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# Aras, Partner Sail Be Bop To J/30 Championship

*by Karina Paape for the Capital*

The J/30 team of John Aras, from Annapolis, and Bill Jorch earned their third consecutive J/30 North American Championship title last weekend off Newport, R.I. with their yacht Be Bop in a windy five-race series which attracted 27 entries.

Winds throughout the three day Olympic-course event, which started Friday and ended Sunday, averaged 30 knots, putting a premium on boathandling, crew work and controlled off-wind sailing.

"It was a series of roundups, dips, broaches and tactical jibes, it was crazy," said Aras, who attributed Be Bop's victory to crew work. "Our crew was just super and that's how we won."

The most demanding conditions of the series came on Sunday when the winds blew a steady 30 knots.

"They got one race in and then canceled," Aras said. "So many people were crashing, breaking things and losing sails."

Aras said Be Bop was the only boat in the fleet with a crew of six.

"The other boats had seven people, but we had expected the wind," Aras said. "We had to sail smarter and not take chances so we could tactically take advantage of other people's mistakes."

Although Be Bop rounded the weather mark first only once over the course of the series, Chevy Chase's Rutschman's conservative strategy enabled them to rack up a series of 6-1-1-2-1 for a 6-3/4 point win over Bill Jorch

(Stark Terror) of Northport, N.Y.

"Everyone made at least one major mistake," Aras said. "We had pointing trouble in the first race and an over ride on the winch which cost us three or four places. We missed a couple of shifts and the rig was out of whack from the delivery because they had spent so much time on starboard tack on the way up to Newport. But after that we got things straightened out."

Going into the fifth and final race of the series Sunday, Be Bop enjoyed a mere quarter point lead over Tontine of Little Compton, R.I. That set the stage for a tough battle in which neither boat could afford errors.

Tontine ran into trouble first.

"We won the start then got into a tacking duel with them upwind. There was so much tacking that I think Tontine's skipper got mesmerized," Aras said.

That mesmerized state ultimately forced Tontine into a port/starboard encounter with another yacht, he being the port tack boat.

"He had to fly the 'I' flag and take a 20 percent penalty which cost him, they ended up third for the series," Aras said.

Four other Annapolis-based yachts traveled to Newport for last weekend's championship, only one of which joined Rutschman and Aras in the winner's circle.

That was Ron Peterson of Arnold who sailed his yacht Valhalla to fourth overall.

