

# FROM THE EDITOR

## The race for Askew's Cup

When I was a kid I loved to hang out at Askew's pond. It was located just across the field from my house and it was where all the kids on my street got together when they needed to get out of viewing distance of their parents.

The pond was a watering hole for Mr. Askew's cows, but it had some nice little fish in it, so in the summer we would get our old Zebco rods and reels out of the garage, dig up some worms and go fishing.

In the winter, the pond would freeze over and we would skate on it every day after school. It's funny, but the winters in Tulsa never seem to get cold enough to freeze the surface of Askew's pond anymore.

But we had never gotten the idea to put a boat in Askew's pond until the day Jamie Fiveash heard about the America's Cup and decided that we, too, should have a boat race. Now, everyone hated Jamie Fiveash, but he was three years older than us and we feared him too much to leave him out of our plans.

We thought the idea of a boat race on Askew's pond was a big joke — until Jamie threatened us. We reluctantly decided to go along.

As it turned out, Jamie already had a boat. A nice, big john boat, which he planned to paint and add a big sail, just like the participants in the America's Cup. Our gang didn't have a boat, but Harvey said he knew where he could find some boards.

We had only a week to build a boat, which wasn't much time for kids in grade school. We tossed out all the elaborate ideas — 75-foot cabin cruisers, 20-foot speed boats — and set out to build a raft.

We all decided that we should treat this task like an adventure. Someone mentioned that it reminded him of Huckleberry Finn. Upon hearing this, Jamie asked if anyone wanted to help whitewash his john boat.

Jamie would come by every day and tell us how badly he was going to beat us. And when he beat us, he was going to award himself a huge trophy he designed: the Askew's Cup. He had already engraved his name on it.

When the day of the race came, his boat gleamed in the sun. Our boat barely held together between Harvey's house and the pond. We dropped it in

the water and, amazingly, it floated.

Jamie had drawn up pretty elaborate rules for the race. He liked to do that kind of thing. The rules went on for five or six pages, but basically the rules prohibited paddling the boat or using motors to propel the boat.

There was quite a crowd gathered around by the time the race started. At exactly 6 p.m. the race would begin. When the starter gave us the word, we jumped in our boats.

Even with four people on it, the raft held up well. We hadn't had time to build a sail, however, so we didn't expect to do very well. Jamie had problems of his own. As we discovered that day, Askew's pond wasn't very deep. Jamie's john boat sunk into the mud.

Both crafts just sat there, unmoving. Jamie claimed victory because he was the only one to have a "real" boat in the race, but we refused to give up.

After about 15 minutes of Jamie's rhetoric, Harvey got tired of boat racing and pulled out his rod to go fishing. On the first cast he hung a lure in a tree on the other side of the pond and pulled hard to free it.

The raft edged forward. The more Harvey pulled, the further ahead we got. We instructed Harvey to reel in slowly. The more he reeled in, the closer we got to the finish line.

We were about halfway there when Jamie started yelling something about breaking the rules. We quickly read through the long rules document, but found absolutely nothing about being pulled to victory.

I don't know what kind of line Harvey had in his Zebco that day — it must have been baling wire — but within just a few minutes we had won the race.

We were never awarded the Cup, though. Upon losing, Jamie grabbed it and threw it in the middle of Askew's pond. I suppose it still rests there today — along with the remains of the S.S. Huckleberry Finn, the winner of the first and last Askew's Cup. □

*Audie Hinds*