

A RESUME OF THE CLUB'S HISTORY

Very little is known of the early days of yacht racing in Karachi Harbor but in the "Daily Gazette" of 22nd June 1880 there is a notice that "the windy weather we have had lately has made our harbor rather unpleasant for boating".

The Karachi Yacht Club, originally known as the Karachi Sailing Club, was founded in 1911. The prime mover in the formation of the club was the late Mr. Punnett of the Customs Service, the club's first Commodore. The Club premises, originally situated at Manora, came into existence in 1912 on land in possession of the Indo-European Telegraph Company whose pier the Club used and whose cable ship "the Patrick Stewart" was moored close by. To the Club building a large extension was made in 1925 and quarters for Tindals were provided in 1930.

Although no Club existed until 1911, there was sailing going on as a sport for many years in Karachi prior to that date. The Karachi Boat Club records the sailing of small boats in the creeks in 1885 but the sport was never developed by that club.

In 1909, there were three Tomtits MEG, ELISE and PIXIE and seven Cutters. The owners and others keen on sailing organized sailing picnics on Saturdays up the creeks and to the Oyster Rocks but no racing took place. Later the idea of racing met with very little support. Due to the efforts of Major Willis of Gunners (late general E.H. Willis, Governor of Jersey), opposition was overcome and he presented a Cup to be raced for by the cutters. This Cup is still in the Club.

With the addition of four Tomtits, NOISETTE, BERYL, NYMPH and MAGRO racing started regularly in 1910, weekly on Thursdays. In the absence of Club House-members, on race days were taken to their boats in a launch from the Native Jetty, tea being served during the trip. Starting arrangements for races were made from a barge moored off Manora.

In 1911, two Tomtits from the Karachi Sailing Club visited Bombay. They were MEG owned by Lieut. Trench, R.E., and NOISETTE owned by the officers of the R.A.F., Karachi. In the same year the Viceroy visited Karachi to open the Hardinge Bridge and a regatta was held in the harbor whilst he was touring it with the Port Trustees. In 1927 the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, visited the Club and took part in a race.

In order to produce a class of boat smaller than a Tomtit 14-foot Sailing Dinghies were introduced in 1932 and proved very popular. The first four were built at Drigh Road by Aircraftsman Everett, R.A.F. A previous attempt to introduce a new class of Dinghy was made in 1914 but, although there were six boats, the enterprise proved a failure and the class was abandoned.

The presence of the Western Command in Karachi, serving with which were several keen yachtsmen, made 1938 very active in the Club. There were 17 Tomtits and 18 Dinghies and on one occasion at least, every boat turned out to race. A very fine Cup was presented by the officers of the Western Command, on their departure towards the end of 1938, to be raced for by the Dinghy fleet.

In June 1939, H.E. Sir Lancelot Graham was elected Commodore and due to his efforts a long lease of the Manora site on special terms was obtained from the Government of India but security of tenure was not possible.

The Clubs activities were curtailed during the Second World War By September 1941, when petrol rationing was introduced, the number of attending yacht owner was about 19, Thereafter difficulties became more pronounced particularly with the desertion of paid hand owing to higher wages being easily obtainable elsewhere and racing ceased in the summer of 1942.

A little later, all sailing was prohibited but, after a few months, sailing was allowed, restricted to the upper channel during daylight.

During this period, owing to difficulties of access and upkeep and with some owners away on active service a number of boats were sold out of Karachi or up the Gulf.

Early in 1943, the question of finding a new site for the Club was raised as the site at Manora had become incapable of expansion and the space available for boats would, on return to normal times, be inadequate. It was felt that, with no security of tenure and with the developments that had been taking place at Manora, it was possible that the Club would have to give up its site.

At this period there was considerable progress by the Port Trust on the reclamation of land on the western side of the channel which provided a favorable site on the mainland with the added advantage of road access.

Towards the end of 1943, the Club was offered by the Port Trust a lease of land at West Wharf, and at the Annual General Meeting held on 27th September 1943, it was decided to accept the lease and to transfer the Club building to this site.

Racing on a restricted scale was recommended and took place from Manora until the middle of 1944 when the Club buildings had been re-erected on the new site. Regular racing from West Wharf commenced in July 1944. The fleet then consisted of 10 Tomtits and 9 Dinghies, though one or two of the former and about half of the latter were more or less permanently laid up.

The cost of transferring the old Club buildings and of a new boat shed, slipway, quarters, etc., was met from the Club's liquid assets and the popularity of the new site was soon evidenced by a steadily growing membership and a gradually increasing Dinghy fleet.

At Partition in August 1947, the Club experienced a minor crisis on the departure of the Hindu staff and many of its Service and I.C.S. members. Owing to the new status of Karachi as a capital city with the tremendous influx of new comers the Club soon entered a popular period.

By 1949, membership was limited to 120, increased in 1951 to 135, and several new Dinghies were built. By December 1950, while there were no new Tomtits, the number of Dinghies was 30 and in 1951 the decking of Dinghies was permitted.