**Be Bop**

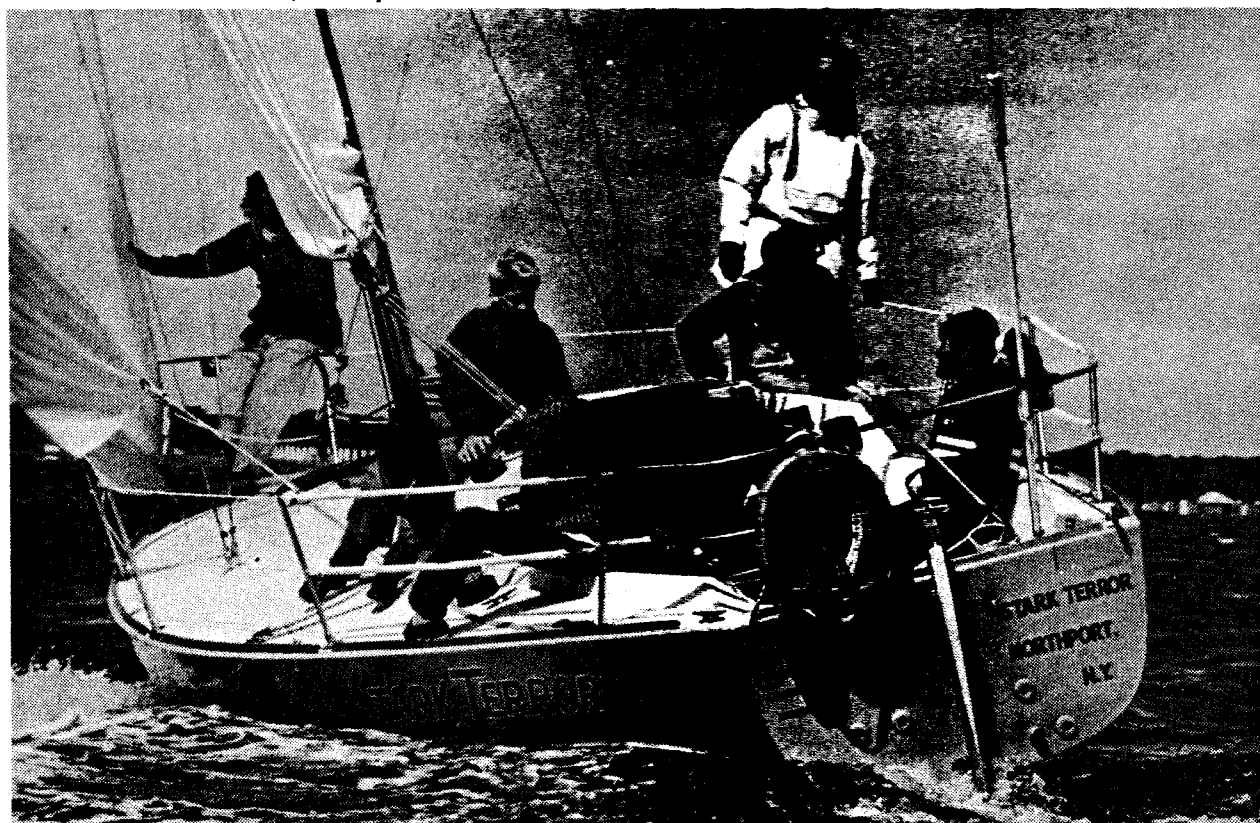
Photo by Karina Paape, Annapolis



# 1987 J-30 Class North Americans Results

Sail No	Boat Name	Skipper's Name	1	2	3	4	5	Total Points
53273	Be Bop	Aras/Rutsch	6.00	0.75	0.75	2.00	0.75	10.25
494	Stark Terror	Jorch	3.00	3.00	3.00	6.00	2.00	17.00
348	Tontine	Hathaway/Hopkins	2.00	5.00	2.00	0.75	19.00 PEN	28.75
33242	Valhalla	Peterson/Bardelman	7.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	12.00	31.00
485	Mogul Bandit	Duggan/Bello	8.00	2.00	12.00	3.00	7.00	32.00
30193	Samurai	McInnis	4.00	7.00	14.00	8.00	6.00	39.00
31236	Wildcat	Raney/Coleman	0.75	9.00	9.00	28.00 DSQ	3.00	49.75
22819	Gut Feeling	Herlihy	28.00 DSQ	6.00	8.00	5.00	4.00	51.00
32715	Jackpot	Twinem	5.00	16.00	16.00	11.00	11.00	59.00
294	Sixes & Sevens	Sullivan/Behr	10.00	8.00	11.00	22.00	9.00	60.00
33247	Wooly Bear	Rapp	11.00	15.00	15.00	10.00	10.00	61.00
270	Chimaera	Clemow	20.00 PEN	10.00	18.00	7.00	8.00	63.00
32430	Grits	Cardoza	12.00	12.00	6.00	19.00	15.00	64.00
419	Blue Jay	David	17.00	14.00	10.00	12.00	17.00	70.00
51885	Hotrod	Hales	19.00	11.00	5.00	18.00	19.00	72.00
496	Jeroboam	Levy/Vickers	20.00	23.00	17.00	9.00	13.00	82.00
30255	Jazadu	Chase	13.00	18.00	19.00	19.00 PEN	18.00	87.00
52	Anticipation	Ingham	28.00 PMS	13.00	7.00	18.00 PEN	28.00 DSQ	94.00
32673	Atlantus	Grauer	14.00	21.00	28.00 DSQ	16.00	20.00	99.00
53228	Gunsmoke	McGuirk	28.00 PMS	28.00 DNS	13.00	17.00	14.00	100.00
330	Lola	Noyes	22.00	22.00	23.00	20.00	16.00	103.00
398	Taciturn	Berman/Bayer	18.00	19.00	24.00	21.00	28.00 DNF	110.00
22715	Fat City	Sherter	9.00	28.00 DSQ	20.00	28.00 DNS	28.00 DNS	113.00
22840	Synergy	Adshead	28.00 DSQ	28.00 DSQ	22.00	15.00	22.00	115.00
423	Sundance	Berg	21.00 PEN	20.00	21.00	28.00 DNS	28.00 DNS	118.00
489	Tippecanoe	Cope	21.00	17.00	25.00	28.00 DNS	28.00 DNS	119.00
53175	Vivacious	Munz	28.00 DNF	28.00 DNS	26.00	23.00	21.00	126.00

**Stark Terror, Northport NY #2 1987 North Americans** (Photo by Karina Paape, Annapolis)



# Worth Repeating

## North American Champions

### 1985 Annapolis, MD

- |    |              |                |                                     |
|----|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | Be Bop       | Annapolis MD   | Bill Rutsch, John Aras              |
| 2. | Valhalla     | Annapolis, MD  | Ron Peterson, Dave Flynn, Jim Ellis |
| 3. | Obstreporous | New York, NY   | T.J. Hetherington                   |
| 4. | Hot Rod      | Wilmington, NC | Bill Raney, Gordon Coleman          |
| 5. | Beef Trust   | Edgewater, MD  | Jeff Lawson                         |

### 1986 Annapolis, MD

- |    |            |                   |                            |
|----|------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Be Bop     | Annapolis, MD     | Bill Rutsch, John Aras     |
| 2. | Red Bendel | New York, NY      | Ben Ebstein                |
| 3. | Vivacious  | New Orleans, LA   | R. Dahmes, Cal Herman      |
| 4. | Das Boot   | Wilmington, NC    | Bill Raney, Gordon Coleman |
| 5. | Peaches    | Coral Gables, FL  | David Berg                 |
| 6. | Valhalla   | Annapolis, MD     | Ron Peterson               |
| 7. | Wooly Bear | Atlantic City, NJ | T&T Rapp                   |
| 8. | Ornan      | Westport, CT      | K. Johnson                 |

### 1987 Newport, RI

- |    |               |                    |                            |
|----|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. | Be Bop        | Annapolis, MD      | Bill Rutsch, John Aras     |
| 2. | Stark Terror  | Northport, NY      | Bill Jorch                 |
| 3. | Tontine       | Little Compton, RI | Hathaway/Hopkins           |
| 4. | Valhalla      | Annapolis, MD      | Ron Peterson, S. Bardelman |
| 5. | Mongul Bandit | Sagamore Beach, MA | Duggan/Bello               |

# Seventh Annual J-30 North Americans Newport, Rhode Island

by Jacelyn Ayres Swenson, Mainsheet Trimmer, Valhalla

Newport, Rhode Island. The 348 year old City-by-the-Sea. A major seaport in the 17th century. And on September 18-20, it became the site of the 7th Annual J-30 North Americans and home for 27 J-30s and their crew.

