Boats have moved on and so has the internet, so BYM has brought back “THE MAGAZINE”

ROLEX SYDNEY - HOBART PREVIEW
We sail in the Big Boat Challenge and get the low down

PLUS
THEY MEET AGAIN
Mirabella’s captain tells the tale

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE
Bruno Cathelenais of Bénéteau - the Xmas tree ships - Pirate Queen - Mirabella V & the Maltese Falcon - Megayacht launches - Francisco Rivas on Spain’s boating industry - Ocean Racing round up - MV Cougar Ace - April Fool - Giles Ollier & Groupama 3 ...............
SEASON'S GREETINGS

Gentle be the breeze,
calm be the waves,
and may all the elements
smile in favour on your wishes

(from COSI FAN TUTTE, comic opera in two acts, music W. A. Mozart libretto L. Da ponte, 1st Act, sixth scene)

Soave sia il vento,
tranquilla sia l’onda
ed ogni elemento
benigno risponda ai vostri desir.

(da COSI FAN TUTTE, opera buffa in due atti, musica W. A. Mozart libretto L. Da ponte, Atto 1, sesta scena)

Weht sanft, ihr Winde
Seid still, ihr Wellen,
Und alle Elemente,
Zeigt euch ihnen Immer wohlgesehen

(auf COSI FAN TUTTE, komische oper in zwei acten, musik W. A. Mozart text L. Da ponte, Act 1, sechste szene)

Souflez doucement, o vent
Soyez calmes, o vagues
Et vous, tous les elements
Soyez-leur clement

(de COSI FAN TUTTE, opera bouffe en deux actes, music W. A. Mozart text L. Da ponte, Act 1, sixieme scene)
When Boats Yachts Marinas magazine was launched, seven years ago, broadband wasn't around, nor were 19 inch TFT screens, powerful two step processors, mega gigs of RAM and many other things that today's internet users take for granted. In other words, it was ahead of its time.

So BYM changed, to become an on-line articles service and, later, the news service was added that is now - with its 5 news indexes - the leading leisure marine news service.

Next came a Photo Gallery, which now holds more than 25,000 images, with more being added every day.

Now, it's time to put the clock back and bring back The Magazine, something that many regular BYM visitors have asked for!

This first bumper Christmas issue mainly looks back, over some of the last year's highlights; future issues will bring you the latest stories, from the world of sail and motor boats.

The best of both worlds

Even though the pictures in this pdf magazine have been downsized to 72 dpi, rather than the 300 dpi that the print industry uses, the sheer quantity of content in 70 pages means that this is still a big file, by modem standards.

We know that, even now, there are people who do not enjoy the benefits of super high speed connections. We also know that, whilst some people like to download and print a magazine, to read at leisure, others prefer to read on line.

So, starting with the next issue, every month we will be putting the magazine on line, in HTML format - same content, but a different layout, with physically smaller pictures, for faster downloading.

The internet era

We are in the internet era; it and other technologies, are changing everything about the way we lead our lives. Fewer & fewer people take a magazine to the park, in their lunch break, or to the boat at the weekend; more and more take a laptop, an I-Pod, or a PDA.

Towns and cities are recognising this and providing free wifi in public areas.

BYM will also be responding to this, by providing more and more on line services, during 2007. This magazine is just the start of a new BYM era.

Once, the BYM magazine was ahead of its time, now it’s ahead of the game.
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AUTUMN INTERVIEWS

In 2005, BYM’s Aldous Grenville-Crowther interviewed the heads of five leading European boatbuilders, posing questions about China, new EU members, hurricanes, rising oil prices & their companies.

Bénéteau’s Bruno Cathelinais

Bruno Cathelinais, became President of Group Bénéteau when Annette Roux stood down in 2004.

Group Bénéteau reported 2004 - 2005 sales of €799.2 million, with sail boat sales up 6.5% and motor boat sales up 22.2%.

AG-C. China now or ten years?

BC. Not now and not in 10 years. Maybe in a few months, because China is a crazy country; it seems the time is not the same time as in Europe. I mean when you say 3 months in China it is 3 years in Europe.

At Bénéteau, we have just begun. We have opened a sales and marketing office two weeks ago and we begin. The goal of this office is to promote the design brand, for the brand is very important in China.

The brand is the most important thing, you have to keep absolutely to the brand and promote the brand first of all. Then you have to organise a dealer network, that’s very new for China and we don’t know how much time this will take. Those are the first and second objectives of this office.

For me, we can expect some boat sales in 2006, maybe, and I am sure we will have a few boats at the 2008 Olympic Games in Shandong.

AG-C. There is a 40 hectare marine site being developed in Shanghai would you be interested in taking part of that development?

BC. No, no, always in the past and think it will be the same in the future we have concentrated our efforts on our business, our core business. It means we create, we build boats and we sell boats.

AG-C. Thirteen new members have joined the European Union do you regard these as a potential sales area, or an opportunity for cheaper manufacturing?

BC. It is an opportunity, a low opportunity now and bigger for the future. At the end it is a marginal additional turnover, because the number of people who are able to purchase a boat is limited compared to Germany, England, Italy, Spain
& France. These remain the five main countries in Europe.

**AG-C. Hurricane Katrina devastated much of the US Gold Coast. Leaving aside the human loss, do you consider this a disaster, or a potential sales opportunity once insurance claims are settled?**

BC. I don’t know exactly the situation of the boatbuilders in this area and when you ask is it an opportunity for Bénéteau, I don’t think so. Each disaster brings business in terms of repair and spare parts, but not new boats, because you can repair a boat even if it is severely damaged.

**AG-C. Will rising oil prices have a major impact on sales soon and, perhaps more importantly, on production costs?**

BC. As a boat builder we are lucky, because in the cost of the boat there are so many choices and so many materials that the effect of oil is limited.

Wood, engine, resin, glass, the mast, the rigging there are so many different things in a boat, it means when only one raw material increases it has an impact, but only a weak impact, on the overall cost. For instance last year, if you consider the evolution of the increase in resin it cost 1%. That is big for one material, but globally it is not very big.

I think where we have an impact is on the customers who use boats, maybe they will be worried and, for that reason, everybody works on new engines, designed and, for that reason, everybody works on new engines, more efficient engines, gaining savings on fuel. So, with new models and new engines each year we save oil.

There is now discussion that the UK will lose its EU derogation on commercial boat diesel that can be sold very much cheaper than normal diesel. This could have an effect on small power craft sales, maybe between 6 and 9 metres, because the customer will be afraid of that.

**AG-C. Madame Roux started the Bénéteau of today, when she persuaded André to exhibit the Flétan at the 1965 Paris Boat Show and has clearly been a big force in shaping the growing of the company. Are there going to be any changes now that she has stepped down?**

BC. I think the change is relatively low, because it is an evolution as I have worked with Mme Roux for a long time - 15 years - and she is still the boss, because she is the main shareholder.

It is not that she is in the daily operations, she is not there, but I have many contacts with her. I think we share the same val-

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**1965 Paris Boat Show**

André and Annette kept rearranging their tiny stand but, beside glittering showcases of established manufacturers, their efforts looked amateurish. Annette began to regret what she had done, for Bénéteau bank statements were red and failure could mean bankruptcy. It was a disheartened duo who arrived to man their humble display. The doors opened, but most visitors were interested in deep keel ocean cruisers and luxurious motor yachts. Those who climbed to the 5th floor barely glanced at little Flétan, before going on to better presented boats. André and Annette became increasingly dejected until, as Annette says ‘the miracle happened’.
ues and we have organised the managers for a stable management; they know the company and the values of the company and we are going to follow the initial development.

I think the customers will feel the company is exactly the same in the future.

**AG-C. Bénéteau and Jeanneau are synonymous with sailing yachts, but there is now an increased focus on motor boats and they seem to be targeting the 9 to 12 metre range that many yards are phasing out, because of demand for bigger boats. Does Group Bénéteau see this as a potential sales growth area?**

**BC.** We are not focused on the power boat, the first aim of the Bénéteau Group is to continue to be world wide leader in term of sailing boats. The additional strategy is to be important, in Europe, in power boats.

We consider the two brands and the ranges we have organised, especially between 9 metres and 15 metres, where we had no presence before 2000, gives us the opportunity to enter the top 5 and I think that will be the case at the end of 2005; we have to check that, but I think it will be the case.

After that, I consider that, by 2008, we have the opportunity of the third position after Azimut and Ferretti. After that short period, because 2008 is tomorrow, we have to consider the next step and that will be probably two things; first is an additional range and second it means other sizes. I don’t say more. Also an additional area, which means outside Europe; probably we can consider that.

**AG-C. Bénéteau yachts have a superb ocean racing record, yet there are still significant numbers of sailors who would not buy one, as they cannot accept that a mass produced yacht can be as good as one produced in smaller numbers. Do you have a strategy to overcome this?**

**BC.** I think mass production is the opportunity to have a better quality, because you can use modern tools, good material, better raw material than when you build a few boats per year.

On the other hand, I think the difficulty is to be close to the customer, when you sell so many boats, that’s the reason why the dealer network is so very important. The future will depend on the dealer network, if it is very close to the customer, then the customer will be sure of a good quality product, but also a good personal relationship.

I think that is the complaint, the big complaint when the customer says “I am nothing, I appreciate this brand, this range, but I feel I am nothing and I put much money on the table”.

It means we must be concerned and focused on the relationship with the customer, because we sell every year nearly ten thousand boats and to be close to the customer, each customer is important, because it is a big decision for them and they merit continuation; that is the role of the dealer network and we have to work on that.

**AG-C. Is the present demand for more comfort and space in yachts pre-**
senting design and cost challenges?

BC. The volume and space is a really big concern in terms of design. It not a problem in terms of cost, but a real problem in terms of design. There is always the same challenge, between the functionality and the design.

If you are in the USA the first criteria is the function and if you are in Italy the first criteria is the design. We have to organise in today’s case, and it will be the case tomorrow, we have to organise a compromise between the functionality and the design.

It is not easy, it is not at all easy. The creative people are so important in our business, because it’s a kind of cosmetic surgery when you create a boat; one millimetre wrong and it is not the same result. Do you understand?

AG-C. Yes, I do. Thank you Bruno Cathelinais.

André-Benjamin Bénéteau - naval architect

It seems strange that someone who disliked going to sea should join the Navy, but André-Benjamin knew it would feed him, clothe him, make him literate and teach him mathematics. He would study hard, spend nothing and decide on a future career.

Before long he had that career planned for, studying the classic lines of the naval vessels, he realised he had ‘an eye for a boat’. When his naval stint was over he enrolled at Rochefort’s prestigious college of naval architecture.

In 1884, the newly qualified young man came home to Croix-de-Vie, set up his workshop on the hard and built his first fishing boat. Fishermen liked to have a boat built in their home port, where they could watch progress, so reasonable success was assured, but it was quality, not convenience, which brought orders flooding in.

Even the uninitiated could see that Bénéteau’s boats were in a different class from those built by the other local yard. Their entries were sharper, the lines finer and performance superior. They sailed closer to the wind, came about more quickly and, when light airs kept others in port, Bénéteau boats would ghost along on a breath of wind. Soon the young constructor had more orders than he could handle. It was time to move to a real workshop, at nearby St Gilles, and start training people to work for him.
The Chief Operating Officer of Hydrogen Engine Center, Inc., Bob Morrison, has announced that the Company has received a Letter of Intent from an investment group Brightwell Holdings BV, representing Turkish boat builder Labranda and in cooperation with UNIDO-ICHET (United Nations Industrial Development Organization and International Centre for Hydrogen Energy Technologies).

The Letter of Intent puts HEC in position to design, test, build and ship up to 200 alternative fueled marine engines capable of running on compressed natural gas and/or hydrogen for use in water taxis. The water taxis are a 10.9 meter long catamaran boat that will provide transportation for up to 10 people in seaside towns.

The marine engines would be built based on the HEC’s new 7.5L V-8 and are intended to replace the 240 HP diesel fueled engines currently used to power water taxis in Turkey, UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Greece.

