



1924 Canadian Olympic patch

The Yachting World & Marine Motor Journal
Olympic Yacht Races

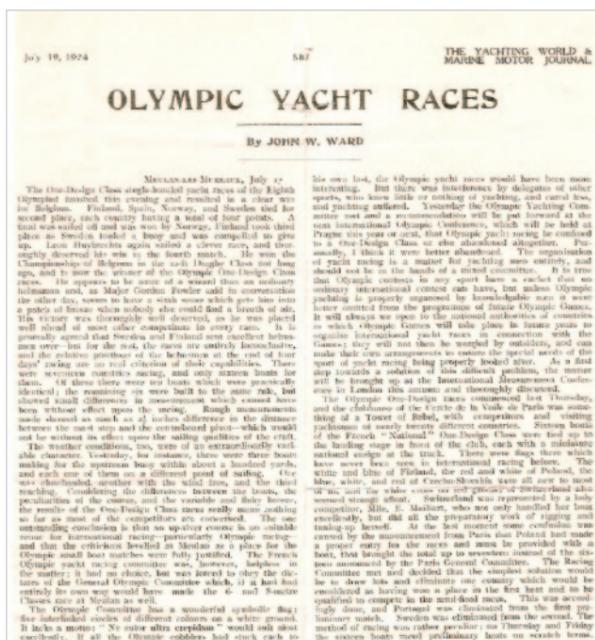
by John W. Ward

MEULAN-LES-MUREAUX, July 19, 1924

The One-Design Class single-handed yacht races of the Eighth Olympiad finished this evening and resulted in a clear win for Belgium. Finland, Spain, Norway, and Sweden tied for second place, each country having a total of four points. A final was sailed off and was won by Norway. Finland took third place as Sweden fouled a buoy and was compelled to give up. Leon Huybrechts again sailed a clever race, and thoroughly deserved his win in the fourth match. He won the Championship of Belgium in the 12-ft Dinghy Class not long ago, and is now the winner of the Olympic One-Design Class races. He appears to be more of a wizard than an ordinary helmsman and, as Major Gordon Fowler said in conversation the other day, seems to have a sixth sense which gets him into a patch of breeze when nobody else could find a breath of air. His victory was thoroughly well deserved, as he was placed well ahead of most other competitors in every race. It is generally agreed that Sweden and Finland sent excellent helmsmen over —

but for the rest, the races are entirely inconclusive, and the relative positions of the helmsmen at the end of four days' racing are no real criterion of their capabilities. There were seventeen countries racing, and only sixteen boats for them. Of these there were ten boats which were practically identical; the remaining six were built to the same rule, but showed small differences in measurement which cannot have been without effect upon the racing. Rough measurements made showed as much as 2½ inches difference in the distance between the mast step and the centreboard pivot — which would not be without its effect upon the sailing qualities of the craft.

The weather conditions, too, were of an extraordinarily variable character. Yesterday, for instance, there were three boats making for the upstream buoy within about a hundred yards, and each one of them on a different point of sailing. One was closehauled, another with the wind free, and the third reaching. Considering the differences between the boats, the peculiarities of the course, and the variable and fluky breeze, the results of the One-Design Class



“Canada had made a start, and Norman Robertson led the way for future Canadian competitors.”



Norman Robertson

races really mean nothing so far as most of the competitors are concerned. The one outstanding conclusion is that an up-river course is no suitable venue for international racing — particularly Olympic racing — and that the criticisms levelled at Meulan as a place for the Olympic small boat matches were fully justified. The French Olympic yacht racing committee was, however, helpless in the matter; it had no choice, but was forced to obey the dictates of the General Olympic Committee which, if it had had entirely its own way would have made the 6- and 8-Metre Classes race at Meulan as well.

The Olympic Committee has a wonderful symbolic flag; five interlinked circles of different colours on a white ground. It lacks

a motto: “Ne sutor ultra crepidam” would suit most excellently. If all the Olympic cobblers had stuck each to his own last, the Olympic yacht races would have been more interesting. But there was interference by delegates of other sports, who knew little or nothing of yachting, and cared less, and yachting suffered. Yesterday the Olympic Yachting committee met and a recommendation will be put forward at the next international Olympic Conference, which will be held at Prague this year or next, that Olympic yacht racing be confined to a One-Design Class or else abandoned altogether. Personally, I think it were better abandoned. The organisation should not be in the hands of a mixed committee. It is true that Olympic contests in any sport have a cachet that no ordinary international contest

Olympic Monotypes sailing out of base on the Seine river

