

# SUMMER 2008

## contents



**NEXT ISSUE**  
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER  
SOUTHAMPTON BOAT SHOW PREVIEW  
PUBLISHED LATE AUGUST. COPY DEADLINE – AUGUST 01  
See [www.afloat.ie](http://www.afloat.ie) for updates

### 02 EDITORIAL

### 04 NEWS

Cork stalwart voices concern about flagship regatta, full book for SB3 Worlds, letters to the editor – continuing the debate on government commitment to maritime affairs, Wordsearch Quiz – win a Gill Barrel Bag in our new competition, book reviews, and Coutts calls for emphasis on youth sailing

### 20 ROUND IRELAND REVIEW

West wins!

### 28 SEASCAPES

Tom MacSweeney bemoans the short-sighted approach of government to all things maritime

### 31 OUTBOARDS

The big, the bad, and the even badder. Tony Jones looks at what's new for this season

### 38 THE JOYS OF BERTHING

Tony Jones reviews Mercury's new Axis

### 44 GREEN TEAM

Ireland's first entry to the Round-the-Word Race in 20 years is given the once-over by Markham Nolan

### 49 ALIVE AND KICKING

Louay Habib witnessed a vibrant and impressive Saab Irish Cruiser Championship at Howth

### 52 THE RCYC AND CORK WEEK PREVIEW

The south's biggest sailing event has come around again. We visit the Royal Cork Yacht Club and preview the Irish regatta of the year

### 65 MASTER OF THE FLEET

HM Yachts prove the theory of evolution

### 71 OLYMPIC SUPPLEMENT

The venue, the sailors and the chances

### 91 INLAND

Brian Goggin reviews Wis latest improvements

### 95 BOAT REPORT

Graham Smith finds style and panache – the new Oceanis 37 from BJ Marine

### 98 BOAT REPORT

Harmony 47 Viking Marine's French invader gets voted on by Graham Smith

### 102 FISHING FOR BUSINESS

Sonass expands its fleet

### 104 MARINE MARKETPLACE

### 119

Dubarry Crossword, and new Hardys Wine Quiz

### 120 SOUNDINGS

WM Nixon reports on Malahide Yacht Club's Golden Jubilee

COVER CAPTION – Main picture: Volvo 70s are launching for an October start in the Volvo Ocean Race. There will be two Irish entries. Photo by: Rick Tomlinson/Volvo Ocean Race

Inset: Winners of the BMW Round Ireland Race, Ireland West. Photo: Bob Bateman

Printed and published in Ireland by:  
Irish Marine Press Publications Ltd., 2 Lr  
Glenageary Road, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin,  
Ireland. t: +353 (1) 284 6161 f: +353 (1) 284 6192  
e: [info@afloat.ie](mailto:info@afloat.ie) w: [www.afloat.ie](http://www.afloat.ie)  
Distributed by: N. Ireland – WNS/Menzies/  
Easons. R of Ireland – Newsread/Easons and  
Newsbros. Scotland/Wales – Menzies. Isle of Man  
– G.E. White

Produced by sailors for sailors  
Managing Editor – David O'Brien (DDI 202 0370  
– [david@afloat.ie](mailto:david@afloat.ie)) Contributing Editor – William  
Nixon General Manager – Angela Fealy (DDI 202  
0374 – [angelaf@afloat.ie](mailto:angelaf@afloat.ie)) Sub-editor – Willie  
Pembroke Design – Colin McEndoo: (DDI 202  
0373 – [colin@afloat.ie](mailto:colin@afloat.ie)) Accounts – Anne Bergin  
(DDI 202 0371 – [anne@afloat.ie](mailto:anne@afloat.ie)) Tom O'Brien  
([tom@afloat.ie](mailto:tom@afloat.ie)) Contributors – Bob and Claire  
Bateman • David Branigan • Georgina Campbell  
• Des Burke-Kennedy • Dag Pike • Gill Mills  
• Fiacc O Brolchain • Markham Nolan Elaine  
Taylor • Bob Hobby • Dermot Russell • Tom  
MacSweeney • Shay Fennelly • Graham Smith  
• Tony Jones • Simon Everett

Disclaimer – The views expressed in this  
magazine are not necessarily those of its  
publisher. Advertisements designed by IMMP Ltd  
to appear in Afloat magazine are protected by Irish  
copyright law. Copyright Irish Marine Press 2008

# BEFORE THE TIDE TURNS

As this summer season builds to a high, it's becoming clear that, for once, the Irish sailing community is beginning to think outside the box.

Perhaps it's all out of necessity, as certain areas risk sliding into decline, but major innovations are cropping up where previously there was a vacuum.

Offshore sailing is the source for much of this new energy. After 20 years of very little activity at the highest level, Ireland will have two entries in the Volvo Ocean Race and will, for the first time ever, host a stopover.

The two entries are markedly different. One is a government-backed affair that, to some extent, ties in with the stopover. The other is a maverick privateer, the first second-hand boat in the race since it went one-design – an innovation in itself.

On a smaller scale, but no less significant, comes the Round Ireland. The race found a whole new audience in 2008 by going online with a flash new race tracker supplied by RORC.

For the first time, offshore racing in Ireland became a real spectator sport as tens of thousands logged on to track the race and follow their favourites. And real participation for the little guy has been rejuvenated by the renaissance of Irish Sea Offshores with the Royal Alfred's Lee Overlay series of coastal and overnight races. Pats on the back all round, then. But not so fast.

A few good results don't make a career. In racing terms, we've won the first beat, or perhaps even the start. And as anyone knows, it's easier to lose a lead than it is to win it back.

There is a slim window of opportunity to capitalise on these gains. Now is the time to examine the advances we have made and maximise the potential to take them further.

A Galway winner of the Round Ireland, a Galway Volvo stopover and two Volvo Ocean Race entries training off Galway and Limerick is the key that will allow Ireland open up the west coast as a resource.

By carrying our momentum forward intelligently, we can bring sailing's centre of gravity away from the traditional hubs of yacht racing and spread the sport across the nation, gaining a whole new audience.

By acting fast, listening to the advice of those in the know, and consolidating gains already made, we could grow events like the Round Ireland to proportions only dreamed of, and reverse declines in the likes of Cork Week, once the jewel in Irish sailing's crown.

But it won't be without some discomfort, for it could mean throwing well-worn blueprints out the window for the time being.

Could the Round Ireland be reformatted? Absolutely. Should it? At the very least, it should be considered, in the context of the sport's greater good.

