



Campbell's crew displays the precision teamwork that helped him win. Here, in the sixth race, the spinnaker starts up as they bear off around a mark.



Seconds after the mark, the spinnaker is full and dancing. Still on his way to the weather mark is Ted Hood, well-known sailmaker.

Action at the weather mark. Buzz Boettcher (7225) holds high at the weather mark, preventing Campbell from bearing away.



TRIUMPHANT YOUNGSTERS

Text and photographs
by Lois J. Kennedy

***A USC junior, barely
21 years old, tops nine of
the nation's best skippers***

PRACTICE is said to make perfect, but youthful vigor and stamina, skillful helmsmanship and near-perfect crew teamwork helped keep the Congressional Cup title in Southern California for the sixth time, notably in the possession of Argyle Campbell, a 21-year-old University of Southern California junior racing for Balboa Yacht Club of Newport Beach.

Sloops borrowed for the March 19th to 21st matches were ten graceful Tripp-designed Columbia Fifties. In the previous five Congressional Cups, boats had been Cal-Forties and a return to craft of about forty feet overall is a distinct probability for 1971. As Dick Valdes, president of Columbia Yachts, commented, "Trying to persuade owners of \$70,000 yachts to loan them for the series is very difficult." Several of those used had never before been raced. Cup regulations, restricting sails to main, 6 to 6½ oz. 150 genoa, a ¼ oz. and a 1.2 to 1.5 oz. spinnaker, helped to minimize differences in the boats. Valdes was forced to use a borrowed mast and mainsail for *Escudero* as her own mast was too tall. But nothing could equalize the custom equipment installed by each owner.

Someone at LBYC must have had a pipeline to the weatherman. Winds stayed southwest to westerly between 10 and 18 knots, skies were clear and sunny, and the temperature between 65 and 70°. Even the smog stayed away from the Los Angeles basin the first two days.

Among the top-flight competitors, Argyle Campbell's closest rival for the maroon blazer of victory was the only younger skipper in the series: 19-year-old Frank (Buzz) Boettcher, a Woodbury College, Los Angeles, junior, racing for California Yacht Club at Marina del Rey. Pre-race odds gave the edge between them to Buzz, who had finished second in last year's series.

However, Campbell had survived the tougher eliminations, defeating 40-year-old Olympic gold medalist and three-time Star champion Lowell North by a slim margin. That San Diego-Newport Beach sailoff will long be remembered for the murderous duel of 27 short tacks on the final windward leg of the last race. It was described as "fantastic" and "unbelievable" by those in the following committee boat.

Sweet as that 3-2 victory was, Argyle and his crew realized they needed hard practice on their starts. Four of the five during the sailoff had been taken by the ace San Diegoan.



Campbell's victorious crew from Balboa Yacht Club pose on board, and grin as Campbell accepts his trophy from Commodore Leedom.

At the awards dinner, Argyle gratefully acknowledged the help he had received two weeks previously, when the Campbell crew had practiced against the *Columbia 50, Serapis II*, with owner Bill Barry's own racing crew manning winches and sheets. *Serapis*'s skipper had been Bill Ficker, acknowledged expert match racing starter who will be at the helm of the Twelve-Meter Intrepid during this summer's America's Cup trials. To casual observers, the two boats seemed to be playing some crazy game. It was a deadly serious game of simulated starts, each beginning at a ten-minute warning signal. The intensive practice paid off handsomely with the BYC team taking almost all their starts in the series.

The decisive battle of the "youngsters" came on the last day when they were first pair in the eighth race. Spectators, out watching the action on more than 100 boats, were rewarded with the most exciting of the 45 matches raced over the five-mile, twice-around windward-leeward course.

They were starting with identical 6-1 scores. At the first day's end, they had been in a three-way 3-0 tie with sailmaker Ted Hood, representing the New York Yacht Club. Friday evening, Campbell was the only one with a 6-0 beside his name on the scoreboard. Both he and Buzz had trounced Hood, in the 6th and 4th races respectively. Reflected one New York crewman, massaging his aching arm, "This Congressional racing is awfully hard on an old man over 30."

