

# ' A B R U S H with S A I L '

**THE OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER OF NEW ZEALAND MARINE ARTIST JIM BOLLAND**

September 2007

*I'd like to start off this month's newsletter by welcoming the many new subscribers who signed-on for future issues of 'A Brush with Sail'. The story of Geoff Stagg and 'Whispers II' has stirred a great deal of interest in New Zealand yachting history, not so much from Kiwi's but from many sailors in the Northern Hemisphere!*

*Thank you for your interest. I continue the history theme this month.*

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## *'The Blue Ribband of NZ Yachting'.*

Before the great war of 1914-18 competitive sailing in New Zealand was still in its relative infancy. Remember, New Zealand is a very new country!

About the time that the schooner yacht 'America' sailed for England to challenge British sailors for that well known cup, our English forbears were still struggling to establish a foothold on our tiny land and any form of non-commercial sailing was restricted to a few wealthy families.

To give you an idea of the 'recent' development of sailing in NZ the best known of our 'clubs The Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, was founded in Auckland in 1859. In Wellington, the Capital City, the club that was to be known as The Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, was formed in 1883.



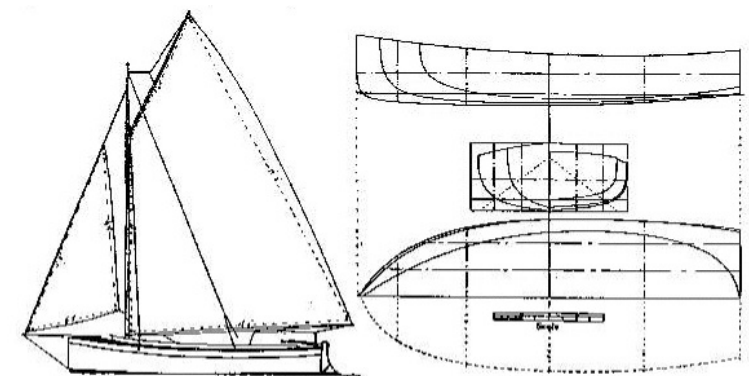
***Sailing on Wellington Harbour 1888***

Auckland was and always will be the centre of sailing in New Zealand and keel yachts abounded there from the earliest days, but during those early days there were problems establishing a suitable small dinghy class for young men of lesser means.

Cutting a long story into a short story, things started to happen with a boom in yacht club membership following World War I and the efforts of a group of Auckland enthusiasts to establish a fourteen-foot sailing dinghy for boys.

Boosting this move was the news that Viscount Lord Jellicoe, a WW1 hero Admiral of the Royal Navy and keen yachtsman, was to arrive in New Zealand as Governor-General and he had expressed interest in getting involved in one-design class yacht racing on his arrival.

Unfortunately there was no one-design class of race yacht in New Zealand at the time, so with the thought of a Governor General actually sailing in their midst, the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron immediately threw its weight behind the effort of the other groups establishing the 14 ft. dinghy class.



*The 1916 drawings of the 14 ft. one design class.*

However, those whose ambition it was to see the growth of a dinghy class for boys were concerned to discover that many of the new class were being built for experienced older sailors who were drawn to the idea of the competition promised by the one design.

The rules of the 14ft.one design class were approved by the AYMBBA early in 1920 while later the same year there were two more notable events boosting interest in the new class. Otago yachtsmen showed a keen interest and plans were sent to the southern province while in November the news was posted in the 'Auckland Star' that the Governor General, Lord Jellicoe had placed an order with boat-builder Charles Bailey Junior, for a 14 ft. one design yacht.

Early in the following year, 14 of the class were sailing in Auckland, at least six were reported to be building in Dunedin (the main port city of Otago) and rumours of interest and building were emanating from Wellington and Christchurch. The class for boys was now the domain of men!

