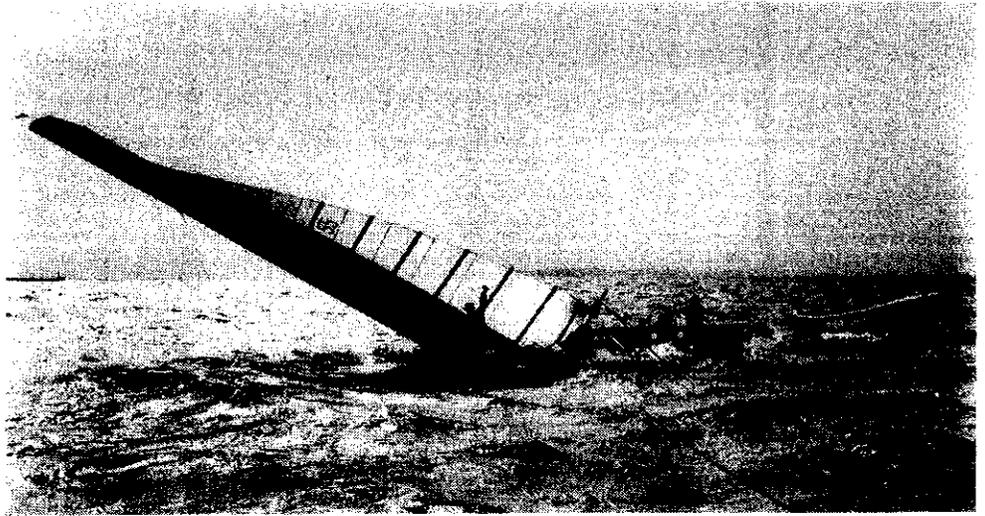


Little America's Cup

by David Pelly



Looking like some huge wounded bird, *Yankee Flyer* lies crumpled in the water after her main beam had collapsed

POP STARS, when they find that their popularity is on the wane, are apt to resort to exhibitionism: smashing guitars or splitting their trousers on the stage. I was put in mind of this when watching the "C" Class catamarans at Thorpe Bay where, in the face of studied public indifference, they laid on as frantic a display of knockabout sailing as I have seen, since the last Icicle race.

The way in which first one and then the other boat obtained crushing victories reminded one also of the ludicrous television wrestling bouts in which one of the contestants falls groaning to the canvas; the audience knowing full well that

Still the fastest in a breeze—*Lady Helmsman*



this is merely a feint before leaping to his feet and giving his opponent a smashing chin drop-kick and double-reverse Boston crab. In short, the whole thing seemed rather over-done.

The U.S. challenger for the Challenge Trophy consisted of the Bob Harris designed *Yankee Flyer* built by Edme Deschamps and sailed by Greer Ellis and Bill Hooten of Danbury, Connecticut. The hulls seemed to be conventional *Beverly* mouldings except that the bows had been given rather more rocker and a very deep bow knuckle, more of a shelf in fact, had been added. She was built of glass fibre and end-grain balsa sand-

wich and was not particularly light. The main point of interest was her huge wing mast which accounted for 43 per cent of the sail area. This was extremely well made and comprised a strong, thick-walled circular aluminium spar on to which frames or bulkheads cut from solid polyurethane foam had been built, the whole being skinned over with $\frac{1}{8}$ in plywood and a single layer of glass cloth and resin. It had the same straight leading edge and curved sail luff as Austin Farrar's design but was higher, bigger and heavier at around 160 lb. The aspect ratio of the whole sail-plain was about 4.5:1.

This mast was impressively smooth and

Anxious moments down wind—*Yankee Flyer*

