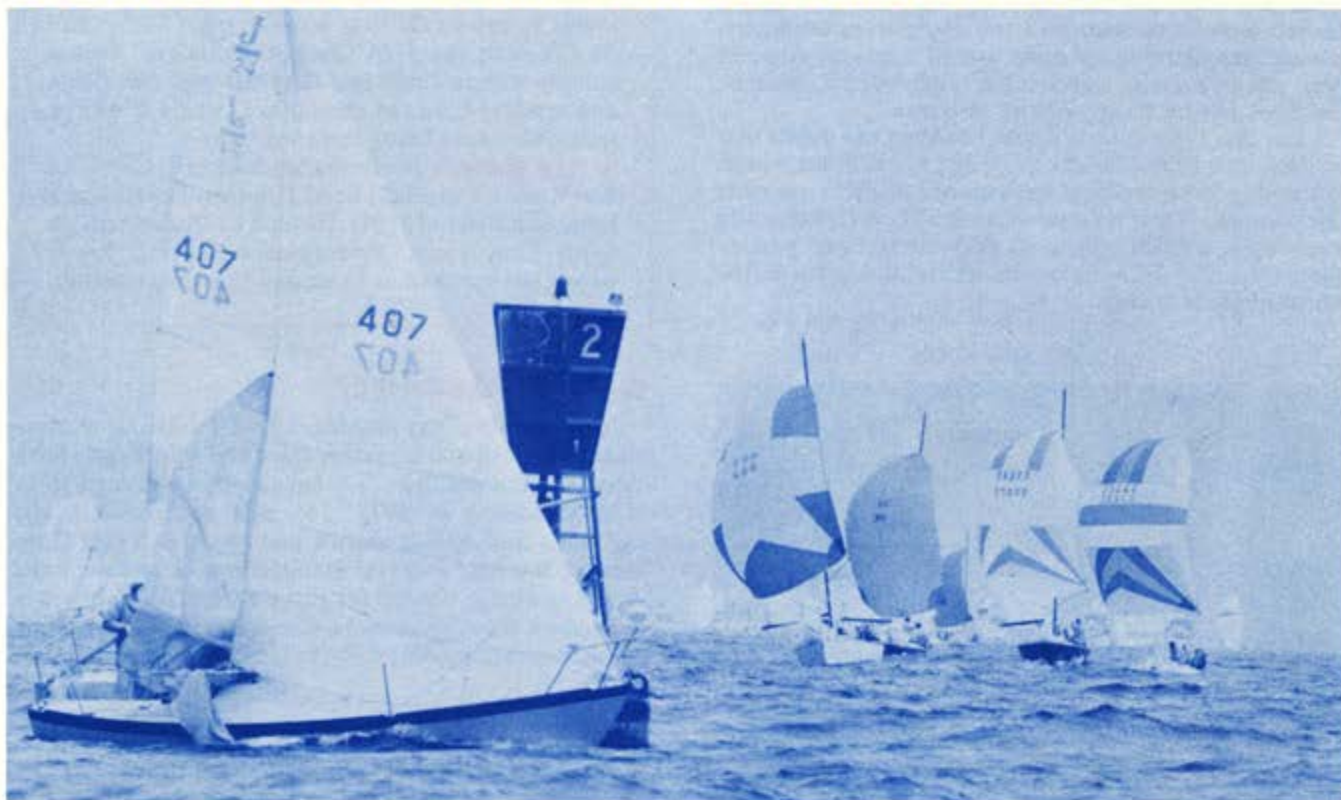


Charlie Scott Wins North Americans



"It was a lot of fun!" — a comment not usually heard from the mouths of sailors after a tough, close series, but that's what the top skippers said about the first J/24 North Americans. The four-race series, sailed in Rhode Island Sound and Narragansett Bay off Newport, Rhode Island, August 8-11, was won by 24-year-old Charlie Scott, from Annapolis, Maryland, after a tough battle with some of the best sailors in the United States.

Midwinters II! The Second annual Midwinter Championship will be held January 14-17, again at Key West, Fla., where the wind is warm and fresh. Write Key West Sailing Club (P.O. Box 828, Key West, Fla. 33040) for entry blanks. Act fast, since housing is limited.

The winner makes a perfect leeward mark rounding.

Scott, the 1971 Sears Bowl champion, had excellent speed in the predominately moderate-to-fresh-air series, but so did John Kolijs, Scott Allan, Bill Shore, and his brother Jim. What the eventual champion had going for him was a good eye for wind shifts and the necessary amount of "winner's luck."