Much preparation went toward this successful event. As host, the Naragansett Bay J-30 fleet, headed up by Russ Cardoza, assured that every competitor felt welcome in his town and the Newport Yacht Club opened its doors and sponsored a highly professional event.

While our northern comrades were preparing for this event, we were anticipating its arrival. Throughout the 86/87 sailing season, every Chesapeake Bay qualifying race was treated as the race which took us one step closer to the Newport NAs. Having finished in the top five in the fleet, we began to make reservations for airline seats and hotel accommodations as well as finalize arrangements for delivering the boat.

The crew trickled in to Newport through the week of September 14. Some came earlier than others to get a rare opportunity to play landlubber tourist in a seafaring town. Equipped with long lists of "must sees" ranging from the Cliffwalk to the Cliffside, and "must eats" ranging from Salas to the Black Pearl, we set out to attack the town. Little did we know the pleasant 70 degree temperatures would give way to a low pressure system that would camp on the northeast for five days. As the last of our crew arrived on Thursday, we saw the last of the Newport sunshine.

Late that afternoon, we boarded Valhalla and joined several J-30s for a practice sail on the outside course. Unbeknownst to us, this practice sail would be the only time our number one would come out of the bag. Although most competitors boasted new, crisp number ones, for the most part, they remained secured in their bags below as most used number threes throughout the five race series.

On our way back to Newport Yacht Club, a fine, misty rain began to fall. By the time we pulled into our slip, the rain was more constant and soon after the race committee meeting that evening, all skippers and crew became acutely aware of the bleak weather reports. We began preparing ourselves for potential heavy air conditions. Most importantly, we practiced thinking "heavy". As a 118-pound mainsheet trimmer went soaking wet, "heavy" thoughts consumed me on the eve of the North Americans.

The following morning a report of 4-6 foot seas on the outside course and the cancellation of the Block Island Ferry forced the race committee to set the course inside. Although the winds were indeed out of the northeast, they were not light and variable. On the contrary, winds were blowing a healthy 18 knots and gusting 22 knots.

Per the race instructions, the race committee hoisted the

course flag at the club 9 a.m. sharp. As code flag Charlie whipped in the breeze, we boarded our boats to sail north for a course halfway between Newport and Providence. Approximately two hours later we arrived, already soaked by the rain and chilled by the wind. Anxious to get the blood "flowing" again, we decided against the number two and brought the number three on deck. We made numerous tacks up the weather leg to get used to this seldom used sail. As soon as the starting line was adjusted, the 10 minute gun went off and a windward/leeward course was set.

The first start was a general recall; giving the entire fleet one last chance to gauge boat speed and pointing ability while sizing up its competition. Reaching up and down the line gave us the opportunity to reassess our starting position. The key in this race, as we saw it, was to have a good, clean air start and avoid being pinned underneath a competitor.

One of the five boats from the Chesapeake Bay fleet was fourth at the weather mark and held that position until her spinnaker blew out at the head. Some boats "crashed and burned" on this leg when sheeting for a reach to avoid recrossing the starting line — a key point in the racing instructions.

The second race of the day was another windward/leeward course which involved some minor breakdowns and "man overboard" reports. Once we crossed the finish line, it was a tough realization to know we had a two hour motor/sail ahead of us to get home.

After the boat was secured for the night we decided a hearty meal would help heal our wounds and nourish us for Saturday's races. Once cleaned up, we headed to Salas — a favorite haunt for Italian connoisseurs — for major "cargo loading". After plenty of pasta and red wine, a good night's sleep topped all our priority lists.

Day Two of the NAs welcomed us with heavier breezes and heavier rain, and again the race committee hoisted the Charlie flag. We decided to motor to the course to save our sails. While the race committee set the full Olympic course, crew members donned extra layers of clothing while I taped up my blisters and cuts. The reaches on the Olympic course would, no doubt, make the race interesting and playing the main would be vital.

As we approached the weather mark, we decided that a jibe set would keep our air clear. It was a wild ride to the reaching mark. Fortunately, our helmsman had a good grip on the tiller when frequent 35 knot gusts hit us and sent a 7,000 pound J-30 into a screaming plane.

In third place at this point, jibing the chute to a closer reach seemed a senseless gamble, so we played it safe and doused the spinnaker to save our position. As it turned out those boats that attempted the spinnaker jibe either lost their

**1988 Midwinter Regatta  
12 - 14 February**

Dear J 30 Owner:

Key Biscayne Yacht Club and the Biscayne Bay J-30 fleet invite you to attend the 1988 J-30 Midwinter Championship Regatta on February 12-14, 1988. Past regattas have drawn 15 to 20 boats for 5 Olympic course races in Biscayne Bay, and this year we are making a special effort to attract boats and skippers from out of town. The winner of this event qualifies for the 1988 North Americans.