It had been possible to improve the amenities of the Club; eight additional quarters for Tindals being built and running water installed in 1949, and electric lights in 1950.

By 1954, there were 35 Dinghies but racing activities during the first half of that year were handicapped by the dredging and reclamation work to the S.E. of the Club. By March 1957, the Dinghies numbered 30 with 9 Tomtits.

In 1924, the Directors of British India Steam Navigation Co., Ltd., presented “The B.I.Cup” to be won outright and have continued to do so annually, with the exception of the war years 1943/48. It is now however a challenge cup.

In 1950, the officers and men of H.M.S. “Mauritius” presented a cup to be raced for against the Club by teams of Her Majesty’s Ship visiting Karachi in boats provided by the Club.

In 1950, the Rules, Byelaws, etc., were revised and in 1951 the rule was adopted allowing members to retain their membership whilst permanently absent from Karachi. Visiting Members were made a class of membership in 1952 and Associate members in 1956.

At the end of March 1956, the buildings at West Wharf were handed over to the Pakistan Navy who had purchased them for Rs. 49,500. We were allowed to occupy them while the new premises, etc., were being constructed on Bunker Island, a portion of which the Karachi Port Trust had leased to us.

The Club transferred to its new buildings at the end of January 1957 and only two days racing were lost during the move.

On 23 February 1957, the President of Pakistan formally opened the new premises before an estimated 350 persons.

The total cost of the new Club buildings slipway, hard standing, etc., was over Rs. 1½ lakhs which was financed partly by the sale of the buildings at West Wharf site, a Building Fund (for which an appeal was launched in May 1956) to which members, non-members and firms generously contributed Rs. 40,000 in cash in additions to gifts in kind and services rendered, and partly out of the available financial resources.

With greater facilities for members, the revised rules in March 1957 increased the total permitted membership to 175 Permanent and 75 Associate members, and the latter membership was again increased to 100 in November 1958.

A new one design class of 14’-6” boats, called, “Karachi Flyer” was started with 7 in the fleet during mid-1959. These were evolved from a prototype made by Air Vice-Marshal A. McDonald, R.A.F., during his service as C-in-C Pakistan Air Force.

The Club started sailing to the new I.Y.R.U. Rules on 1st June, 1959.

In 1962, British Overseas Airways Corporation presented the “Speedbird Cup” for competition by the Flyer fleet and the British India Steam Navigation Co., Ltd. presented a second “B I” Cup for separate competition by the Tomtits.

In 1964 the venue of the Club Annual London Reunion was changed to the Little Ship Club where it has since been held with increasing popularity.

In September 1965, the outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan resulted in the closure of the Club under the Security Regulations controlling the Karachi harbor area. No organized sailing was possible for five months and activities were limited to beach parties, where a few

privately acquired mini-sailors, were in constant use, and to the use of a Club “annex” established in a small flat with distant views of the harbor and sea.

Resumption of sailing in February 1966 found the Club with reduced membership but with the boats in good order, thanks to the attention of the Club Tindals who with difficulty had managed to get over to the Club and to put the boats into the water with reasonably regularity.

In 1970, the Club imported ten fibre glass Larks by special assignments. To provide Trophies for the new class there was some re-allocation mainly from the Tomtit events.

As a result of the war with India in December 1971, the Club was again closed and as the harbor remained closed to foreign nationals until April 1973, the Club went through a difficult period. Some racing was organized at Sandspit, but with the Club closed there was considerable loss in revenue and a dwindling in membership, some boats were removed from the Club whilst others deteriorated through lack of use.

Consequently, when the club reopened in 1973, it was found necessary to run all races on a combined fleet basis. Even so, there was little support for Tuesday racing and this was discontinued in November 1974. Subsequently official races were introduced on Sunday mornings in addition to the informal afternoon races.

In 1973 Cadet Class of membership was introduced. In 1975, the club sent a team privately to Colombo to compete in the 5th Southern Asian Yachting Regatta.

During 1975/1976 the Enterprise boat was introduced to the Club. Subsequently this class of boat has become very popular and the club members today own a large number of this class of boats.

In September 1978 the club organized a very successful 7th Southern Asian Yachting Regatta in Karachi in which teams from India, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Singapore, Dubai and Pakistan took part. This was the first international Yachting Regatta in Pakistan and became instrumental in promoting Yachting as a sport in the country.

In November 1978 Members of the club participated in the VIII Asian games held in Pattaya, Thailand, in which Byram Avari with Lt. Munir Sadiq won the first Yachting Gold medal for Pakistan. This was an outstanding performance considering strong opposition from India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and others. For this achievement Byram was given a Pride of Performance certificate by the President of Pakistan.

In the years following yachting has gained a great deal of popularity in the country and the competence of our sailors is as good as any in the world today. Another encouraging sign is the interest being shown by the young members and the club is proud that in the Asian Regatta in Bombay in 1981 a bronze medal was won in a junior competition.