Sixty-four boats from as far away as Texas and Minnesota sailed in the series, which was run by Robin Wallace, of the Ida Lewis Yacht Club. Most of the boats were docked at Newport Offshore shipyard, and most, if not all, of the sailors enjoyed refreshments and other support supplied by the Michelob beer company.

With all those sailors from all over the United States, one fleet stood out. "The three Scotts" — Charlie, Allan,

(continued on page 6)

Class Association News

From the President

Dear Member:

We are well into our first season of existence and the J/24 class seems to be doing very well. We completed our first North American championship in August, with 64 entries. Orders keep pouring in and existing fleets are expanding while new fleets are forming rapidly. The first British championship was held in October, and production is underway in Australia.

However, one thing worries me a bit. Every successful and strong one-design class has flourished through good grass roots organization at the local fleet level. We have some fleets that seem to be very well squared away and well run, but I'm sad to say that many of the fleets that we have chartered in this first year seem beset by lethargy. Despite numerous requests from association headquarters to fleet captains for dues, lists of members, news of fleet championships, and other class-related matters, there has been a disappointing response.

I feel that there is little doubt in any of our minds that we have one of the finest one-design boats in the world. We should back the boat up with one of the finest class associations. This is *your* association and these are *your* fleets, and only through *your* interest and participation can the J/24 class take its rightful place in the world of yacht racing.

Good sailing to you all,
Lou Burns



Lou Burns (in cap) with NA's measuring crew.

J/24 News

J/24 News is published by the J/24 Class Association for skippers, crews, and observers of racing and cruising J/24s. The class office is at P.O. Box 429, Newport, Rhode Island 02840. An active, associate, or sponsoring membership includes a subscription to this newsletter. Editor: John Rousmaniere.

1979 North Americans: The class officers are considering sites for the 1979 North American Championship. If your club is interested in hosting the series, please send information concerning facilities, sailing conditions, and the club's history of race management to the class office.

Fleet Status: Many fleets have not sent in dues or lists of members to the class office. Members should check with their fleet captains to see if reports have been made. **FLEETS NOT HEARD FROM AS OF JANUARY 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED INACTIVE.**

Measurement Certificates: The class rules (III 1.0) state: "No yacht shall be allowed to race in the Class unless it has an Official Measurement Certificate on file with the J/24 Class Association." Please comply with this rule by filling out your certificate and sending it to the class office, where it will be recorded before being returned to you.

A New Builder: Performance Sailcraft Corp., in San Rafael, Cal., has joined Tillotson-Pearson as a licensed builder of J/24s. Headed by champion Star sailor Don Trask, Performance Sailcraft has a strong background in Laser and Star construction.

A New Measurer

Jonathan Ford has succeeded Rod Johnstone as class measurer. Ford and his father Ham and wife Rogers have raced and cruised their "Cinnabar" since the early days of J/24 sailing in 1977. Jon was successful in the Lightning and Soling classes and, with a degree from Stevens Institute in naval architecture, he has the technical knowledge needed for this position. His address is 25 Summit Road, Riverside, Conn. 06878, and his home phone number is (203) 637-2562.

Measurer's Rulings

1. Halyard locking devices are not permitted
2. Boltrope feeder for mainsail luff is permitted.
3. "Pumping" of spinnaker halyard to induce surfing is not permitted.
4. Tack hooks may be installed for mainsail reefing at the gooseneck.
5. A wire pendant may not be installed between the boom and the upper main sheet block and may not be used to replace length of any other standard tackle.
6. Installation of a jib Cunningham system is permitted.
7. Halyards and other running rigging may not be led below deck.
8. The mast must be fixed at the step so that the intersection of the aft face of the mast and the step is no less than 8" and no more than 9½" forward of the forward face of the main bulkhead.
9. All required items of equipment must be operable and capable of performing the intended use.
10. Additional mainsail reefs are permitted above the one mandatory reef.

On the Circuit, Here and Abroad

British Championship

Philip Watson, from Dublin, Ireland, won the last two races to take the first J/24 Championship of the United Kingdom at Lymington, England, on October 14-15. Watson had a fourth and two firsts in the three-race series, which was sailed entirely on the second day after dense fog and a calm prohibited racing Saturday. Watson's crew included Jim Sweeney, Dennis Kelly, and Tim Levett. Tony Blachford, of the host Lymington Town Sailing Club, was a close second, with finishes of 1-3-3. Bob Fisher ended up third with a 2-5-5 record.

