



## THE RIGHT-OF-WAY

The El Toro sailboat is seven feet eleven inches long and weighs 80 pounds. The freighter *C. E. Dant* is 565 feet long and weighs 32 million pounds. When the two of them had a confrontation not long ago, it was, of course, the freighter *C. E. Dant* that gave way. This tiny ripple in nautical history occurred during the annual Bullship Race, a madcap affair in which more than 100 El Toros make their desperate way across San Francisco

Bay. Best say *try* to make their way, since the quality of each year's race is measured by the number of Toros that capsize. This year, the wind was negligible, and the day's most memorable event is recorded above. Hundreds of sailors on the Bay held their breath when it became apparent that a lone Toro was going to exercise the traditional, lawful right-of-way of sail over power. The onrushing *C. E. Dant* indeed reversed her engines and changed course, and those watching felt a secret thrill. On water, you just can't throw your weight around.

July 5, 2010

Dear El Toro Association & Stuart Sparling:

Attached is my scan of a picture from about 50 years ago. You recently mailed the framed photo to me Stuart, and of course you are the owner of my carefully crafted El Toro #8247. You're keeping it at Inverness Yacht Club, aren't you?

A different copy of this image of El Toro #2451 asserting right-of-way over the freighter "CE Dant" in San Francisco Bay used to hang in the Lake Merritt Sailing Club's committee room. Many former LMSC members (El Toro Fleet #4) will probably remember that picture! I note that Duncan Carter uploaded some photos a couple of days ago from the recent Independence Day Regatta at Lake Merritt... Duncan should recall the photo... The caption under the LMSC copy of "El Toro vs. CE Dant" indicated that the typical master of a merchant vessel like the CE Dant would doff his hat for a small sailing boat like El Toro 2451 -- and then stomp on that hat! ;-)

The caption that you provided, Stuart, is included under my scan of the framed picture, but I'm not sure of the image source, nor the exact date. I'm guessing the date is around 1960...

Thanks for sending me the framed picture, Stuart! I hope it can be shared on the ETIYRA web site...

Sincerely,

Robert S. Nelson

1971 El Toro Senior North American Champion