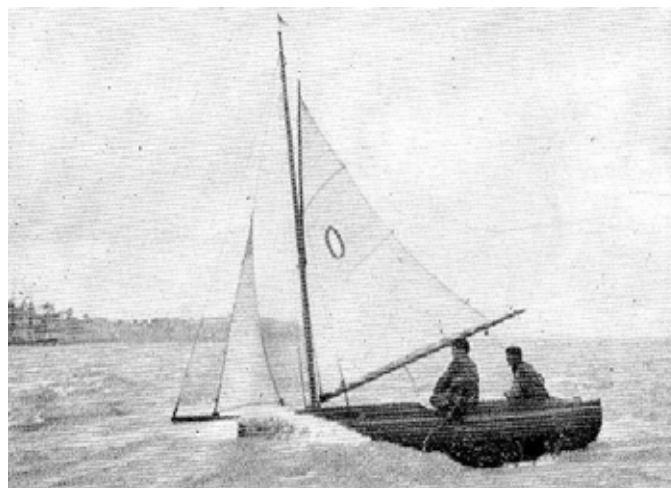
Such was the interest in the class, due in great part to the involvement of the Governor General, that the Jewellery firm of Walker and Hall Limited

presented a fifty guinea championship cup to the RNZYS for competition among the new class. The cup was presented in memory of a young New Zealand born naval officer, Lieut.-Com. W.E.Sanders VC, DSO, RNR, who lost his life in heroic circumstances on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, 1917.

The 'Squadron, foreseeing the importance of the trophy, vested it in the Auckland Yacht and Motor Boat Association as in an almost immediate reaction to the presentation of the Sanders Cup, Otago interests issued a challenge to Auckland to defend the 'Cup over a series of races during Easter 1921 on the Waitemata.

'Heather' skippered by her owner Bill McCullough represented Otago following a trial series competed for by seven yachts and in Auckland the Governor's yacht 'Iron Duke' sailed by a professional crew whose skipper was Glad Bailey, was selected defender and according to the Auckland press, most favoured to successfully defend the new trophy.

This first contest for what was to become New Zealand's premier sailing event proved the pundits wrong. Although 'Iron Duke' had the legs of the southern boat in lighter conditions, 'Heather' was superior in the solid breezes that prevailed for races one, four and five and so gained the three victories necessary to claim the Sanders Cup for Otago! Bill McCullough and his crew were feted as champions when they returned to Dunedin. The interest in their success by both sailors and non-sailors, helped create the inter-provincial rivalry that was to be a great part of the success of the battle for the 'Blue Riband of New Zealand Yachting'.



**1921 and 'Heather' wins the Sanders Cup for Otago.**

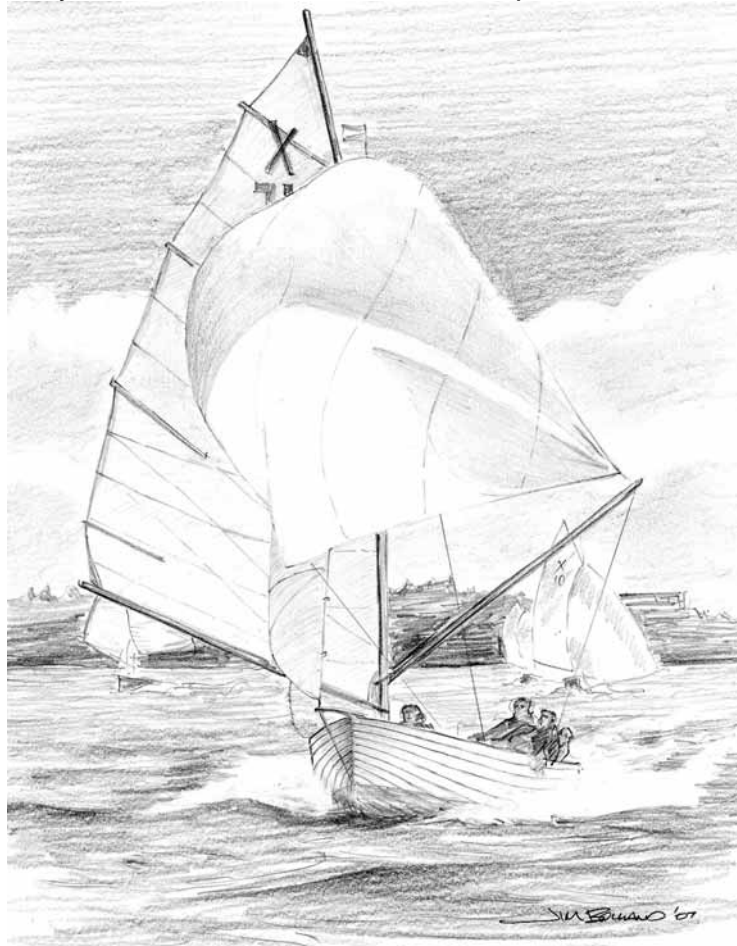
Enthusiasm for the new class spread like wild-fire nation wide and on the fourth of February 1922, 'Desert Gold' (Auckland), 'Linnet' (Canterbury), 'Iron Duke' (Wellington), and 'Murihiku' (Southland) came to the start line of the first race of the second contest, each crew and supporters looking to take the Sanders Cup off the defender Bill McCullough, his crew and 'Heather'.