The U.S.-based Hydrogen Engine Center, Inc. designs, manufactures and distributes alternative-fuel internal combustion engines for the industrial, distributed and standby power generation markets.

HEC representatives recently spoke with numerous interested parties at the Power-Gen International show in Orlando, Florida about other applications for the new 7.5L engine including power generation, hybrid electric vehicles, irrigation and other industrial applications.

“The addition of the 7.5L engine to the HEC product line-up will provide the company with the most diverse product mix in the alternative fueled industrial engine market,” stated Morrison. “With UNIDO-ICHET working to facilitate an educational and technological exchange between developing and developed nations, we are charged with creating and delivering commercial engine technology.” said Morrison. “We are very pleased to have this opportunity to work with Labranda. It demonstrates the viability of developing new power systems and energy sources as part of a global initiative to employ clean and renewable energy sources.”

With a newly built manufacturing plant, Hydrogen Engine Center, Inc. is able to quickly manufacture and ship alternative fuel engines to previously untapped markets. Over time, the Company expects the marine industry to have a high demand for alternative fuels and non-carbon based emission engines.

Joe E. Lewis, III, Vice President of Engine Sales at HEC, remarked, “When it comes to alternative fuel technologies, the marine engine market is wide open for significant new business development. At HEC, we are focused on developing the world-wide market for reliable, site-specific, renewable power generation and alternative fuel internal combustion engines. The marine engine industry segment is a prime example of how our engine and fuel technologies can serve a diverse marketplace.”

THE FUTURE FOR MARINE MEDIA?

Next year, Americans are projected to spend an average of:

- 1,555 hours watching television, **UP** from 1,467 in 2000;
- 974 hours listening to radio, **UP** from 942 in 2000.
- 195 hours using the Internet, **UP** from 104.
- 175 hours reading daily newspapers, **DOWN** from 201.
- 122 hours reading magazines, **DOWN** from 135.

Figures from the Census Bureau’s annual Statistical Abstract of the United States.
THE CHRISTMAS TREE SHIPS

This year the brand new Coastguard cutter Mackinaw brought Christmas trees to Chicago. In days gone by, they came in old schooners. One of these, the Rouse Simmons, was to become the subject of legend. This is her true story.

There have been many Christmas Tree ships, before the Mackinaw, but none is better known than the ill fated Rouse Simmons, about which a whole series of fictional and non-fictional tales have been written, turning the schooner into a legend. We have studied contemporary accounts of the Rouse Simmons and her sometime master Herman Schuenemann and found the real story is more interesting and poignant than the romanticised versions, which began to evolve in the days after she was lost and have never ceased to proliferate.

August Schuenemann was the family breadwinner, when the exceptionally hard winter of 1874-75 threatened the health of everyone in the Great Lakes community. That year, his father, Frederick – who had erysipelas – lost most of his sight and, unable to support his family, was forced to accept money from the county poor fund. August’s sister, Mary, was committed to a mental asylum.

Schuenemann was then
working for a schooner owner, called Johnny Doak, who had taken a liking to the young man. Calling Doak “schooner owner” may conjure up an image of wealth, but is far from the truth. Doak owned a poor ship, called the Emily Doak, and made a precarious living hauling stone that he picked up from the shore, taking cargos from wrecks and using every opportunity he could to earn a few dollars. Nevertheless, there was good demand for stone and it was time of relative prosperity for Doak and those who worked for him.

In 1875, Doak came across an old schooner, W. H. Hinsdale, lying near Milwaukee, in poor condition and offered August her captaincy and a share in her. The Hinsdale was lengthened and repaired, at Ahnapee, and, in 1876, took 1,300 Christmas trees to Racine, Wisconsin. Less than a year later, August lost her on rocks, approaching St. Josephs, Michigan.

In summer 1879, Ahnapee sawmill owner Charles Fellows had trouble with the crew of his scow schooner, Sea Star, and replaced every man and made August her captain. Fellows’ business was well set up, so this little ship – lengthened and rebuilt in 1880 – was far better maintained than the Hinsdale.

Her main work was carrying timber for the sawmill, but there are records of her carrying Christmas trees to Chicago in 1883 and ’84. Sadly, she was badly damaged, in 1885, when the steamer Peerless hit her and, having been sold and never properly repaired, she was wrecked at Clay Banks the next year.

In 1886, August again took Christmas trees to Chicago, this time as master of the Ole Olson, and then became a ship owner again. The 60 ton scow schooner, Supply, was sold to unknown Ahnapee interests – almost certainly the Schuenemann brothers - by the US Marshall, after her captain had defaulted on a shipyard bill.

August is recorded as selling her in 1889, having carried Christmas trees to Chicago the two previous years, and buying the Josephine Dresden for $1400. The brothers must have lurched between being close to the breadline and relative affluence, judging by the varying quality of their boats, which appeared in one name or another and sometimes under a spouse’s name, presumably to guard against the fleet being taken in case of debt.

August’s next ship was the old Seaman, a 120 foot long, 180 ton boat built in 1848. In 1895, she lost her mast – no doubt through rigging weakened by age and poor maintenance - in a storm on Lake Michigan, but August used her to carry Christmas trees that year, by having her towed from Sturgeon Bay to Chicago by a steam ship. She was rigged again and, despite being damaged by a storm next year, August again took her to Sturgeon Bay for Christmas trees, before abandoning her.

At this time, Herman appears to have been mainly handling what could be termed the onshore aspect of the business, arranging cargos and overseeing business ventures, which ranged from cafés to grocery shops. It was, probably, he who changed the Schuenemann style of doing Christmas tree business.

Until then, the brothers had
mainly sold trees to retail outlets, but from 1896 they sold direct from the ships, decking them out with lights and notices saying “Lowest prices”. It was a better business than using middlemen, but it was still risky. If they got into Chicago when demand was brisk they could make excellent money, if they were late the trees could hardly be given away.

Sometimes an extra ship was hired, like the Grand Haven rigged schooner Mystic, a vessel of 160 tons, but she went ashore on Pilot Island, outward bound to collect the trees and Herman had to hire the M. Capron. (A Grand Haven rigged schooner was a converted three master, with the centre mast removed and a staysail on the mizzen.)

In 1897, the brothers acquired the largest ship they were ever to own, the 231 ton Mary L. Collins, which had first been wrecked at Sister Bay, in 1883, and, again, on South Manitou Island, ten years later. On each occasion she was written off, but subsequently salvaged and repaired. This was another $1400 purchase, suggesting that this was a period of greater prosperity, but that could not have lasted long, for the next buy was a very different vessel.

The increasing use of steam ships was an opportunity for August and Herman Schuennemann. It meant that a small old boat, needing work, could be bought for next to nothing, near hulks that did nothing for the rest of the year. Typical of them was the 210 ton George L. Wren, whose rigging and hull were described as “a sorry sight” when she went to Manistique for trees, in 1906.

There is nothing to suggest that the 42 year old, 205 ton, 123 foot Rouse Simmons was in any better shape, when Herman first leased her for the Christmas tree trade in 1910. In fact, she would have, almost certainly, sunk the previous year, but for assistance from the car ferry Grand Haven.

The ferry had been en route from Grand Haven to Milwaukee, when the Rouse Simmons was seen, in near sinking condition and flying...
a distress signal. The ferry’s master went to her assistance and managed to get a line on her and tow her to Milwaukee.

The Rouse Simmons was lost, with all hands, off Two Rivers point, at around 4 pm on November 23, 1912 and the media started the legends, which continue to this day. Her story is not that of a benevolent and affluent Father Christmas, going down with his fine ship. It is just one part of a story of men struggling to create a better life, by knowingly risking their lives in weary old wrecks.

So, don’t think of her as “THE Christmas Tree Ship”, spare a thought for the hundreds of men who took appalling risks, in the dozens of once proud, schooners that ended up as ‘Christmas Tree Ships’ and delivered trees all around the Great Lakes.

Marian Martin

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**CHICAGO HIGH RISE GETS VERTICAL WI-FI**

MDI Access - an Alsip, Illinois provider of high-speed Internet solutions to multi-tenant residential and commercial properties - and Draper and Kramer, Incorporated - a Chicago real estate company - recently announced that 1130 S. Michigan Ave. had gone live with the city’s largest residential high rise Wi-Fi system. With 656 apartment units, the 43-story building has the most units in the city linked by a single Wi-Fi system.

“With this solution, they save the expense of purchasing DSL or cable,” he said.

Ten wireless access points - constructed on the exterior of 1130 S. Michigan - connect to a wireless “backbone” inside the building, providing Internet access to all residents.

Heiderscheidt said this “outside in” approach enabled his company to reduce the number and corresponding cost of access points down to 10 from about 80 that would, normally, be required for a building this size, if the access points were located inside the building.

Heiderscheidt said the 1130 S. Michigan solution was driven by the building’s manager, Draper and Kramer, which wanted to spare the enormous costs and time of rewiring the entire building. “They told us they weren’t going to pay to rewire the property, they wanted wireless, and they wanted it for less than half the price of a wired solution.” Heiderscheidt said. “We delivered on all counts.”

Draper and Kramer manager Randal Agostini, who supervised the installation, said the new system “bathes the entire building with Wi-Fi signals” and works much better than other Wi-Fi approaches they tested. The new system spared having to run wires and cabling through stairways, corridors and residents’ units. “The installation of the system didn’t inconvenience our residents or our building’s staff.” he said. MDI Access provides telephone and in-person customer service to residents needing assistance.” he added.

Heiderscheidt said vertical local area network Wi-Fi deployments in high rises will still be necessary if the city of Chicago installs a municipal area network. “Municipal networks are horizontal and only cover the first few stories of a building,” he explained. “What we’ve done is taken your typical municipal layout and turned it 90 degrees.”

Draper and Kramer is currently working on bringing additional properties in the portfolio “live” with Wi-Fi and is very pleased with this progressive technology.
“Having spent 2 years listening to dockside gossip about Mirabella V, I was sceptical about what she could do. Critical whispers had suggested she was beset with problems.

So, I set out, on September 24, to find the answer to what Aldous Grenville - Crowther, Technical Editor of BYM News wanted to know. “Is the Mirabella V really a motor boat with the world’s tallest mast, or a sailing yacht that can push the envelope?”

James Scott-Anderson - J Class tactician.

First, I put a question to owner, Joe Vittoria. “The big thing about Mirabella is that she is the biggest thing in the world, so why, with all the available technology and all the money that's been spent and Ron Holland as a designer, couldn’t she have been made a better sailing boat? Why are there tacking constrictions, because the mainsail has to be dropped to clear the backstays when, if you ’d reduced the mast height by ten metres it could have been made a lot faster? Dockside gossip says ‘It’s the biggest sloop in world, because Joe wanted the biggest in world and that’s the only reason it was built, but it
Joe Vittoria: “Yeah, I know this and, you see, I don’t have a boat building business that advertises, so, because I don’t advertise, the magazines just don’t need to worry about what they say about it. People like to write negative things, but they won’t write negative things about a Feadship, or a Lurssen, because there is too much advertising at stake. I hate to be commercial, but that’s what it’s all about and I understand that. I’ve sailed on it, I know what it can do, despite what some people have said. I know that anyone we take sailing on it will understand its capability.”

JS-A: Next I put a technical question to designer Ron Holland; how does the boat deal with a Chinese gybe and, if that arose, what are the systems that would help to get through it?

Ron Holland: “It would be a huge accidental crash job and you’d break something, like rip the sail. So you just don’t do that. Because you have two sheets we are controlling the boom very well, it can’t go bang bang right across and the two sheets give you a much smaller range of uncontrolled boom movement.”

JS-A: Do you have some system where you can very quickly release the load on the vang?

Ron Holland: “Yes we do, but basically this is an operational thing; just as you can’t fly a 747 into a stunt manoeuvre, so you can’t sail this boat without being aware of what’s going on. You sail this boat sensibly, so we have operational limits that we don’t have on say a J24.”

