

# THE CALTECH SAILING CLUB

Sailing may be a minor sport, but this new organization looks like a major entry on the Caltech sports program

By JIM WYMAN '53

**S**AILING ACTIVITIES of one form or another have existed at Caltech for the past twelve years. Three years ago a loosely organized sailing club was able to participate in the Pacific Coast intercollegiate dinghy championships at Newport Harbor, and to travel to Berkeley for an invitational regatta with the University of California.

Last November, three or four undergraduates and a graduate student decided to organize some sort of formal sailing club. The first major achievement of the new organization was in talking Hal Musselman, of the Athletic Department, out of \$10 for dues in the Pacific Coast Intercollegiate Yacht Racing Association, and a similar national organization.

The primary purpose of the new sailing club was to represent Caltech in intercollegiate sailing competition. In order to do this effectively, the Tech sailors needed boats to practice with. Small sailing dinghies were occasionally borrowed from neighboring colleges. In spite of these obstacles, the rapidly growing sailing club was able to participate in five regattas at Newport Harbor, and to travel again to Berkeley to make a good showing against the Pacific Coast champions.

By this time it was obvious that the sailing club would have to obtain boats of its own, if its purposes were to be achieved. The plan was: first to strengthen the organization and gain further recognition; and second, to find someone who could provide some dinghies and equipment.

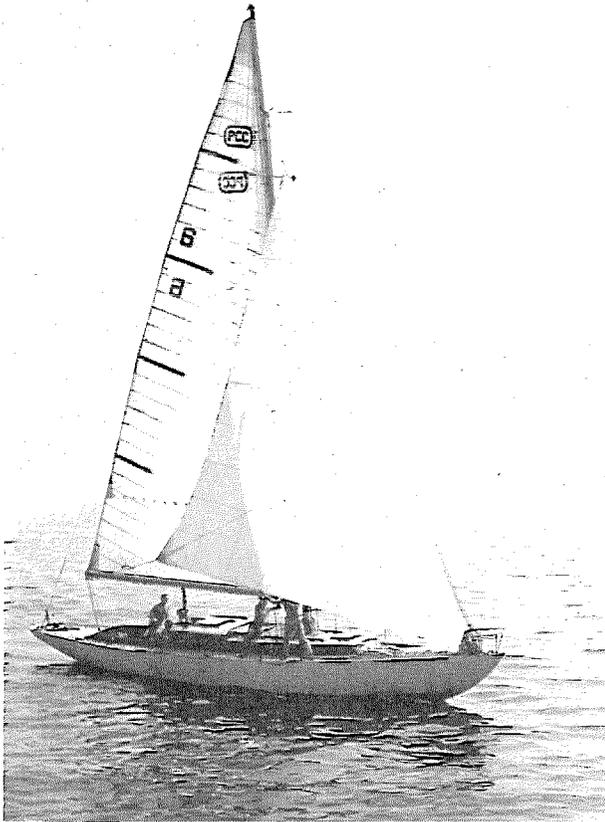
The club was able to gain the approval of the associated students and the athletic council—and thus became a candidate for status as a minor sport. Weekly meetings of the club provided sufficient interest for twenty-five members. A constitution was drawn up, a

club burgee designed, and regattas were planned and discussed. The most significant event in this program was the consent of Dr. Clark B. Millikan to act as faculty adviser to the sailing club. The sailing club's growth and progress are due mainly to Dr. Millikan's efforts on behalf of the organization.

It was realistically assumed from the beginning that not much financial help could be expected from the Institute. But a meeting with Commodore Don Barber of the Los Angeles Yacht Club revealed that the LAYC had been considering the idea of sponsoring a junior yachting organization for some time.

Early last June, three members of the LAYC met together with Dr. Millikan and two members of the sailing club to discuss the terms of sponsorship. It was agreed at that time, pending approval by the LAYC Board, that the LAYC would loan Caltech \$1250, interest free, if the sailing club could raise the balance of the \$3000 required for the purchase of six racing dinghies. The loan would be repaid from membership dues of the sailing club.

Dr. Millikan then decided that the money could best be obtained through tax-deductible gifts to a special Caltech Sailing Club Fund. Letters went to some 160 Institute faculty members, trustees, associates and alumni. The results were extremely gratifying, and the desired amount of money was obtained. In addition, Mr. P. G. Winnett, an Institute Trustee, and Mr. Dana Smith, an Institute Associate, both donated 16-foot Falcon-class sloops to the sailing club. It is contemplated that six 13-foot Fiberglas racing dinghies will be purchased with the \$3000 that has been raised.



*During the summer, members of the newly organized Caltech Sailing Club crewed on ocean racing yachts like this Pacific Coast Cruiser owned by Patent Attorney Fred Lyon. The yacht, named "The Kitten," won the Honolulu Race in 1949.*

The Los Angeles Yacht Club has three major reasons for sponsoring the Caltech Sailing Club. First of all, the sailing club would provide small boat sailing activity at the LAYC during the fall and winter—which are otherwise periods of relative inactivity. Secondly, trained members of the sailing club would provide a reliable source of crews for LAYC members on their yachts during the spring and summer seasons. Thirdly, members of the sailing club might prove to be potential members of the LAYC.

In addition to the \$1250 loan, the LAYC provides docking and storage facilities at the club for Caltech's new boats and equipment. John Wells and Earle Burt (Caltech '15) of the LAYC Board have been the principal advisers for the unique sponsorship.

Besides its new material assets, the Caltech Sailing Club now has a stronger, better-coordinated organization. There are seven club officers, each with distinct duties and responsibilities specified by a new constitution. Membership cards are provided for the three school terms; and all activities at the harbor are governed by a set of rules of conduct and procedure. The club expects to have about forty-five members during the first term of this year.

The new program of the Caltech Sailing Club provides, primarily, sailing training for inexperienced men; and secondly, an opportunity for others to participate in intercollegiate regattas, using Caltech's boats.

Caltech may challenge any of the ten major colleges in California, Arizona and New Mexico to a regatta.

These regattas are held under the auspices of the Pacific Coast Intercollegiate Yacht Racing Association. In December, Caltech will again be represented in the Pacific Coast Championships at Newport. In February, the Caltech sailing team will again go north to Berkeley, and in May to Newport for the annual U. S. C. Invitational Regatta. Sailing races with local colleges will be held every three or four weeks.

Monthly meetings of the sailing club are also a significant part of the program. Last May, Mr. Howard Wright of the Transpacific Yacht Club (and LAYC) showed movies of the 1949 Honolulu Race, at a general meeting of the sailing club. At that time, Mr. Wright showed the existing curve which was used to determine the time allowances or handicaps of different boats in the Honolulu Race—and pointed out that the empirical results of the three post-war races did not conform to the time-allowance curve.

Members of the sailing club were asked to work on the problem; and the result has been a new curve based upon the empirical results of these three races. The Race Committee of the TYC has voted to accept this curve, and use it as a handicap standard for the 1953 Honolulu Race. This new standard for the greatest yacht race in the world will be called the Caltech Empirical Curve.

Two or three members of the sailing club already have bids to go on the next Honolulu race, in July; and others have been crewing on ocean racing yachts out of Los Angeles and Newport Harbors.