There are plenty of boats in the area available for loan or charter, or consider bringing down your own boat; dockage arrangements can be made at KBYC. Here's a partial schedule of racing in southeast Florida in January/February:

14 Jan	Ft. Lauderdale to Key West Race	IMS/ PHRF
17-22 Jan	YACHTING Key West Race Week	IMS/PHRF/J30
24 Jan	Biscayne Bay YRA Race 1	J30 One Design
6 Feb	Around Key Biscayne Race	J30 One Design
12-14 Feb	J30 Midwinters	J30 One Design

You don't have to spend the winter just thinking about sailing - come down and enjoy South Florida's finest sailing season. For more information about available boats or race entries, contact:

**Biscayne J30 Fleet**  
Dave Berg  
9325 Balada St  
Coral Gables, FL 33143  
305-379-1414

Ray Sullivan  
625 Harbor Cir  
Key Biscayne, FL 33149  
305-681-6100

**Key Biscayne Yacht Club**  
Doug Wilson, Race Chairman  
180 Harbor Dr  
Key Biscayne, FL 33149  
305-361-9171

# A September Adventure

by Mike McGuirk

At 4:30 pm on Thursday, September 10th, 1987 Gunsmoke left the dock at Charlie Scott's with a crew of five, enough food for a week and 13 gallons of extra fuel on the first leg of a sailing adventure that would take us to Newport, Rhode Island, where we would participate in the North American Championships and then back to Annapolis in just two weeks time. It was an experience that I will never forget.

After uncounted hours of planning and two days of preparing the boat, we were looking forward to a pleasant first night out in company with fellow voyagers Vivacious and Hot Rod. Our "five knot" rule would likely have us motoring but it was a beautiful evening, glassy waters and our 2500 rpm would give us a very smooth 5.9 to 6.0 knots plus a nice boost from the favorable current that we expected to have all the way up the bay.

At midnight we entered the C&D canal having settled in to the routine of standing watches and with all hands now familiar with the LORAN, using the Autohelm, reading charts and keeping a log. Radio checks with Vivacious and Hot Rod on the even hours were enabling us to cross check our navigation and get to know our fellow adventurers.

The canal was a breeze (no pun intended) with only a few ships passing through to give any excitement. With about two miles to go the current finally switched and would remain adverse for just about the first hour down the Delaware. Soon the eerie glow of the nuclear power plant gave way to a beautiful sunrise. With the wind still non-existent we had to be content with our 8.8 knots over the bottom as we headed for the Caps May canal.

When the current switched again about an hour north of the canal entrance, it found us in the wide and shallow part of the bay and was not a big factor. Through the canal itself we had perhaps a 0.5 kt adverse current but not enough to deter our enthusiasm and excitement as we anticipated our upcoming introduction to the Atlantic ocean.

Clearing the jetty at 11:15 am on the beautiful sunny Friday in about 10 knots of SE breeze our three boat convoy finally raised sails and secured our trusty Yanmars. Ours had done a superb job over the last 18 hours and had only burned about 7 gallons of fuel. Despite the light winds we used #3 jibs by agreement with the other boats. We actually used a #4 that we had on board compliments of Beef Trust who had created it out of an old #3. It amounted to simply a high clewed #3 which would later prove to be the perfect sail. It gave us a comfortable 5.8 or 5.9 knots and the SE wind gave us a nice jib reach on our course of 060 degrees, the "outside" route direct to Brenton Reef Tower. Newport, here we come!

As darkness settled in we were revelling quietly in our good fortune. We had just had a delicious lasagna dinner and listened to a forecast of favorable weather for the rest of the trip. With only 180 miles to go and right on the rhumb line, all was right with the world. We put a reef in the main and settled back for our first night on the high seas.

About 9:00 pm some low clouds began to hide our starry skies and the wind slowly began to build. By midnight it was clocking a steady 20 knots and had backed a little to ESE. The waves also began to build and the Autohelm, which had already been performing beautifully on its little wind vane, began to have some difficulty. One of our crew members was also having some difficulty with his lasagna and decided to take the rest of the trip off. I took over his watch and, with my other watch captain, began a two hour rotation hand steering while our remaining two crew continued on their normal four hour watches. The challenge steering at night in big waves was to minimize the horrible "crashes" coming off the top of the waves while still making a decent track over the bottom in the now even more backed but slightly abated wind. It became quite a game trying to stay up on the rhumb line while finding the best route through the 4 to 8 foot waves. The sickness had also hit the rest of our less abundantly crewed flotilla and during our midnight phonathon they decided to head for New York.

It got kind of lonely out there all by ourselves about 30 miles from shore and nothing between us and the ocean but our trusty J/30. It was cold and wet and the slightest chore required a major effort in the pounding waves. Although we felt secure enough it didn't take any coaxing to get people to clip in to the jack lines. Only one of us was sick, but no one felt much like having more lasagna. It was a tough night!