It was time to go sailing!
Outside Monaco harbour, Mirabella’s crew set about hoisting sail. Joe Vittoria had explained that they were using a secondary halyard system as they were re-designing the main one after it had broken earlier in the season.

**The biggest mainsail in the world**

Even though it was a slow process, it is understandable considering her main is the biggest in the world. Once it was up, the number two jib was unfurled and we had about 10 to 18 knots of breeze and were sailing upwind on a close reach with the wind at 75 degrees apparent. The Falcon was about quarter of a mile from of us. We were heeling 15 degrees, which was very comfortable sailing, but the speed was surprising. We were doing 15 to 16 knots and this was just on GPS data.

Once we settled in, we found that we were able to match the Falcon’s speed – a big surprise even though this point of sail is not the Falcon’s best. It was nonetheless a great thing, as her hull length and sail area is greater than Mirabella’s, and especially as problems with the roller reefing mechanism meant that the sloop couldn’t use her big foresail.

**A talented racing sailor**

Tom Perkins, a talented and very experienced racing sailor, later said that it had been a great experience to have been out sailing with the Mirabella V and it had been a wonderful sail.

To be on a yacht of Mirabella’s size and to be sailing so well is an extraordinary experience. Mirabella has never been noted for her sailing ability, but this is something that can now change. The hull motion, which is one of the
best indicators of good performance, is excellent; lifting and surging forward into the swell with a long steady motion, allowing the rig and sails to provide uninterrupted power.

**Not enough practice**

The breeze picked up very quickly and soon we had to come about to put a reef in and prepare to drop some of the guests and film crew off. Even on charter – so the crew do not have as much practice as they could. It was whilst we were manoeuvring that, to use Joe Vittoria Junior’s phrase, things ‘went pear shaped’ and the Falcon came very close to us, much to the delight of all on board, who had been struggling to get photos on this gloomy day.

Later, BYM asked Joe Junior why the Falcon had come about so suddenly? Here’s what **Joe Vittoria Jnr** told them: “We had been sailing for a while, on the windward side of MF when the decision was made that we should tack. Part of the tacking procedure (maybe MCA requirement, I am not sure) is to fire up at least one engine in case we need extra manoeuvrability during the process. The engineer went into the wheelhouse to start it up. The props had been feathered during the sail and the shaft brake was on. The procedure would, normally, be to de-feather the prop and then to release the brake.”

**The impact of de-feathering at 17 knots**

“The engineer told me afterwards that this procedure is hard-coded into the system by Kamewa (Rolls Royce), so I am not sure why it is done that way, but it is bound to be for a good reason. In any case, they had probably not...
What about the stories of always sailing with reefed main?

Joe Vittoria: This is an ‘our kind of wind’ day and, when we go out I’m not sure what the captain’s going to do, but my guess is that until we get into the video session, with the helicopter, we will probably keep the main reefed and we do that because the rig was designed to be reefed in the Caribbean and for full use in the Mediterranean. That’s because of wind strength, but the reefed main is the basic sail plan of the boat and I wanted it oversized. I’ll explain, when I started buying Camper and Nicholson boats in 1971, I was the first to say “I want the mast higher and a bigger sail. I want more rig, because I’m taking the boat to the Mediterranean, but you build all your boats for the winds and seas around here.” So all my boats - 30 footers, Ron Holland ¾ tonne, 48 footers, 40 footers - I put a bigger rig on them. So, talking to Ron, I said “I want to put a bigger rig on this one as well, because that way, when its 10 knots in the Mediterranean, we can sail .... and we can.

thought about the impact of de-feathering, while running at 17 knots and the result was that the brake started slipping and then tore off its seat. Luckily, it also tore off the hydraulic hose and so the brake opened, thereby preventing it from going round with the shaft. When the brake started to slip it caused a lot of white smoke to come up the engine room vents and this was noticed quickly, precipitating a call to the engineer to go to the engine room."

“For safety sake the captain decided to signal a fire alarm and we mustered in the designated place (as instructed in a general briefing before we went out that morning). Engineers quickly reported that all was fine, it was not a widespread problem, but meanwhile the boat had been pointing upwind for a considerable period of time and the crew, having had to muster also, were now facing a jam in the first reef point sheet. They were facing 35 kts of wind and were trying to get the main sail down, when we noticed a small rip in the first segment. Luckily for us, this did not ruin the day, because we never needed the full main after that anyway.”

Falcon to windward

“I did not see what happened to Maltese Falcon during all of this, but I noticed that she was now windward of us and quite close. She could not have known what we were trying to do and that she was now inadvertently, blocking our ability to complete the tack, so at that point the captain looked at my father who was signalling “down” and he agreed and the main was taken down. I then spoke to several people who said, while we were mustering, "Falcons in reverse?"

Maltese Falcon tacked, but seemed to have caught a big gust as she swung her sails (cross-booms?) across which would have appeared to have caused her to scrub off a lot of speed, almost to the point of looking like she was in reverse. My engineer (who is friendly with MF’s engineer)

The man behind the Mirabella

Joe Vittoria: Bob Direcker was a very passionate guy and, one day, I started a conversation with him, because we often met to just talk about friendly things, and I said to him “Bob, do you think it would be possible to build a sloop; like 180, or 190 feet long?” His first answer was “Well I don’t see why not.” Then I started saying that I wanted it to be a performance sloop, so the keel depth came in, because Bob’s mind immediately went to the size of the mast. I said I want the mast to be at least 20% higher than the boat is long.
said “Wow bet they never did THAT before.”, but having read their web site blog, I think they have done just about everything. It was frustrating to be sitting there like that, but we learned something from all of it and so did the crew, who had not had much practice in 35+ knots of wind. We will be speaking with Kamewa about changing the procedure and we will also investigate improving the use of the reef winches and downhauls for the mainsail. So, it all went pear shaped for about 10 minutes, but all was forgiven that afternoon when she went like a train!

**Not ideal for a heli shoot**

At 40 knots, the main was dropped and it became very overcast – not ideal for a helicopter shoot. By the time we had taken the guests ashore, the Falcon had set sail and was on her way to Juan le Pin. The breeze and the sea had fallen off, and we thought the show was over. The film crew thought it was worth trying, however, so we set the main with one reef in and the number two jib. We had 25 to 30 knots of wind and were heeled to 20 degrees: the maximum she is allowed by safety regulations. The wind was at about 80 degrees apparent and the instruction was given to “go as fast as you can.”

With the two sails up, we began to pick up speed and were averaging 17 knots, at one point reaching 18.3, which is the fastest she has ever sailed. The crew, the Victorias and their guests were all delighted. It was absolutely thrilling to be doing that speed on such a big boat, with the added fun of the helicopter coming very close to film us.

The Mirabella’s captain, Mark Coxon, then invited me to take the helm and this was a revelation. Though a computer attached to the helm controls the rudder, I was driving by feel and the sails and she was remarkably responsive! Sailing at over 17 knots, with
The yacht herself was a huge engineering challenge and the owners and crew are still working through ways to improve the sail setting and manoeuvres. This is a positive attitude, considering the size of her rig (positively colossal at 96 metres) and the huge sail area and, during her build, some great advances in engineering were achieved. She is also very comfortable and spacious – not always a quality on sailing yachts.

The day’s sailing answered Aldous’ question; “Is the Mirabella V just a motor boat with the world’s tallest mast, or is she a sailing yacht that can push the envelope?” The Mirabella V is, indeed, a true sailing yacht and capable of giving a good run with the best of them. James Scott-Anderson

MIRABELLA V ON LINE - IN WORDS & PICTURES

Click the pictures to read more, or go to http://www.bymnews.com/mirabellav/

BYM News goes sailing on the world’s largest sloop, Mirabella V, in company with the world’s largest clipper, Maltese Falcon.

Mirabella V’s owner, Joe Vittoria, talks to BYM News about the dockside gossip and explains the motives for her build, her mast, her sails.

Joe Vittoria talks about the man behind the Mirabella V concept, the build challenges and running a superyacht.

Short videos of the Maltese Falcon filmed from the Mirabella V and on board the Mirabella V at speed and a longer video of the Mirabella sailing.

Photo album with 260 pictures of the Maltese Falcon and the Mirabella V, on the day they went sailing together.

Photo album with pictures of the Mirabella V at the Monaco Grand Prix and sailing.

More Mirabella V - her early days.
MEGAYACHT ROUND UP

The supply of money for the purchase of ever bigger megayachts seems unlimited. This is a selection of some notable 2006 launches.

January - Ability by CRN

The 54 metre displacement CRN, steel and aluminium, megayacht “Ability” was launched, before a crowd of 2000, at the CRN shipyard. The yacht was the first to emanate from the yard’s collaboration with designers Zuccon International Project.

At the time of the launch, CRN had sold 17 mega yachts, ranging from 30 to 72 metres, over the previous 6 months. An exceptional figure, which confirms the extraordinary production capability of the shipyard, where currently 25 yachts - from 30 to 60 metres - are under construction.

January - Vango by Westport

The largest superyacht ever built by Westport Shipyard was launched, at Platypus Marine, Port Angeles. The 164 foot “Vango” has an advanced hull design by renowned naval architect William Garden and styling by Donald Starkey.

March - Seafaris by Forgacs

Newcastle property developer Jeff McCloy’s 39 metre catamaran “Seafaris” was launched. The aluminium vessel was built at Forgacs Shipyard and fitted out by the Furniture Manufacturing Company of Australia. McCloy had the Au$30 million yacht built for personal use and Great Barrier Reef charter.

April - Anne Marie by CRN

Ferretti’s CRN Shipyard launched yet another new megayacht, from the award winning Custom Line; the 40 metre Anne Marie.
FEADSHIP APRIL FOOL
Naturally, Royal van Lent launched this 60.96-meter (200’) motor yacht, on an appropriate date.

The exterior
April Fool’s timeless exterior profile is based on the classic lines of Feadship, with elements that make it distinctive from all other yachts in the fleet. Classic features include the long bow, the dodgers and the sloping treatment of the black tinted wheelhouse windows.
While the rhythmic lay out of the other windows is traditional, the more square shaping of those positioned amidships adds a more modern flavour. A stand out feature is the curved shape in the arch running from aft to forward like a wave. This makes April Fool very elegant and will ensure that she is recognized from afar, decades from now.

In addition to a superb full beam owner’s suite, April Fool has four spacious staterooms and fine quarters for up to eighteen crew.
The origins of this quintessential design attribute can be traced to the central staircase and elevator. While it is possible to have two separate staircases running from lower to main and main to upper deck, the requirement of an elevator means that the staircase should also go in one vertical line.

Combining a central staircase with a central engine room added to the interior design challenge on April Fool, as the stairs had to run aft of the engine room and end up even further forward in the guest lobby. Furthermore, having the elevator alighting on the sun deck required a housing there.

Inside out

Designing a boat from the inside out in this way, to culminate in the highest point of a yacht, has clear implications for the golden ratio rule, which says that around one third of the boat is aft and two thirds forward.

On April Fool, the elevator house is relatively far aft. In response, the designers created a forward moving structure to balance the whole profile, integrating the electric sun awning and providing excellent shade in the process. A removable carbon fibre canopy was designed to provide shade aft.
**Fooled again**

Other prominent features of the exterior are the tender bays, especially to port where the owner’s favourite 30-foot San Juan SJ70, called Fooled Again, is docked, and the stainless steel telescopic foremast, required at night for navigational lighting, which descends electronically into the yacht during the day.

**Relaxed & peaceful**

April Fool’s eclectic oak and cherry interior was finished by Janet Leroy based on a concept by Larvor of France. While the family boat concept may not be revolutionary, this is the way many people enjoy cruising today. The atmosphere on board April Fool is relaxed and peaceful and, by mixing the classic with the contemporary, each area has been given its own individual taste. The highly original staircase is a fine example of this approach. Deep azure blue glass paneling runs from deck to deck, intriguingly etched with an exquisite ocean cross section. Consequently, when guests leave their staterooms they see the sand of the ocean floor and as they take the stairs, fish in various shapes and sizes swim by, until they come out on the bridge deck. In addition to the impressive etching, the oceanic effect and the size of the glass is magnified by back lighting behind. Woven oak blocks offer a quiet contrast in smooth square patterns and, by merging glass and wood together, Feadship has created a staircase that is both modern and traditional.

