

From a full spread of modern Sixes with 3DL sails charging off a starting line to the image of the dusty yellow-colored modern ST. KITTS sliding along upwind with a white sand beach and palm-tree-covered hillside as a backdrop, the visuals in this book are stunning.

The magical aspect, aesthetically, is the amazing collection of period images of boats that have made their mark on the class and the people who owned, designed, and sailed them. Images of the boats of this time are pure poetry, including those of the legendary Sparkman & Stephens-designed GOOSE and the fine-lined TUTTIV, a Gustaf Estlander design, under sail.

A half-page shot of the British-American Cup team, including the hugely successful AMERICA's Cup sailor C. Sherman Hoyt, in 1923 taken on the S/S MAURITANIA is a fascinating glimpse into the past, each owner in a three-piece suit, straw skimmer hat, and pipe in hand.

The impressive aspect of this book is that you see images of the same boat racing in its heyday and also racing just last year. The timing of the book as it relates to the current renaissance in the class is perfect.

It's easy to just look in awe at the beautiful pictures on your first gaze at this book, but the chapters and text are tight little nuggets of detail that need not be read in order. This fun arrangement is tempered by the

different writing styles of the different authors that interrupt the flow of the book. This is largely because, as Pekka Barck recognizes in his foreword, the project was halted a year before publishing when his hard drive with all the book's research crashed. All the material was lost.

What happened after this disheartening blow was nothing short of inspiring as e-mails went out and class members volunteered to put the pieces back together. From coordinating the list of every known Six-Meter created to re-creating the designer and yacht profiles, this growing family of enthusiasts passed their first big test as a group with the successful release of this book. The list of various acknowledgments is long and spread throughout.

Broken up into chapters including the rating rules, racing, designers, yachts, and countries, the book attempts to be both a grand coffee-table book and the definitive book on the class. It does both, and it is easy to overlook the change in styles as you pore over the fun details of British-American Cups, Scandinavian Gold Cups, and World Cups of the past and near past. Many images lack captions, but it is fun to decipher their origins and the yachts within them.

It is a Herculean effort to try to sum up William Fife's, Olin Stephens's, Bjarne Aas's, or Ian Howlett's design influence on the class in two to three pages apiece. The

authors, however, did something that has never been done: they put it all in one place for us to see.

The introduction by Olin Stephens, designer of some of the most successful Sixes of all time, is both technical and brilliantly simple in its message. He gives his lifetime of perspective by looking at the class as a continuous being as opposed to a bunch of antiques being restored for the sake of restoration. They are raceboats and are still racing.

There are a few oversights in the book, but nothing can take away from the exciting compilation of images, stories, and statistics, including two bar graphs charting the number of Sixes built over time and the number registered by country.

In Barck's and Street's book, there is an image from the 1920s in Finland of spectators in rows of folding chairs watching as silhouettes of 18 Sixes race upwind in an offshore breeze. It seems to me, and to Cornelius Shields, that watching these boats sail is a rewarding, inspiring experience in and of itself. *The Six Metre—100 Years of Racing* gives you the feeling those Finns were experiencing at that moment, since, in my estimation, watching a Six-Meter sail is just about as exciting as sailing on one.

*Chris Museler is a regular contributor to WoodenBoat. He wrote about the issues of classic yacht racing for WB No. 201.*