

The AUSTRALIAN 10 RATER

Stephen Crewes. National Historian 2006.

The '10' as it is called around my neck of the woods, has had a comparative short life as boat classes go in OZ.

In Australia, the Marblehead was king from the early days (1964 circa) and was settling down to become a really good class to race. For if you wanted to race another club, this would entail a 400 mile round trip to Canberra, from Sydney. So this 10 Rater class really started on a club by club basis.

I first heard about the 10 Rater when Doug Billing and Kevin Byrnes started talking about them in early 1968 circa. They were talking about stretching the water lines of a Marblehead that Doug had built some years before. I think they wanted to smooth the lines out or something on a boat called 'Stealer'. This boat was a beautifully made, planked boat. Any Museum would have been happy to show it but Doug was

not happy with it, for he had to put a 'stealer' plank in, when he was making it. You see dear reader this man is a perfectionist, when it came to planked model yacht hulls. To have a plank like that on your hull was just not good enough. Anyhow the discussion (in Doug workshop), went to and fro, till someone (I think it was Kevin) said why don't we extend the section spacing like a 'ten rater' to straighten the lines out. Well the discussion took on a new aire', like what do we know about 10 Raters. The day finished up that they were going to build a 10 Rater together, using the 'Stealer' Sections and spacing them further apart, say from 5" to 6.5" or something like that.



KA1 Paul O'Brien kneeling, Graham Langdown RO (cent) T Wveth sailing M . Wittv 'Bosun'. Nerana Lake.



Doug billing's 'Ranger' being held by Left T.Wyeth, J. Summerville back to camera. Scarborough Park Sydnev

At that time the 10 Raters was struggling with the 6000 divisor in the formula. Short waterlines were predominant then, as they are today. 10 Raters weighed on average 30 to 36 lbs. Now, what the problem with the formula was, it was giving these 30 pounders about 1050 square inches of total sail area. This, clearly, was not enough to drive the brutes. The rule fixers worked their 'flurry' to come up with a 'better rule'. (Let me say that in my humble opinion that rule fixers NEVER come up with better rules, just more complicated ones).

Ron Dunster from the Canberra Model Yacht Club was the design Guru in Australia then. For he had had several boat designs already printed in Model Boats magazine. He was enthused to try a 10 Rater too, and in turn got others in his club to try some designs as well.

Canberra Model Yacht Club and the Sydney Model Yacht Club held racing events, the 'Wind and Ding' regatta as they were called, every 3 months, turn about. So the next event we had, there was a discussion about 10 Raters going on while we were racing the M's in Canberra. There were some really interested people including the ones already mentioned. Ray Bennett (SMYC), Paul O'Brien (CMYC), Roger Hattersley (SMYC), Graham Langdown (CMYC), Jack Arthur (CMYC), Ron Fox (SMYC), Glen Cunningham (CMYC), Stephen Crewes (SMYC) and Terry Hemmings (CMYC), Tony Wyeth (SMYC) to name some.



When the clubs came together for the next 'Wing and Ding' in Sydney the first of the Ten Rater boats started to be shown. And I might add, started to be photographed, too. A date was fixed when we would run the 10 Raters, the long weekend in October was chosen as the first National 10 Rater championships time. For each class had their own long weekend national championships throughout the year.