By daybreak Saturday morning we were 120 miles and still on the rhumb line. Steering the waves became a whole lot more fun now that they were actually visible. About 11:00 am, with the low, gray clouds still scouring overhead, the wind picked up into the 20's again and backed to E. We decided to put in a second reef. It was a welcome relief for a couple of tired helmsmen as the weather helm went to neutral making the job of wave steering a lot easier and our boat speed wasn't hurt at all. Throughout the night we had been seeing 5.5 or 5.6 up the front and 6.4 to 6.6 down the back. However with the wind now out of the east we could no longer hold the rhumb line and it became apparent that we would not be able to fetch Montauk Point off the tip of Long Island.

At 5:00 pm, about a mile off East Hampton, we tacked back out to sea. Now that we were on port tack (with the engine cooling water intake on the leeward side) we decided



to try power sailing to cut down on our tacking angle. It gave us an extra 10 degrees and after one hour we were able to tack back for Montauk. We continued to power sail through that night but kept very close watch on the cooling water supply. We had previously lost our engine warning system due to the serious dousing it had been getting with salt water.

The rest of the evening was more of the same: wet, wild and wonderful. Power sailing allowed us to clear Montauk in the continuing 15 to 20 knot E wind. We slipped by west of Block Island, past Point Judith, Brenton Tower and into Narragansett Bay. By 4:00 am Sunday we were enjoying the hot showers at New Port Yacht Club. It had been about a 335 mile journey at an average speed of 5.65 knots. Our fellow voyagers Vivacious and Hot Rod pulled in about 7:00 pm that evening safe and sound.

The next three days were spent relaxing; drying and cleaning out the boat. Poor Gunsmoke really needed some TLC. She was a mess! The worst part was the cherry tomato remains that had gotten into every nook and cranny after being tossed out of a swinging fruit hammock tied to one of the grab rails in the cabin. I'm still expecting a bumper crop of tomatoes next year despite three days of cleaning. The hospitality and helpfulness of the crew at NYC was great. This was certainly the most relaxing part of the whole vacation adventure.

Thursday was measuring day and clean the bottom day following by a productive practice sail with Valhalla, the Skipper's meeting and a National board meeting at which Bob Johnstone made a pitch for a J/30 MkII. He requested and received (we didn't have much choice) an endorsement from the National class for the concept of a still-to-be-one-design J/30 with a new deck and interior which would be introduced at next year's Newport boat show to "revitalize" the class. With our cooperation he will make every effort to keep the new boat in compliance with our one design class rules. Without our cooperation he would simply design a new boat. Old J/30s would continue to be built only with runs of from 6 to 10 orders.

Three days of wild and wooly racing among 27 J/30s followed Friday through Sunday. After rounding the top mark of the first race in fourth and feeling like we were pretty hot, we proceeded to blow up our chute in about 25 knots on the run of the windward/leeward course. It began just above the numbers in the center of the chute, spread horizontally to each leach and then went down the tapes to about mid sail before we could get it down. It was pretty spectacular and sickening. We chose not to race the second race that day to get our chute in to the loft for repair. Our only claim to fame the remainder of the racing was on

another spinnaker run in the third race. A broach you're thinking, recalling the '85 NA's? No, this time we kept it under control, yes, even successfully gybed our newly repaired chute in winds of 20 to 25 knots. Our moment of glory came in a blast of about 30 in which we managed to coax Gunsmoke up to a screaming 13.3 knots approaching the leeward mark. Blinded by the spray and deafened by the roar, we passed boat after boat as they watched in awe. Six boat lengths from the mark we calmly hoisted the jib, dropped the chute and proceeded to round the mark just like we did this all the time.

Fortunately, Valhalla and Bebop distinguished themselves to preserve the honor of our fleet. Vivacious and Gunsmoke tried hard but couldn't seem to get it going in the difficult conditions of wind and rain, long rides to the starts and endless delays getting races started that prevailed for at least the first two days.

John Heinz, the navigator extraordinaire of Vivacious for the return trip, concluded that our flotilla should depart Newport at 4:00 pm Sunday for the best current at the Race. And so about that time, having reloaded the boats with cruising gear and in receipt of favorable weather forecasts, we departed NYC in company with Vivacious and Valhalla. This time our plan was to go through New York for a change in scenery and since we were only a crew of three. The first night out down Long Island sound was a beautiful sail on our trusty #4 and a reefed main in a 20 to 25 knot NNE wind with 1 to 2 foot waves. We roared by Race Point at about 9:30 pm with favorable current and sailed the rhumb line throughout the night as the wind gradually dropped to 12 to 15 knots.

V & V had dropped astern during the night with less sail up than us and we lost contact with them as a beautiful sunrise ushered in Monday and the last of our breeze. By 11:00 am, we'd dropped the jib and were motoring in winds of less than 5 knots and were approaching Throg's Neck bridge. The current was going to be perfect for our excursion down the East river. We'd be about one hour early at Hell Gate and right in time for max current at the narrows. Our only excitement was catching what turned out to be a plastic bag on our prop just past the UN building and almost killing the engine when we tried to reverse and clear it. We decided to limp along until reaching a less congested area before trying to do it again. After an obligatory swing past the statue, we motored on out to the ocean where to be honest, I felt much more at home.

Down the Jersey shore the wind finally filled in from the SE at 5 to 10 kts about 5:00 pm enough to at least let us power sail with the main and #4 as we tried to make good a southerly course. By 9:00 pm they would switch to SW and we would continue power sailing with our course. We

continued to get favorable current down the coast until almost midnight.