Picture the scene on Sydney Harbour, having to fight for a space to watch the start of the 2007 Sydney-Hobart among thousands of spectators from every walk of life, with as many again on the water in a spectator flotilla that carved the harbour to froth.

Praise has been heaped on the Round Ireland as one of the offshore greats by the new record-holder, Mike Slade. As a great sailing nation, surely Ireland can aim to match what Sydney has achieved.

Who's to say that, with a little more thought, a grand festival couldn't be built around the Round Ireland start, attracting a vast fleet of international racers and spectators to match?

Wicklow SC deserves recognition for maintaining and building the race to the status it enjoys today, and though a move from Wicklow to a more boat-friendly and spectator-friendly venue has been repeatedly mooted, that's not necessarily the answer. But it should be considered.

Could a new course be the answer? Should we give the fleet the choice of whether they leave Ireland to port or starboard? Perhaps, but let's at least start asking the questions.

The Volvo Ocean Race, too, offers an opportunity to get the nation behind the sport once again, with two teams to back and follow for the duration of the race, welcoming them home towards the end of the course as they sprint across from Boston to Galway. Green Dragon's watch leader, Damian Foxall, was inspired enough by NCB Ireland in 1989/90 to make ocean racing his life. How many more with similar potential are strangers to the sport right now, waiting for an introduction?

These opportunities are ours to use as we see fit. It's up to Ireland as a whole to make the most of them.



Champagne sailing: Skipper Mike Slade celebrates his 'line honours' and a new course record for the BMW Round Ireland Race at Wicklow. On coming ashore the skipper of the world's fastest yacht had important advice for Wicklow Sailing Club. See report page 20  
Photo: David Branigan

## IRELAND'S PLACE AS AN ISLAND

The Irish Times editorial of May 8th remarked that "inheriting the position of Taoiseach is like being given charge of an oil tanker", while elsewhere a headline refers to "Captain Cowen" and an "unchanged crew".

The marine analogies might seem apt but for the sadly ironic fact that in this island nation of ours we still cannot rise to a minister for marine with a stand-alone department to look after this country's marine resources.

Ireland has control over 15 per cent of all EU waters and is moving, through the United Nations, to have this area of jurisdiction extended to beyond the continental shelf. Ninety-five per cent of our trade comes through our ports.

Yet our marine portfolio – such as it is – is spread over four different Government departments. How utterly ludicrous.

A single marine authority responsible for all commercial shipping, fisheries, marine resources, leisure boating, marine tourism, ports, etc is a necessity, not a luxury.

It can only benefit the island of Ireland.

Yours, etc,

Capt Michael Doyle  
Landfall  
Mulgannon  
Wexford

## NEGLECTING THE SEA AROUND US

I wholeheartedly agree with Capt Michael Doyle regarding the Government's failure to allocate a full Cabinet post for the marine industry. This was the ideal occasion for the new Taoiseach to demonstrate his commitment to the industry and to coastal communities.

The ocean economy currently contributes some €3 billion a year to Ireland's GNP from fishing, aquaculture, food processing, shipping, tourism, IT, financial and other services. At the moment, responsibility for all of this falls to the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food on the one hand, and Communications, Energy and Natural Resources on the other, with the Departments of Environment, Transport, Rural Affairs and Tourism also involved to some extent.

We need a joined-up, cohesive and integrated maritime policy. The Taoiseach should have taken the first step toward this by appointing to the Cabinet a full minister with responsibility for all the facets of the marine industry. It is ludicrous to think that we can develop a vibrant maritime sector with such a disjointed and fragmented system of administration.

Yours, etc,

Senator Michael McCarthy  
Labour Party Spokesperson on the Marine  
Seanad Éireann  
Dublin 2

## NEED FOR FULL MARINE DEPARTMENT

I note with interest both the portfolios of the new Cabinet Ministers and the identified areas of responsibilities of the new Ministers of State. The 20 or so Ministers of State are designated as 'having special responsibility' for all kinds of important issues, such as drugs strategy, community affairs, heritage and local government.

But there is one omission – that of marine affairs. While fisheries have now been put in with agriculture and food and there seems to be a certain logic in this, may I respectfully suggest that there is a lot more to marine affairs?

While an ever-increasing amount of our exports are in the form of services, it is still a fact that about €150 billion of merchandise, both exports and imports, must pass through our seaports each year. Therefore, commercial shipping and our commercial seaports are vital to the economy.

Yet we do not have a separate Department of the Marine, or even a Minister of State responsible for marine matters. All we have today to deal with marine matters is a small and increasingly obscure section, buried within the Department of Transport.

Not good enough, in an island nation of ours, whose economy is so heavily dependent for survival on commercial ships and our seaports.

Yours, etc,

Tony Ayton  
(retired inspector with the International Transport Workers' Federation)  
Avondale Lawn  
Waterford

## LOUGH REE AND SHANNON SHARE TOP PRIZE

The Mitsubishi Motors/Irish Independent 'Sailing Club of the Year 2008' award has been presented jointly to the Shannon One Design Association and Lough Ree Yacht Club in a ceremony at LRYC's clubhouse in Ballyglass near Athlone.

The annual award dates from 1979, and aims to highlight achievement in sailing, and the successful functioning of clubs both for their own membership, and within their communities. Dual club awards have occurred before, and class associations have been also been highlighted, but this is the first time a club and a class association have been linked.

Lough Ree YC can trace its origins in the Athlone area back to 1770, while the concept of the 18ft Shannon One Design emerged from a meeting of Shannon sailors from all the river's lakes in Athlone in 1922.

Today, Lough Ree YC is a thriving organization with a very attractive riverside clubhouse where the river emerges from Lough Ree at Ballyglass. The club is notable for its high level of voluntary input, and though much of the new clubhouse was officially opened in 2006, work is in hand on the continuing improvement of facilities.



Eileen Brown, Commodore of Lough Ree YC, and Stephen O'Driscott, Chairman of the Shannon One Design Association, with the 'Club of the Year 2008' award

## CARLINGFORD LANDS NEW TITLE



Carlingford Lough and the surrounding Cooley Peninsula has been designated 'European Destination of Excellence 2008 - Tourism and Intangible Heritage', by Fáilte Ireland, in recognition of its tourism potential.

The Irish tourist body commended the area for its natural resources, natural and cultural heritage and full calendar of events.