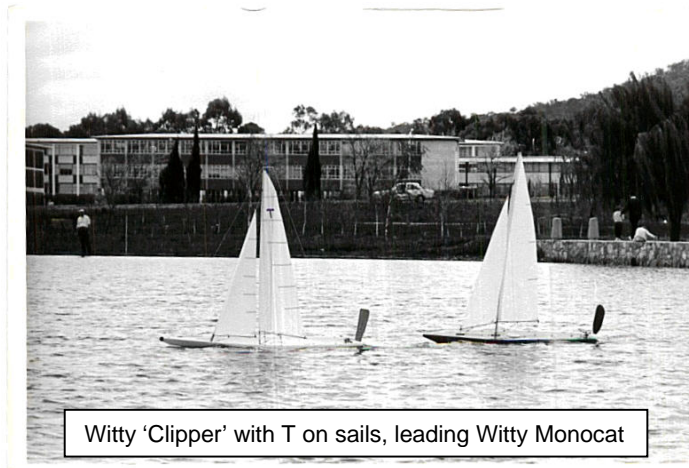
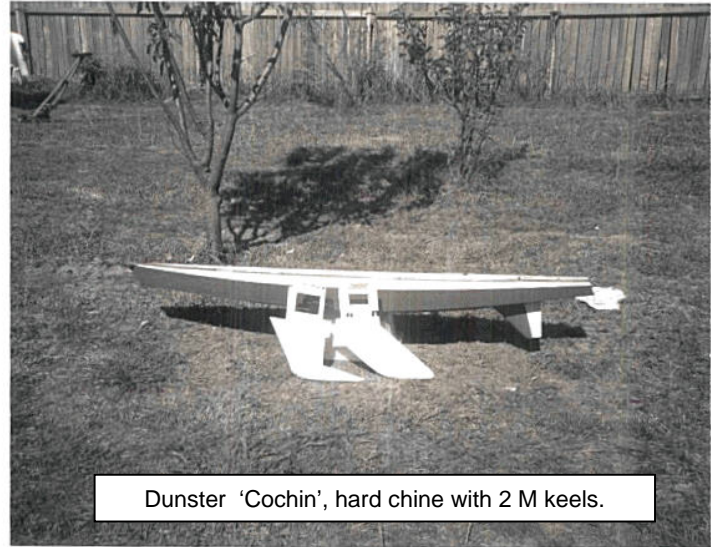
I want to say not all of the tens were a success. Kevin Byrnes (SMYC) came up with a boat that he took the lines (supposedly) off a successful Marblehead class boat, Legend, (circa 1966). This design came out totally unbalanced in hull form. It would gripe all over the pond on windy days. I felt like taking a gun to it, it was in such pain. The lengthened 'Stealer', that Doug did was superb in performance, for it could beat like it was on rails and run, with a spinnaker, like nothing our club had ever seen before.

Canberra's Members Graham Langdown, Jack Arthur and Paul O'Brien built 10 raters. Being a new class in Australia, those interested in the class didn't have any

information on what was good designs for the class. We did however, have the then almost outdated book, 'Model Racing Yachts' by Priest and Lewis which was written in 1954 circa.

The Ten Rater rule was going through a transformation of the rules at this time as well. The Divisor in the Equation of 6000 was being changed to 7500. So this in itself was at a time when unknown things in 10 R design were happening. Up to this time the "usual" Ten Rater was about 54" LWL and had about 1050 sq" of Sail Area, on a 14" draught.

Paul O'Brien's (CMYC) boat was a new Stan Witty (UK) designed 'Clipper', a long, flat run type hull that was just coming into vogue at that time. He said he carved it out of blocks of Surfboard foam, with a hot wire and a Surform (rasp) and did it very quickly too. Paul's boat became the Australia's first registered 10 Rater, KA1 'Obsession'. Another Canberra boat owned by Jack Arthur, 'SALLY' was KA2.



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The designers of some of these early Australian Ten Raters were into trying everything, including airfoil masts, double luff sails, twin keels and twin rudders etc and it was a time of flux in the class. Ron Dunster of Canberra tried a hard chine design, called 'Cochin'. Ron

won the first Canberra ACT Championships with this boat. It actually "sported" his Foxtrot Marblehead keel at the time of the boat's first outing, the day of the Championship.

The 10 rater has certainly come a long way since that early beginnings in Australia, particularly from the design table of Frank Russell, who with persistence, won through with a multitude of great designs including his famous scow designs, which I thought were fabulous.

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