The 26-boat fleet was reduced to 23 by the time racing finally started Sunday when the three Swedish entries, representing the Malmo fleet, had to depart with their new boats. The first race was held over a triangle/windward course in six to ten knots of wind. A three-knot current sweeping upwind bunched the fleet on the second reach; by the end of the leg, 15 different boats had, at one time or another, taken the lead — including two boats that eventually finished at the bottom of the fleet.

Patrick Pym, from Hayling, and Fisher were 1-2 around that leeward mark and dueled for the lead on what started out as a port-tack-favored beat. The building and backing wind, however, turned the leg into a reach. Blachford, who had rounded third, cracked off early and came roaring in with the current to nose out Fisher by a boat length. Pym, who had sailed a bit too far to windward, fought back against the current to finish third ahead of Watson.

A building southwesterly working against the Spring Tide ebb current roughed up the Solent for the second and third races, both sailed over windward/leeward/windward courses. In the second race, Watson took the lead on the run, closely followed by Blachford and Richard Roscoe (winner of the only previous British J/24 regatta). Coming into the finish, Watson had Roscoe safely tucked away until the luff of the genoa on the Irish boat slipped out of the headstay groove. Seeing this, Roscoe immediately started a tacking duel, closing the gap while Watson gamely covered with his genoa looking more like a blooper than a jib. Fortunately for Watson, Roscoe had a bad tack due to a bad wrap on a winch and had to settle for second, closely ahead of Blachford.

The wind freshened to 17 to 20 knots for the last race. Watson took the start, getting a big jump on Fisher, Roscoe, and Blachford — all well placed on points going into this race. Boats carrying working jibs were definitely faster in these conditions than those lugging genoas that sagged off to leeward. At the weather mark, Watson had a 20-second lead. He planed all the way down the 3½-mile run to open up a 1½-minute lead. A traffic jam involving a dozen boats caused a great deal of position changing at the leeward mark. Watson won going away over Doug Ritherdon; third was Blachford.

Despite the wide spread in points, the racing was very close, except in the last race; the top ten boats were usually closely bunched all the way around the course.

Results:

(1) Philip Watson/Kurt Barfred, 4-1-1, 5½ points; (2) Tony Blachford, 1-3-3, 6¾; (3) Bob Fisher, 2-5-5, 12; (4, tie) Doug Ritherdon/D.M. Woodhouse, 9-4-2, 15; (4, tie) Richard Roscoe, 5-2-8, 15; (6) Patrick Pym, 3-9-6, 18; (7) Eddie Hyde, 10-6-7, 23; (8) Peter Drake/J.L. & P.S. Milligan, 6-7-11, 24; (9) Stewart Alexander, 8-12-10, 30; (10, tie) John Adams, 11-16-4, 31; (10, tie) Richard Carlisle, 12-10-9, 31.

Great Lakes Championship

Stu Johnstone and his father Bob returned from Newport to their old home town and won the Great Lakes Championship, Sept. 22-24, off Chicago Yacht Club. Alternating at the helm, with Bob steering in the first and third races, the Johnstones had a 2-2-1-2 record to win by five points over Ron Frankel, whose boat was steered by former Flying Dutchman world champion Keith Musto, visiting from England. Third was Larry Klein, the Highlander national champion from Detroit.

The 16-boat fleet sailed a medium-distance race and three Olympic-course races in the no-drop series.

Crewing for father and son were wife and mother, Mary, and local Star sailor Doug Allen.

The J/24 outboard engine rule proved to be a blessing in disguise. Not only did crews not have to wake up

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Marblehead Race Week	1st
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Annapolis Summer Series	1st
Lymington (England) Series	1st
British Virgin Islands Race Week	1st
J-24 Invitational (Florida)	1st
Buoy Race (Spokane, Washington)	1st

*indicates partial inventory

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early to make it to the starts, but they were able to tow half the Star and the Soling fleets to the starting line on Saturday.

Results:

(1) Johnstones, Newport, R.I., 2-2-1-2, 6¾; (2) Frankel/Musto, Zenda, Wis., 5-4-2-1, 11¾; (3) Larry Klein, Detroit, 4-3-3-4, 14; (4) Earl Liden, Detroit, 6-1-6-3, 15; (5) Dale Anderson, Minnetonka, Minn., 3-5-4-9, 21; (6) Bill Allen, Minnetonka, Minn., 1-6-17-5, 29; (7) Mike Dow, Charlevoix, Mich., 12-7-7-6, 32; (8) Steve Barth, Chicago, 7-9-9-8, 32; (9) Mayeau/Bartels, Chicago, 11-10-5-7, 33; (10) John Hughes, Chicago, 10-8-10-11; (11) Mike Auster, Chicago; (12) Robert Veckey, Chicago; (13) Rod Cohee, Chicago; (14) Dick Newman, Chicago; (15) Lee Friedman, Chicago; (16) Garry Nobel, Chicago.