Carlingford is just over an hour's drive from both Dublin and Belfast, and boasts a huge selection of sailing and water-sports activities, set against breathtaking views, which entice enthusiasts of all abilities all year round.

"Whether you love the thrill of sailing, yachting, rowing, surfing, sea-angling or racing, the area has extensive facilities and expert services on hand to make your water pursuits memorable," said Newry and Mourne District Council Mayor Michael Cole. "If you'd

like to stretch your land-legs there are plenty of diversions - from climbing the famous Mourne Mountains to horse riding - and you can also easily explore on foot, the medieval villages with the castles and cobbled streets. Visitors can also sample modern Irish cuisine at one of the many award winning eateries."

For sailing enthusiasts there are berthing opportunities at Carlingford, Warrenpoint, Omeath, Greers Quay and Rostrevor. These quaint coastal towns and villages are brimming with character and come alive in the summer.

You can also berth nearby in the city of Newry - the second largest retail centre in Northern Ireland. Sail up the canal via the Albert Basin through the recently automated Victoria Lock Gates and you can take advantage of the special promotion to stay up to three nights free of charge.

More information from [www.carlingford.ie](http://www.carlingford.ie)

## SILVER LINING IN KERRY

Cahersiveen-based Marine Siveen has been appointed sole distributor of Silver Marine RIBs and inflatables in Ireland.

Supported by advanced New Zealand technology and top quality materials provided by world's leading fabric manufacturers, Silver Marine boats were ranked in the top four when set against 10 other brands by the French Bateaux magazine (May 2005).

All Silver Marine boats are fully ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 14001:2001 quality accredited. Further information from [info@marinesiveen.com](mailto:info@marinesiveen.com) or tel: 066 9414 111.



## TAKE IT TO XTREME

Xtreme Boat Sales is currently seeking sub-dealers for Glastron sports boats and motor cruisers.

For 2008 Glastron have 28 models to choose from, the smallest at 17ft, right up to the 27ft sports cruisers. Dealership opportunities are open throughout Ireland.

Call Xtreme Boat Sales on 0044 2870 328886 or [www.xtremeboats.co.uk](http://www.xtremeboats.co.uk)

# MASSIVE SB3 FLEET HAS EYES ON DUN LAOGHAIRE

The National Yacht Club will announce before July 4 whether or not it will allow an expanded entry for SB3 Worlds in September.

The Dun Laoghaire club scored a major coup in securing the first World Championships in the class, and entries reached the 120-boat cap by mid April.

Event chairman Rory Byrne confirmed that there was already a long waiting list for potential drop-out spots, and said that he was looking at alternative options which would allow a larger entry.

"We are looking into the possibility of raising the cap," said Byrne, who described the massive subscription as a "high-quality problem".



Photo: Gareth Craig

With 120 boats, the fleet would likely be broken into four groups for qualifying rounds, sailing on two separate courses, but Byrne said that the SIs had not been written yet, and with the possibility of further entries, "nothing is set in stone".

He said the committee was also looking into various options for dealing with berthing and on-shore facilities, including modular breakwaters in front of the National Yacht Club to house the fleet.

"We are looking to put as many boats in front of the club as possible," he said. "We are working on a solution with Dublin Port, one of our main sponsors. They have the capability to put this together, but we have to have a consultation process with Dun Laoghaire."

He said that other clubs on the Dun Laoghaire waterfront had offered whatever assistance was necessary to help the event go smoothly. Camper van slots were being offered to entrants within the harbour, and the Royal St George Yacht Club has extended a welcome to travelling boats, offering free boat parking for entrants to both the national championships and the worlds for the three weeks between the events.

Byrne urged those eager to sail in the event to register to join the waiting list for cancellations or a possible extended entry. He said the committee will happily transfer entries up to two weeks before the event. Joining the waiting list is free of charge but the numbers are building up fast.

# BJ MARINE

[www.bjmarine.net](http://www.bjmarine.net)

Dublin • Cork • Belfast • Mediterranean

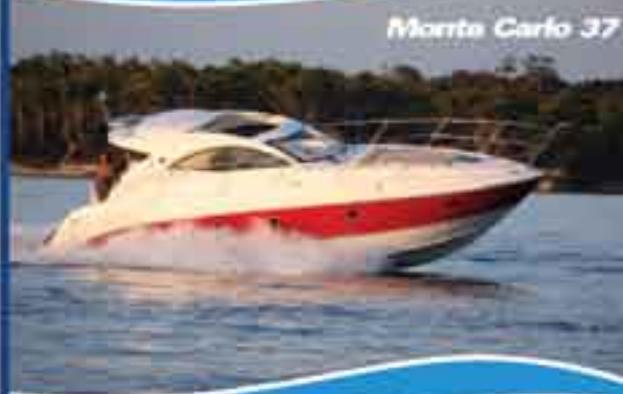


## BENETEAU

**Power Boats - Sports, Flybridge, Hardtop  
Trawler Yachts - 18ft - 52ft**



*Antares 10.80*



*Monte Carlo 37*



*Antares 8*

**New Malahide Showroom NOW OPEN !**

**Malahide Marina, Dublin, Ireland**  
Tel: (+353) 1 8081560  
Mobile: (+353) 86 771 2225  
[sales@bjmarine.net](mailto:sales@bjmarine.net)

**Crosshaven, Co. Cork, Ireland**  
Tel: (+353) 21 4832900  
Mobile: (+353) 87 771 2224  
[sales@bjmarine.net](mailto:sales@bjmarine.net)

**Bangor Marina, Northern Ireland**  
Tel: (+44) 2891 271434  
Mobile: (+44) 7854 903351  
[bangor@bjmarine.net](mailto:bangor@bjmarine.net)

**Malta, Malde, Malta**  
Tel: (+356) 27019396  
Mobile: (+356) 99999356  
[malta@bjmarine.net](mailto:malta@bjmarine.net)





1037

• 57ft



**ew Malahide Showroom NOW OPEN !**

**thide Marina, Dublin, Ireland**  
 Tel:(+353) 1 8061560  
 Mobile: (+353) 87 771 2222  
 aafaa@bjmarina.net

**Crosshaven, Co. Cork, Ireland**  
 Tel:(+353) 21 4832909  
 Mobile: (+353) 87 771 2224  
 aafaa@bjmarina.net

**igor Marina, Northern Ireland**  
 Tel:(+44) 2891 271434  
 Mobile: (+44) 7854 905351  
 bangor@bjmarina.net

**Malta, Msida, Malta**  
 Tel:(+356) 27019356  
 Mobile: (+356) 99999358  
 malta@bjmarina.net

# BEAUTIFUL HALLOWE'EN SAILS INTO DUN LAOGHAIRE

When Halloween sailed into Dun Laoghaire Harbour this June bank holiday weekend, her Irish owners moved to the forefront of the international classic boat world with the beautifully restored vessel.