During 1980/1981 the club undertook the task of major restoration of its club premises. At the same time a well needed facility of a toddler’s pool and a play area for children was added.

In the 9th Asian games held in Bombay in November 1982 Pakistan sent teams to participate in Enterprise, O.K., Fireball and Windglider events. Byram Avari with his wife Goshpi was once again outstanding and won a gold medal for the second time running in the Enterprise class of boats. Capt. Khalid Akhtar (from the Navy) also showed excellence in sailing the O.K. class of boats and also won a gold medal.

The Club looks back with pride for its contribution to sailing in Pakistan now that the performance of sailors in the country has reached a level where 2 out of 3 gold medals won in the IX Asian games were in the yachting events.

For a while, windsurfing had also become popular.

**COMMODORES AND VICE COMMODORES
SINCE 1930**

Commodores:	Vice Commodores:	Year
A. S. Campbell	C.G.Hawes	1930
A. S. Campbell	W.S.Kenholtz	1931
A. S. Campbell	B.J. Whitby	1932
A. S. Campbell	A.C. Murray	1933
A.C.Murray	F Godbert	1934
A.C.Murray	W.L.C.Trench	1935
W.S.Kenholtz	F Gobiet	1936
F. Godbert	A.C.Murray	1937
A.C.Murray	F.Godbert	1938
Sir Lancelot Graham	Lt. Cdr. R. R. Caws	1939
Sir Lancelot Graham	Lt. Cdr. R. R. Caws	1940
M. Napier	F. Godbert	1941
M. Napier	J. M. Peters	1942
F. Godbert	R.L. Coghlan	1943
Sir Hugh Dow	G. Godbert	1944
Sir Hugh Dow	D. B. Brow	1945
Capt. R. R. Caws	G. G. Ray	1946
R.L. Coghlan	J. Wright	1947
Capt. R.R. Caws	R. Simpson	1948
J.C. Rigby	J. Wright	1949
J. Wright	J.E.A. Low	1950
M. Napier	P.T. Ensor	1951
J.E.A. Low	J.C. Rigby	1952
J.E.A. Low	J.P. Bray & J.C. Rigby	1953
J.C. Rigby	A.V.LeCocq & V.W.Hummerston	1954
J.P. Bray	W.J. Richmond	1955
W.J. Richmond	V. Pollard	1956
W.J. Richmond	V. Pollard	1957
J.P. Bray	F.W. Fegen & M.J. McNulty	1958
V. Pollard	M.J. McNulty	1959
J.C. Rigby	J. Astell-Burt	1960
A.W. Samuel	J.PI Bray	1961
W.E. Ashfull	J. Astel-Burt	1962
I.G. Worsnop	A.W. Samuel	1963
J. Astel-Burt	J.F. Fewings-Tate & Col. D.W. Boman	1964

Col. D.W. Boman	J.A. Bennett	1965
J.A. Bennett	J.S. Katrak	1966
J. S. Katrak	W.R.A. Kimber	1967
W.R.A. Kimber	J.R.D Hermon	1968
J.R.D Hermon	J.L. Porter	1969
J.L. Porter	J.R. McCarthy	1970
W.R.A. Kimber	S.D. Shroff	1971
S.D. Shroff	R.D. Kabraji	1972
R.D. Kabraji	N. Dastur	1973
N. Dastur	E.M. Brown	1974
E.M. Brown	B.D. Avari	1975
B.D. Avari	L.J. Wyman	1976
L.J. Wyman	R.T. Sethna	1977
R.T. Sethna	J.G.H.Thwaite	1978
J.G.H.Thwaites / B.D. Avari	B.D. Avari	1979
Avari		
B.D. Avari	B.R. McKenna	1980
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	B.R. McKenna	1981
A. Marvi	V.H. Faizi Quraishi	1982
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	N. Dastur	1983
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	J.S. Kemp	1984
J.S. Kemp	N. Dastur	1985
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	N. Dastur	1986
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	M. Pickard	1987
A. Marvi	M. Pickard	1988
A. Marvi	M. Pickard	1989
V.H Faizi Quraishi	H. Mauer	1990
H. Mauer	V.H. Faizi Quraishi	1991
H. Mauer	V.H. Faizi Quraishi	1992
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	A.E. Deane	1993
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	A.E.Deane	1994
A.E.Deane	Rafi Jamaluddin	1995
A.E.Deane	Rafi Jamaluddin	1996
Rafi Jamaluddin	V.H. Faizi Quraishi	1997
Rafi Jamaluddin	V.H. Faizi Quraishi	1998
Rafi Jamaluddin	Dr. Mervyn Hosein	1999
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	Dr. Mervyn Hosein	2000
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	Dr. Mervyn Hosein	2001
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	Dr. Mervyn Hosein	2002
V.H. Faizi Quraishi	John R. Stoney	2003
John R. Stoney	Tariq Bukhari / Dr.Mervyn Hosein	2004
Dr. Mervyn Hosein	Mr. John R. Stoney	2005