Most of April Fool’s interior is executed in oak, with the exception of the master bedroom (cherry wood) and the crew quarters (ash). The overall scheme of the fabrics is light and fresh, while the ceilings, walls and carpeted floors are crisp and clean. Larger windows play an intricate role in complementing this ambience as well as offering superlative views over the water.

**The main deck**

The immediate impression one gets on entering the main lounge is how much larger it is than the actual volume would suggest. The virtually full length windows and double doors leading out to the aft deck generate a very open feel. The color scheme of white with beige tints and touches of light blue sets the tone for much of the yacht.

To port is a four-seat settee facing a television cabinet. In the centre resides a designer coffee table with a rounded wooden foot with metal frame and glass tabletop. The starboard side of the lounge has a circular card table aft and two fauteuils in light suede leather with matching hassocks forward. Two book cabinets stand against the wall flanking the hallway to the dining room. The dining area contains a round table that seats between ten and fourteen people. Made of ash wood, the table has four removable leaves, which are stored in a cabinet in the lobby. All four corners of the dining room
have china in cabinets, hidden behind doors made of woven oak.

**Committed to haute cuisine**

The connected pantry and galley offer everything the owners’ personal chef could require to create home from home or haute cuisine. The chef certainly knows how to meet the owners’ gastronomic desires as he travels with them wherever they go. The owners are so committed to providing the best in cuisine that they even gave up precious real estate just aft of their stateroom for an extra giant freezer compartment. Not that the suite is in anyway compact as a result, however.

The entrance is on the starboard side via a TV/library area with two fauteuils and matching footstools; this is a lovely spot for private reading or relaxation. The master bedroom is the only space on April Fool to be in cherry wood rather than oak. Blue and white striped fabrics adorn the walls and blinds, with an Aigue Marine bedspread and headboard offering a green contrast. To starboard is a modern cherry desk, accompanied by a comfortable desk chair.

The his and her dressing rooms are magnificent. Leather floors highlight the masculine in ‘his’, while white paint and light carpets in ‘hers’ enhance both the exceptional volume and the feminine feel. The bathroom is also a large space, occupying the full beam. A pleasantly understated atmosphere prevails with Vert Artic marble used throughout. Primary features include a large oval bath, a sauna and a shower with a built-in bench. Gold-plated fixtures and hardware add a note of luxury.

**The lower deck**

Going down a level, a white oak guest lobby leads to the guest day room, which includes a TV, computer and entertainment facilities for the owners’ grandchildren, plus a bed settee should there be additional guests onboard. The four guest staterooms are in matching pairs off the corridor.

Although there was space for more cabins, the owners chose for larger suites as they rarely entertain more than four couples. As a result each suite is a true VIP stateroom in terms of its size, facilities and comfort, but with a different color scheme and name. The ‘red’ aft port room is called Formenterra and uses grey Bardiglio Imperiale marble in the bathroom. It has twin beds, as does the aft starboard room, which is colored yellow and named St Tropez. The marble here is Pacific Blue. Both twin rooms can be converted into double bedrooms.

The two forward suites are slightly larger, with an extra desk and closet. Starboard is the pink room - Portofino – with Rose Aurore marble in the bathroom. The final guest suite is called Capri.
and has yellow Onyx marble. The two forward bathrooms have an extra surprise in the form of Hollywood-style mirrors framed on either side by vertical rows of light bulbs. These are designed to ensure that the person shaving has a straight mirror and is not required to use the angled mirror to the right. This is yet another example of the owners’ enormous attention to detail when it comes to pampering their guests. At the push of a button, the mirror descends behind the sink to offer views through the porthole.

**The engine room**

The engine room houses two Caterpillar 3516B-DITA diesels, each with an output of 1492 kW at 1600 rpm. Twin Wärtsilä propellers generate a maximum speed of 16 knots and, in combination with a fuel capacity of 33,210 US gallons, offer April Fool a 5,000 nm range at 13 knots. There are two separate rooms for the three Caterpillar C-9 generators and the switchboards.

**The crew quarters**

The forward part of the lower deck is where the crew reside. There is an engineer’s cabin, a first officer’s cabin and six twin crew cabins. A splendid mess room provides the personnel with a wealth of facilities and a proper place to socialise and relax.

**The bridge deck**

An outside-in experience awaits in the sky lounge thanks to the giant windows. These are so low that a total panoramic view of the surroundings is available when seated on the L shaped set-tee or chairs. Should guests prefer to watch life pass by on a big screen, a plasma TV nestles behind a sliding panel against the forward wall. The starboard section of this lounge has a games table and a delightful bar. A charming detail of the latter is the re-applied azure blue glass (an echo of the stairs), in which are engraved the owners’ favourite tipples. The glass sliding doors to the teak aft deck are nearly always open when this room is being used; a large oval dining table seats twelve should the sundowner turn into a full blown al fresco party.

Moving forward along the corridor you find the elegant captain’s cabin and a ship’s office, described by the first mate as “a fantastic place to work.”
The wheelhouse

The same can no doubt be said of the wheelhouse, which contains a bridge that is integrated both in terms of its systems and the way it merges within the overall look. Bringing all the equipment together in one console has been de rigeur for several years already, but ongoing breakthroughs in technology create new possibilities in design. April Fool is a yacht of the new generation of Feadships that dispense with the console altogether and use five independent screens. This results in a much more open look, with the entire perspective being significantly enhanced by the spaces between the screens.

The wheelhouse is very large and there is a separate chart table looking in the same direction as the boat’s course. A giant leather couch, seating at
least six, allows guests a prime view of the proceedings; making this very much the place to be as the yacht comes into a harbour. The special dark brown lacquer, which makes the wood feel like felt, adds a touch of class.

**The sun deck**

Whether arriving via the elevator or the outside stairs, the curvaceous feature extending forward of the elevator house will immediately catch the eye.

This is the first time an awning has been an integral part of a Feadship design, reflecting the increasing amount of time guests spend outside.

The forward section comprises a teak bar, topped with granite, a pop-up television, various seating and sunbathing equipment and a Jacuzzi complete with wind break.

The aft area contains a custom designed extendible dining table that can entertain up to twelve people in comfort (a similar table is on the bridge deck aft).

A huge barbecue is housed in a locker on a high-low platform, so that it can be tucked away when not in use. The carbon fibre awning here is easy to set up and indirect lighting, on top of the poles, illuminate the entire canopy at night.

**Marian Martin**

**Photos Feadship**
MEGAYACHT ROUNDPUP continued

May - My Issue by Moonen

Moonen Shipyards launched its largest displacement yacht ever, the 290 tonne Explorer 114 My Issue. Built for repeat clients, this first edition of the all-new Moonen “Explorer Series” is a unique long-range research-type cruising yacht designed by René van der Velden with naval architecture by Stolk Marimecs. My Issue has a Lloyd’s Register “Ice Class” certificate.

May - Cambria II by Azzura Marine

Iain Murray’s Azzura Marine launched the 30 metre megayacht Cambria II, on Queensland’s Gold Coast. John David’s custom built gentleman’s motor yacht - a one of a kind vessel - was the star attraction at the International Sanctuary Cove Boat Show.

David’s first Cambria is the historic 1928 23 metre J Class yacht, often said to be the most faithful restoration of all the surviving cutters.

May - Mirgab V by Burger

Burger Boat Company launched the largest aluminum yacht, in its 143 year history, for the Alshaya Family from Kuwait. Over 1200 onlookers stood by, in eager anticipation, as the new 500-ton Marine Travelift carefully lowered Mirgab V, a 144’ Tri-deck, into the water for the first time. That evening a spectacular fireworks display, sponsored by the Alshaya family, was shared with the community of Manitowoc.

May - Sunday by Benetti

The 58 metre Sunday, has a similar profile to Allegro and Galaxy, but her lines are enhanced by the addition of 2 metres in length - one metre amidships and the other forward.

More megayacht launches next month
MIRABELLA & THE MALTESE FALCON MEET AGAIN IN ANTIGUA

The world’s biggest sloop and the world’s biggest clipper met up again in Antigua.

The Mirabella V wasn’t racing, of course, just doing a bit of sail testing, but everyone wanted to know who won.

This is how the Super yacht Cup organisers saw it.

The first day’s sailing was a spectacular sight for all, with a stunning display by two of the world’s largest sailing yachts, as the three masted Maltese Falcon (88m) and the sloop Mirabella V (75m) sailed away from the start area outside English Harbour. The two yachts started together one hour after the first boat, in the pursuit style race for superyachts.

Maltese Falcon and Mirabella V are two radically different yachts, but they both performed impressive speeds of over 22 knots in the 18 – 20 knot trade winds. The course took the fleet on a close reach, south of Antigua, followed by a bear away, towards Curtain Bluff, and a beat back up the coast. There was little doubt that on the broad reach Maltese Falcon was the fastest boat, flying full sail, but after rounding the bottom mark for the beat back up the coast Mirabella V showed she was willing to put up a fight. Although officially not competing, boat for boat, the two yachts were clearly displaying their credentials.

This is how Mirabella V’s captain saw it.

We were sitting at anchor, in Antigua, minding our own business. I got talking to Chris, captain of Maltese Falcon and told him I was taking Mirabella V out, as I needed to do some work on the sails while under way. He told me how happy it would make Tom Perkins if we would go and “play” with them in the Superyacht Cup the next day, off Antigua. When I called Mr Vittoria, to ask if I could take her for a spin, he said he had received an email from Tom, not an hour before, asking him to let us sail. He cautioned me that insurance doesn’t let me race, so to just cruise along, but that it was a great opportunity for the two boats to have a great sail together.

We’d had some work done on the bottom section of the mainsail, in Genoa, by Doyle’s, and I had yet to re-attach it to the top section of the main, not an easy job to line up the batten pockets so the batten can lace them together, but I decided I could sail with a reef in, because I didn’t have the bottom section attached. I can hear the keyboards typing away already at that comment “still not sailing at full hoist, yadda yadda yadda........”. In retrospect, it was a fine sail selection; I had ample power and all the speed I needed.

After the hoist, I gingerly bore away and sheeted in. When I settled onto the course to the leeward and a little ahead on a beam reach. Maltese Falcon was piling on sail all over the place and I thought that t was all over the way she looked to be passing me.

I killed the engines, feathered the props and rolled out a jib.
In the 18-22 knots of wind, I found we were only just being overhauled by Maltese Falcon. Because of my concern for the mainsail foot, I didn't want to vang on, or sheet on, to what I would normally like, so the main was not doing its best, but I figured Mr Victoria might not like it if my next phone call was about a ripped mainsail, especially with charter season starting, as I don't have another in the container! Anyway, that's my excuse for the reach, at first; being gentle on the main.

**The staysail is the equaliser**

I unfurled the staysail and found that we were now pretty even on the reach, both doing around 17 knots. The staysail was the equalizer. Maltese Falcon looked magnificent; waterline length rules, on a reach, and Maltese Falcon has plenty of that over us, so I was surprised we could hang on.

Remembering that Maltese Falcon was competing and we were not, I had to confront my next problem. Maltese Falcon was above me and had to bear away and gybe at the turning mark. I don't gybe and now had the problem of letting Maltese Falcon roll me and gybe in front of me. I furled the staysail and she creamed along in front and gybed; it looked pretty good from where I was driving. I then, despondently watched Chris take off down the run. He was sailing very high of the mark, because I assumed he needed to run square to reduce sails before the next beat, so he put distance on us very quickly, before slowing down as he ran square to the mark. I rolled the jib and tacked under main. We came out of the tack at about 3 knots, set the jib and bore away. Next thing we are still doing 15-16 knots on the run, which amazed me. Once I was up and running I don’t think we lost distance down the run/broad reach.