The 70ft William Fife designed and built bermuda cutter of 1926 is moored at the Royal Irish Yacht Club and its massive wooden mast towers over nearby craft.

In 1926 Halloween created a Fastnet Course Record of three days, 19 hours and 3 minutes, which stood until 1939. That time for the 608 nautical miles was not beaten by a boat of similar size until Ted Turner took line honours with the 12-metre American Eagle in the 1971 Fastnet Race.



It was America's Cup legend Denis Conner - a man who knows his boats - who guided the Irish team towards this prize acquisition last winter. At dinner in the south of France, The Dennis suggested to Chris Craig of Dub Langhaire that the St Tropez-based Hallowe'en should and should be bought. Hallowe'en was built for Scottish landowner Norman Boxendale for the second Fastnet Race of 1924.

The Fastnet was an annual event until 1931, with the initial rules after the inaugural race of 1920 stipulating a maximum LWL of 50ft. That's precisely Hallowe'en's size, but it's said that William Fife did not take any other ideas from the rule, he just designed and built a seagoing 15 metre which happened to have Bermudan rig.



Denis Langhaire's Hallowe'en leads the fleet at the Fife regatta in late June. The 150th anniversary regatta was staged primarily for the owners and sailors who take pride in the restoration and sailing of these yachts, but it also gave residents along the Clyde the most amazing spectacle of sail and a chance to look back to the roots of sailing in their shores. Photo: Mark Turner

**BJ MARINE**

[www.bjmarine.net](http://www.bjmarine.net)

Dublin - Cork - Belfast - Mediterranean



**Luxury Motor Yachts  
40 ft - 50 ft**

**Searanger 43 AD**



**Atlantic 42**



**Atlantic 40**



**New Malahide Showroom NOW OPEN !**

**Malahide Marina, Dublin, Ireland**  
Tel: (+353) 1 8061560  
Mobile: (+353) 87 771 2225  
sales@bjmarine.net

**Crosshaven, Co. Cork, Ireland**  
Tel: (+353) 21 4833909  
Mobile: (+353) 87 771 2224  
sales@bjmarine.net

**Bangor Marina, Northern Ireland**  
Tel: (+44) 2891 271434  
Mobile: (+44) 7854 903351  
bangor@bjmarine.net

**Malta, Malta, Malta**  
Tel: (+356) 27019356  
Mobile: (+356) 99999356  
malta@bjmarine.net

## COUTTS CALLS FOR NEW EMPHASIS ON YOUTH SAILING

America's Cup veteran and all-round sailing supremo Russell Coutts visited the Royal Irish Yacht Club last month to talk insurance and give his views on the future of sailing.

There to launch a new range of insurance offers from Eagle Star and Affinity, Coutts held a Q&A session with a group of enthusiastic – if slightly bewildered – Optimist sailors.

After fielding questions on his favourite class and revealing some tricks of the trade, Coutts told Afloat that if sailing wants to survive, it has to focus on getting youths involve in the sport, and keeping them in the sport.

"Times have changed, kids are exposed to different things than when I was growing up.

"I think that sailing is becoming too expensive for a lot of families, that's one thing that has got to be addressed," said the New Zealander. "Something like an Optimist dinghy – these days to buy an Optimist is not cheap, it's very expensive.

"Yacht clubs have to encourage programmes that are affordable and look at economics of scale," said Coutts. He also encouraged clubs to look at the variety of pressures on the sport and come up with innovative solutions.

"People maybe in the past used to come down and spend all Saturday down at the yacht club. Now people have other activities they have to balance. People can travel more easily. We're starting to see Wednesday night races becoming more popular and even winter racing because people want to use their summers for different things

His words bring to mind the recent story of the Finnish Optimist Association, which bought 300 Optimists in a bulk order from a Chinese manufacturer, providing the boats to new sailors at a third of what they normally cost, and making history in the process. The order, with Far East Boats in China, was the biggest single shipment of Optimists in the 60-year history of the class.

Coutts also reckons that the immediate future could see the overall number of clubs shrinking, but doesn't think that has to be a bad thing.

"Lots of yacht clubs used to exist in local communities because people didn't travel quite so much or so far. They now might be better combining and having a larger membership."

The New Zealander urged sailing in Ireland to shed the elitist tag that is often pinned on it and open up the sport to everyone. "I struggle with that because it's just not the case in NZ, I can't imagine it's really the case here. If it is, then the sport should work at changing that image."



"...and this is how I won the America's Cup (three times)!" Russell Coutts showing the ropes to Dun Laoghaire Juniors. Photo: Markham Nolan

## SERVICE FIRM SUED FOR DAMAGE TO BOAT

A businessman whose holiday plans were ruined after his 37-metre motorboat suffered engine failure has successfully sued the company which serviced the boat.

The Circuit Court heard that Brendan Martin of Howth, Co Dublin, had hired Auto Marine Engineering Services Ltd, Co Cork, to service both engines on his 37-metre motorboat.

After the work had been carried out, Mr Martin took the boat on a test trip around Lambay Island. However, the starboard engine failed during this trip, and the boat returned to Howth on the port engine. The starboard engine was subsequently written off and Mr Martin discovered the bilges around the engines were full of oil.

Mr Martin had sued Auto Marine Engineering Services Ltd, Aughtabrid Beg, Glanmore, for breach of contract in the carrying out the service. The court awarded Mr Martin €28,496, to include the cost and fitting of the replacement engine, depreciation and loss of use and damages.



## SISK TUNES INTO CLASSICS

Dublin sailing historian Hal Sisk is making waves on both sides of the Atlantic with two classic boat projects, one new and one old.

Sisk is reviving the Colleen class, originally designed at the turn of the century, and hopes to have the first production boat available for sale by the end of the summer.

The boat, loved by expats around the world in the 1900s, is being restored as a commercial class in Argentina. The boats were popular with members of the Tigre Yacht Club, in a plush northern suburb of Buenos Aires. The nearby town of Novotecnica is where the new breed of Colleen is taking shape; faithful to the old designs but benefitting from a modern treatment.

