

SCYA and the 1932 Los Angeles Olympic Games ... Continued

By: F. Daniel Somrack

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In the late 1920s, C. D. Mallory, President of the North American Yacht Racing Union and prominent figure in international yachting circles, accepted plans to introduce a six-meter class. SCYA secretary Fred Bobsyshell confirmed that his association would work to include the six-meter sloops in future SCYA regatta competitions.

Once the six-meter boats were introduced on the Pacific Coast, California sailors gained swift proficiency in maneuvering them. Although the U.S. was strong in all four of the Olympic yachting events, Churchill believed America's best hope for a medal was in this six-meter class. Additionally, they were easier and cheaper to build than the eight-meter boats, a significant concern during the Great Depression.

Beginning in February 1932, Al Christie, SCYA Commodore and Olympic Yachting Committee Chairman, began prepping the U.S. team by staging regattas on the Pacific Coast. Southern California Corinthians purchased three new 6-meter boats of "championship timber" to be used in the games.

The first boat was prepared in Sweden by Donald W. Douglas, Jr. and was designed after the Swedish Gold Cup winner on the east coast. The second boat came from the Los Angeles Yachting Club boasting, "it's the best boat money can buy." The third was financed by the Long Beach Yacht Club.

A Star is Born



The Star class, originally slated for exhibition only, made its debut at the Los Angeles Games. Southern Skipper, Gilbert T. Gray and crew member Albert Libano sailed their two-person keelboat, Juniper to five first-place finishes to defeat Great Britain for the Gold Medal. The star division continued as a longstanding Olympic discipline until 2012.