

DRAGON

The International Dragon, one of the most beautiful of all racing sloops is a three-man keel boat of traditional Scandinavian design — good looking, fine sailing, and sea kindly. Designed in 1928 by the Norwegian naval architect Johan Anker, the 29 foot Dragon immediately became popular in Europe, culminating in its acceptance as an Olympic Class in 1948.

The Rochester Dragon Fleet was pioneered by Dr. Ralph Alexander, who sailed the first Dragon, *Vixen*, from Toronto to Rochester on November 9, 1953. The fleet expanded from that point on, with Bernie Wahl, Ashley and Vince Palmer, and Arden Paulsen all acquiring boats in the early part of 1954. In November of the same year, Hank Darnell and his daughter DeeDee also brought *Sivi* from Toronto in a cold slow passage of 26 hours. Adding to the roster in following years were Dick Callon, Dick Wagner, Maurice Huggins, Maurice Van Horn, Fred Nusbbaum, Bruce Huston, Helen and Joe Ingerson, Wiles Converse, Bill Statt, Sal Bereza, Bruce Cameron, Bud Strobel, Rob Holt, and Alex Kemp.

An extensive racing program began almost immediately and the Dragons soon became one of the strong one-design fleets in the Club. Some of the more important trophies used in Dragon competition were the Wilbur Cross Trophy, the O'Keefe Trophy donated by the Canadian Brewing Company, the John Foster Dulles Trophy donated by the former U.S. Secretary of State and put into competition in 1955, the George L. Craig Trophy intended to increase Dragon interest at a District Level, the Duke of Edinburgh Trophy sailed only in Canadian waters and the Mayor's Trophy.

The Mayor's Trophy, a graceful silver bowl dedicated by Mayor Peter Barry in 1956, attracted the greatest local interest. It was the work of Dragon sailors Ralph Alexander and Bernie Wahl that brought this trophy into existence. Ralph Alexander and his wife June were avid amateur photographers as well as sailors and one of June's photographs of Henry Darnell working on a ship model was selected by Kodak for use in magazine advertising, making funds available for the purchase of the Mayor's Trophy.

Among the more memorable accomplishments of the RYC Dragon sailors were Bruce Huston's winning of the Dulles Cup in 1955, 57 and 67 and O.E. Schupp's winning of the Duke of Edinburgh Trophy in 1973 and third place in the North Americans in 1974. Schupp also placed third in the Great Lakes Championship in 1973 and 1976 and won in 1975. Helen Ingerson's series of Dragon victories in the 1962 season are also well remembered.

Interest in Dragons peaked in the late 1950's, when as many as 12 raced out of RYC and as many as 19 raced in Genesee Yacht Club/Rochester Yacht Club events. The

advent of fiberglass boats, however, prompted many Dragon sailors to switch to more easily maintained designs and the fleet declined.

During the past few seasons the effort of Orion Schupp has brought a resurgence of Dragon interest at RYC. Some of the recent RYC sailors who have been attracted to this beautiful boat are John Heffron, Howard Low, Richard Barker, Phil Enriguez, Rick Klingbiel, John McGrath, and Jim Barnash.

Written off as a fleet only a few years back, the Dragon continues to grace the harbor of RYC.

Ralph Alexander's VELOCE.

