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Robert Edward "Ted" Turner

November 19, 1938 -
Birthplace: Cincinnati, Ohio

"I lose my self-restraint and just get up and dance sometimes."

As a 12 year-old at the Savannah Yacht Club, Turner dove into sailing the same way he would do everything, with pedal to the metal and damn the torpedoes, and with wholesale success. He spent as much time in the water as in his Penguin, but while observers were busy laughing he started winning. He took the same approach to Lightnings, then dinghies at Brown University before moving on to Y-Flyers and Flying Dutchmen on Atlanta's Lake Allatoona. He would win the FD World's in 1965, the 5.5 meter Gold Cup in 1970.

Turner moved into big boats with charters for the Southern Ocean Racing Circuit, literally learning the ropes as he went along. He learned fast, winning the SORC overall in 1966, and leading a timber-rattling après sail crew celebration that was considered “outrageous.”

Turner’s venture into the America’s Cup in the 1970s shook up what was (then) a venerable bastion of propriety. His public battles with Dennis Conner, Lowell North, and local clubs are storied. He was labeled “Captain Outrageous” by a media overjoyed to have an uninhibited rock star in their midst who spoke his mind. Turner acquired *Courageous* after its Cup victory in 1974. Always loyal, he put together a crew of old SORC hands including tactician Gary Jobson and trimmer Robbie Doyle, and made the cover of
Sports Illustrated
after winning the right to defend the Cup. In 1977, Turner steered
Courageous
to a 4-0 sweep of Australia.

Turner won the coveted Congressional Cup that same year, and prevailed in the storm-ravaged Fastnet Race in 1979. The only man Voted Rolex Yachtsman of the Year four times, Ted Turner will probably be the last amateur skipper to win the America’s Cup.

- Roger Vaughan

Links of Interest:

32nd America's Cup Encylopedia page on *Tenacious*

Sports illustrated Cover, July 4, 1977 featuring Ted Turner

Ted Turner's page on Academy of Achievement

April 24, 2002 article on Ted Turner in Sailing World Magazine

Ted Turner Wikipedia page

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