It was a magnificent contest and at the end of the sixth race 'Desert Gold', 'Murihiku' and the defender 'Heather' were locked at two wins each. On

February 15, in front of a large crowd of mainly Otago supporters, the Auckland skipper Joe Patrick made the best of the start in an ideal fresh north easterly and 'Desert Gold' led from gun to finish to take the 'Cup back to Auckland.

In a matter of a few seasons, an idea for a new class had gone from the planning stage to active fleets of the 14 foot one design yachts in five provinces. The quest to capture the Sanders Cup was given extra impetus by the press, which had found a public groundswell of support in each province that was matching that of inter-provincial rivalry found in New Zealand's winter passion for rugby!

A movement to name the 'Class the 'Jellicoe Class' was warmly received by most provinces, but in Auckland where the number of yachts in all classes necessitated giving various groupings a designated letter, the AYPBA had grouped the 14 ft one-design as the 'X' class. And so in Auckland they became popularly known as 'X'ies'. This was to spread nationwide in time.



***'Rona', winner of the Sanders Cup for Auckland in 1923-24.***

The third contest in 1923, the defence of the Sanders Cup by Auckland on the Waitemata harbour saw the appearance of one of several outstanding craft that were the cause of joy or angst, depending what province you supported. Remembering that these boats were supposedly one-design (and that was

the good intention of the original rules), the ego's and aspirations of competing groups had rivals looking closely at the boat that won!

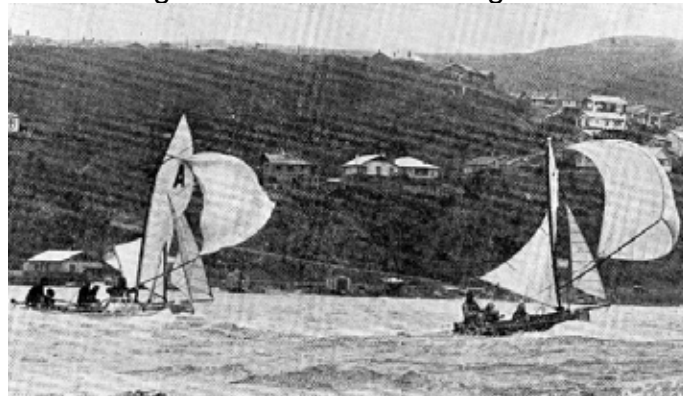
Every year there were mutterings and rumblings about 'that' boat, usually the Sanders Cup winner, as men sought reasons why they had lost! It couldn't possibly be their own helming skills, tactics or sail trimming that let them down! Oh dear no! The winning boat must be a freak! The owner or builder has cheated the rule!

This was the downside of the X Class and the Sanders Cup contests, but it was fuel for the sporting press and helped gain 'column inches' in the press!

But going back to the 1923 contest, we find a new boat defending the 'Cup for Auckland. 'Rona' was a beautiful Bailey built boat, well sailed by A.E.Mathews and crew. After third and second finishes in races one and two, 'Rona' ran away with the next three to successfully defend the Sanders Cup for Auckland.

It was decided that Auckland would defend the 'Cup on Wellington Harbour in 1924 and 'Rona' won the Auckland trials to be the defending yacht. The first race was abandoned after the arrival of a severe southerly that hit shortly after the start. Such was the chaos on the first spinnaker run that only 'Rona' was left upright and much to the Auckland crew's disappointment the race was abandoned. However, five races later 'Rona' had established a 1, 3, dsq., 1, 1 record to retain the Sanders Cup for Auckland.

