

"MR. LIGHTNING"

They call him Mr. Lightning.

No one is quite sure when they started calling him that, but there can be no doubt why that title was conferred on Karl Smither.

This tall, friendly druggist from Buffalo, N. Y. has been sailing most of his life and has been sailing Lightnings almost from the beginning of the class.

His regatta trademark, port and starboard socks, has been a familiar sight at hundreds of regattas, where he has always been a contender and worthy competitor.

A long-time member of Buffalo Canoe Club's Fleet 12, Karl has served the Lightning Class in a variety of capacities, including the presidency in 1949.

Karl first hit the Lightning big time with a victory in the 1943 North American championships. Sailed under wartime conditions in boats drawn by lot, on the waters of Barnegat Bay, Karl started in this regatta a string of 23 successive participations in the North American championships.

Sometimes alone, and sometimes with the teamwork of fellow BCC'er Bob Crane, Karl was runner up in the next four North Americans. In 1944 and 1946, it was a joint effort of the Smither-Crane team which landed them the runner up spot. In 1945 and 1947, Karl did it alone. In 1948, with Crane, they won the President's Cup. In 1951, Karl was runner-up in the President's Cup and in 1953 was North American's runner-up.

First winner of the Mid-Winter Championships down south was, you guessed it, Karl Smither, just 20 years ago. And he hasn't missed one of those, either.

In fact, in a series of boats named Thermis (he's up to number nine now), Karl hasn't missed much racing. He's been in countless local and regional regattas, at most of the big ones and represented the U.S. in world competition.

Nor has he lost his touch. Karl provided one of the big thrills of this year's St. Petersburg competition when he led the last race most of the way before yielding by an eyelash on the final weather leg.

In 1947, Karl served as treasurer of the Lightning Class and two years later, as the Class celebrated its 10th

LIGHTNING HALL OF FAME

By Alex Kaye

More than just the boats they sail, the Lightning Class is also people. Here, in these short profiles, are four of the men who've helped make the class what it is today. There are countless others who've contributed and are contributing now and it is hoped that their stories may be told in future issues.

anniversary, he was its president. He has also served on the governing board.

Karl's love of sailing and for the class is shared by his wife, Idy. Although Idy no longer crews, she's with him at almost all the regattas and has performed valued, but unsung, service for countless race committees as the Class' foremost statistician.

Small wonder, then, that Karl Smither is "Mr. Lightning" to sailors everywhere and the Smithers family is the first family of the Class.





"THE QUIET TOUCH"

Another member of this "first family," by marriage, may some day very well inherit the "Mr. Lightning" title.

Tom Allen, married to the Smithers' daughter Anne, has won just about every title and every honor the Lightning Class can bestow. His list of accomplishments reads like the ever-expanding history of the class itself.

All three Lightning World Championships, raced under a variety of conditions in three different parts of the world, were won by Tom. He's the only man ever to win the North American championship four times and with

many years of racing still ahead, this young man bids fair to set records which may never be equalled.

Tom won his first major crown in 1952 as he guided the first "Atom" (4811) to victory in the President's Cup series of the North Americans. A championship swimmer, Tom was busy in the Navy in 1953, but the following year found time while stationed at Bainbridge, Md., to win his first North American championship, and repeated the victory in 1955 at New Orleans.

Busy with career and family, Tom didn't score again in the big time until 1959 when he was runner-up in the North Americans. In 1961 he really hit the jackpot with his third North American triumph and his first world championship. In 1963 he retained his world crown at Lima, Peru.

And in 1965, the quiet, unassuming super sailor, repeated his twin victory with a fourth unprecedented North American championship added to retention of the world crown for the third time.

If the odd-numbered years are vintage years for this hard-working, serious boat builder then his competitors in the North Americans at Cleveland and the World's at Toronto can look forward to seeing his transom once again.

Among Tom's 1966 accomplishments are the number two spot in the North Americans, and his fourth Canadian Open crown (he won it before in 1952, 1953 and 1965).

Tom's wife Anne, between babies, is an important member of his racing crew. Anne, who's been sailing most of her life, has been part of the crew in almost all of Tom's major victories, including the World and North American championships.

Although they've known each other since childhood, both families had summer homes at Pt. Abino, Anne and Tom didn't start dating until the end of high school. They now have three children, with a fourth on the way.

"THE EXPERIMENTER"

What does it take to make a top sailing skipper and nautical experimenter and innovator?

Here's the story of Carl Martin Eichenlaub, Jr. of San Diego, who has sailed his way to one of the top spots in the annals of the ILCA.

Ike started his sailing career when he was four years old when he made his first sailboat. It didn't float, it just sat in the back yard.

At the age of 10, he took his wagon and travelled 12½ miles to a lumber company to buy \$4 worth of wood from which he made a boat to sail in the San Diego river in some ponds owned by a sand plant. Here he learned to sail and also to carry this boat on his back to and from his house about two miles, away over a steep hill until the men at the plant felt sorry for him and allowed him to chain the boat to a pipe there.

Ike built his first racing boat from a plan in a book about building boats. He called it the "Inner Sanctum" and won many handicap races in it at the Mission Bay Yacht Club, which at that time was only a pier on Mission Bay.