By 2:00 am Tuesday the winds had increased to 15 kts and the waves were up to 4 or 5 feet. As on the trip up, the Autohelm just couldn't keep us close enough to the wind in the larger waves so we began to hand steer and continued to power sail to minimize our loss to the rhumb line. About 3:00 am a thunderstorm roared through causing us to throw in another reef and allowing us to ride a nice lift back to the SW and died. We dropped the jib and motored the rest of the way to Cape May canal.

Our good fortune with the current had to end sometime and as we turned into the canal there wasn't any doubt that we had missed the flood up bay and no wind on an otherwise beautiful, warm sunny day. During the middle of cocktail hour I even got to go swimming...to check the keel after a particularly abrupt stop on a shoal. "But we were out of the current".

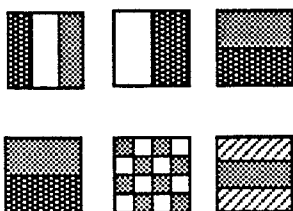
About 6:00 pm a thunderstorm came through which let us sail again for a while on a double reefed main and the #4 in smooth water (for awhile) and 30 kt winds. What a thrill that was! The wind quickly died though and our next 2 hours were spent motoring again in favorable (finally) current. At 9:00 pm we entered the C&D where the current was adverse again but that meant that we would have a lot of help on the last leg down the Chesapeake.

Sure enough by the time we entered the bay we were seeing 8 kts over the bottom and were greeted with a westerly breeze of about 10 kts. With sails back up, our last leg was a fast and enjoyable jib reach. Annapolis towers were in sight about 20 miles north with just the top lights showing above the horizon. We knew we were home. Another fast trip, this time about 375 miles at 6.1 kts average speed as we docked at Charlie's at 6:00 am.

Breakfast at Chick & Ruth's sure tasted good!

*Mike McGuirk*

Gunsmoke  
10/14/87



shoots or lost control. This was true for the boat in second. Attempting the jibe, she hit the mark and was forced to re-round it with no rights, dropping at least 6 boats in the process.

Most of the fleet went directly toward shallow water after rounding the leeward mark. We unfortunately did not and finished fourth overall. After crossing the line, we sailed back to the starting area and tuned into channel 78 to hear the race results and each skipper's hair-raising tale. Immediately, however, the talk turned to concern over sailing a second race that day. Many reports came in of broken gear ranging from blocks ripped out to turn spinnakers. The race committee, at the same time, decided to cancel the second race. Without hesitation, we took down the head sail and enjoyed a wild ride back to the club. On shore, many war stories were shared over complimentary beer, wine, and hot hors d'oeuvres.

Feeling much older Sunday morning, we reluctantly pulled on soggy foul weather gear and waited around the dock areas for the course flag to go up. Hallelujah! We weren't being sent eight miles away to the northern course! We would sail on a smaller course near the Newport/Vomestown Bridge so we could squeeze in two races by the 2:30 p.m. deadline; and two exciting races they would be.

The wind velocity had decreased somewhat which brought more competitors into the race. The favored end of the starting line was close to shore since a heavy current was running against us. Both starting sequences brought plenty of excitement to the fleet when boats were jockeying for position while port tackers were coming off the shore line. Many quick tacks and close calls occurred when boats attempted the "squeeze play" and didn't quite make it. And some that tested the depth close to shore discovered it wasn't easy getting off the bottom.

There was quite a dog fight for the first five positions, and unfortunately, last minute protests played a significant role in determining the winners of this regatta. As usual, consistency paid off in the long run and these skippers went home with beautiful half models of the J-30.

As for the crew, we took home bumps, bruises, aching backs and shoulders — and a wonderful memory. Newport exceeded my expectations and the J-30 fleet spirit, along with its people, take most of the credit... it certainly wasn't the weather!

# Wonderwoman, Where Are You?

by Ruth Wood

**Bowman:** "The man in the crew of a sailboat who handles headsails and thus works on the bow, the forward part of the deck".

The above definition is from the "VNR (Van Nostrand Reinhold) Dictionary of Ships and the Sea". Of course, the word "bowoman" wasn't in the dictionary. No surprises there! So when Jeff Lawson asked me a few weeks ago to write an article about what it's like for a woman to work the foredeck of a J-30, I was taken back a bit. I hadn't given much thought to the difference. There are four women crew members on Valhalla and four men. No less is expected of the women.

OK, I know what you're thinking. Women aren't as strong as men, right? I admit it - I'm not as strong as most guys, some things are more difficult than others. I'm five foot six and weight 123 pounds soaking wet. Hoisting the spinnaker in a good blow isn't easy. That's life! Wonderwoman, where are you when I need you? Face it - jibbing the spinnaker is for gorillas. So what ever happened to using your brains instead of your brawn? Jibbing from the spinnaker halyard two feet above the deck and trying to think heavy thoughts just doesn't work. Letting the halyard back to a winch when the wind is up or signing a crew member to back me up definitely takes the edge off.

I have been racing on boats crewed primarily by women for most of my racing career. To combat the problem of not having as much upper body strength as men, a simple weight lifting program is essential. Once I got my strength up I cut back on the weights and the rigors of racing keep me in shape. Several years ago I sailed on a 39 foot CAL crewed solely by women. Not only was the weight lifting program essential, but each crew member had an assigned back-up for when the task at hand became too difficult. The extra person moved in quickly and smoothly.

