AUGIE DIAZ NEW WESTERN HEMISPHERE CHAMP

Brilliant Brazilians Take Second and Third

Agustin Diaz has once again shown that he is a threat to the top sailors in the Snipe Class. Augie won the twelfth Western Hemisphere Championship held at Cartagena, Colombia on December 2nd through 9th. It was such a close battle with the two entries from Brazil, Marco Paradeda and Waldemar Bier, that the outcome was not established until the final race. Augie, racing with his father, Gonzalo as crew, was in third place after the sixth race but only 5.4 points behind Paradeda, and 1.4 points behind Bier. Augie held the Brazilians off, finishing second in the final race. Paradeda took an eighth (his drop race) and Bier finished sixth. Diaz turned the 5.4 points deficit into a 4.6 lead.

U.S. Snipe sailors have been seeing and hearing about this fine young man for some years. His first big win was the Midwinters in Clearwater in 1969. He beat some of the big guns like Earl Elms and Francis Seavy. This is a feat in itself but it is remarkable when you consider that Augie was only 14 at the time. He followed that up with the over-all win of the Winter Circuit in 1970, two U.S. Junior National Championships, and finishes of 3-3-5-2 in the past four U.S. Nationals. He was Silver Medalist in the Pan Am Games in 1971 and 2nd at the South Atlantic Championship in 1972. There is no doubt that we have not heard the last. As one sage stated, "When you are only 18 years old and have made all the mistakes already, you have to be good."

Cartagena is an ideal place to sail, with its large bay where courses can be set in any direction. The trade winds blow stronger during the months of December and January, with lighter winds during the rest of the year. The facilities are excellent and the hospitality superb.

The skippers meeting was held on Sunday morning followed by the drawing of boats. Each team sailed their first boat for two practice races and the first race. Sunday and Monday afternoons were given over to practice races and demonstrated that it was almost essential to hold to the starboard side of the course. Throughout the week the winds would increase and veer to the north. This was a strategic challenge to the competitors and made boat speed more important than tactics.

Augie Diaz got off to a good start by leading both of the practice races. He did not cross the finish line in either race, taking DNFs instead of firsts. Many had not heard of the old saw that it is bad luck to win the practice race. When questioned, Augie stated that it is not a superstition, it is a fact. It was supported by this regatta.

The first race was started on time with winds of 12 knots. Paradeda was first at the windward mark followed by Diaz, and went on to win the race. Paradeda was second and Bier third. Daniel Moreno is shown receiving a memento on behalf of the Western Hemisphere nations. The excellent presentation by Berta Swanson was made in Spanish!
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Boat launching area at the Western Hemisphere Championship.

Dates, Horiuchi and DeCosta. Interestingly,
this is also the order of finishes although there were position changes in the
interim. Diaz went into the lead on the
second beat. Parada would lead around the downwind mark and took a short starboard hitch to clear his air. Unfortunately
for Diaz, a lift arrived at about the same time as a large gasoline
barge. He had to tuck to avoid being
blanketed, and dropped the lead. He also
found his toughest competition.

The following morning, the second
race was held in the lightest wind of the
regatta. A delay helped, since the wind
increased. Winds were 6 to 8 and again
Parada was first at the windward mark,
followed by Bier and Dates. Diaz was
sixth and gradually worked up to second
place by the next windward mark, follow-

ed by Dates, Parada, Bier, and Lisochi. On
the final windward leg Parada went up
the middle and Diaz put a tight cover on
him. This turned out to be an error since
Diaz and Parada finished sixth and
seventh instead of 2nd and 3rd. Most of
the fleet held to the starboard side of the
course, to their advantage. Bier kept his
lead, with Dates second, Sanjurjo third,
and Lisochi fourth.

The third race was the same afternoon,
in winds only slightly heavier. Parada
continued to be the first at the windward
mark with Bier, DeCosta, Sanjurjo and
Brown close behind. The first three posi-
tions did not change during the rest of
the race. Sanjurjo dropped behind Hori-
uchi, but picked him up again to finish
fourth with Horiuchi fifth. Diaz had
drawn one of the slower wooden boats
and was next to last at the first mark but
managed to finish ninth. At the end of
the day Parada had a firm grip on first,
leading the second place boat by 10

points. Only 8 points separated the next
five boats.

An 18-20 knot wind greeted the con-
testants for the fourth race. This was to
the liking of Diaz and Bier who did battle
for the whole race, with Diaz taking his
only first place of the regatta. Lenhart
worked his way up to finish third follow-

ed by Parada and Dates. Bier was now
in the lead. Parada right with him and
then Diaz third and Dates 4th but close to
each other. There was a widening gap be-
tween these leaders and the rest of the
fleet.

The fifth race started in 8 knot winds
which freshened to 15 at the finish. Para-
da was back to his first at the wind-
ward mark as Bier and Dates followed by
Parada, Bier and Dates. Bier was in
second place by the reaching mark
followed by Dates, Lisochi and Diaz. Bier
finished fourth followed by Dates.

The afternoon race, the sixth, was held
in 15-18 knots. Andres Lisochi, Colum-
bian national champion, took an early
lead and held on to a decisive win. He was
greeted by a tremendous ovation from all
hands at the finish. Richard Todd was
second at the first mark with the thunder-
ing herd of Parada, Diaz and Bier right
behind. Diaz worked his way up to finish
second followed by Todd, Lenhart, Tsuda
and then Bier.

