

Thrills at the Tiller.

treated. Sharks represented no real danger.

At New Caledonia several small yachts were specially built to favourite NZ designs. Contests were organised, and many exciting races were witnessed.

Back home these last five war years, the dwindling ranks of yachtsmen have endeavoured to keep the sport active until absent enthusiasts return. Competition has been mainly confined to local contests, and all are keenly awaiting the day when once more they can sit at the tiller of a sailing «dish» or keeler in a good stout breeze.

A new-style boat has aroused wide interest this year. Good things are expected of her, and her appearance in the V-class contests at Auckland in the coming season is awaited with enthusiasm. She was built in Auckland to an American pattern, 18ft overall, 9ft waterline, and 18in maximum depth.

She scarcely possesses the dryness and comfort characteristic of the better-known 18-footers, but the builder claims yachtsmen who delight in speed and ease of handling will get thrills in double doses and still be in no more danger than if sailing an orthodox V-class boat.

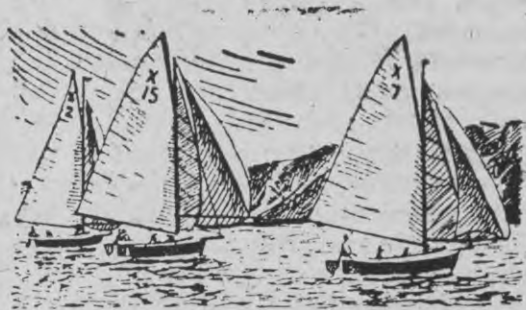
The hull is like a gigantic surf-board, with the greatest depth from deck to keel only 18in. The flat bow is 3ft wide, and this with a 4ft stern gives the boat a «skim dish» effect. She has no sheer. The forward deck curves outward and downward with a streamlined sweep, and the bow is formed where the topsider tapers away from 9in amidships to 1in forward. She has a long, narrow cockpit, about the same size as a «zeddie.»

All enthusiasts remember the champion Wellington 14-footer Betty, which built up a phenomenal record from the time she took the Sanders Cup from Otago in 1926. Her magnificent sailing qualities have retained for her the honour of being the wonder boat of the Jellicoe fleet. It was not until the Auckland contender Caress appeared that an equal of Betty was found. There has been

great disappointment that Caress has not had more opportunity of proving her class. In view of her performances, many maintain that she would have beaten Betty in a straightout contest.

The last Sanders Cup series was held at Auckland in January 1941. Caress made history by claiming the cup in three straight wins, the first time this has occurred in the 21 years of the race. Caress also won the cup for Auckland in the two preceding years.

A week before the 1941 Sanders Cup contest, the small fry competed for the Cornwell Cup on the Wanganui River. The holders, Wanganui won the first race of the series, but eventually had to bow to the Christchurch brothers, B. and P. Lamb, who won with the Blue Peter.



It is in these cup races that NZ yachting interest is principally centred. However, wherever salt spray and white wings fly, talk usually veers round to the famed America Cup contests and England's failure ever to build a boat to wrest the trophy from America.

It was in 1851 that the first race was sailed, and that grand old doyen of yachting, Sir Thomas Lipton, spent a lifetime of vain endeavour to create a Shamrock to raise England's pennant. He built five of these beautiful yachts—a new one for every challenge.

In the last two of the eight America Cup contests, always sailed in American waters, England's bid was made by Endeavour I and II but with victory still at bay. The last race was held in 1937. The American yachts which have successfully defended the cup down the years were Columbia (1899 and 1901), Reliance (1903), Resolute (1920), Enterprise (1930), Rainbow (1934), Ranger (1937).