Short Reports

Fleet 11: Jack Mathias won the Niagara Frontier season championship sailed at Buffalo Canoe Club, Pt. Abino, Ontario, reports fleet captain Ed Stevens. Mathias, a member of the U.S. Olympic yachting team in 1976, was followed by Tom Oller and Tom Ray in second and third places.

Fleet 18: Herb Finley sailed his "Bananas" to first place in the Narragansett Bay fleet's championship, sailed in July and August. Second was Bill DiSpirito in "Papillon" and third was fleet captain (and class president) Lou Burns in "Decollage."

Fleet 6: The Detroit fleet sponsored its first annual one-design J/24 regatta over Labor Day weekend, sailed on Lake St. Clair out of the Bayview Yacht Club. Larry Klein won ahead of the Bauer/Lyle team, in 8- to 20-knot breezes.

New Jersey: "Waldo C. Wookiee," sailed by the Johnson/Eggers syndicate, won the New Jersey Y.R.A. J/24 Championship sailed July 8-9 off her home Raritan Yacht Club, Perth Amboy, N.J. Second in the 12-boat fleet was E. Silvy's "Lotus Easter," from Brooklyn, N.Y., and third was W. Volk's aptly named "Volks Wagon," hailing from Keyport Yacht Club. The series was part of the famous Red Grant Regatta, and the J/24s sailed as a one-design class using class rule sails.



Bob Johnstone crewing for son Stu at Great Lakes series.

Texas Championship

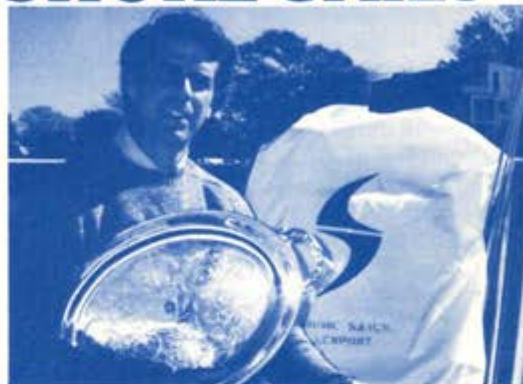
Jim Borden, from Corpus Christi, walked away with the first J/24 Texas State Championship at a three-race regatta held September 23-24 off Corpus Christi Yacht Club. The wind was good, with ten- to 20-knot breezes prevailing, but one little storm came through just as a race was finishing, bringing a little havoc. The host club provided great hospitality.

Half of the 18 entrants came from Corpus Christi, five from Austin, two from San Antonio, and two from Port Arthur. This district now has a board of governors and a newsletter. The board of governors is putting together a schedule of sanctioned regattas for 1979, and the district governor (who is now being elected) will appoint race committee chairmen to coordinate the regattas with the host clubs. According to the newsletter, "The feeling is that if we provide good racing and competition at the regattas, have good race committee work, and good parties after, then the owners will want to travel with their boats."

Results:

(1) Jim Borden, 1-1-1, 54.75; (2) John Shepherd, 3-2-2, 50; (3) Bob Johnson, 2-5-3, 47; (4) Richard Specia, 5-3-6, 43; (5) Bill Levens, 4-11-5, 37; (6) Jane & Wayne Ashby, 8-7-9, 33; (7) Gary Startzell, 4-10-12, 31; (8) Jack Kern, DSQ-4-4, 30; (9) Jim Dinn, 7-12-10, 28; (10) Welch/Cuthrell, 10-9-11, 27; (11) Bill Bond; (12) Dailey/Tor; (13) Bill Worsham; (14) Dave Cheney.

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The One-of-a-Kind Regatta

North American champion Charlie Scott sailed his J/24 to second place on corrected time in its division in the "Yachting" magazine One-of-a-Kind Regatta for cruiser/racers in October. Winner in the division, which included most recent designs, was a Soverel 30. The J/24 had a comfortable lead going into the last race but got caught on the wrong side of a big shift, which turned the fleet standings upside down, and dropped to second, one point behind the Soverel 30.

In the December "Yachting," Bob Bavier wrote "had the two divisions been racing against each other, the top nine boats in the racing division would have beaten the runaway winner in the cruiser/racer division (the San Juan 24) and the J/24 would have beaten the Soverel 30 by one point for first in fleet." So it could be said that Charlie, his crew, and their J won the One-of-a-Kind.

