

# Brighton Parade

Report and Photographs by Zoe Trumper

The Peter Stuyvesant Brighton Marina Offshore race hit town on August 8th and the seaside resort, also blessed with hoards of scruffy mods on scooters, knew all about it.

On the Saturday there was a massive parade of all the boats through the Brighton streets, an excellent idea and good showmanship. Some of the big boats looked positively awesome as their massive frames were trundled along, rather like the May Day parade of power at the Kremlin.

Both the Stuyvesant Class I boats were there, the Cigarette mono and the Cougar cat, and immaculate they looked in their Stuyvesant livery. Mike Doxford and Tim Powell elected to race the Cigarette and when they held a comfortable lead at the half-way stage a fairytale finish for them and their sponsors seemed in prospect.

But it was not to be and the cruel luck, which has bedevilled them all season, struck again. At the Dayglow buoy one turbo charger was destroyed and, once again, they were out of contention.

## First time

We were, however, lucky enough to have a Class I winner for the first time this season in Gus It, the former Class IIII driven by Paul Sinclair with Russell Culpán navigating. The cheeky Gus It jumped two classes to compete in Class I and with the retirement of the only other entrant in the top class, Sinclair took first place.

The Peter Stuyvesant Brighton Marina Offshore Trophy had more entrants than any other offshore race this season and it was only a pity that the weather didn't respond to make it a day for spectators, for the racing certainly merited watching. With the calm waters of the bay even the Class IVs had average speeds of 50 plus mph and of the fifteen starters in this class eleven finished. The non finishers were due to disqualification for not going through the start gate.

Classes I,II,III and Cruiser Class National and Day all raced together. The first two had a 90 nautical mile course whilst Classes III and Cruisers had to complete 70nm.

Thirty five boats made an impressive

start as they roared across the start line, none noisier than Colin Gervaise-Brazier's Class II Goldrush, making its British debut. For all the noise, however, it didn't seem to give Gerv the necessary speed and he soon dropped back from the front line. It appears that they had a dicey piston so they couldn't reach their potential speed.

First time round past the crowds lining the harbour wall was Gus It but this lead was short lived and the battle began between Romans Sabre and Aquaglide. On the farthest leg out at sea Aquaglide seemed to have the edge but into the wind past the marina the aerofoil on Romans Sabre seemed to come into play.

On the first lap it was just Romans Sabre but by the second it was Aquaglide and as this new Cougar crossed the start/finish line on the third lap her nearest challenger was the improving Stuyvesant monohull. From that moment Mike Doxford and Tim Powell seemed set for a 'perfect victory' and by the fourth lap the Cigarette had pulled clear of the field.

The battle was then left to the Class II cats and on the fourth lap Romans Sabre seemed to gain the advantage. However, the following minutes illustrated how mechanical failure can change the whole picture. The Stuyvesant boat did not appear again and Aquaglide pulled away in a final burst to reach the finishing line 47 seconds ahead of Romans Sabre. Gus It was the only Class I finisher so taking the honours despite finishing behind the Class IIs.

Further back, the twenty four Class III boats were having tussles of their own. Leading after the first lap was Avia Watches driven by Ian Birnie and Alan Baldwin, followed by Aphrodisiac and its husband and wife crew, the Armstrongs. Their second place, however, was usurped by the Clarke Group on the third lap.

Peter Bloomfield in Pobjoy Mint II kept a steady fourth place until the beginning of the fourth lap where he passed Aphrodisiac to creep up to third place. Len Hall in Tucktonia started in fifth place and Aphrodisiac managed to maintain the distance between them right up to the last lap where Tucktonia, a new red and white Cougar, overtook to take fourth in Class III.

At the start of the fourth lap, therefore,

Avia Watches was leading the Class IIIs, though having a battle with the Class I Gus It, followed by Clarke Group, Pobjoy Mint II, Aphrodisiac and Tucktonia respectively.

At the finishing line Avia Watches had kept the lead to take first place and Pobjoy Mint II had relegated Clarke Group to third place. The winner finished with an average speed of 61.47nm.

The overall Class IV winner was Van Molen Gasoline, driven by Les Salvidge and navigator Gerry Wickham, a new Marshan to the offshore scene. They completed the 40nm course in 37 mins 52secs at an average speed of 58.31mph. Only 30 seconds later finished the late starter I Like It, a 16' Fletcher driven by Eddie Fraser and Derek Squire.

## Within 35 seconds

All four Class IVD finishers crossed the line within 35 seconds of each other. OCL Suzuki, driven by Gwyn Perryman, another first timer, was pushed all the way by Mr. and Mrs. Reilly in the Fletcher TK1 but managed to cross the line 17 seconds ahead.

Tokyo Bay II was first in IVC despite having the least power - Suzuki 65 - of the Class IVC boats.

The one class IVA finisher - TK3 - managed an average speed of 44.10 mph with the Yamaha powered Fletcher 13'.

It takes rough weather to get the most excitement from the Cruiser Classes. In these calm waters, therefore, they soon sorted out places and generally stayed in that order. The Wellcraft, Vergo, with the usual crew of Peter Hewitt and Chris Blight completed the course in 1hr 48secs.

A new Day Cruiser Class B, Mistress Quickly, maintained second place except for the third lap when Aeon Splashdown overtook but couldn't keep the position until the end. Shiral was followed some way behind by Deep Fresh.

Although the sun shone brightly on Saturday for the parade the weather was dank and gloomy for the actual race day. Never mind, full marks to Peter Stuyvesant for making every effort to give an excellent offshore race at the marina with the most spectacular start of the season and a little extra razamataz which brings the sport closer to the public.



Despite a good start, Romans Sabre had to take second place behind Aquaglide at the finish. Photo: Zoe Trumper.