The boat was designed as a replacement for the Mermaid and is reckoned to be the first one-design keelboat class in the world. Now being built in GRP, with a 3hp engine fitted through a drop-slot in the stern, the clinker-finish hull and classic gaff rig will make turn-of-the-century colonial style sailing available to the masses.

Classic Sailboats in the UK have been involved from the start, drawing on their experience with other classics like the Water Wag and the Shannon One Design, which they also build.

Towards the end of 1896, the Dublin Bay Sailing Club selected James Doyle as the designer of their new One Design Class to replace the Mermaid and the Half-Raters.

"They [the new boats] would sail well and present a handsome appearance... they would combine stiffness under canvas, stability, buoyancy, quick-staying powers, be good boats, whether going to windward, reaching or with free sheets... they would also have the additional advantage of being Irish in design, Irish in material and Irish [he hoped] built....", read the original brief.

The new Colleens are available with standard fittings, traditional fittings, or modern-as-the-internet Harken race spec fittings. Sisk's other classic import may have old-style lines, but she's a sleek modern cruiser under the hood.

Molly Ban is an extremely stylish and sophisticated 63-foot motor cruiser from the pen of British designer Nigel Irens. Her slightly smaller sister, at 17 metres, conceals three double cabins, with three heads and two showers, and cruises comfortably at a shade over 18 knots, with 475 horses doing the work, so the scaled-up Molly should provide an even more plush interior, with her longer waterline allowing for greater power.



**www.bjmarine.net**

Dublin • Cork • Belfast • Mediterranean

**Top Quality Used Boats  
Available Immediately  
Unbeatable Prices !!**

*Soaluna SC 29*



*Antares 13.80*



*Elan E35 Power*



**New Malahide Showroom NOW OPEN !**

<p><b>Malahide Marina, Dublin, Ireland</b> Tel: (+353) 1 8061360 Mobile: (+353) 87 771 2223 satae@bjmarine.net</p>	<p><b>Crosshaven, Co. Cork, Ireland</b> Tel: (+353) 21 4832909 Mobile: (+353) 87 771 2224 satae@bjmarine.net</p>
<p><b>Bangor Marina, Northern Ireland</b> Tel: (+44) 2891 271434 Mobile: (+44) 7854 902351 bangor@bjmarine.net</p>	<p><b>Malta, Maida, Malta</b> Tel: (+356) 27019356 Mobile: (+356) 99999356 malta@bjmarine.net</p>





Olympic silver medalist David Wilkins and Robert Michael celebrate the launch of the Malahide anniversary publication

## MALAHIDE CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF SAILING

An Olympic silver medal representation at eight of the last nine Olympic Games, 27 National Championship winners in seven different classes, administrators of international repute, and the introduction of sailing to hundreds of children and adults are among the highlights contained in 'Malahide - 50 Years of Sailing', a publication marking Malahide Yacht Club's Golden Jubilee this year.

Written by sailing journalist Graham Smith (a club member since its inception in 1958), it outlines the achievements of its members both at home and abroad at the highest levels of the sport. The full-colour 80-page publication was launched by David Wilkins, 1980 Olympic Silver Medal winner, at a reception in the club on April 30th.

Established in April 1958 as Malahide Sailing Club (it changed to Yacht Club in 1980), it has contributed significantly to the social fabric of Malahide over the past 50 years and would be considered one of the most successful clubs in a town noted for its

sporting prowess and facilities. Malahide's sailing Olympians include Wilkins, Robert Dix, David Burrows and Robin Hennessy, while multiple National Championship winners include Hennessy, Philip Watson, Alistair Rumball, Roger Morris and Richard Burrows.

In the cruising sector, Peter Killen and his crews have completed extensive deep-sea cruises to the likes of Iceland and, most recently, Antarctica which have led to numerous awards.

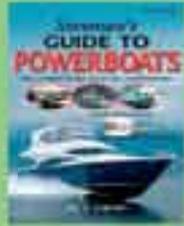
On the administrative front, three members - Paddy O'Neill, Neil Murphy and Robert Dix - were each President of the Irish Sailing Association, while Jock Smith officiated as Principal Race Officer at two America's Cup Challenger Trials in the 1980s.

'Malahide - 50 Years of Sailing' is on sale in the MYC clubhouse and via the Club's website - [www.myc.ie](http://www.myc.ie) - at a cost of €25.

See also Soundings on page 120

## AFLOAT BOOKWORM

With the holiday season coming sharply into focus in the next few weeks, it's time to browse what's worth buying, sailing or marine-wise, on the bookshelves for those get-away-from-it-all moments that come with a bit of sunshine and calm



First up is Sorensen's Guide to Powerboats - How to Evaluate Design, Construction and Performance - Second Edition (published by

McGraw Hill, price €15.99), by Eric W. Sorensen, intended as an aid for the prospective boat-buyer and as a reference guide for boat-owner and sailing professional alike.

Tight, compact and well-illustrated, it's divided into two sections: the first looking at powerboat design and construction; and the second getting to the heart of the market and running the rule over boats in 27 separate categories. Sorensen, a licensed captain and boat-owner himself with many years service writing about boats and sailing them, has a nice easy-to-read style that, while probably a little too novicey early on, gets down and dirty soon after bringing into his calculations analyses taken from J.D. Power and Associates marine market research, where incidentally Sorensen was once director of marine practice. With nearly 500 pages, the last two hundred of which are imaginative reviews of bay boats, catamarans, cruisers, motor yachts, trawlers and many more, under headings for construction, hull design walkthrough, cockpit, bridge and foredeck, cabin and finally sea trail. In essence, a decent and manageable guide for anyone interested in dipping their toe in the current market.



Getting much more specific, Rob Gibson's Introduction to Boat Handling for Sail and Power (published by Royal Yacht Association, €12.99) is a

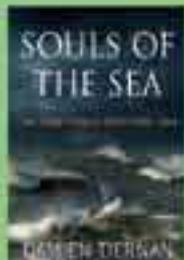
comprehensive explanation of not only day-to-day manoeuvring but how to react to those tricky emergencies that fate never forearms us with. With really informative diagrams, Gibson, a RYA yacht-master instructor and examiner who has taught sailing over the past 15 years, considers the basic principles and problems of tides, currents, fast turns, slow speed control and lines of approach, and taking into consideration getting in and out of the marina. There's also sections on ropes, knots, cleats and bollards, boat types and their limitations, moorings, handling under sail, anchoring, towing, and dealing with heavy weather and

emergencies. Precise, to the point and ticking all the boxes for the novice sailor, there's a lot in here that will one day save many a young sailor's life. For that reason, this is an essential present for the aspirant mariner.