Working on the foredeck is very challenging. Quick ballet-like maneuvers to avoid being strangled by jib sheets, topping lift, spinnaker sheets and forguy is my specialty. Where else on the boat can you get in so much trouble so fast? You have to be organized just to get out of the way when it all comes tumbling down around you.

All kidding aside, you do have to be organized and take your time when setting up for any sail change or set. We all know how easy it is to get distracted. When preparing to set the chute I know my crew members are thinking, "Boy, she looks cool and calm," as I get all the gear ready for the hoist. But in reality, I'm talking myself through the maneuver. (I forget to mention, you have to be a little crazy to work up there.) Attaching the sheets and halyard so the chute goes up side-down is embarrassing as hell. So beside making

sure everything is led outside, I actually take the clew in my hand and instruct myself to attach the sheet or guy to it and do the same with the halyard. When the sail goes up clean I know it was worth it. The sigh of relief can be heard for miles.

Spinnaker jibes are another thrill for the bowperson. Twirling a 12-foot pole above my head reminds me of the nightmares I had as a child learning to twirl a baton. I was sure it would come crashing down on my head and kill me. The only difference here is that not only do you have to twirl it, you have to wrestle the new guy into one end of it while at the same time push the pole out as far forward as possible, take the old guy out and finally attach the pole to the mast ring. WHEW! I know, count your blessings. Dip pole jibes are even more fun. Of course, all this happens in a matter of seconds. That is, if the cockpit crew and the skipper like you and don't try jibbing so fast that you're spinning around the pole like a gymnast.

During the jibes the bowperson and the driver must work as a unit. The driver and the bowperson should have a quick chat about what is anticipated before, during, and after the jibe. If a quick maneuver is paramount in maintaining position in the fleet, the foredeck crew will be prepared. If an extra person is on board, assign him or her to stand ready at the mast to help the bowperson successfully complete the jibe. The same goes for the trimmers. They should talk over the upcoming jibe. Quick jibes are impressive. Consistent clean jibes are a mark of excellence.

Talking through the jibes, take-downs and hoists before they actually happen saves a lot of time, not to mention warding off hyperventilation. Talking about who is going to do what, no matter how many times you've done it, helps new crew members feel more relaxed, and it doesn't hurt the old salts to go through it again either. Remember, whatever position you play on the boat isn't a part you play alone. When trimming the headsail you affect the main sheet trimmer. When trimming the spinnaker, the sheet and guy trimmers work as one. Needless to say, when jibbing the spinnaker the bowperson hopes the trimmers and the skipper rotate the chute and the boat as a unit. Thus, the bowperson's anticipated lynching will be negated by good team work.

The challenges are endless, of course, and just when I thought I had it all under control I found myself trying to do all of this in the dark on the way to Solomons Island or Saint Mary's. But think positive! This is when the bowperson can really shine! While I'm on the bow setting up the sheet and guy and trying to figure out whether the line I'm reaching for is really a sheet and not the lifeline or the bottom of the headsail, the people in the cockpit are watching me,

commenting that Houdini's name is on my family tree, or that I'm a descendant of the human fly. I'm thinking I should have spent more time in the closet practicing with blindfolds on. Because if I pull this one out of the hat the butterflies in my stomach can all go back to wherever they came from.

Working on the foredeck at night can be difficult and scary. Everything takes longer when it's dark. Add rough weather or rain to the picture and the need for total concentration increases tenfold. I always wear a life vest or harness depending on the severity of the conditions. I have enough to think about. How I'm going to swim back to Annapolis doesn't need to clutter my mind. A small flashlight on the market about the size of a piece of shredded wheat that you can activate by putting in your mouth and biting down is all the light you need. Don't go to the foredeck with a flashlight whose beam may end up in the skipper's eyes and render him blind for the rest of the race. A good sharp knife with a marlin spike is a must. Wet lines with knots that won't budge often need persuading. And we all know that cutting a line is painful but often necessary. In other words, the right tool for the job. I always bring my own gear to insure good quality. To insure the spinnaker or jib gear is led properly "Take Your Time". If conditions are poor take a little extra time to set it up, and then check it again. Bouncing around on the foredeck on your knees can really slow you down.

Racing in light air is the rule, not the exception on the Chesapeake Bay. Traditionally, foredeck folks are the lightweights on the crew, but the bowperson moves around on the boat more than anyone else. Remember to walk lightly and delicately (another ballet-like step but

performed with more grace). Crew weight and movement is a very important consideration for the entire crew on a J-30. A bowperson's tasks require moving about the boat. Set a good example for the rest of the crew. Plan your movements tactically. Talk over your plan with others so they can compensate for your shifted weight. Try to work swiftly and carefully so as not to distract the rest of the crew by repeating tasks unnecessarily.

Becoming a competent bowperson takes lots of practice, team spirit and above all, a good attitude. Don't let mistakes get you down. You're going to make them and that's OK as long as you learn from them. Another thing to remember is that no one can do it alone. Good communication with your crew is important. After each race the team should discuss what went right and wrong.