Based on overall corrected-time results for the combined fleets, the top eight boats were:

(1) J/24, 9-1-1-2-(12), 13 points (elapsed finishes: 9-7-5-6-10); (2) Soverel 30, 7-(10)-2-3-2, 14 (5-2-1-1-1); (3) Kirby 25, 3-5-5-6-(20), 19 (6-9-7-8-18); (4) Lindenberg 26, 1T-2-7-(19)-11, 21 (4-6-8-17-9); (5) Evelyn 26, 4-15T-3-1-(28), 23 (7-14-6-4-26); (6) Creekmore 22, 8-6-4-7-(13), 25 (11-19-16-17-13); (7) Harmony 22, (20)-12-8-4-1, 25 (25-22-18-14-4); (8) Aphrodite 101, 1T-13-15-(15)-6, 35 (1-1-2-3-3).

World Championship Coming Up

The first J/24 World Championship will be held off Newport, Rhode Island, August 4-10, 1979, barely 2½ years after the first J/24 was launched. The host for the event will be Newport Offshore, the shipyard in Newport that did such an excellent job of hosting the 1978 North Americans.

Entry will be by qualification through district and regional championships. Each district will be granted a number of openings in the world championship that will reflect 1) the fleet's roster of dues-paying members of the class association and 2) the number of boats entered in the qualifying regatta. Class officers are now considering a plan in which each of the ten regions has two slots at the worlds if 14 or fewer boats sail in the qualifying regatta. The region will gain another slot if 15 boats sail, plus one more slot for every additional five boats that enter the qualifier.

Certain remote fleets, such as Bermuda, Hong Kong, and Curacao, will qualify one boat without the requirement of a district or regional regatta. A total of 70 boats are expected to sail in the first worlds.

Six races are scheduled with one make-up day, with four closed-course races held over two days and two long-distance races. There will be a throw-out race. The 720° rule will be in effect and the race instructions will include a "sudden death" provision that goes into effect after the second general recall.

There is a possibility of a J/24 match racing championship to be held on the Saturday and Sunday before racing begins.

Each region will be expected to provide two volunteers to help with measuring and registration. The race committee will be run by Newport Offshore.

Fall Championship

Charlie Scott defeated 31 other competitors by a wide margin to win the Fall National Championship, held November 18-19 by Severn Sailing Association, Annapolis, Md. Scott won two of the three 8-mile Olympic course races held on the first day in a shifty ten- to 18-knot northwest wind. The other race was won by Stu Johnstone, who led a strong contingent of five boats from Newport, Rhode Island.

On Sunday, Johnstone jumped out to an early lead and won the first race in a light northerly. In the last race of the no-drop series, the wind died and went through 90-degree shifts, and Steve Prime won by a large margin over a shortened course. The racing was closer than the scores indicate, as 20 different boats finished in the top ten at least once and 13 boats finished in the top six at least once. The host club's race management and hospitality were excellent.

Results:

(1) Charlie Scott, 1-3-1-3-5, 12.5 pts.; (2) Scott Allan, 3-12-4-2-3, 24; (3) Rod Johnstone, 4-6-7-4-8, 29; (4) Stu Johnstone, 12-1-6-1-(13), 32.5; Steve Prime/J. Thommen, DSQ-2-3-5-1, 44.75; (6) Dave Hirsch; (7) Steele/Myers; (8 Tie) Jim Mead & Ted Prush; (10) Bob Reeves; (11) Bill Shore; (12) Pete Cleaves; (13 Tie) Louis Burns & John Lapides; (15) Randy Staats; (16 Tie) Tim Dwyer & Herb Finley; (18) William Hein; (19) Dave Rogers; (20) J. Biles.

J FEVER

1st	L.I. Sound Championship
1st	English Championship
1st	Texas State Championship
1st	One Design Invitational (CA)
3rd	Larchmont Race Week
5,7,10	North Americans
1st	Youngstown Regatta
1st	L.I. Sound Season
	Overnight Championship
1st	Marblehead Spring Series

WITH

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Scott Wins North Americans

(continued from page 1)

and Jim — were from Annapolis, Chesapeake Bay Fleet 8, where they had tuned and raced their boats through June and July. The preparation showed, and they finished 1-3-6. Without a throw-out race, they would have been 1-2-3, with the more consistent Jim Scott winning out over Allan and then Charlie. If Scott Allan had not misread his circular, he would have won over the Scott brothers.