I closely watched Maltese Falcon round the bottom mark and saw her come out of it at very slow speed and then tack. I realised she was being squeezed for water beyond the mark. My plotter showed her as being in less than 10 metres of water, so I avoided the mark and stayed in deep water (draft being 10 something metres). I then waited until she was well to windward of me again and then came on the wind.

This was Mirabella V country; moderate seas and 20 knots. I was getting more confident in the mainsail, so sheeted and vanged a little more. I never was trimmed on as tightly as I wanted, though, and thus was carrying a little lee helm up the beat.

We saw 33 knots AWS up that leg, with 35 AWS being the jib’s theoretical limit.
I found that 30 degrees AWA worked well with the main undertrimmed.

The alarm went off for the jib sheet tension, set at around 20 tons, so it was near its limit. I am glad we had just end-for-ended all the running rigging, because we were maxing stuff out. We also had the cap shroud 200 ton limit alarm going off, but it felt very comfortable.

**We put a mile on Maltese Falcon**

Curtain Bluff to the finish, off English Harbor is about 5 miles and I don't think I am exaggerating if I say we put a mile on Maltese Falcon up that beat. I so severely overbaked the layline that I reached into it, but this is what Mirabella V is supposed to do and I can't take much credit for it. No shame for Maltese Falcon on this leg, it's just not her point of sail.

At this point we'd had a chance to compare the boats on different courses and I had work to do to the mainsail, so I bailed out and left them to it. The original start time for Maltese Falcon was 1400. Tom Perkins requested it be brought forward an hour, but I don't think anyone told the chopper pilot, so that cameraman missed some great footage of the two boats barreling along at 17 knots.

That night we all had a beer together in Nelson's Dockyard. Maltese Falcon stole the show by going stern to all lit up. I saw Chris and we were both pretty happy to have had a blast together.

There just aren't that many sailing boats over 200 feet that can actually get out of their own way and we had just had two of them, only a couple of boat lengths apart at 17+ knots. It all makes it more fun for owners and spectators and that is the name of the game.

**The tortoise & the hare**

Mirabella V and Maltese Falcon are apples and oranges; you can't compare them. I, personally, think Mirabella V is faster on all legs in moderate wind, as she should be, but Maltese Falcon eats me on the corners, as they just brace the yards around and steer. It is the Tortoise and Hare scenario.

I commend Chris on the way he runs and drives Maltese Falcon. His skill complements a very fine craft; she is a really handy vessel. Mirabella V sat out the rest of the races, so I could keep prepping for charter. Sadly, I watched Maltese Falcon through my porthole as she tore up the Caribbean Sea.

As the race organisers have adjusted the handicaps, the racing has become closer and closer, with Maltese Falcon finishing mid fleet today, in the final race, I think. Good job Chris, I was jealous every day.

The best thing to come from the day is that Maltese Falcon is toying with some underwater mods to improve upwind performance. I say "bring it on, Chris", then she will draw too much water to be able to use my favourite berth at Antigua Yacht Club. See what our priorities really are now?

Guess I'm ready for a "flaming" from Sailing Anarchy readers. Bring it on, guys. Everyone who saw the boats sailing that day loved it and I just had way too much fun to worry about it.

David Dawes, Master.
Sydney - Hobart!

This Yacht Race is to sailors what Mount Everest is to climbers.

The degree of difficulty is the attraction with the east coast of Australia generally regarded as one of the most notorious stretches of water in the world. Typically it is wind against tide with huge southern ocean swells compressed by the shallow waters above the Australian continental shelf and breaking crests whipped by south-westerly winds uninterrupted on their express trip from Antarctica.

Benign start

The start, on Sydney Harbour, is usually pretty benign, with Boxing Day typically hot and dry and a prevailing north easterly breeze creating perfect sailing conditions. This event and the Boxing Day test match, if there is one (as is the case this year), are usually the only distractions from the post-Xmas blues, so huge crowds line the shores to watch the fleet work up the harbour and then turn south for Hobart – 628 miles into the Southern Ocean.

The start of the Sydney Hobart Yacht has become part of Sydney culture, although it is more as an excuse for a day out on the harbour than as a
pure sporting event. The truth is that the public, in general, knows very little about the yachts and the race itself. In fact, few would know the difference between a sloop and a ketch, but who cares, that isn’t what it’s all about. It’s a spectacle, a reason to have some fun on the water.

Humble beginnings

The beginnings of the race were very humble and compatible, therefore with the mainstream Australian psyche. Sixty one years ago, half a dozen Sydney yachties decided it would be a good idea to have a race to Hobart and chose Boxing Day for the start. The yachts were of course timber built cutters, ketches and sloops and the race was a pretty casual affair as was indicated by the name of the convening club, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, but the scene had been set and an icon of Australian sport was in the making.

Changed by money

The race though has been transformed by money and technology with bigger, lighter, stiffer meaning faster, which in turn means hugely increased demands on structural strength. A 30 metre, 30 ton super-maxi sailing close-hauled comes out of the back of a wave at about 12 – 15 knots and up to 15 metres above the following trough. It might be all but airborne for a few seconds and then wham! The 11 ton bulb at the bottom of the 5.5 metre knife-like canting keel wants to head straight for the bottom, but the hull wants to take on the next crest. Meanwhile there is no give anywhere in the 45 metre all-carbon rig and sails, so the back stay loads soar.

The record for the race now stands at 1 day 18 hours 40 minutes and 10 seconds, an astonishing average speed of 14.7 knots and a far cry from the 7 days of the first race!

Big Boat Challenge

The Magazine from BYM News

Issue 1 - January 2007

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All this drama is acted out at sea away from the public eye and, as a result, the Big Boat Race was born 12 years ago. Why not have a preliminary race on Sydney Harbour and bring the excitement within reach of the public. The course for the race is, basically, twice around the harbour past many of the famous landmarks; Steele Point, Fort Denison, Mrs. Macquarie’s Chair and of course the Sydney Opera House.

The excitement and spectacle of the day is a perfect curtain raiser for the main event on Boxing Day. Although in-consequential in the trophy scheme of things, the reality is that racing yachtsmen are racing yachtsmen regardless of the stakes, so few of them give any quarter out on the course.

**Big Boat 2006**
The 2006 Big Boat Race was sailed on a dark day in a 15-20 knot southerly accompanied by the occasional shower. There were 18 yachts on a very short starting line, so from the deck of Wild Oats X - the start was a pretty hair-raising affair, with just about everyone early - except Wild Oats XI, which hit the line from the second row doing 18 knots until able to come up to a close hauled point of sail.

CYCA vice commodore Matt Allen in his much modified Volvo 70 Ichi Ban, ducked everyone’s stern on port to take advantage of the incoming tide and then charged in on the port tackers at the first mark, to take second place.

Skandia stayed ahead of Wild
Oats around Fort Dennison, but then surrendered the lead in the spinnaker run down the harbour to the junction buoy near South Head. Skandia had only arrived in Sydney, on the delivery trip from Melbourne, at 0600 on the morning of the race and a 2 metre rip in the mainsail had to be repaired before the yacht could front the starting line.

**Waterline rules**

Where Ichi Ban was concerned, after that first charge waterline length ruled and Wild Oats XI pulled ahead of the modified Volvo Open 70, relegating her to a third place she held to the finish. Nevertheless, Ichi Ban’s performance, in its first encounter with bigger boats was impressive and enough to give Matt Allen the IRC overall win. “The boat is going well.” said Allen after the race. “Today was a good race track with good pressure and good angles, if there had been less wind, we wouldn’t have been near those guys.”
The new Yendys a Reichel Pugh 60, owned and skippered by Hong Kong based Geoff Ross and only recently arrived from the McConaghy shipyard, in China, showed that she had plenty of pace and with a good IRC rating should feature in the Hobart handicap results. Otherwise, the two Volvo 60’s sailing at the back of the field demonstrated the quantum leap in yacht design since they were built for the Volvo race in 2002/3 - although this call is possibly a bit unfair given that they were not designed for racing around the buoys.

At the post race press conference, Matt Allen, Grant Warrington (Skandia) and Mark Richards (Wild Oats) expressed their view that the Big
Boat Race, was not really a pointer to the outcome of the Sydney Hobart, but an opportunity for skippers and crew to let off steam, after months of intensive preparation for the big Boxing day race.

**The Hobart winner?**

Last year, the 30 metre Reichel Pugh sister ships, Alfa Romeo and Wild Oats XI, squared off in the harbour race and then duelled for line honours all the way to Hobart – with a tactical move early in the race making the difference in favour of Wild Oats, which took all the honours despite problems with the mainsail mast track.

This year Alfa won’t be there, but Wild Oats looms ominous again; during the IRC regatta, sailed in 35 knots of wind on Friday after the Big Boat Race, she clocked 32 knots under spinnaker and, with two days of north easterlies currently forecast, looks set to disappear over the horizon ... but the forecast keeps changing and maybe Grant still has a trick up Skandia’s sleeve. Her sails looked tired and unconfirmed reports say a new set is on the way. Then, of course, there is Maximus ....?
The dark horses

One boat definitely awaiting new sails is Ichi Ban. The former Volvo Ocean Race yacht has been much modified and the race between ABN AMRO One, winner of the last Volvo, and Ichi Ban will be a measure of the success of those modifications. As Brunel, Ichi Ban was probably the slowest boat in the Volvo Ocean Race fleet; whilst ABN AMRO One was the fastest, in all but light airs.

It’s been a while since strong south-westerlies prevailed in the Bass Strait, where trouble usually begins. Such conditions would test the high tech monster maxis and favour the two Volvo Open 70s that seem to take heavy weather in their stride.

Trevor Joyce
OCEAN ROUND UP
A look at some of the 2006 highlights

JANUARY

The New Years day talk was still mostly about the Rolex Sydney Hobart! A few days before the start, Mark Richards, skipper of the brand new maxi Wild Oats XI, commented that winning the race on handicap was the real prize. “It’s a bigger thrill for a boat to win on handicap than to get line honours.” he said. “Line honours this year is between four or five boats really, handicap is between the whole fleet. That is the goal that everyone aspires to. All the guys up in the CYCA clubhouse with their photos on the wall, they are the handicap winners. From the sailors’ point of view, that is the real trophy, to win the Tattersalls Cup.” Little could Richards have imagined that, less than a week later, he would become the first skipper, since Rani’s victory in the inaugural race of 1945, to take ‘the treble’ - not just line honours, but handicap victory and a new course record.

The Volvo Ocean Race restart, in Capetown, on January 2, was fraught with penalties, collisions and little wind. It was the beginning of a leg of attrition! It wasn’t long before Ericsson & Brasil were heading back to South Africa; the first with a repeat of its leg 1 keel problem, the latter with hull cracks. Brasil1’s crew were determined to get to Australia, under their own sails, and restarted, but the Volvo Open 70 dismasted and ended up being trucked across the desert. Those two weren’t the only ones in trouble! Pirates and movistar both had keel problems and limped to the finish, after emergency repairs at sea. This led to Farr’s Russel Bowler being quoted as saying that requests by participants led to keel failures; Mike Sanderson - with ABN AMRO One going like clockwork and hitting 27 knots - seemed to agree when he said “Breakages are all from weight reduction.”

FEBRUARY

Ellen MacArthur loaded her trimaran B&Q onto a ship, enroute for a Far East record establishing session.

The Volvo Ocean Race saga continued, with more keel problems - this time for movistar and Brasil, plus a controversial start and ending to leg 3 and Grant Wharrington officially retiring, as Brunel-Ing Real Estate, to re-enter later as just Brunel.
MARCH

Ellen MacArthur announced her intention to step back from solo sailing and head up a two boat IMOCA 60 team. Later in the month, Ellen & her crew completed the first of the runs to establish a series of Asian records - sailing from Yokohama, in Japan, to Jeju Island, in South Korea, in 5 days 11 hours. Neither this, nor any of her subsequent Asian records received much western attention, but that didn’t seem to be the object of the exercise.

