



Anita Minter

My indoctrination with the Big Boys

by Anita Minter

(Club member Anita Minter was sponsored by Outrigger Canoe Club when she represented the U.S. at the Hobie 16 World Championships at South Padre Island, Texas. This is her story.)

After the start of Race One and being in shock for the next 36 hours, I realized this was going to be a real experience. The competition was going to be good, but I had no idea how good.

From 22 countries, 96 teams (13 representing the United States) were gathered at South Padre Island, Texas, for the 1978 Hobie 16 World Championships, Oct. 21 - 29, 1978.

Eighty skippers were pre-qualified, based on past year racing record or divisional championships. Some 90 skippers were competing for the 16 remaining spots in a two-day series prior to the championship itself. I was fortunate not only to have been pre-qualified to represent the USA, but also the only female skipper - which is an honor all by itself. I gradually became more at ease with some 50 boats on the start line (Hawaii's average, around 20).

I was quickly and shockingly made aware of how much faster your reactions have to be with little or no room for error. In one race, after

sailing almost the entire course with nice winds of about 18 knots, and having a down wind tacking duel with Hobie Alter, rounded the last mark in 12th place (Hobie and Dean Froome 2 boats behind me). I made one bad tack (costing me a few seconds) and wound up crossing the finish line in 24th position. Dean and Hobie were 10 boats in front.

Another new experience for me was the effect of the different currents and tide changes, tied in with the changing wind directions. The decision of "to go or not to go" was much more crucial than in home waters. The wind conditions were pretty much Hawaiian style - 10-25 knots with winds blowing upwards of 30 knots on the last day. Throughout the entire regatta, there was a short steep chop, except when the north wind blew which then kicked up a high rolling swell "a la Diamond Head"; but still remaining was the funny chop going every which way. That was one of my major problems. Although I didn't place too high in the standings, I had some of the greats right there with me. We couldn't believe how some of the top finishers just came out of nowhere, and really knew their stuff!

I learned many things during this series and will hold it as one of my most memorable experiences. The learning process is endless and I love it. A Texan taught me how to work with the chop; a Californian gave me more confidence in my port starts, and a gracious Brazilian showed me there is still such a thing as sportsmanship!

**December and January
sailing dates**

**DECEMBER 2, 3, 9, and 10
HYRA**

**MATCH RACE CHAMPIONSHIPS
17th DECEMBER - 21st JANUARY
LASER FROSTBITE SERIES
SUNDAYS KANEHOE**