Simon Keeling's The Sailor's Book of the Weather (published by Wiley Nautical, €14.99) is as much a useful general weather book as one specifically for

sailors. Written by the former GMTV weatherman and fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society (RMS), who unusually for an English television meteorologist shows southern Ireland on his maps. Without over-indulging science, it tackles the structure and the physics of the atmosphere, the seasons, and the workings of the weather, offering ideas on practical forecasting and DIY informed-speculation from charts and the hazards of thunderstorms, mist and fog, without boring the sailor looking for the snappy sound-bite.



Lastly, Damien Tiernan's Souls of the Sea (published by Hachette Books Ireland, €13.99) is out now in paperback for those who missed it first time around in hardback. Telling

principally the sombre and harrowing tale of the demise of the Pere Charles and the Honey Dew II and their crews, on January 10th 2007, Tiernan, RTE's south-east correspondent, talks to the survivors and the loved ones of those who perished, piecing together a story as much as about the horrific loss of three boats - the Renegade was also lost that month close to Tuskar Rock - and the intriguing story that followed. Well-written, sad and crisp, the story moves like a diary through the hours and minutes leading up to and including the disaster and its aftermath, ultimately questioning why the loss of the Honey Dew II, in particular, wasn't realised immediately by those monitoring the sea, what drives fishermen to take to the sea in the middle of a storm and how loss of life can be avoided.

All in all this month's selection is an eclectic and worthwhile array with reading options for everyone.

Paul O'Doherty

# HOW THE TS WE W WAS WON



MAJOR OF THE YEAR 2008


**BMW  
ROUND  
IRELAND  
YACHT RACE  
2008**
**RACE REVIEW**

**Head Left:** Overall Winner Aodhan Fitzgerald has competed in seven Round Ireland Races so far, last time as a two-hander, with fourth overall the best result until now. Ireland West is the perfect title for Aodhan's campaign. There were four sailors from the Gaelscoile on board, and Irish was as frequently spoken as English. The crew didn't leave the rail from Clonsilla to the finish, wrapped in Lull bags for warmth and kept happy by the occasional cigarette. A podcast by the Ireland West skipper giving details of his seventh circumnavigation is on [aflor.it](http://aflor.it)

There were echoes of the 2007 Fastnet early on as the 46-strong entry gathered in Wicklow and Dun Laoghaire for the 2008 BMW Round Ireland yacht race. The big guns had arrived, nestled in Dun Laoghaire and making brief sorties into Dublin Bay to stretch their legs. Biggest of them all, Leopard, was living up to her name, casually stalking another record like easy prey.

A sizeable throng of double-handed entries, 11th total, fished out the fleet, and despite some gaps at the top end due to Commodore's Cup commitments, the Round Ireland was shaping up to be extremely competitive.



Also shaping up was a nasty low, looming off Ireland's west coast, and all of a sudden things weren't looking so easy. Like the Fastnet the year before, the race committee looked at the clouds down the track and wondered whether this wasn't the best idea after all.

A glance at Wicklow SC's flash new online race tracker close to start time on Saturday showed the showbiz end of the fleet hadn't budged from the deep, safe water of Dun Laoghaire Marina. There were rumours that Leopard and others were booking back into the Royal Marine Hotel for another night before the race committee had even pulled the plug officially. Regardless, the delay was forthcoming, and a gale blew itself out, to some extent, overnight. But, like the Fastnet the year before, the delay would not spare the fleet from a big breeze for the entire race.

Sunday at noon saw gunsmoke and the fleet was finally under way, save for a couple of notable absentees. The delay had put the 48-foot Aiegre out of the race, with her hire crew having to catch flights that they now risked missing.

Also out, falling on its own sword, was the crew of Volvo 70 McConnells Chieftain, Ger O'Rourke's last-minute Volvo Ocean Race entry, blown onto the marina as they tried to leave. Unbowed by the few non-starters, the fleet sped off southwards on an east coast drag race, fetching on starboard tack in wind that still approached gale force. By the time the full fleet had rounded Tuskar Rock, things were getting tricky.

Lucky ol' Leopard already had the Fastnet in her sights by sun-up on Monday, and her crew was looking in the downwind wardrobe for cloth that would best suit the west coast.

Meanwhile, the rest of the fleet had hit quicksand. Light and patchy breeze off the south coast had navigators looking for answers in all sorts of directions.

The Lulra 56, Formidable 3, hugged the Cork shore early on, which initially looked like a heinous decision.

Out to sea, Ireland West was dodging rigs on the Kinsale gas fields so as to get a hotter angle on the Fastnet, while fixing a major leak through their speedometer fitting.

In the short term, the inland strategy paid dividends, but in the long term, Ireland West would have the last laugh.

As the fleet rounded the Fastnet, everyone knew what was coming. There was plenty talk of the impending 40-knot session, but yet it seemed to take much of the fleet by surprise when the mercury suddenly dropped in the dark at 3am on Tuesday.

"We had the massive spinnaker up," said John Chambers on Mumbo.ie, a doublehanded entry. "We got knocked over, it came in very suddenly."



Captions (left) from top:  
 As signalled from very early in the race, team 'Langer' of Nadie, McCarthymotors.ie and Cavatina – all from West Cork – won the team competition. In fact they were the only one of 11 three-boat teams to survive the conditions intact.  
 Michael Boyd and Niall Dowling's Slingshot, a doublehanded entry  
 Mumbo.ie was confirmed as winner of the demanding two-handed class, coming in a very creditable 8th overall against fully crewed boats. Co-skippers Patrick Cronin and John Chambers were sailing to raise awareness for the Childfund Ireland charity.  
 Jalfrezi, a J120, British doublehander  
 Tom Fitzpatrick's FMB Noyeks, a Beneteau 36.7  
 Photos: Bob Bateman



RACE REVIEW



And they're off – the fleet head south past Wicklow. Is there merit in future fleets heading north instead?

Photo: Bryan O'Brien/Irish Times

# IN THE SHORT TERM, THE INLAND STRATEGY PAID DIVIDENDS, BUT IN THE LONG TERM, IRELAND WEST WOULD HAVE THE LAST LAUGH

## TIME TO TAKE STOCK

The 15th staging of the BMW Round Ireland Race has proved yet again that this island forms the backdrop for one of the world's great ocean races.

racing normally evens out the unfairness of nature by running a regatta series with multiple races to determine who is consistently the best sailor.