In any case, this was a month when any other feats would have paled, compared to the high drama in the Southern Ocean leg of the Volvo Ocean Race! It was the Ericsson crew that got the first scare when - in the middle of a night - the boat first broached, all standing, and then went into a Chinese gybe. Scary stuff, but not to be compared with what Bouwe Bekking and his boys were to go through.

At the end of the previous leg, movistar had been in a tremendous battle with ABN AMRO One and, despite having keel problems, had taken the leg win. This time, as the Volvo Open 70s closed in on Cape Horn, Cayard, on Pirates of the Caribbean, and Bekking, on movistar, were neck and neck and putting pressure on Sanderson, on ABN AMRO One, which was just 40 miles ahead. Then came an unconfirmed report on the Sailing Anarchy forum “movistar has ‘bomb door’ problems and is heading for a fishing village near Cape Horn”. Then came official confirmation from Race Control.

At 0315 GMT today, Bouwe Bekking reported that movistar was taking on water at a high rate and requested that the nearest boats, Brasil 1 (Torben Grael) and Ericsson Racing Team (Neal McDonald), should standby to offer immediate assistance. They were sailing in 30-35 knots of breeze with a jib top, small staysail and one reef in the mainsail, 242 nautical miles from the scoring gate at Cape Horn.

“We are sinking. Everybody up,” commanded Bekking as the water poured into the boat around the keel box. “Slow the boat down, the water is coming in very fast, and close the water tight hatches.”

The water was coming in from around the top of the keel box. Within minutes the sailors were knee deep in water. The water tight hatches were closed, immediately, and safety gear and grab bags moved onto deck. The sail area was reduced to only the stay sail and the yacht slowed down, as the crew frantically pumped.

Bekking’s report leaves nothing to the imagination: “A sailor’s nightmare is sinking and this looked like a pretty serious situation. If we had rats onboard they would have jumped off by now. We mobilised some people on deck to drop all the sails, and when I went downstairs again, I got a real shock. The generator box was already completely underwater, and the water had spread now through the entire mid compartment, and was close to washing over the main engine box as well. And what a mess inside, sails, sleeping bags, food bags, you can’t name it all, were floating around.

In the meantime, Spike (Pe-
ter Doriean) had collected all the safety gear and put it on deck, just to be sure.” Capey (Andrew Cape) had already informed race-headquarters. After seeing the amount of water, I decided to ask headquarters if other boats could assist. Water and electricity don’t like each other too much, so the circuit breakers were popping off all the time. With the personal torches on, it looked like a scene that Hitchcock could only dream of. Now Chris (Nicholson) was diving underwater to connect the two emergency high capacity bilge pumps directly to the batteries, as that was the only way of assuring power and running of the pumps. What else do you do? Bail of course, like mad, but I felt it was like watching television, where somebody is using one small water hose to protect his house against a raging bushfire. Even though we knew we were on the losing hand, strangely enough you don’t give up.”

“Then the shout, PUMPS ARE RUNNING. Now we maybe have a chance to beat the incoming flow rate, and get the level down. To all our big relief, this was the case. Slowly but surely, the levels went down and we got the situation under control. We have made an emergency fix on the leaking box and the incoming flow is minimal. I’m proud of the boys, they did well, not just in this emergency situation, but also in the way that they have sailed movistar so magnificently up to that moment. We are now heading for Ushuaia (Argentina) to look at the damage.”

movistar’s damage was temporarily repaired, by making the keel fixed, and she sailed to finish the leg to Baltimore.

APRIL

Ellen MacArthur continued her Asian Tour, notching up record number 5, between Qingdao and Shanghai. Big trimarans got rather more attention, though, when Olivier de Kersauson brought Geronimo into Yokohama, having crossed from San Francisco in 14 days 19 hours, taking almost 5 days off Steve Fosset’s trans-Pacific record.

In the Volvo Ocean Race all was much as usual, which means that ABN AMRO One took the leg 5 win, but only after languishing in zero winds near Baltimore, which at one point meant putting the anchor down to avoid going backwards! Behind the winner, there were breakages as usual, but this time a near dismasting, rather than keel problems. Simon Fisher tells the story:

“Right now, here on ABN AMRO Two we are all feeling pretty damn lucky that we still have a rig in the boat and are able to push hard in the hope of making up a few places. Earlier this afternoon, we got pretty damn close to this leg being all over for us. We were power reaching along in 25 knots of wind, going fast, all under control. It has become a drag race against Brasil 1 and Ericsson to see who can get to the next shift first, so we had the pedal down hard. All of a sudden there was a massive bang from on deck, like gunfire followed by the screams of the guys on watch to get everyone on deck. The toggle that holds the runner block to the boat had snapped. With this broken there was nothing opposing the force of the jib and staysail pulling the mast over the front of the boat. The toggle that holds the runner block to the boat had snapped. With this broken there was nothing opposing the force of the jib and staysail pulling the mast over the front of the boat. Luckily Beavis, thinking fast, threw the boat into the wind and the guys arriving on deck wound the mainsheet on hard to stop the rig tumbling down. With little support the 30 metre spar was writhing around like a snake as the jib flapped on the bow. Fortunately we were able to get the sails down without any further damage and start making repairs in order that we get under way again. We were able to rob some parts from the leeward side enabling us to fix the runner block back to the back of the boat and within half an hour we were back sailing again at full pace.

movistar got a reward for a lot of hard work on the keel, with an in port race win, in Baltimore, but most spectators’ eyes were on The Black Pearl.
"I am a Pirate King, I am a Pirate King and it is, it is a glorious thing to be a Pirate King."

So said Gilbert & Sullivan, in the Pirates of Penzance, but for the in port race, in Baltimore, Paul Cayard’s The Black Pearl had invited a Pirate Queen to come on board! Tara Conner, the newly crowned Miss USA, was Pirates of the Caribbean’s guest.

Like most people, my knowledge of beauty queens had been limited to watching them walk seductively down a catwalk, wearing the highest of heels and a fixed smile. Scarcely, an image that conjures up the impression of someone at home on a Volvo Open 70. I called Tara, to find out if it was also a glorious thing to be a Pirate Queen?

I’d heard that Tara Conner had never been sailing, before The Black Pearl cast-off in Baltimore for the fourth in port race of this Volvo Ocean Race.

“That’s right, I’d never sailed” said Tara “and I’m very happy that I was on the Black Pearl for my first time. It was a great experience.”

I put it to her that starting your sailing experience on a Volvo Ocean racer was a bit like having your first drive at Daytona. “Did you have any idea how fast the boats could go?” I asked.

“No, I really didn’t have any idea.” Tara replied “Also, as I’d never been sailing, never really been in a sailboat before, I didn’t know how much work went into it. I didn’t realize how many people it takes to run a sailboat like that.”

“Were you a bit nervous about it before you actually got there? Were you worried about being seasick?” “I wasn’t very nervous, because I am up for anything, I was more anxious to see that everything worked out for the Pirates. I have never been seasick before, so that didn’t worry me either. I grew up by Lake Cumberland, so I’m really used to being on the water a lot, so I am not likely to get sick.”

“The experience was so crazy.” said Tara, laughing. “Of course, I was standing on the back of the boat the entire time, so when they shifted from one end to the next - I don’t know the term for that yet -. so when the side you were standing on went up, you had to move to that side and when they shifted to the other and that side went down you had to go back to that side!! There was a lot of moving about on the back of the boat and trying to let them do their thing and stay out of their way.”

I could imagine that was hard for a newcomer, but Tara didn’t think so. “You know it wasn’t
difficult, I didn’t find that. Well, maybe it was a little difficult at first, but it was fun.

I had wondered how the Pirates’ crew had reacted to having a beauty queen on board and asked Tara whether they had treated her like a glamour girl, or just one of the lads?

“They treated me like one of the lads,” she said “I can get along with everyone. I am not much of a prissy kind of girl, I will try anything once. I did skydiving and a lot of extreme sports so this was right up my alley.”

So what had been the high spot of the day? Tara hesitated, before saying “The high spot of the day was pretty much the work of the race itself, because they were so focussed. I was very anxious to see how well they could do and I was understanding that the points they scored there moved them into third spot. I am very, very proud of that and very proud that I was a part of it.”

A Miss USA has to attend all sorts of things and I wondered whether Tara enjoyed doing this activity type of thing rather than something more formal?

“Yes, I do I love hands on things.” she told me “Of course, the formal type of events are really fun, because you kind of feel like a princess, but when it comes to things like this it brings me back down to my roots. I was a tomboy growing up, so being able to get in the action and be a part of the thing is a lot of fun for me. I really am the outdoorsy type side to the other. If I have the opportunity I will go with them again”.

“Do you think you will go and see the Pirates, when they arrive in New York?” I asked.

“You know, I think I might, because they were such good people and I got good vibes from them, so yeah; they will be here between the 8 and the 11, so maybe I can go on the yacht again!”

Had Tara expected to win Miss USA?

“No, it was a huge surprise, because it was something I had wanted for a very long time and I never thought I would be that lucky. When it comes to raffle tickets and trying out for the lottery and stuff like that I never get my name called; I’ve have never been one of the lucky ones. I never expected to be called that night and, when I was, I just went into shock. I was so completely shocked it didn’t actually hit me till the next morning. Then it struck me ‘I’ve, just won Miss USA’ and I actually cried!!”

“When your year as Miss USA ends, will you completely change the direction of your life and go into something very glamorous or go back to your business studies?” was my final question.

“I think I am going to try to balance both, because I want to do something with my life.” Tara replied “My aim is to, possibly, get into hosting my own show, or acting of some kind, or even singing if I can! I think education is very important though, without education it is so hard to get anywhere, so I will probably go and try and finish my degree, so I will have a fall back. I like to keep my options open.”

I freely admit that I’ve never talked to a beauty queen before and Tara Conner surprised me. I’d expected someone “prissy” - to use her word, instead I spoke to a bright, down to earth young woman, who gives you the feeling she will succeed in anything she takes on. If she gets serious about sailing, you can be pretty sure she won’t be satisfied with just some gentle cruising.

Marian Martin
MAY

At 08.37 GMT, on the 22nd, off the English coast, near Falmouth, the body of Hans Horrevoets was transferred, from ABN AMRO Two, to the frigate HNLMS Van Galen, which had come to take him home.
MAY continued

Ellen MacArthur completed her Asian Circuit, establishing a thirteenth and final record, between Terengganu, Malaysia and Singapore.

Olivier de Kersauson decided to join Ellen in establishing, rather than breaking records & drew a little more attention, possibly because more people had heard of Yokohama and Hong Kong, than Terennanu, Sanya and Nha Trang. The Frenchman was less than happy with a time of 4 days 17 hours, due to fickle winds, but the members of the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club thought it enough cause for celebration!

The Volvo Ocean Race again provided a lot of news, in the trans Atlantic leg to Portsmouth. First surprise was Grant Wharington’s decision to withdraw, citing health reasons; something that seemed incongruous, given his bullish attitude when Carina Prakke interviewed him for BYM News, in Annapolis, just a couple of weeks earlier. You can read that interview HERE.

The real drama came, though, in the finishing stages. First, there was the tragedy of Hans Horrevoets being swept from ABN AMRO Two. In a superb feat of seamanship, Hans’ crew mates recovered him, but efforts to revive him were sadly unsuccessful. Then, with Brunel reporting that it too had suffered keel damage, whilst going to the assistance of ABN AMRO, came the news that movistar was again in serious trouble and had asked for the emergency services to be put on standby. The keel pin had moved 50 mm sideways and was moving up and down. Bekking’s crew stabilised the keel, as best they could, and kept going towards ABN AMRO Two, which had turned back. The two boats met and headed for Portsmouth together, but 300 miles off Land’s End, a forecast of 40 to 50 knot winds made Bouwe Bekking take the decision to abandon the Volvo Open 70 and transfer to the Dutch boat via liferaft.

The fisheries protection vessel, HMS Mersea, went out to meet ABN AMRO Two and escorted her to within site of land. A solemn faced Bekking and crew were put ashore at Falmouth and, despite an extensive air search, movistar was never seen again.