'Rona' was much admired by most but held under suspicion by some who considered that something was odd with her design. This was the first of



***There was chaos on Evans Bay shortly after this photo of the start of the abandoned first race of the 1924 Sanders Cup regatta in Wellington***

many such situations as mentioned earlier. It was suggested that the 'Rona' should be made a yard-stick for the future and a steel mould be constructed to her shape and all future builds would be required to fit within the mold, plus or minus a set measurement.

This idea was argued back and forth, forgotten about and then resuscitated in 1933 when the steel mould was constructed and used at the contest of that year. Auckland pushed for the use of the steel mould as, by 1933, of the 13

Sanders Cup regattas sailed Auckland had won only won four and Canterbury had won the 'Cup five times, Otago three and Wellington one.

The boat that irked Auckland was the 1926-27-28 champion 'Betty', built and skippered by George Andrews. Above all, Andrews was an excellent sailor and exceptional helmsman, but as was the way in X Class enthusiasts thinking at the time, the hull of 'Betty' was given ALL the credit for it's great performance. So instead of everybody except Auckland sailors being suspicious of 'Rona' as it was in 1923 and 1924, now it was everybody except Canterbury sailors who were suspicious of 'Betty'!



***'Betty' the Canterbury Sanders Cup champion 1926-27-28.***

Although Auckland's 'Avalon' skippered by 'Farmer' Willets claimed the Sanders Cup back in the 1929 regatta sailed at Akaroa, the 'Cup slipped from their grasp again in 1930 and they failed to win it back for a decade.

During this period Canterbury added their name to the 'Cup six times, Wellington three and Otago one. Wellington's 1931 victory was the Capital's first and the yacht was the ex Canterbury champion 'Betty' skippered by Arthur Johnston.

When the Canterbury yacht 'Avenger', skippered by George Brassell, won the 1931 contest on Wellington Harbour, the move to have the 'Rona' mould built was re-ignited and was successfully passed at the 'Class conference. As far as Auckland was concerned, their move didn't help them much as the following year 'Avalon' won again for Canterbury. It was still going to be seven long years before the 'Cup would be back in the 'City of Sails'.

*To be continued in the next issue of 'A Brush with Sail.'*

## ***Med Cup won by 'Artemis'.***

It was neither particularly pretty nor was it winning ugly, but Russell Coutts, skippering the crew of owner-helm Torbjorn Tornqvist's 'Artemis', finally lifted the Breitling MedCup trophy on the final day of his third season competing on

the world's leading fleet racing circuit.

On the last day of the 2005 season, Coutts had to settle for second to Vasco Vascotto and the crew of 'Pisco Sour'. Today a nervous tenth followed by a solid fifth was enough for Coutts and the hand-picked team on 'Artemis' to clinch the 2007 Breitling MedCup Circuit.

In a light easterly breeze with a 17 points cushion to protect Artemis made a shaky start to the first of two final windward leeward races.

Forced to the wrong side of the left favored track Coutts, Tornqvist and team rounded the first windward mark 13th, with only one boat behind them. They recovered two places on the second beat, and one on the final run.

The second race start went marginally better, but with four boats recalled for jumping the start gun at the pin end of the line, 'Artemis' effectively had the title secured by the first windward mark.

With Swedish businessman Tornqvist driving the 2007 Judel-Vrolijk design, and at least six present or past America's Cup winners among the afterguard and crew, 'Artemis' won the 2007 title by just eight points after 32 windward leeward races and six coastal races over the five series regattas this season. Winning the Hyères Trophy, 'Artemis' became the fifth different boat to win a regatta overall this season after 'Bribon' in Alicante, 'CxG Caixa Galicia' in at Breitling Regatta, 'Siemens Matador' in Copa del Rey, Palma and the outgoing 2006 champions 'Valle Romano Mean Machine' in Portimao, Portugal.

It is the second consecutive year of the three year old circuit, that the winning boat has been steered by an owner-driver, Tornqvist also winning the Corinthian Trophy for the season and for the Hyères Trophy regatta.

"We did what we had to do today. We knew going out today that we needed a minimum of a ninth and a tenth for victory. So we would have liked to have finished off a little bit better today, but the main thing is that we achieved what we had to do." Said three times America's Cup winner Coutts. "It was tough conditions out there today and five different winners in five different regattas show that winning this has certainly not been easy."