The leaders going into the final race,
were Parada, Bier and Diaz. One of
them was sure to be the winner and it
would probably be determined by the
"luck of the draw". In the second draw
on Saturday morning, the only restriction
was that no one could sail a boat he had
already sailed. Since Diaz had refused to
win the practice race he was bound to

Diaz would lead the second place boat by 10
points.
have good luck — and he did. He drew his old boat — the one he had sold in Cartagena the previous year. When he drew #20 from the hat he let out a whoop, "swung his crew around a couple of times and ran to "his" boat. Psychologically he had won already. Bier drew one of the better Skipper boats (see article on how the boats fared). Paradeda drew a wooden boat that had one of the poorest track records, although Diaz had a second with the same boat the previous day.

Counting throwouts, Paradeda was leading with 18 points, Bier in second with 22 points and Diaz in third with 23.4 points. Diaz had only to be in the top five and ahead of Bier to take second place. However, he had to have a couple of boats between Paradeda and himself to take the top place. Bier could have won with the same strategy. All Paradeda had to do was beat the other two.

The winds were more westerly for the final race and started in about 8 knots. Again they built up to about 12 at the finish. The course was shifted slightly to adjust for the change in wind direction as well as to provide a bit more challenge for the contestants. As could be expected, the two Brazilians and Diaz started right together, closely covering each other. Diaz finally broke away as did Bier. Horiiuchi was first at the windward mark with Diaz right behind. Lenhart, still fighting, was in third place followed by Bill Evans and Dates. Bier was in seventh place. Paradeda, evidently psyched out, hit the mark and had to re-round. Diaz passed Horiiuchi on the first reach and Bier pulled up to sixth. Paradeda, still having trouble, got the jib sheets under the bow. This put him in last place. Lenhart, not to be denied, passed Diaz on the run and won the race. Diaz was second, Horiiuchi third, Dates fourth and Tsuda fifth. Bier finished sixth and Paradeda sailed a very hard windward leg finishing eighth.

In this championship regatta one could not make a major mistake and expect to recover. Augie and Gonzalo sailed a hard series and deserved their win. Thus the Hayward Western Hemisphere trophy returns to the U.S., but only for the fourth time in its history. The first winner of this trophy was Dr. Clemente Inclan from Havana, Cuba. Dr. Inclan is now living in Miami and a member of Miami Snipe Fleet #7 as are Augie and Gonzalo.

(Continued on Page 10)
Gus Lemaitre was Director of Public Relations. He arranged for all of the housing and social events. The first major deed was extracting the contestants from the airport. If you have never seen a Chinese airport. Gus will also be remembered for the wonderful party at his home after one of the races.

The People Behind the Scenes

The twelfth Western Hemisphere Regatta got its start in Bermuda when Daniel Moreno submitted Colombia's invitation. At the time he said the only thing he could promise was good winds. Most will promise anything but good wind since this is one thing that cannot be controlled. His promise was fulfilled.

With that taken care of all that was left was to find the people. Daniel's formula is to put the right persons in the right places. This he did with his usual efficiency and the regatta went off without an observable major problem.

Captain Guillermo Uribe was the executive director and provided the logistical support. Race committee boats, mark boats, bus transportation, skippers' meeting, and a multitude of other items came under his guiding hand. It was all right there when needed. Captain Uribe was also a perfect host when he entertained the entire group on his ship, the ARC Gloria. The Gloria is the Colombian Navy's Cadet training sailing ship. It left the small boat sailors agog and was one of the high points of the social schedule.

Lorenzo Depascale from the local fleet and Juan Carulla from Bogota ran the starting lines and were assisted by Berta Swanson, and Ralph Swanson as SCIKA Representative. The starting lines were excellent — there was not a single general recall.

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Roberto Londono was the Technical Director and an invaluable member of the team. He performed his duties so superbly that he was almost invisible.

Andres Lisochi served as translator at the Skippers meeting and meetings of the National Secretaries. His English was flawless and presumably, so was his Spanish. The big difficulty was in trying to translate for those who kept changing their minds on what they wanted to say. Must be fun!

No doubt there were another hundred or so people who went about their duties entirely unnoticed. Only a few have been mentioned and these only to demonstrate how much work is involved in putting on a major championship regatta. The people of Colombia did it and deserve a big THANK YOU from all of SCIKA.

And what did Daniel do? He claims no credit but we know he did at least one thing. The winds were good.

But Some Are More Equal Than Others

The purpose of one-design class racing is to eliminate the boat factor as a determinant in the outcome of races. A round robin series where every contestant sails every boat is a further attempt in this direction. It does not completely succeed since the boats are used in different conditions. When the order of boats is drawn a top-notch skipper can perform skill from consideration. Here is how they stacked up:

The Colombian Snipe Fleets provided 18 competitive boats plus two back-up boats. There were 5 U.S. built (Chubasco) fiberglass boats, 5 Danish built (Skipper) fiberglass boats, 1 French built (Teurlay) fiberglass and the prototype Brazilian (Bruder) boat fiberglass over wood and considered the equal of any of the fiberglass boats. The remaining 6 were locally built wooden boats. The boats were divided into 3 groups with 2 Chubascos, 2 Skippers and 2 wooden boats in each group. The Bruder was equated as a Chubasco and the Teurlay as a Skipper. Boats were also evaluated by performance in the local fleet in making the divisions.

Every skipper drew a boat for the first race. He was put automatically into one of the boat groups and would sail every boat in that group. After the third race, the competitors had the system figured out and knew which boats they would be sailing for the next three races. The regatta officials were somewhat amused by this "leak" in their security. They should have known that sailors are among the sharpest people with analytical minds. The officials then adjusted the rotation within each group.

Another drawing was held for the seventh race with the provision that no skipper should have any boat that he sailed before in the series.

Since boats can seldom really be equal, an attempt was made to appraise their performance. Each boat was scored in the same manner as were the contestants. Since the Uruguayans were unable to attend there were only 16 finishes for each race. In this situation, the boat received a position equivalent to its average for races finished. A throwout race was given to each boat in an attempt to remove skipper skill from consideration. Here is how they stacked up:

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