One felt a little sorry for Dee Caffari, who completed a remarkable voyage in the midst of the Volvo drama.

Dee crossed the finishing line, of her round-the-world voyage, at 1855 GMT on May 18, becoming the first woman to complete the circumnavigation the wrong way; that is against the prevailing winds and currents. Her time for the course was 178 days 3 hours and 6 minutes.

The inaugural London-Nice race of the Multi Cup Ambassador Championship was won by Franck Cammas, on Groupama 2. It was a good beginning, marked by the excitement of the fierce duel between Cammas & Pascal Biddégorry, on Banque Populaire, who were only about 10 miles apart, for the whole of the 2075 mile course!
JUNE

This was the month the Volvo Ocean Race ended. After the tragedy and trauma of the previous leg and ABN AMRO One having already taken the overall win, it was inevitable that some of the nail biting excitement had gone. It didn’t help that, in the leg to Rotterdam, the record for the fewest miles in 24 hours was broken and the course had to be shortened, by 76 miles, to be sure all the Volvo Open 70s would arrive in time for the inport race. None of that diminished the joy of the boys from Brazil, though, when they won the leg, a prize they had desperately wanted and a great performance for a country that had never had a Volvo Ocean Race entry before.

After yet another ABN AMRO One win - in the Rotterdam inport race - it looked like ABN AMRO Two would also notch up a leg win, as the yachts again had light airs on the final leg to Gothenberg, and its all conquering team mate struggled at the back of the field. It was not to be though, the Dutch boat became becalmed and had to watch Pirates of the Caribbean inexorably catching them and then going by. The Kids fought back hard, to the delight of the thousands of spectators who had come out in boats of all sizes, to see the finish. It was Cayard, though, who helmed Black Pearl to a win and second place overall, with Sebastien Jos on ABN AMRO Two, just minutes behind.

Meanwhile, Olivier de Kersauson continued breaking and making records, by beating Bruno Peyron’s 8 year old West - East Pacific record, by almost 19 hours. Geronimo covered the 4483 mile course in 13 days 22 hours and 38 mins.

More 2006 Ocean highlights, including a Transat and 24 hour record for Orange II and an eventful Route du Rhum, in the next issue.
How did it all start?

In 1978, Mike Birch won the Route du Rhum in the trimaran Olympus. It was the first time that a multihull had beaten a monohull and it changed sailing history.

I had already designed my first multihull in 1969, a proa. It went well first time out, finishing third in the La Rochelle to Lorient race, behind Charente Maritime and Elf Aquitaine and it beat Elf Aquitaine, 3 weeks later. The real turning point though came in 1979, after Birch’s success, when I got an order to design the first Jet Services. The design was done, there was a sponsor, but when we started looking for a yard to build it we came to a halt. We could not find a yard capable of building such a technically advanced boat, so we all met to discuss what to do. Should we just stop the project, should we go for a less technically demanding design?

In 5 minutes we’d decided to start our own yard; Multiplast was created for just that one boat, but when it was finished there was another order, then another and we haven’t stopped since 1980.

When did carbon fibre start to be used in boats?

Carbon fibre was invented by researchers in English laboratories. It was perfected towards the end of the 1940s, but only used in research laboratories and a bit in industry. In the 60s, the Japanese took up the European work and, at the same time, took it to the industrial stage. Around 1970, it was being used in the aerospace industry and for armaments, but only for state of the art work. It was in the mid 70s that it started to be used on multihulls and, more than anything, it allowed great progress in performance. It is very simple, multis are performance boats, but going fast is not just a question of form, if you have a boat that is lighter, but just as solid as another boat, it will be faster.

Carbon fibre is as strong as steel, but 5 times lighter and half the weight of aluminium. So, the biggest progress in multihull construction is in the advanced technical aspects that carbon fibre enables us to create, which is why we have invested a great deal in
the study of this material, both as naval architects and as constructors.

**We noticed rivets on Groupama’s beams, does this mean you sometimes have to use metal to reinforce certain areas?**

The arms on Groupama are constructed in an unusual way, like an RSJ, with the top and bottom sections bonded to the vertical section. It was not Multiplast that decided on that type of arm, we have not designed Groupama 3, we just made it and it was apparent that - on the curved section of the arms - there would be movement and this would lead to the sections wanting to come apart.

The only solution was a mechanical one, to use rivets so the sections cannot come apart. It is the fruit of experience from Groupama 2. Multiplast beams are designed differently; four sections are bonded to form a box and then the whole wrapped in carbon fibre.

**Does an outside designer create conflict?**

No, when there are outside architects, they design and Multiplast just constructs. We don’t get involved in the design at all, we only advise on matters of safety. If we believe there is a risk of failure we warn the client.

We have had the experience of six giant multihulls, we have sailed on all six boats, we have had contact with the crews and skippers and received a huge amount of feedback. We do not offer any advice or opinion on matters that might make a boat go faster, we only comment on matters related to the safety of the boat and people.

**We have been told the big drawback of carbon fibre is that it does not flex?**

That isn’t true. In the early 90s, when the first all carbon hulls were made, many people said it is too rigid, it will split! They were wrong. Yesterday, in Lorient, I saw the first carbon fibre boat that we designed and built; it has never had a hull failure and is still sailing today. The thing that a composite structure cannot take is a big shock, like hitting a container, for example.

The fact is that there are no
bad materials, just bad applications of a material. Carbon, properly used, is just as good as any other material for mono, or multihulls.

All the America’s Cup boats are carbon, all the Vendée Globe boats are carbon, all the Volvo Ocean Race boats are carbon. The problems that have occurred with the Volvo boats have nothing to do with the material, they are down to the workmanship.

When Russel Bowler talks of problems of delamination with age, he is both right and wrong. He is just a designer, what he lacks is the practical every day experience in the workshop. That is the difference, the strong point of Multiplast; I don’t know all the composite yards, but I think it is the only one with this combination of naval architecture and hands on practical experience.

When Yann Penfornis was supervising the build of Groupama he would be in the workshop at least once every hour. It is only in boats that you often have this division; I was a big Formula One fan and there you do not have an engineer sitting in Switzerland with a car being built in the UK and, in important building construction, the architect will spend a lot of time with the craftsmen. With boats, you lose a lot when you have the naval architect in one place and the construction in another. Bowler is, however, correct about problems due to aging; old composites, which have been worked, do not have the same mechanical properties as new ones. All materials fatigue and carbon is no exception. With the right safety factor, a carbon hull will be good for 2 or 3 world tours; in the first one there should be no failures, next year there will be a risk of minor failure and, third time round, a risk of some major failure.

The right safety factor to cope with the highest loadings likely to be encountered is very important. America’s Cup boats, for example, don’t need such a big one because they hardly sail at all and only inshore and in good weather. The problems occur when you get boats like the 60 footers, that have been designed for regattas, setting off on the Route du Rhum; they were not made for it, so they break.

Some people think carbon is a miracle material, but it is not; it is just better than other materials. There are no miracle materials, no bad materials, just bad choice and application of materials. If you design a round the world boat and do not take the fatigue factor into account, you are going to get failures. If you calculate correctly and build correctly you will not have failures; Orange II went round the world at an average of 22 knots and nothing failed.

Aldous Grenville-Crowther

“PlayStation was much criticised by the press and other naval architects, but not by me for the simple reason that I am pragmatic. The boat could have been better looking, it could have been constructed better, but the thing that counts is that it did it – it took the records. Before you start criticising a boat, you should be able to design and build a better one.”

Giles Ollier.

Read more from Giles Ollier click HERE, or type www.bymnews.com/Gclass into your browser

To see more pictures of Groupama 3, plus images of other GClass boats click HERE, or type http://www.bymnews.com/photos/index.php?cat=17 into your browser.
In December, MDL Marinas detailed plans to make them the UK’s leading dry stack provider, with the opening of three new dry stack facilities along the south coast, with over 300 berths.

New dry stack facilities at Cobb’s Quay Marina, Poole and Hamble Point Marina, River Hamble will together provide 220 berths for motor boats up to 10m. The Saxon Wharf Marine Trade Centre, in Southampton, will become the largest capacity dry stack system in the UK and cater for circa 85 boats up to 13m long. The new developments, with the existing 104 berth facility, at Cobb’s Quay Marina, will enable MDL to offer boaters over 400 dry stack berths in 2007.

**MDL says:**

“Many boat owners are finding that dry stack is the answer to their boating needs,” says Dean Smith, Head of Sales and Marketing at MDL Marinas. “MDL’s dry stack berthing reduces maintenance costs and offers customers nothing less than exceptional service, with some of the most experienced personnel in the UK running the dry stack systems. MDL is regarded as a first class marina group and it is clear from customer demand that MDL is also the preferred dry stack storage provider.”

MDL says its dry stack service enables customers to access their boats by calling the marina an hour before their preferred launch time. Launching and recovery is available 7 days a week, during the marina’s times of operation.

When the marina team is notified of a launch, they place the boat in the water ready for when the customer arrives. When customers return to the marina, the MDL team lifts the boat out of the water, rinses the underside and places it back in the system.

**According to MDL:**

It has become recognised by boat owners that there are many benefits to dry stack berthing which include; no need for antifouling, reduced risk of saltwater deterioration, secure storage with a high level of security at each marina, as well as better fuel economy and enhanced residual value.

**BYM talked to some UK boat owners, this is what they said:**

I think it all depends on access. Provided that you can guarantee to have the boat available at a couple of hours notice I don’t see any problem.

It’s not for me; I use the boat too much and I would be worried about my pride & joy being scratched or banged. Maybe you get used to it, but my annual lift out is hard enough to watch!

If they can guarantee near instantaneous lifting (in & out) at the whim of the owner, why not?

If this all needs to be done on appointment and it works with waiting lists etc... that might be a showstopper.

Just imagine 3 weeks of bad weather, suddenly the weather clears for one long weekend and half the owners are screaming to get their boat in the water NOW!

It is fine if you have a small boat, do not visit very often and live a long distance away. Then you phone up, tell them you are on the way and to launch boat.

"available during THEIR times of operation." No thanks, going boating is a spontaneous thing.

I would move my boating activity to an area that could accommodate me in the water, even on pile or swinging moorings, or move the boat across the channel to benefit from cheaper marina facilities.

The continental option has a lot going for it (cheaper diesel now) and, with return flights with Easy Jet/Ryan Air costing about as much as the fuel to drive to your boat, I think MDL may find a lot of customers walking!
MV Cougar Ace

On Monday, July 24 the car carrier Cougar Ace rolled onto her side, whilst 230 miles south of Alaska’s Aleutian islands.

C130s, other aircraft, tugs and other vessels raced to the scene, amid fears for the lives of the crew and of massive pollution.
On Tuesday, September 12, the Cougar Ace brought her cargo of almost 5000 Mazda cars into Portland, Oregon.
The Magazine from BYM News

MV Cougar Ace - the remarkable story of a vessel that lay down, but refused to die!

Tuesday, July 24

Following the severe listing of the Cougar Ace, a Coast Guard C-130 aircraft, from Air Station Kodiak Alaska, deployed several life rafts to the Cougar Ace and returned to Kodiak for fuel.

Tuesday, July 25 - the crew are rescued

A Coast Guard rescue helicopter - from Air Station Kodiak - was deployed, together with two Pavehawk helicopters, from the Alaska Air National Guard, accompanied by a C-130, and two HC-130 aircraft, with inflight refueling capabilities. All were carrying parachute deployable rescue teams, from Kulis Air Force Base. The crew of the Cougar Ace were airlifted to safety, unscathed except for one broken ankle.

By late that day, the Coast Guard had decided that - though floating with its keel and a propellor out of the water - the Cougar Ace was stable and did not appear to be sinking. The primary concerns, now that the crew members were safe, were possible environmental threats and hazards to navigation. For this purpose, the 378 foot Coast Guard cutter Rush came on scene and a small boat crew, deployed from the Rush, to more effectively observe the Cougar Ace, described a sheen around the vessel as “very light”. Mitsui O.S.K.

