

Sports of The Times

By FRANK M. BLUNK
Yacht Family Hibberd

COMMODORE FRASER of the Manhasset Bay Yacht Club and his race committee sat on the bow of the *Ilse III* a couple of weeks ago and prayed for wind. Long Island Sound was smooth as milady's boudoir mirror. Smoke from a tug far out along the island shore hung like a plumb line in the sky. Close by, eight Lightning Class craft drifted in gentle swells at the end of tow ropes.

This was just another long-waiting day in the Syce Cup series for the women's sailing championship of the Sound. There had been a fair wind on the first day, nothing but whispers since, and drifting matches. Hours had passed now and the patience of the committee was running out. The supply of cold beverages aboard was ebbing fast and the skippers and crews of the Lightnings were singing for a breeze.

Patches of Ripples

A slight ripple appeared on the water, a patch here, a patch there. The committee chairman megaphoned the women to drop their tow lines and run up sails. A course was set. Now there would be a race. The crews bustled about the business of getting ready. One boat was seen to be in trouble. Rigging at the top of its tall mast was tangled, or broken. Something had to be done, but quickly. The wind could die and ruin the start.

"Hold fast!"

A slight, fair-haired woman on a motor-sailer tied up to the *Ilse III*, cut loose, reached the troubled Lightning in a matter of seconds, shinnied up the mast, made the necessary repairs, slid down.

As the warning signal for a start was run up, Commodore Fraser saluted the nimble mast climber.

"Thanks, Lorna!" he shouted.

Many-Time Champion

This was the fabulous Lorna Whittelsey Hibberd, many-time national sailing champion, many-time Sound champion, a skipper who knows all the answers, whether wind, water, boat or rule. A charming mother and wife ashore, a salted veteran afloat. Wife of a yachtsman, Fred Hibberd, and mother of a yachtsman, Fred Jr., who at 14 is one of the Sound's leading Lightning Class skippers.

Wherever canvas is spread for sailing races, on little boats or big, on sheltered or blue water, you'll find the Hibberds. If they aren't competing they'll be out helping and cheering. It's in the blood. Lorna's father and brother and sister were sailors. Lorna has been at it since she was 6. The name Hibberd long has been a big one in yachting. And now Fred Jr. comes along, perhaps in a few years to have his name engraved on as many silver mugs as his mother's,



Mrs. Lorna Whittelsey Hibberd, when she won Women's National Sailing Title in 1930.

perhaps to be as hardy and as courageous.

Fred Jr., for example, might consult the "log." He'd find entries like these:

Sept. 4, 1930—Off Cohasset, Mass.—The Indian Harbor crew skippered by Lorna Whittelsey won the national sailing championship today, taking a first leg on the new cup offered by Mrs. Charles Francis Adams, wife of the Secretary of the Navy.

May 1, 1932—Off Marblehead, Mass.—Foggy, with rain squalls and a smoky sou'wester. Lorna Whittelsey, with clubmates Bill Swan and Ted Clark, led the Long Island Sound Fleet to a 3-point victory over Boston's dinghies today. Lorna's skillful upwind sailing turned the tide of victory for the New Yorkers.

Dunked in the Creek

Dec. 10, 1933—Rye, N. Y.—Lorna Whittelsey took a cold dunking today when her 11-foot sailing dinghy capsized in a contrary wind on Milton Creek. Too far to swim in the icy water and in heavy clothing, she clung to the overturned craft until rescued, then went over to Larchmont and sailed in the races there.

Jan. 1, 1935—Port Washington, L. I.—Ten hardy skippers, including Lorna Whittelsey, with Fred Hibberd as crew, went out today in a stiff northwester to uphold the record of the Frostbite Yachting Club on its third anniversary. All the boats were tossed like corks. Gabriel Giannini and Robert Van Name, in Red Nose, took a nose dive. Lorna, by skillful maneuvering of her boat, the *Great Republic*, reached the floundering swimmers. Fred pulled them in. Lorna went on to finish third in the day's series.

July 15, 1953—Manhasset, L. I.—Lorna Whittelsey Hibberd shinnied up a mast and saved the day for the Syce Cup.

Arthur Daley, who writes Sports of THE TIMES regularly, is on vacation.