



Thrashing to windward under severely reduced canvas: Running Flush, Blue Dragon and Alcidia II

"Not on starboard are you?" The crew of the Solent Sunbeam Tantivy keep a watchful eye on the camera. The Sunbeams celebrate their fiftieth anniversary this year

Y/W  
Sept  
'73

# Cowes Week

It was as if the Summer of '73 had decided to make one last, big effort to overcome its reputation for having been an almost totally windless season. Drawing itself up to its full height it took a deep, deep breath and blew. After building up during the Channel Race it blew really hard for three days, and the wind was accompanied by the traditional trimmings of low scudding cloud and driving rain.

On Sunday, 5 August, the second day of Cowes Week, only the cruiser classes sailed and the tales of broken gear and torn sails were endless. On Monday, all Cowes Week Races were cancelled, leaving the stage clear for the Admiral's Cup Competitors to fight out their battle on a grey, windstreaked Solent. On the following day, the wind still blew, but at least the sun re-appeared. Small day-boats were again prevented from sailing, but for most competitors it was a classic day's racing, in hard conditions, as some of our pictures show.

After this, the weather just quietly faded away until, by the second weekend, races were being abandoned through lack of wind. For the smaller boats such as the X-O-D's, it was hard indeed to loose racing first because of too much wind and later too little.

More than ever before, the racing was dominated by the Cruiser Classes. Five classes were scarcely adequate to contain them. For instance Class 4 (19.5-22.9ft Rating) had no fewer than 120

X-O-D's and Dragon's beat round Old Castle Point. They had a trying Cowes Week, loosing races both through too much wind and too little



entries. That's as many as most dinghy championship fleets. Also noticeable was that the keenly sailed 'Ton Cuppers' tend to come out top of the pile. For instance, in Class 2 it was the One Tonners Winsome V (David May), Thunder (J. C. Rogers), Liz of Lymington V (Peter Webster), and Cornish Chough (W. J. Rogers) which had good results, together with Bruce Bank's Northwind.

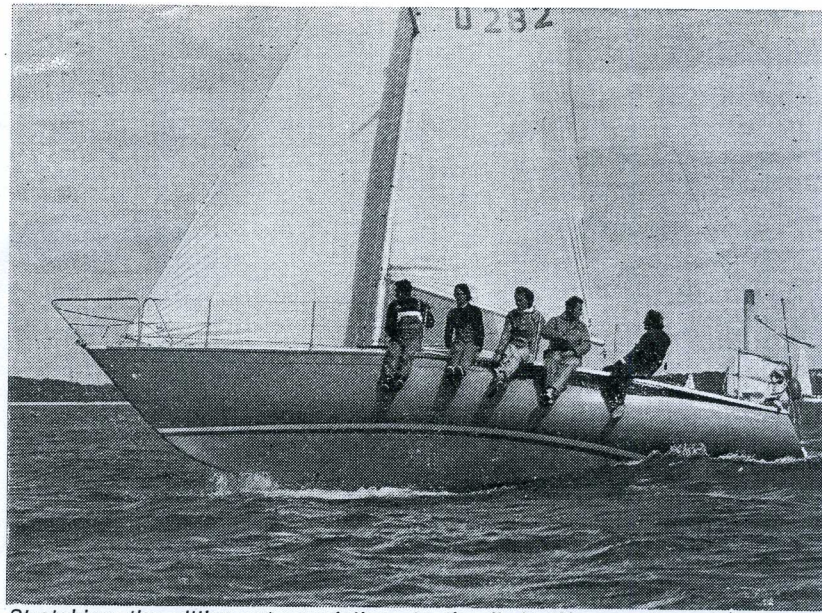
Class 4 was electrified in the later part

of the week by the appearance of Paul Elvstrom's Half Ton Cup winning Bes, sailed by Rodney Pattison. She twice sailed right away from her class into the distance.

In Class 5 the Quarter Ton Fleet was busily engaged in final tuning and hardly a single non-Quarter Tonner managed to infiltrate into the prize list.

The gigantic Class 1 swelled or shrank depending on whether or not the Ad-





Stretching the sitting-out regulations to the limit (No member of the crew . . . may be stationed outside the lifelines) the Half Ton Cup holder *Bes* slides easily to windward with Rodney Pattison at the helm

On a Solent-flecked with white, the *Scampi Windy* of Hamble, shows just how fast the modern small boat can travel down wind

Derek Boyer's *Carillion* thunders downwind under twin headsails. The leeward jib is set in a strange but apparently effective manner

miral's Cuppers were coming out to play. The two 12-Metres *War Baby* (Warren Brown) and *Evaine* (Graham Godfray) did little racing and the queen of the fleet, the 61ft *Sorcery* (J. F. Baldwin) seemed to be conserving her strength for the Fastnet. Incidentally she had the dubious honour of having a Time Correction Factor of greater than 1; in other words her corrected times were greater than her elapsed times. *Mersea Oyster* (D. Powell), *Samphire* (J. A. Sampson) and *Marionette* (C. A. F. Dunning) were front runners of the non-cup boats.

It was certainly a memorable Cowes Week—possibly a great one.

Living up to her name, the Quarter Tonnor Flying Listang appears to be about to leap right out of the water