Buzz had fallen victim to LBYC's Barney Flam, wily veteran of five Congressional Cups. An eager crewman caught his foot in the genoa sheet as Buzz narrowly led Flam around the last leeward mark. Buzz bore off to clear the sheet tangle and Barney drove up to weather, crossing the line with over a minute to spare.

Campbell's one loss, to 33-year-old Bill Ibs, Jr. of New Orleans Yacht Club, was a surprise to spectators, race officials and, most of all, to the hard-driving Balboa Yacht Club team. Argyle ruthfully admitted later, "Nothing seemed to go right." Margin of Ibs's victory, his best race in the series, was a whopping 3 minutes 22 seconds.

Ibs and his crew had never before sailed a fifty-footer. The day before the races, 30 knot winds discouraged a spinnaker-setting practice session. The first time the New Orleans crew popped a chute on a *Columbia 50* was at the first weather mark of their first race. By Saturday, they had become well enough acquainted with their boat to take Campbell's measure.

Still smarting from defeat in that race, Campbell committed his only obvious error of tactics. At the next start, he was slightly astern and to weather of Boettcher as they crossed the line on starboard tack. Instead of holding his rival on starboard, Argyle flipped over to port. Buzz followed and stayed to weather the rest of the leg. They

charged down on the marker, like a pair of white horses racing neck and neck, with the California Yacht Club boat on the inside.

Boettcher elected to carry Campbell beyond the mark. The spectator fleet did a mad scramble as the sharp bows headed their way. But Campbell's crew coolly set their chute first, gaining half a boat-length.

Undaunted, Buzz immediately initiated a jibing duel, treating the spectators to flawless sail-handling as the two huge ballooning kites were shifted from port to starboard and back again with scarcely a wrinkle. On the second weather leg, now a boat-length behind, Boettcher started a vicious tacking duel, but in 10 tacks neither of the tenacious crews made an error.

Campbell's win assured him the 1970 Congressional Cup title and Race Chairman Downey Muir radioed the club to order a maroon jacket from the local supplier in Campbell's size 40. But there was still one more race. Flushed with victory, the young racing titans polished off Pat O'Neal of the Larchmont (N.Y.) Yacht Club, in the final pairing. Disheartened Boettcher bowed to Hawaii Yacht Racing Association's Cy Gillette.

Argyle's talented crew hail from two Newport Beach clubs. Andy Rose, 19, Bob Kettenhofen, 23, Tom Purcell, 20, John Prentice, 19, and Mark Hughes, 21, are from the Balboa Yacht Club. Ray Wilde, 21, and Peter Parker, 19, are from Newport Harbor Yacht Club.

Atlantan Ted Turner, fresh from capturing the Southern Ocean Racing Circuit crown with his converted Twelve-Meter, *American Eagle*, became the hard-luck skipper of the series. The main on the *Columbia 50* he received in the draw for boats was so old and out of shape it wouldn't draw well. Ted's usual salty racing vocabulary was reportedly in full flower. In spite of the poor main, Ted beat Barney Flam for a 1-2 score.

Next morning the race committee substituted a properly cut mainail. With the new main hoist on and functioning perfectly, the crew quickly had the 1.2 oz. spinnaker up and drawing rounding the weather mark. The lead over Hawaiian Cy Gillette was four boat-lengths when half of a horizontal panel on the chute ripped open. Score for that second day was losses to Gillette and Boettcher with a win over Ibs.

Saturday, with mended spinnaker, Turner displayed his championship style as he knocked off first Ted Hood, then Ches Rickard, Royal Vancouver Yacht Club, and Tom Fisher of Detroit, representing the Great Lakes Yacht Racing Union. Final Turner score, 5-4 for fourth place.

The chairman for the 1971 Congressional Cup series, Bob Graham, is already hard at work. First order of business

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