"It is obviously one of the top events on the calendar these days and now we have a good group of owners who are passionate about trying to win and it is always nice to somehow end up on the top of the heap at the end of the season."

"I though these sailing conditions here have been great, very interesting and it was a tricky day and no side of the course was definite. It was an interesting racing area."

"I think the high standard will surely attract new owners. Torbjorn Tornqvist our owner, this is the first time he has done something like this and so clearly

it is achievable for new owners and that is good for the sport. It is great working with an owner like Torbjorn he gives the people a lot of freedom to put the programme together the way they want to, he is a very successful businessman who likes to go sailing for his passion."

"Torbjorn put the necessary funds in to build a really nice boat. We put together a good programme, we always had good boatspeed, we had nice equipment and well prepared crew so these things usually combine to get a good result. I hear that there are nine new boats for next year and the competition is going to be very tough again. Next year I have some other projects on but I intend to compete in the TP52 class and I look forward to more of this type of sailing in the future."

The winning owner, Geneva based Tornqvist commented. "As Russell has said before this has been about the whole package. From the moment the design, the boatbuilding process, the way we have prepared ourselves for the season, plus the fact that we have had the same crew – more or less – through the whole season. And I think that the team has grown stronger through the season. And we really have a good team spirit. There is always a positive word, even if we don't do so well."

"And it is good to show that as an amateur you can do well. Mind you we have a great team, the best sailors in the world."

'Bribon', Jose Cusi's Judel-Vrolijk design won the Santa Ana trophy as the season's top performer in the 24 boat fleet across the coastal race.

**2007 Breitling MedCup TP52 Circuit, Final results:**

- 1 Artemis** (T Tornqvist SWE-Judel Vrolijk 2007) 199 pts
- 2 CxG Corporacion Caixa Galicia** (V Tirado-ESP Botin & Carkeek 2007) 206 pts
- 3 Patches** (E Conneely, IRL- Reichel Pugh 2007) 244 pts
- 4 Bribon** (J Cusi, SM Juan Carlos-ESP Judel Vrolijk 2007) 262 pts
- 5 Valle Romano Mean Machine** (P de Ridder, MON-Judel Vrolijk 2006) 262 pts
- 6 Mutua Madrilenia** (V Vascotto, ESP-Botin & Carkeek 2007) 262pts

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## *What's the difference?*

On this page are two images from the final 'Med Cup, regatta at Hyeres, France which finished on the weekend of 15-16 September.



The photo above, © **Thierry Martinez** shows just how hot the competition is in the Med Cup regatta circuit! Next year, at least nine new boats will heat it up even more! The image below, © **Diego Yriarte**, shows the crew of 'Artemis' doing what winners do, celebrate. In the background 'Mean Machines crew contemplate their final race win and their new boat for 2008.



Med Cup TP52 Circuit ([www.2007.medcup.org/news](http://www.2007.medcup.org/news))

Meanwhile, on the next page, there are two more photos of another important regatta also sailed on the weekend of 15-16 of September.....



It's a case of moving from one extreme to the other. These photos © **Danny Giacobe** show the Lightning Class fleet racing in the annual Governors Cup regatta at the Lake Wallenpaupack Yacht Club (above) and below, the winning crew relax and celebrate their victory.



And what's the difference? There are many aspects of these two regattas that are so very different that they may as well be on different planets!

However, the lovely thing about sailboat racing is that the pride and satisfaction from winning will be glowing at the same temperature in the hearts of both crews. Big yacht and small dinghy, they're both winners!

**Lake Wallenpaupack Yacht Club, ([www.lwyclub.com](http://www.lwyclub.com))**



**'WIND WHISPERER'.**

**© Jim Bolland 2007**

A Limited Edition of only 20 prints from the original painting 'Wind Whisperer' will be available early in October 2007. The image size will be (approx.) 81 c.m. X 49 c.m. (32 in. X 19 in.) exquisitely printed on artist canvas with margins allowing for stretcher fixing. Protective UV filter coating is applied.

Each print, individually signed and numbered by the artist. Price, NZ\$ 650.00. plus freight cost. Enquiries can be made to ([jim@jimbolland.co.nz](mailto:jim@jimbolland.co.nz)).

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