The series was sailed over a novel trapezoidal course. Picture a triangle with a four-mile weather leg and three-mile reaches. Next slice off the jibe mark. You now have a four-legged course, with a four-mile beat, a two-mile reach, a two-mile run, and another two-mile reach leading to the leeward mark. The long beat spreads the boats out before the weather mark and the slice produces a run. Two of the three buoy races were held around that trapezoid and then finished at the weather mark for 14 miles. The other used slightly shorter legs for 10½ miles.

Once they were used to four buoys instead of three, the competitors came to like the course, although some of the top crews complained that the reaches were too broad and the jibes too easy.

Two other races were scheduled, but only one was started and finished. Race 2 was to be a long-distance contest around buoys in Rhode Island Sound, but fog closed in and the race committee sent the fleet on a 24-mile course around Conanicut Island, in Narragansett

Bay. The other race, scheduled as Race 4, never got off. After nine general recalls, the race committee decided there wasn't enough time left to finish a race, so they abandoned for the day. Culprits were an extremely shifty breeze and a group of aggressive sailors in highly maneuverable boats.

**Scott Allan: "Mess up
one tack and you'd
lose five boats.
It was that close."**

Charlie Scott started the series off as he says he often does by winning the first race after leading at every mark, in a moderate southwesterly. Second was another Annapolis boat, sailed by Lawrence Leonard, and third was Bill Jorch, Northport, N.Y., with Newport sailmaker Bill Shore at the tiller. Five of the top ten boats were from the Chesapeake, including tenth-place "Swag," James Mead's J crewed by his wife and three children, two of whom were seven years old. A trophy for the crew that best reflects the spirit of the class, donated by designer Rod Johnstone, was awarded to Mead at the end of the series.

The postponement of the distance race was fortunate for many, since the wind increased to working-jib



strength between the second general recall and the actual start on the new course. Scott Allan led much of the way until he missed a buoy and had to double back to round properly, losing 30 boats in the process. "We just didn't read the fine print on the sailing instructions," he explained later. Allan recovered to 12th and Charlie Scott, who also missed the mark, dropped from about seventh and finished 16th. Midwinter champion Mark Ploch and Jim Brady, from Clearwater, Florida, won the race ahead of Skip Whyte, from Cambridge, Massachusetts, with Jorch and Shore third. Jim Borden, from Corpus Christi, Texas, finished fourth, and John Koliuss, another Texan, was fifth. As it turned out, Allan's *faux pas* cost him the series, since he now had to count his opening-race ninth.

Charlie Scott recovered nicely from his poor second race to win the third race and take the series lead from Jorch and Shore. Allan finished second in a building southwesterly after early race leader Dave Hirsch, from Stratford, Connecticut, had to do a 720 and dropped to eighth. Koliuss, an Olympic medalist, took third and Willet Whitmore, from Swampscott, Massachusetts, recovered from his first race 51st to finish fourth. J-Boats president Bob Johnstone finished fifth; he was fourth in the first race and 45th in the second one — an indication of the level of competition. Meanwhile, Jim Scott was putting together a 5-7-6 series — the sort of record that people begin to notice toward the end of a regatta.

The next day was practice start day under the increasingly impatient supervision of the race committee, but by Friday morning both the wind and the competitiveness had settled down to the point where a race could actually be started. The race organizers had decided to permit a throw-out race, so Charlie Scott was now leading with two firsts. He had a large but vulnerable (considering his 16th) lead over Jorch/Shore, Whyte, Koliuss, his brother, Ploch, and Allan.

Sailing conservatively in light air and keeping an eye on those boats, Scott took ninth in the fourth race, which Tim Dwyer, from Newport, and Vincent Brun won, with Allan, Koliuss, James Mead, and Jim Scott finishing after in that order. Charlie Scott won the series by two points, and only seven points covered the first six boats.

Scott's crew consisted of Bob Hatch, Theo Peterson, and John White. Hatch and the skipper had worked hard on their boat's bottom and keel while they left the running rigging completely stock — "Smiles" had no electronic gear — except for a Windex. "We sanded the bottom and painted the keel and replaced the putty in the fairing area," Scott said. "We had no trouble measuring in except that the trailing edge of the keel was a bit too thin, and we had to build it up."

Scott used Hood sails made by his sailmaker brother. Other sails in the top ten — some made by the skippers — included suits from Ulmer (Koliuss and Ploch), Horizon (Allan), Shore (Jorch and Stu Johnstone), North (Whyte and Dwyer), and Hood (Jim Scott and Whitmore).

And what did Scott think of the series? "I had a lot of fun. I like the class." His brother Jim echoed the sentiment: "I had the most fun I've had at a regatta in a long time. The sailing was very competitive, and the beer parties in the evening gave me a chance to unwind."

