

THE 1961 SNIPE CLASS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RACES

BRAZIL WINS THE TITLE — UNITED STATES 2nd — SPAIN 3rd

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS FROM 18 NATIONS COMPETE ON LONG ISLAND SOUND



THE WINNERS - Axel Schmidt holds the Isaacks Trophy and watches Commodore Penman of England hand over other prizes to his twin brother and crew, Eric.

— Photos by F. Nakajima



THE RUNNERS-UP - Alan Levinson (left rear) watches his brother, skipper Harry, receive the second place trophy. Vice-Commodore Sam Norwood, Janie Hughes, wife of Rear-Commodore Floyd Hughes, and D. Verner Smythe, Chairman of the Protest Committee, applaud.

When a couple of young sailors from Brazil won the Lightning division in the Pan American Games in Chicago in 1959, world Snipers became keenly aware of the fact that they were also top Snipe sailors in their home town of Rio de Janeiro and that, in all probability, they would eventually make their mark in the Snipe class.

And this year they did so with a big bang! The young 22-year old twin brothers, Alex and Eric Schmidt, came to Rye, New York to the 20th World Championship Regatta and swept the Sound in a most convincing fashion. Arriving early Sunday after participating the previous week in the Lightning World Championship Races at Milford, Conn., where they took 3rd place, they entered the third tune-up race and took 1st place away from the Bahamians, who had won the previous two events on Saturday. Thus they gave emphatic notice of their entrance to competition and to some, it appeared that a finger was writing on the wall.

And this belief was justified, for on Monday the twins won both races handily and by the end of the week, they chalked up a 1-1-2-2-1-1 for a grand total of 9442 points, just 1133 points more than the U. S. team with 7-3-1-3-5-4 (8309), who themselves were 270 points ahead of Spain in 3rd with 5-2-1-8-8-3. This was the most decisive victory ever scored in a Snipe class World Championship Series and, considering the top-flight competition, one of the most brilliant. They have won many local, national, and international titles in the Star, Lightning, and Snipe classes, and here they upheld their reputation so impressively that no doubt was left in anybody's mind that they rank as top small boat sailors in the world.

The regatta, sponsored by the Snipe Fleets of the U. S., was expertly organized by the Quassapaug (Conn.) Fleet 231 and held at the famed American Yacht Club at Rye, N. Y. 18 National Championship teams competed in this 30th Anniversary of the Snipe Class on Sept. 16-22nd, with Portugal and Finland unable to come at the last minute. Cuban sailors, prominent and successful contenders in the past 10 years, were missed by all their friends.

The modified Gold Cup Olympic courses were laid out on Long Island Sound in front of the yacht club, where the towers of New York City are visible on a clear day. Ten races in all were scheduled - 3 tune-ups on Saturday and Sunday with the 7 championship races from Monday to Friday, and in spite of the approach of hurricane Esther (which culminated in a near miss Wednesday night with winds of 40-50 mph), all races were sailed

exactly as scheduled, which, under the circumstances, was considered very lucky indeed.

Sailing conditions were practically unchanged throughout the period from Saturday to Wednesday noon with a steady 12-16 mph wind. It shifted to the NE Sunday P. M. after the last tune-up and there it held with increasing force as Esther approached with high waves building up into white caps and rather short rollers - quite choppy for Snipes. But as Esther passed, the wind shifted to NWxW Friday morning, dropping to 10-12 mph and bringing ideal sailing conditions for the last two races.

Most of the contestants arrived at Idlewild early in the week where they were met and driven to lodging at the Westchester Country Club. 18 new wooden Snipes, completely equipped, awaited the contestants. Beautifully constructed by the Lippincott Boat Co., they were destined for post-regatta delivery to buyers who had consented to their use on the regatta. Friday A. M., sails were measured and after lunch, boats were drawn by lot. Then each team did its own rigging, and evidently Basil Kelly of Bahamas was the best rigger, for he won both races Saturday in fairly heavy weather, which he likes. But Sunday, the Schmidts arrived - and the die was cast!

Sunday P. M. saw the opening ceremony with a colonial Fife and Drum Corps entertaining with music and marches; a formal flag raising and cannon salute for each country; speeches by various notables; and then christening of the boats with toasts to all drunk in champagne. All set for Monday's races!

(RACE 1) - Wind ENE 14 mph. Considerably more waves than Sunday, which bothered many of the boys. Start was good with Brazil and Bermuda on to shore while Argentina and U. S. went out on port tack. At the first 3 marks, it was Argentina, Brazil, Bermuda, but at end of 2nd beat, Brazil was 55 seconds ahead of Argentina with Bermuda 3rd and Bahamas 4th. Brazil finally won by 21 seconds. Japan, Uruguay, and British Guiana could not solve the waves and wind and did not finish after capsizing.

(RACE 2) - Practically a repetition of the first slug-fest, except this time Spain led Brazil the first half of the race, but when a turnbuckle got loose on De Arion's boat, the Schmidts passed him on the 2nd windward leg. Argentina sailed a close 3rd, while Bahamas nosed out Switzerland for another 4th. Brazil's margin was 56 sec. in this one. These were the worst races in the whole series for U. S. with 8-7.

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