Wednesday and was expected to arrive on scene Monday;

Wednesday, July 26

Bering Sea Rescue Services - a Coast Guard aeromedical evacuation team - was deployed on the scene by Air Station Kodiak, to transport the injured crew member from the Rush to a hospital in Dutch Harbor. The Rush remained on scene, providing search and rescue, while a small boat crew searched for the other missing crew member. In the meantime, the Coast Guard cutter Corry was deployed to continue the search for the missing crew member.

Saturday, July 29 - reinforcements on the way

The Cougar Ace had drifted to within 130 nautical miles of Amlia Island in the Aleutian chain. The Rush remained on scene and four other vessels were en route to the ship: The Coast Guard cutter Morgenthau had left Dutch Harbor late Thursday, taking on heavy towing equipment in Adak and was expected on scene Saturday; the Makushin Bay - a vessel belonging to Magone Marine - was on its way, from Dutch Harbor, with salvage specialists from Titan Maritime aboard. They were also expected on Sunday.

The plan was that, once on scene, the various salvage experts would assess the condition of the vessel and report salvage options to the Unified

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Command. The Cougar Ace was continuing to emit a light, patchy sheen, about four miles in length, as it drifted, but the main concern was about the amount of fuel on board; confirmed as 113,500 gallons of Intermediate Fuel Oil and 33,000 gallons of marine diesel.

Sunday, July 30 - a man dies

The team of salvage experts attempted to board the Cougar Ace from the Makushin Bay, but were unable to climb up the structure. They successfully accessed the vessel using the Coast Guard cutter Morgenthau’s HH 65 Dolphin helicopter. The salvage team then commenced a survey of the vessel’s engine room and some of the cargo decks.

After the survey was completed and the team was disembarking, its naval architect slipped and was knocked unconscious. The other team members conducted CPR on the scene, before he was medevaced to the Morgenthau. After CPR, for over an hour, he was pronounced dead by the Coast Guard flight surgeon.

Tuesday, August 1 - cars still in place

The initial survey, of number one and nine decks, showed that the cargo had remained in place. The engine room was intact and there was no sign of water ingress. With weather conditions expected to worsen, a decision was made to take advantage of a favorable weather window to rig a tow from the tug Emma Foss and gain some control of the Cougar Ace, whilst the salvage options were considered.

Unified Command was considering three primary options: Towing the Cougar Ace to a port of refuge for righting; Righting on scene and then towing to a port for further assessment and repair; Partially righting the vessel to improve its condition for towing to a
port of refuge.

**Wednesday, August 2 - Pumping plans made**

One the major factors, was the extreme angle of the vessel, which would make it difficult for crews to work on board and could affect equipment needed to right the ship. Nevertheless, it was decided to off load three pumps and other needed equipment, from the Makushin Bay onto the Cougar Ace, and pump water from the number nine cargo deck, at the waterline, to a starboard ballast tank, to reduce the list. However, there was no significant progress due to limited visibility that restricted the use of the Coast Guard helicopter used to shuttle equipment and personnel to and from the Cougar Ace. Swells of up to 12 feet also hampered the work. The Sea Victory took over the tow from the Emma Foss.

**Thursday, August 3 - towards the Bering Sea**

It was decided to take the Cougar Ace into the Bering Sea, to reduce the impact of the swells that the ship had been consistently encountering in the Pacific Ocean.

**Friday, August 4 - A third tug on the way**

By 10 am, the Cougar Ace was approximately 30 nautical miles south of Samalga Pass, with crews working to rig a second towline from the Sea Victory; a process that was expected to take the better part of the day. The plan was that, once the second towline was secured, the car carrier would be taken though the Pass and into the Bering Sea on the next flood tide.

Officials stressed that adequate assets would remain with the Cougar Ace to ensure protection of the marine environment. These were: the Coast Guard cutters Mor-genthau and Sycamore; the tugs Sea Victory and Emma Foss; the utility vessels Redeemer and Makushin Bay. A third tug, the Gladiator, was on the way.

**Sunday, August 6 - Calm waters**

Morning saw the Cougar Ace at rest, in semi-protected waters, north of Umnak Island.

**Monday, August 7 - Swells again**

The salvage team began transferring water from the number nine cargo deck around 3 pm; but it soon became apparent that choppy seas were posing a risk to the salvage team. The salvage vessel Makushin Bay, which was being used as a staging area for the pneumatic pumps, was unable to remain close enough to the Cougar Ace without striking the ship. With safety and environmental protection paramount, it was decided to suspend pumping and arrange for the vessel to be taken to Wide Bay.

**Wednesday, August 8 - Safely moored**

After the mayor and citizens of Dutch Harbor had been reassured that there would be no
risk to seabirds and other wildlife, the Cougar Ace was towed to the Icicle Seafood’s mooring buoys in Wide Bay and secured. Her flotilla of escorts were still in attendance and had been joined by the barge Kashega. The Sycamore made an hourly sécurité broadcast notifying mariners that there was a 0.5 nautical mile security zone around the vessel.

**Thursday, August 9 - Pumping in earnest**

By 5pm, after a good days pumping, Cougar Ace’s list had been reduced to 58°. As the vessel was dewatered, computer models were updated for the next stage of rebalasting.

**Thursday, August 17 - One week on**

The Cougar Ace’s owners, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, reported that the car carrier had been restored to a nearly upright position, completely eliminating the threat of sinking. The company went on to say “Safety measures will be executed to secure the cargo, hull and engine of the Cougar Ace and preparations will then get under way for towing to a discharging port.”

**Sunday, August 20 - Getting ready to go**

The USCG Marine Safety Detachment, in Dutch Harbor, reported that the Cougar Ace was stable, but - although only 41, of 4813 cars had shifted - most decks had suffered vehicle damage and all vehicles needed to be resecured. The Cougar Ace’s emergency generator was on line and the service generator was being considered for placing back on line, once the salvors, Titan, released the ship back to its owners.

The water and sewage systems and the main and low pressure carbon dioxide fire systems were inoperable, as there was a loss of CO2 when the Cougar Ace began to list. They would be evaluated for repairs by the owners, who would also clean spilled transmission fluid and other lubricants, from all car decks, and containerise the recovered fluids for proper disposal.

**Saturday, September 2 - Final preparations**

Captain Mark DeVries, Captain of the Port for Western Alaska and Commander of Coast Guard Sector Anchorage, announced that the Cougar Ace was stable and safe for transit to Portland. “The Cougar Ace has been properly ballasted and we have...
checked and secured all ballast tanks.” he said. “We have adjusted the ballast to put the vessel within its established stability criteria. No additional ballast transfers will be conducted until the vessel reaches Portland and the Coast Guard and the Class Society can fully inspect the ballast system to certify that it’s working properly and can again be used.”

Two individual plans to tow the vessel were developed. One plan covered the open ocean tow, the other the Columbia River to Portland portion. The Crowley Marine tug Sea Victory, which successfully towed the Cougar Ace from the open ocean to Wide Bay, would tow her to Portland, with the tug Gladiator as an escort. Upon reaching the Columbia River, marine pilots from the Columbia River Marine Pilots Association would come aboard to assist in the safe transit to Portland. The total transit time from Wide Bay to Portland was estimated to be 10 days.

Earlier in the week, stores were supplied and loaded for transit. Inspections of the vessel located a minor amount of flood water in some of the piping, due to downflooding through vents when the vessel was still heeled over. This flood water was pumped to tanks aboard the Magone Marine barge Kashega. The tail shaft was locked in place as was the rudder post. Testing of the watertight integrity of the cargo doors was completed and found to be satisfactory.

Tuesday, September 12 - The Cougar Ace arrived in the Port of Portland, Oregon, where her cargo of Mazda’s was to be unloaded.

That same day, Mazda North America said none of the cars would be sold as new vehicles. “While we do not, at this time, know the full extent of the damage to vehicles on board, none of the Mazdas will be sold as new.” said Jim O’Sullivan, president and CEO of MNA. “Those beyond will be immediately scrapped. It is possible those vehicles which are repairable will be made available for sale through Mazda’s dealer net-
were on the ship.” Many of those who followed this story, as it unfolded, felt that Mazda missed a publicity opportunity and should have had “Cougar Ace survivor” badges made up, for cars that might well have sold at a premium!

On Dec. 15, Mazda North America said it had decided to scrap all Cougar Ace cars. “After thorough testing, by engineers from our North American and Japanese R&D centers, we decided the most appropriate course of action was not to sell any of the 4,703 Mazdas aboard the ship.” said Jim O’Sullivan, President and CEO of Mazda North American Operations.

“We always put the customer first.” O’Sullivan continued. “This drove our decision to scrap every one of the Mazdas involved in this incident.”

See the PHOTOS

Could you give some details about ANEN - its aims and how it is made up?

The aim of the new association is similar to that of the other big associations, in other countries; such as the BMF in the UK, UCINA, Italy and FIN. We are smaller, but we need to be organised in the same way.

We have an enormous potential future in Spain, which is the third tourist country in the world. We have the sun and the sea and we think a lot of possibilities to develop the boating sector, over the next five years.

Will you get any Government help?

Our first target, in this program for the future, is to negotiate immediately with the administration. We have, in Spain, one of the most favourable situations for the development of the leisure boating sector, but the worst position in Europe, for the rules and legal requirements and we need to be competitive with other European countries.

I spoke last year with the late Senor Miguel Company Martorell, President of ADIN....

Our company was in ADIN. It is a very old association, started 50 years ago. ANEN is not official today, because we need the authorisation of the General Assembly but, unofficially, I can say that ADIN will be included in ANEN, as the Catalonian Organisation.

How do you see the world market and the position of Spanish manufacturers in that market, today?

Similar to last year, with the total turnover in the industry this year increased by about 7%. The problem is the small size of most Spanish companies. If they are to increase in size, they must also increase the organisation and become more professional. I am very optimistic though, because - in the last two or three years - you can see that this Barcelona Boat Show is growing a lot. That means that the sector is growing and the sector is getting very much more professional. The big important venture capitalists have
become very interested in this sector, in Spain, in the last three years. They are thinking of a positive future.

**What of markets outside Europe?**

A company like Rodman needs to be world wide. It is impossible only to sell in Spain. Our target is to sell 90% of our production for export and 10% to the domestic market. That’s exactly the same as the other big international companies.

**How about expansion into Asian countries?**

The Asian countries we need, but first and foremost we must increase our activity in the main European countries, like France; for us they are the model for the rest of the European market. Now, we are also working in different markets, like Japan, Africa, Norway, for example, as well as the USA and Venezuela; we are working on everyone.

Our target is to be represented in not less than thirty countries, in the next year. That’s a very ambitious target, but realistic for we are now in approximately twenty countries.

You have launched the Rodman this show, and plan a 74. Will you be phasing out smaller models?

No, we separate clearly the two areas. The sports fisher boats we will continue, because we have a strong position in this kind of boat, in Europe.

The new range of Muse yachts, signed by Siva Simona, a world known designer, will be a very important part of our turnover in the future. In the next three years, there will be eight new models, from 44 to 104 feet - 44, 48, 54, 66, 74, 84, 94 and 104. Next year, we will have here the new 74, which is now in the shipyard and, by the end of next year we will have four new models, in this range, with a clear personality. The idea is to be one of the top shipyards in the world.

Some Italian yards are moving into marina ownership, so they can offer a yacht and berth. Have you similar plans?

I agree that it is necessary not only to offer the boat, but to solve the big problem, which now is to find a marina place. We are working towards this and have some projects in the first stages.

Can you sum up Rodman’s future?

Rodman has a gross turnover of €120 million and employs about 500 people. At the moment, we have two important divisions; the professional boats for patrols, fishing and coastal protection craft and the leisure division.

The coastal craft are mainly for the export market. 30% for the domestic market, perhaps less, but most of the production is exported. The leisure division of the company is doing very well and increasing sales and production, over the last years. Rodman is one of the fastest growing companies in the sector.

Aldous Grenville-Crowther

More Muse photos HERE
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