All boats were measured before the series, with special attention paid to keel and rudder shape, and Scott was

Skip Whyte: "The whole Annapolis crew was tough."

Charlie Scott: "We have a good fleet down here in Annapolis. That helps a lot."

not alone in having to make alterations. During the series, spot checks were made of the first, second, 15th, and 30th finishers, but required equipment was found on all boats checked. There were only three protests in the series, all concerning proper use of the 720 rule.



Jim Mead and his crew, which included two 7-year-olds, won a prize for sportsmanship and finished 18th.



A typical start. Number 151 is eighth-place Mark Ploch.

1978 North Americans Results

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3. Scott Allan, Annapolis, Md., 9-(12)-2-2, 13
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5. Skip Whyte, Cambridge, Mass., 6-2-(12)-7, 15
6. James Scott, Annapolis, Md., 5-(7)-6-5, 16
7. Tim Dwyer/Vincent Brun, Newport, R.I., 7-(DSQ)-14-1, 21
8. Mark Ploch/Jim Brady, Clearwater, Fla., 16-1-9-(19), 25
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30. Everett Pearson, Warren, R.I., (42)-28-29-23, 80
31. Rod Johnstone, Stonington, Conn., 25-(33)-24-31, 80
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33. Tom Rowe/Seth Morrell, Edgartown, Mass., 38-32-(47)-12, 82
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35. John Johnstone, Madison, Conn., 20-(34)-31-33, 84
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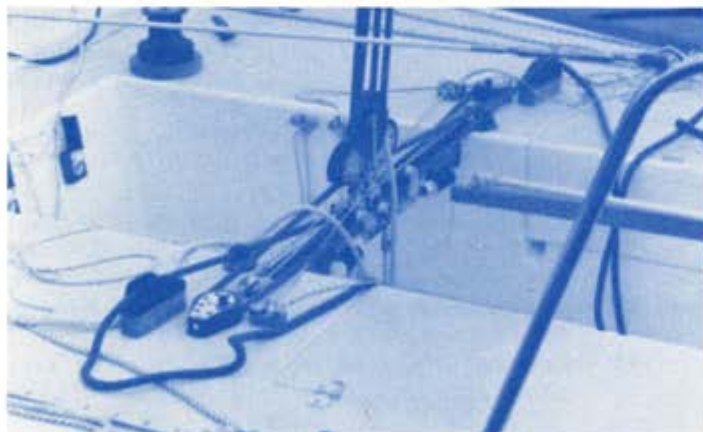
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J 24

Photographs in this issue were taken by the following: North American Championship — (on the water) Karin J. Olsen, Offshore Studios, Wilmette, Ill.; (on shore and equipment) John Rousmaniere; Great Lakes Championship — Carol Singer, Chicago, Ill.

Racing Tips *(continued from page 12)*

maneuverability, people like Whyte — whose sailing career has been spent mostly in one-designs — are confronting some novel problems. One is how to lead the clew of the genoa jib outboard of the lifelines when the winds hauls aft. What's needed is a Barber hauler that can be quickly installed and removed. On Whyte's boat, there was a "short sheet," bright red in color, that led through a block on the port rail, across the cockpit, and through a block on the starboard rail. At each end of the line was a stainless steel hook large enough to fit into the genoa clew. When the boat bore off to a close reach, a crew member would reach to leeward and hook the short sheet into the clew. The short sheet was then led around the windward winch and the strain was taken on it as the jib sheet was released. The clew was now outboard of the lifelines and properly led, since the shortsheet lead was a bit forward of the normal genoa lead.

Why was it red? To distinguish it from the tangle of other lines that usually found themselves into Whyte's cockpit. Whyte also rigged a Barber hauler for his working jib.

Another gadget used on Whyte's boat was a twing, a light, 1/4-inch line that led through a padeye on the port side, on the rail and just aft of the chain plates, aft through a cam cleat, across the cockpit and forward through another cam cleat to a padeye on the starboard side. (Generally speaking, making any line "double-ended" like this saves about 1/3 of the length that would go into two lines; try it sometime on your spinnaker sheets.) At the bitter ends were two Harken bullet blocks, through which the spinnaker sheets lead. Whyte used 5/16-inch spinnaker sheets instead of the stock 3/8-inch sheets, which would need the next larger Harken block.

Downwind, the windward twing was taken down to steady the pole and to keep the pole end from sliding down the afterguy away from the clew. The leeward twing was tensioned to keep the spinnaker sheet from looping over the end of the boom and from pushing the boom aft on a dead run. Whyte's crew experimented with twing tension and discovered that jibing worked best with the twings down about 1/3 of the way. Twings were not used on the light-air sheets.

