

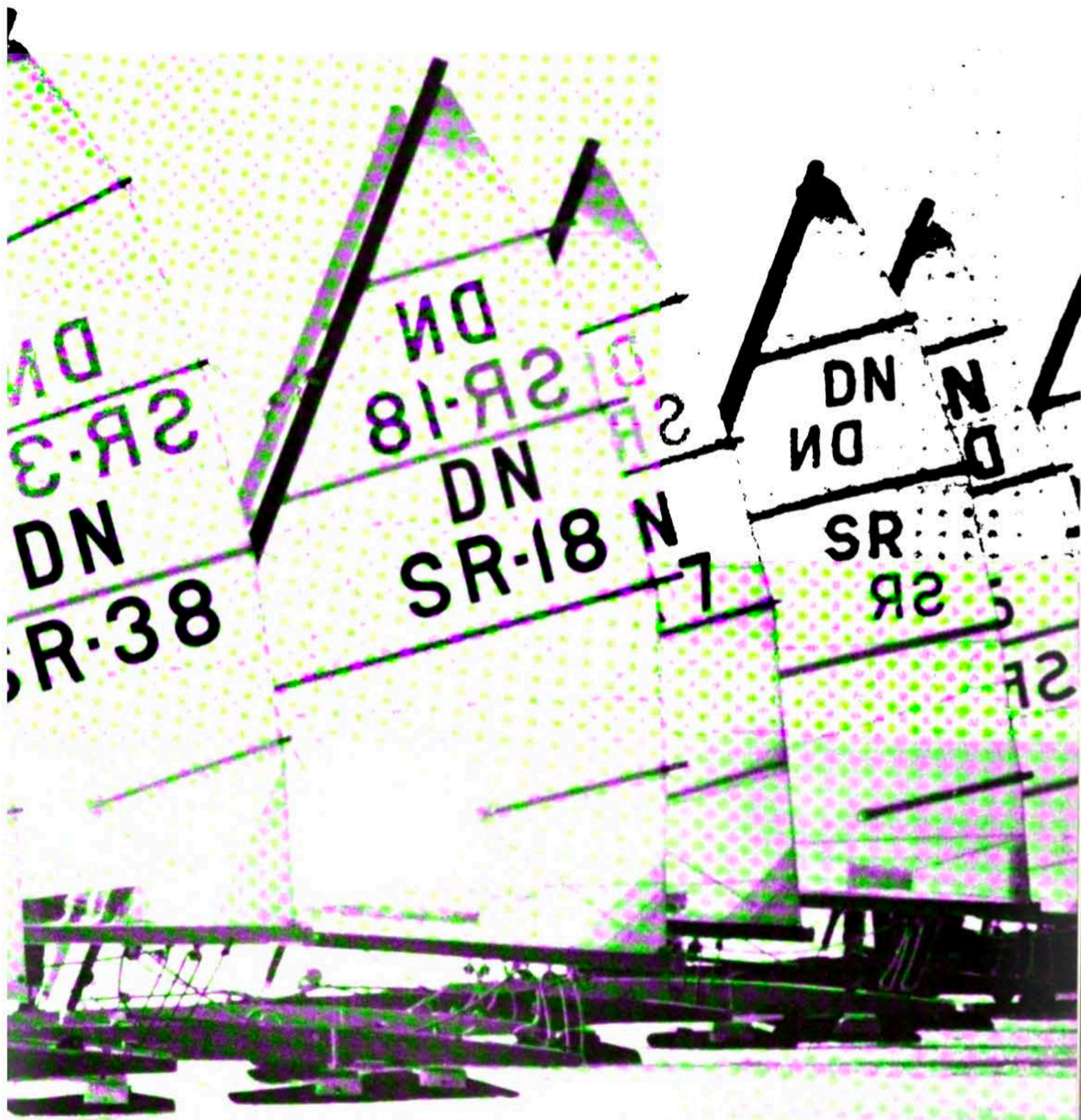


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**The Soviet ice-yachting hope is also a student at the Tallinn Polytechnic Institute. Above: The Vooremaas at home.**



**T**HE HOUSE OF CHAMPIONS best describes the Vooremaas' little house in the town of Haapsalu, a health resort in Western Estonia. Endel Vooremaa, the head of the family, is a three-time ice-yachting champion of Europe and a prize winner of many international competitions. However, his son **Vaiko** has also drawn a lot of attention lately. He is a two-time junior world champion and the USSR senior champion in the sport. In 1983 he won the gold for Europe as well.

Haapsalu is famed for its ice yachting. Since time immemorial the local fishers have gone out in the winter in their iceboats. According to historical records, it was in the late 1880s that the activity became a sport. The Bay of Finland, on which this small town is situated, is an excellent place for races on the ice. As for the secrets of designing and building strong ice yachts, they have been passed down from generation to generation. Incidentally, the yacht in which Endel won the first European championships in 1971, was built with his own hands.

After working hours, Endel can be found in his shop, building a better rig. **Vaiko** can also be found there, helping his father.

Endel maintains that diligence and patience are the main traits of any ice yachtsman's character. Diligence is essential in constructing a reliable boat, and patience helps to find good ice and read the wind. The problem is that Estonia's winters are unpredictable. Some years there is no snow, and other years there is so much snow covering the ice that it's impossible to go ice yachting at all. So, if the weather is good, the yachtsmen practice until dusk.

In 1980 **Vaiko**, who was then 17 years old, defeated his father at the European championships for the first time in his life. Endel, who had put on some weight, found it hard to overtake his younger and lighter opponents. That was a memorable year for **Vaiko**. As Estonia's top athlete (he was USSR junior champion in ordinary yachting, in the OK yacht class), he was asked to light the Olympic Flame at the opening ceremony of the regatta in Tallinn.

What does Endel think of his son's achievements? He believes that **Vaiko** has what it takes to win and that his biggest victories are yet to come.