

SOUTH AFRICAN SHARPIE ASSOCIATION.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING THE 8TH APRIL, 1966.

It is with some sadness that I present my report for the year 1965 to 1966.

At Lourenco Marques last July we all realised that the Sharpie Class was up against it. The Class was at that stage static, with no new boats under construction and little interest being displayed by Sharpie owners. With this in mind Mr. Hans Weis had built a prototype plywood sharpie, which was sailing at the Regatta at L.M. Following the Regatta he organised a postal ballot of S.A.Y.R.A. Councillors and obtained their agreement to the use of plywood as an alternative covering material for Sharpies. We felt that by providing an easier method of construction we might stir interest in the Class. Unfortunately our optimism was unfounded. No new boats have been built and many Sharpie stalwarts have deserted us for other classes. For the first time since Sharpies became National Class we failed to get an entry for a National Regatta. My own feeling is that we attempted too little too late.

We are now squarely at the crossroads. A move is afoot at S.A.Y.R.A. to have our National status changed to that of a Recognised Class, which would in effect relegate us to "O" class racing until we regained sufficient strength to warrant our re-instatement to full National standing. I am sure that this proposal will be accepted at the next meeting as our arguments against it are unconvincing.

Our membership now stands at approximately 40 paid up members and our active fleet, by which I mean active at National and Provincial Regattas, is falling off rapidly. Our chances of getting a full entry at Durban seem at the moment to be slim.

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I am still convinced that the need is great in National sailing for a three-man boat, but the tendency over the whole world seems to be towards two- and one-man boats, and I am possibly persuaded in my belief more by sentiment than by logic. I have spent many happy years in Sharpies, and feel that no other boat can offer me more.

At this meeting we must attempt to set a course of action for the future, the success of which will depend on the efforts of my successor as Chairman of this Association. At Lourenco Marques I stated quite clearly that I had not sufficient time to devote to the task, but against my better judgement was persuaded to carry on. The position has steadily worsened and is now absolutely impossible. Ann, too, can no longer continue as Secretary as she has accepted a part-time job. We have no alternative but to resign.

I am very grateful for the support you have given me, and would particularly like to thank Ann for all her efforts as Secretary of this Association. Thank you too, Hans, for your help over the past year, particularly in connection with the change of rules. All Sharpie owners are tremendously in your debt.

Finally, may I wish my successor and the Sharpie Class all good luck in the future.

TREVOR WELLBELOVED.

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