We went on to ask Skip about tacking the J/24. He said that his main concerns when tacking are: first, that the old sheet is free to run (on his boat, one man was assigned to making sure this was the case); second, that the boat is steered properly through the tack; third, that there only be a single wrap on the new leeward winch — any more and an over ride was inevitable; and fourth, that the sails not be trimmed too flat and too rapidly after the tack.

Coming out of a tack, Whyte wanted the genoa to be 15 to 18 inches off the leeward spreader, and he also let the traveler all the way down to leeward. Acceleration is the most important thing to think about after a tack, and acceleration results when the sheets and the traveler are eased. "When in doubt, let it out," Skip reminded his interviewer, "especially when the boat is slowed down — after going through waves or after a tack." As speed increases, the sheet and traveler are trimmed.



Tardy, frantic spinnaker action at Newport.

Finally, Skip said a word about tuning. Tight rigging is the way to go, but before screwing every turnbuckle down, the owner should work hard to locate the centerline of the boat — to make sure that the maststep and partners are on the centerline. Skip has tried this with string stretched fore and aft and with a tape measure led from the masthead to either rail, but he's not confident of either technique and is willing to try others.



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Racing Tips from Skip Whyte

Eventual fifth-place finisher at the North Americans and one of the top skippers in almost every class he sails in, New Englander Skip Whyte has some original opinions about deck layout and sail-handling. Whyte owns and manages Can Am Sailcraft, a boat dealership and marine hardware store in Cambridge, Massachusetts, yet even though he has access to the most modern, sophisticated gear, he (like most advanced sailors) believes in simplicity.

For example, although he feels that a compass is important in any racing boat, he had only one compass in his J/24 at the North Americans. It was a flush-mounted model located on the bridge deck, just aft of the companionway, where he says it is most visible. He knows that many people swear by their dual compasses located on either side of the cabin house, but he thinks that his crew, lines, and other gear would inevitably obscure his line of sight. He advises against a bulkhead-mounted compass inserted in the after side of the trunk, since this installation allows sunlight to fall on only half the compass card. So far, he and his crew (and his compass) have had no problems with the dome underfoot.

Skip feels that the J/24's standard gear layout is excellent, but that a few additions, permitted by the class rules, are helpful. One is a double-ended control on the permanent backstay. He has found that it is quite easy to pull on a line that leads from a point in front of and fairly far away from his arm, but that short pulls from nearby leads are difficult. So he has arranged the backstay controls so he may trim from across the cockpit: when sitting to windward, he pulls the leeward line and eases the windward line; when sitting to leeward, he pulls the windward line and eases the leeward line.

The gear he uses is simple. He pins the stock camcleat/fairlead so that it does not swivel. He then leads the

control line forward to a bullet block, through which he trims the line from the windward side. On the other side, he installs a bullet block under the after pulpit and a small camcleat screwed to the deck on a wedge. Forward, there is another bullet block.

The control line cleats automatically when trimmed. To ease the control line, he pulls up on it between the forward and after blocks. In concept, this is very similar to the standard spinnaker halyard cleating gear on a J/24.

The class rules also allow the owner to change the cleats on the traveler so long as he does not add to the number of parts. Whyte's experience with the system in which the cleats are on the traveler car itself is that the bitter end of the control line inevitably gets lost to leeward, far from the skipper's hand. He prefers an arrangement in which the line cleats on deck, near the skipper's hand.

Whyte has reversed the stock boom vang so that the cleat is on the mast end rather than on the boom. He had to add a swivel so that the cleat could be aimed to either side of the boat, where it is played on hard reaches by a crew member. One of the not-so-secret secrets of championship crews has been to play the vang rather than the mainsheet in near wipe-out conditions. In a puff, they let the vang off to twist the upper and middle parts of the mainsail (which provide most of the heeling force), while the lower half remains powerful.

The vang must be accessible to a crewmember on the windward rail. Whyte's arrangement does just that, and he says that a crew member can get the vang back in hard from his sitting position, without having to crawl into the cockpit under the boom, as he might have to with the stock arrangement.

Since the J/24 is both a cruising boat, with its genoa jib and lifelines, and a racing boat, with its speed and

(continued on page 11)



Stu Johnstone uses much of the gear favored by Skip Whyte, including a double-ended backstay adjuster, deck-located traveler cleats, twings, and a vang with the cleat at the mast for easy adjustment downwind.