Yet not for the first time have commentators expressed dissatisfaction with the outcome, not only this year but every year where nature's capriciousness decides the winner in the last twenty miles of a 700 mile race.

Obviously it's not an option in this type of offshore race – although many events such as the Volvo Ocean Race and the Figaro are broken into legs mitigating the long distance offshore racing.

It happens also in the Fastnet and sometimes in Sydney-Hobart, but the Round Ireland suffers to a greater extent.

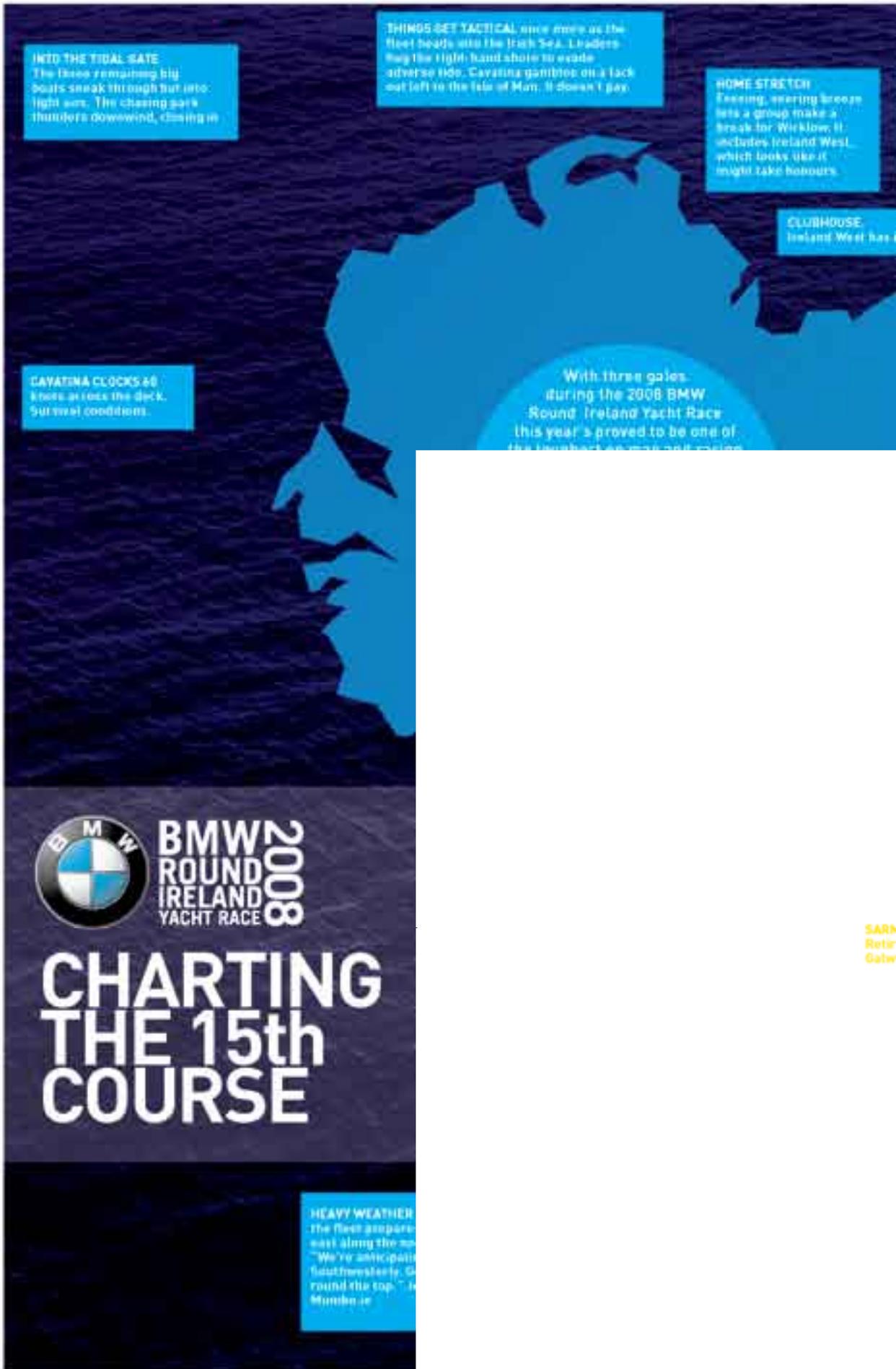
And there are other less than satisfactory aspects to the Round Ireland, the Fastnet and the Sydney-Hobart.

This cannot be put down to any aspect of the organisation of Wicklow Sailing Club, nor can the boats, crews or skippers be considered blameworthy in any aspect but the geographical and meteorological nature of the approaches to the finish line throw up last minute reversals of fortune.

One in particular is the insistence on determining an overall winner from the entire entry list when the basis of good handicapping is to keep like with like by having rating bands as narrow as possible.

'That's yacht racing' is the standard reply but yacht

Afloat.ie has posed some questions already about the course and the timing – is it time to have the debate to review aspects of this great race?



**INTO THE TIDAL RATE**  
The fleet remains big boats sneak through but into tight work. The chasing pack thunders downwind, closing in

**THINGS GET TACTICAL** since more as the fleet heads into the Irish Sea. Leaders hug the right hand shore to evade adverse tide. Cavatina gambles on a tack out left to the tale of Man. It doesn't pay.

**HOME STRETCH**  
Tearing, veering breeze lets a group make a break for Wicklow. It includes Ireland West, which looks like it might take honours.

**CLUBHOUSE**  
Ireland West has

**CAVATINA CLOCKS 48**  
knots across the deck. Survival conditions.

With three gales during the 2008 BMW Round Ireland Yacht Race this year's proved to be one of the toughest ever yachting races.



