



Yachting

American yachting carried on the traditions and skills developed in the age of sail. America's first vessel built exclusively for pleasure was the brigantine *Cleopatra's Barge*, launched in 1816. This ship was built in Salem, Massachusetts, for Captain George Crowninshield of a famous Boston shipping family. America's first yacht club was the New York Yacht Club, founded in 1844. The following year, the club sponsored the first formal American yacht race in New York's harbor. The winner, William Edgar's schooner *Cygnets*, won a purse of \$225.

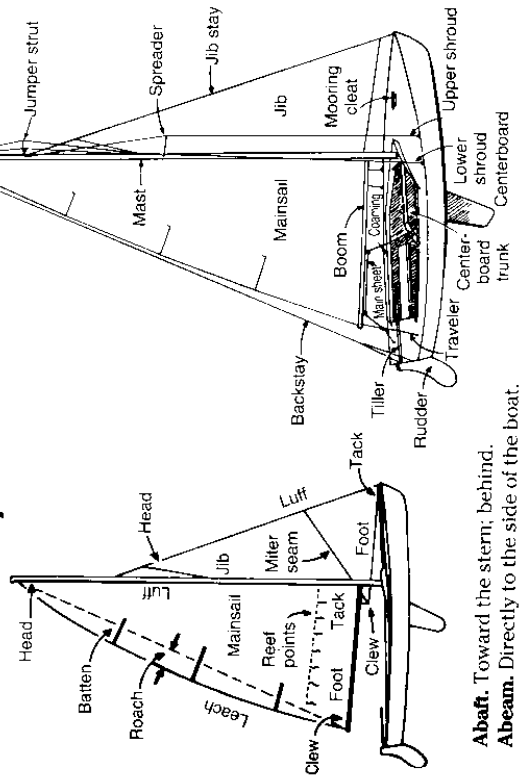
The first world yachting championship was sponsored by the 1851 London Exposition. The race was open to all classes of yachts and covered a sixty-mile course around the Isle of Wight, off the southern coast of England. The prize was an ornate 134-ounce silver pitcher, donated by the Royal Yacht Squadron. In this race, the schooner *America*, representing the New York Yacht Club, defeated fourteen other yachts and won the silver pitcher—the prize that is now known as the Americas Cup.

Since 1870, there have been numerous challenges for the Americas Cup. Some of the world's best and most famous yachtsmen, including the tea magnate Sir Thomas J. Lipton, have sought to wrest the "Auld Mug" from the grasp of the New York Yacht Club. In 132 years of racing, after several attempts, the undaunted crew of the *Australia II* scored a stunning four-to-three victory in the best-of-seven race.

The cup was returned to the United States in 1987. The American boat *Stars and Stripes* defeated *Australia II* in four consecutive races off the coast of Fremantle, Australia, near Perth. The skipper of the *Stars and Stripes* was Dennis Conner, who had been at the helm of the losing boat in 1983.

The "Auld Mug" continues to be sailing's most coveted prize and the race is now a wide-open affair. Many nations compete for the cup in trial races, eliminations, and final events. Because of satellite technology, what used to be a small yacht-club race is now viewed worldwide on television as sailing's greatest spectacle!

Glossary



Abaft. Toward the stern; behind.

Abeam. Directly to the side of the boat.

Aboard. On or in the boat.

About. On the opposite tack.

Adrift. Not made fast; lying around loose; not under control.

Aft, after. At or near the stern, or rear end, of the boat.

Alee. To the leeward side; when the helm is in the opposite direction to that of the wind.

Aloft. Above the deck.

Amidships. Halfway between bow and stern or port and starboard; in the middle of the boat.

Anchorage. A sheltered area where boats can anchor in reasonable safety and not interfere with marine traffic.

Astern. Behind the boat, or backward. An object is **astern** when it is behind the boat. A boat is **going astern** or **making sternway** when it is moving backward.

Awash. Level with the water; with water rolling over the deck.

Awelgh. The position of an anchor when it is clear of the ground.

Backstay. A wire brace let **aft** to support the **mast**.