He bought his first class boat, Skimmer #76, in 1946 and learned to make it go well enough to want a

real winner. Buying Skimmer #63, he won the National Skimmer championships in 1948 and 1949. Also in 1949, he built an 8-foot Sabot pram, winning the nationals with it.



First you need a good boat.

Second you need someone to sail it.

Third you need people to help sail it.

Fourth you need a little luck!

First you need a NICKELS & HOLMAN.

And with all of that going for you, you've got to be a winner. Get the Lightning with the latest in hull shape design, weight displacement, lightweight spar and rudder, and all the rest of the "go-fast" goodies. We're building them in fiberglass and wood. And we're ready to go in plywood. Check your needs for this season against the box at the right. Then call your order to Clarence Holman at (313) 629-2198. Or stop in at 2426 S. Long Lake Road, Fenton, Michigan. Remember, first you need a NICKELS & HOLMAN.

fast boats	fast equip.	fast covers
Fiberglass \$2350.00 Wood 2250.00 Plywood from 2175.00	Masts, Booms, Rudders, Tillers, Rigging, Custom-Fittings	Mooring \$40.00 Mooring (vinyl) 50.00 Trailing 145.00 Rudder 12.00
fast hdwe.	fast trailers	fast kits
Race-Lite, Mariner, Seaboard, Roledge, Star Marine	Lightning only \$295.00	Wood from \$285.00 Fiberglass 2000.00

In between times he acquired an International 14, which he raced successfully, winning the Pacific Coast championships in that class three consecutive years as well as eight consecutive Gold Cup Series at Newport Harbor.

1953 was a key year for Carl. He married his crew, thus assuring himself of never being left without some one to go with him, and he built a Lightning for his father. But Carl liked this boat so well his father never got to sail it. He took it to New Orleans in 1955 and came very close to winning the North Americans. That was the "Billie."

In 1960, Carl won his first North American championship and was runner up in 1962. The next year he won the crown for the second time and in 1965, after breaking a mast in the elimination, won the President's Cup.

Carl's love of boats is boundless and in 1948 he started his boat building business with his friend Leon Bothell in his grandmother's garage, moving to his present location in 1952.

Ike built two Feather class sloops in 1952 and de-

cidied to race one of them in the ocean race from Newport Beach to Ensenada, Calif. On the way to Newport for the start of the race, he ran into foul weather and his boat sank in 600 feet of water about 20 miles out at sea. He and his friend Leo Culp blew up by lung power a raft they had, climbed into it and were rescued the following day.

A man of many talents and interests, Ike took up the trombone in 1961 and now plays with the San Diego County Symphony. Previously, he played the flute and piccolo which he learned as a child and which he played in high school and at San Diego State College.

Another hobby today is building model trains and someplace along the line he found time to write a book about sailing to be published by the Tulsa University Press.

For all of his sailing achievements, Ike was voted "Yachtsman of the Year" in 1963 by the San Diego Association of Yacht Clubs and the following year won the Sports Illustrated "Award of Merit."

Another of the quiet-spoken ones, Carl's contributions to, and influence on, the Lightning Class are far from over.

"THE WOODSMAN"



Hank Cawthra's love of wood was inherited from his family's association with furniture manufacturing in home town Grand Rapids, Mich.

Hank's love of sailing, and of the outdoors, was acquired at an early age on the lovely lakes and ski trails of his home state.

As it inevitably happens with most top sailors, Hank was finally drawn to the Lightning Class in 1951, after 20 years of successful racing and model building and racing.

It took him just two short years to climb to the top of the class, winning his first North American championship in 1953 in "Broom", #4924. He repeated this vic-

tory in 1958, after winning the President's Cup in 1957 and was North American runner-up in 1960.

As a measure of his skill, still campaigning old, wooden "XL", number 6066, Hank won the first race of the 1966 North Americans by a convincing four minutes. In 1961, he was attracted to racing Catamarans and has done well with them.

Hank's service to the Lightning Class includes a term as chief measurer in 1958 and as Class President in 1959.

Hank's first racing was done in a 16' chine center-boarder on Walloon Lake in northern Michigan. Then came the big boats as he actively raced keel sloops of the 17 sq. meter, 22 sq. meter and 210 class for about 20 years, winning the 17 sq. meter class four times.

For about six years, concurrent with his racing of these full-sized yachts, Hank satisfied his love of working with wood by being active in model yachting. He won the mid-western championship of the "A" class five times and the national championship of the 50/800 class with the famous "Mogul" of his own design and manufacture.

During this period he also designed the well-known and successful Class "A" models "Meteor" and "Tuscarora" and the 50/800 models "Omar," "Fatima," "Target," "Philip Morris" and "Ripple." The latter was widely distributed in kit form as were many of his previous designs.

In the winter, Hank spends every available minute on the ski slopes. He's been a National Ski Patrolman for years and is still active in this.

He's the father of one daughter who is also a good sailor and skier and now is a high fashion model in New York. She, as well as her father, are honor graduates of the University of Michigan. Hank earns his living at Chevrolet Division of General Motors where his concern is product warranty.