The success of the crew of Valhalla has been the result of practice, years of racing experience and respect for each others' abilities. Rotating the crew so that each member has a good working knowledge of each position meant sometimes not placing well in a race, but the long-term gains are undeniable. A good crew must be versatile and knowledgeable. My job on the foredeck gets easier when the people in the pit understand what I'm going through. My knowing the skipper's and trimmer's limitations helps me work around anticipated problems and execute successful maneuvers.

I have enjoyed racing with the J-30 fleet. The competition is very keen, the boats are fast and the "Sportspersonship" is top notch.

### *Teri Munz's Crab Soup*

as enjoyed on "Vivacious" in Oxford, Maryland

COOK: 1 onion, diced  
1 pepper, diced  
3 stalks celery, chopped  
in 3 tbs butter

IN LARGE SOUP POT PUT:

8 cups water  
1 32 oz. tomato puree  
2 cubes beef bouillon  
1 can mixed vegetables

COOK ONE HOUR then ADD:

1 pound crabmeat  
4 tbs Old Bay Seasoning

SIMMER ONE HOUR; LADLE INTO BOWLS

This freezes well & heats up quickly stove top while the "French Bread" is baking



# Reporting From...

## LAKE ERIE/LAKE ONTARIO

### Scotch Bonnet Race, June 1987

Strong 50 K thunderstorms causing many boats to withdraw from the 81 mile race. Starting 101 boats J/30's race PHRF 135 rating. In the PHRF Class 2C Bingo, owner Cooper, took first and J/30 King Pellinore, owner Ghertner, took second. These same placed second and fourth overall!

**District Championship** at Youngstown Yacht Club's Level Regatta. Five boat fleet, three races was sailed in light to medium conditions on Lake Ontario. Two of the J/30's had fully battened Mylar-Kevlar mainsails. Several boats used light air Mylar #1 genoas.

- 1st: Bingo (Cooper)
- 2nd: Samson (Railton)
- 3rd: Warra Ghsypgey V (Johnson)

**Rochester Race:** Fall conditions for this September race, J/30's Innis Free (Hill) finished 3rd in PHRDF 2C Class.

Thank you to Lory and Nancy Ghertner for offering to be area representatives and for reporting the above. 12/10/87

## DAYTONA BEACH

Evan Feist "Blew J" winner of the Commodore Cup 1987. The 6-race series took place over four month period off shore the Beach in all kinds of conditions. The Olympic Triangle competed with 40 PHRF boats. "Blew J" has a rating 139. With 155, Jib Main and 3/4 oz pinnaker, Evan and crew Rek Kinsey, foredeck, Robin DeArmas, halyards are happy sailors.

## EAST FLORIDA DISTRICT #6

David Berg reports preparations are being made for the 1988 Mid-Winters. Boats are needed for out of town folks to charter. Anyone wanting to know more about it call David at (305)379-1414 (w) or at home (305)665-2324.

## FROM THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

Our winter meeting was held at Pirate's Cove in Galesville, November 21st. A delicious luncheon buffet was served to some 47 members and guests. Award presentations were made for the 1987 season as follows:

### CB J/30 Championship Series

- First: "Tiger" Tom Donlan
- Second: "Gunsmoke" Mike McGuirk
- Third: "Insatiable" Ron Anderson

### J/30 Season Highpoint Awards:

- First: "Valhalla" R Peterson & S. Bardelman
- Second: "Gunsmoke" Mike McGuirk
- Third: "Beef Trust" Jeff Lawson
- Fourth: "Jazz" J. Hall
- Fifth: "BeBop" B. Rutsche & John Aras

**Corinthian Award:** S. Kaminer and A. Dunn "Das Boot"

*Newly elected Fleet Captain Mike McGuirk shared the schedule of races for the 1988 season. Anyone planning to vacation in the Chesapeake Bay area and would like to join in on the cruising or racing events be sure to contact the CB fleet.*

### **J/30 Members Who Are Dealers:**

Gregory R. Egan  
Crosby Yacht Yard, Inc.  
72 Crosby Circle  
Osterville, MA 02655  
(617)428-6958

Jon Knowles  
East Coast Yacht Sales  
38 Lafayette St.  
Yarmouth, ME 04096  
(207)846-4545

Rick Simmons  
4980 NW 3rd Terr.  
Boca Raton, FL 33431  
(305)374-5995

Charles Scott  
737 Red Cedar Rd.  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
(301)974-0545

Don Finkle  
223 Lockport Street  
Youngstown, NY 14174  
(716)745-3862

Howard McMichael, Jr.  
447 E. Boston Post Road  
Mamaroneck, NY 10543  
(914)381-5900

Paul Welles, III  
PO Box 10732  
Raleigh, NC 27605  
(919)828-9847

### **J/30 Members Who Are Sailmakers**

Will Keyworth  
Shore Sails Chesapeake  
7310 Edgewood Road  
Annapolis, MD 21403  
(301)268-6501

Henry Bossett  
Shore Sails New Jersey  
101 E. Rt. 35 South  
Pt. Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742  
(201)892-8922

Dave Flynn  
Doyle Sailmakers  
153 King George Street  
Annapolis, MD 21403  
(301)268-1175

North Sails East  
189 Pepe's Farm Road  
Milford, CT 06460  
(203)877-7621

Win Fowler  
Shore Sails  
202 Commercial St.  
Portland, ME 04101  
(207)772-8113