

class report

## tempest in a teapot



### *Anarchist Nick Mockridge breaks down the Tempest class for us*

The [International Tempest](#) is perhaps best known for being the only boat ever to have knocked the Starboat out of the Olympic Games; it debuted alongside the Star in the terror-ridden '72 Munich Games, and completely replaced it in Montreal four years later. US success in the Tempest was high, with Glenn Foster winning a silver medal in '72 and "Mr. America's Cup", Dennis Conner, winning a bronze medal in '76, and although the class continues to thrive in Europe - with the 2009 Worlds in Switzerland attracting 63 boats, sail numbers touching 1200, internationally-renowned builders ([1](#), [2](#)) a Mk2 hull and a larger spinnaker - like other ex-Olympic classes here in the US, it has struggled.

Arguably (and I stress "arguably" because this is Sailing Anarchy and therefore prone to heated debate!), the Tempest was ahead of her time. In an era (1965) when there were few dinghies with a trapeze and keelboats were, to use common SA vernacular, "5 knot residue boxes", the 22' Tempest keelboat sported a light, sleek hull, powerful sail plan and a trapeze, thus annihilating the competition in the Olympic boat trials despite being forced to carry an extra [88lbs of sand ballast in the cockpit](#). These attributes (with and without sand!) allowed her to plane readily downwind and made her very fast upwind when sailed by just two people - an anomaly for any keelboat and many dinghies in those days. She really was a dinghy sailor's keelboat; a pioneer in the sport boat movement, albeit 40 years too early to be fully appreciated. Yet despite a winning design and the involvement of some of the country's best boat builders (O'day, Schock, Lippincott and Plastrend), the class in the US fizzled out and died.



Or did it? Over the last few decades, thanks to passionate "spark plugs" in isolated pockets around the [US and Canada, the Tempest Class](#) has continued to percolate quietly beneath the ever-changing surface of the sailing scene. While some hulls have indeed become flower planters, many others have been well maintained and have been racing in PHRF and Portsmouth events nationally. And all of a sudden, whether it's because of the recent US "fun is fast" Sportboat phenomenon, the formation of

the [Vintage Yachting Games](#), or simply that the stars are finally aligned, the US attitude towards Ian Proctor's ground-breaking Tempest has dramatically changed: buyers have emerged, seeking boats to fit all budgets; old boats are being renovated and returned to their former glory; and used boats are being imported from Europe. The class is rising from the ashes!

<http://www.sailinganarchy.com/article.php?get=6423>

The US Tempest Assoc (which represents both the US and Canada) is desperately seeking the whereabouts of its 330+/- North American boats, and is turning to the sailing community for help. We don't care the state it's in - if you own, know the whereabouts of, or can in any way help track down one of these classic, sleek, elegant and downright fun sportboats, or if you're interested in finding out more about this timeless dinghy-keelboat hybrid, we want to hear from you today! Please [contact](#) the US Tempest Association.

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