# CHARTING THE 15th COURSE

**HEAVY WEATHER**  
The fleet prepares east along the north coast. "We're anticipating Southwesterly. G round the top." from Mumbac.ie

SARNIA Retired to Galway

**MCCONNELL  
CHIEFTAIN**  
Holed getting off  
marina dock

**LEGALLY  
BRUNETTE**  
Leechline rips  
out of main

**INIS MOR -  
Pre-race  
favourite suffers  
fuel leak**



**MIGHTY MAX  
2 - unknown**

**RUFFIAN**  
- Also at  
Smerwick  
Harbour

**STAR DANCER**  
Retired to  
Fenit

**FIRST OF  
SEPTEMBER**  
Smerwick  
harbour  
- battens  
exploded

**WSI**  
Anchor  
locker leak  
worsens

**LASCAR**  
Retired at  
Cabirciveen

**JACANA**  
Retired to  
Dingle



RACE REVIEW



Downed temporarily, too, was Ocean Spirit of Carlingford, and plenty of others who all took a hit at pretty much the same time. Kites were pulled in rapidly, and the west coast became a white-sails-only affair, yet still speeds in excess of 15 knots were regularly recorded by boats that would only rarely see those figures.

Faced with a brief respite passing Galway and Mayo, but with much worse weather to come off Donegal, several boats banked on safety in and around the bottom left corner of the course.

At this stage, Adrian Lee's Cookson 50, Lee Overlay Partners, was storming away with the lead.

The trio of big boats, including Formidable and the VO60 Alburn, were taking giant strides in the big wind and it seemed like they could hold it – if they could hang onto the breeze.

Another drag race ensued up the west coast through Tuesday, and with the wind continuing to howl it was a matter of who made the best of it in a straight line.

The next corner meant a turn downwind and the beginning of the race's turning point. Up until the northern coast, it seemed like one of the high-performance sleds might defy their rating and pull out a win.

The smaller boats, through Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, were still running before 45 knots of westerly wind, with defending champion Cavatina recording 60 knots across the deck.

Meanwhile, the bigger boats had rounded into the northern portion of the Irish Sea, facing slackening winds and a roaring tide. The fleet began its concertina motion and it was as if an entirely new race had started.

Cavatina, which had stormed along the west and north coasts, was now back in the chase, with the likes of Nadie, McCarthyMotors.ie and Ireland West all in the chasing pack.

Leopard had long since drained the champagne for line honours, but the real race had only begun. Timing was all-important as the peloton hoped to have the flood tide usher them into the northern Irish Sea.

The wind veered with them until the majority were south of Strangford Lough. Again, Cavatina was beginning to look like the favourite. However, a shift in breeze to the right of the course, while she had headed left, towards the Isle of Man, seemed to seal her fate.

Ireland West had, at this stage, romped back to Wicklow, not entirely certain of victory, but almost. Conditions had gone from 40 knots to just five on the lower reaches of the Irish Sea.

George Radley's team aboard McCarthyMotors.ie worked to get every last drop of power out of her as they rounded the Kish, but the West had already won. The crew on board Ireland West, led by Aodhan Fitzgerald, took the ultimate honours home to Galway.

## PUTTING ROUND IRELAND ON THE MAP

By David O'Brien, Irish Times Sailing Correspondent

The best way to safeguard the future is to invent it and by introducing satellite tracker technology, Wicklow Sailing Club brought internet access to this year's BMW Round Ireland race. Out went arbitrary reporting positions relayed by Coast Guard and in came precise tracking on computer screens for the five day voyage of the 40 – boat fleet.

Its impact was most apparent in the exciting closing stages. Pundits tracked Irish sea duels between Cavatina, Ireland West and McCarthy motors.ie to predict the overall prize with some certainty. The investment in this technology is a quantum leap forward for race organisers and has been widely acknowledged as such.

Wicklow Sailing Club says its website attracted 57,000 hits over the five days of the event. It puts the club on the map but in a wider context it's also a boost for the campaign, encouraging more interest in offshore sailing at a time when it is in decline. But such innovation should not end there because, if the comments of this year's line honours winner are anything to go by, the club is sitting on a golden opportunity.

If this is the case, why does the race's appeal, though deserving of far greater international note, remain rooted in a small fleet? When he came ashore from his second circumnavigation, Leopard skipper Mike Slade said that the race timing was an obstacle to further international growth.

"It's so close to the UK's Round the Island race, and it's not a Fastnet year. I think if it was on in a Fastnet year, you'd see more of the big boats coming here for the Round Ireland and then doing the Fastnet." By listening to the advice from Slade – owner of a super-yacht which holds some of the world's biggest records – Wicklow can make further innovations for 2010.

The club could also consider wider changes, including the course itself. In a replay of recent races, the last 100 miles of the 2008 voyage have seen a dramatic change in fortune for one time backmarkers. Slower boats were the winners again over the last 24 hours and the high speed endeavours of Wednesday have been relegated in the handicap stakes at least.

This continued march of the slow boats has prompted calls for an examination of the course to see if there is another way of staging Ireland's premier offshore race. Essentially, statistics from 1986 to 2008 show the race is won and lost between Rathlin island and South rock; and the closing stage of the 15th edition proved no different.

Because the race effectively restarts as boats can be caught in a tidal gate after some six hundred miles of fair sailing, it has been suggested that the option of sending the fleet northabout on a flood tide should at least be examined. Another option is to allow competitors sail in either direction after the start passing through a gate east of the Wicklow line.

As those stepping ashore in Wicklow testified last night, though brutal at times, the Round Ireland is the perfect offshore race course and it needs to be sold around the world as such. The entire sailing community needs to get behind Wicklow and assist it in promoting this 704-mile offshore race as an icon of Ireland's summer sport.



## ARMCHAIR SAILORS

For the armchair spectator, the Round Ireland had always been a tricky, staccatoed affair to track – until it finally moved online.

Before 2008, updates on Round Ireland progress were often few and far between, and usually out of date by the time they got to the reader, with media coverage petering out to a trickle after the headline boats had finished.

However, with Wicklow SC investing heavily in technology this year, the race has truly come alive.

OC and RORC provided Wicklow with a flash and very expensive real-time web tracker system, which allowed race fans to live the Round Ireland as it happened, tracking their favourite boats, seeing their every move.

The tracker has been used to follow the likes of the Fastnet and other flagship races in the ocean racing calendar, and proved a massive hit.

Wicklow SC claimed to get upwards of 57,000 visits in total on their new website, which incorporated the tracker as the race progressed.

That coupled with detailed and regular updates on Afloat.ie meant the 2008 BMW Round Ireland Yacht Race was enjoyed by the largest audience that the race has ever seen.

Even the crews went online, with Ocean Spirit of Carlingford updating photos to a blog, and Mumbo.ie sending messages to supporters through a specially-created Facebook page.

For the next edition, hopefully we'll see further enhancements on the official site, like regular updates similar to those provided by Afloat.ie

Kudos to Theo Phelan and his team at Phelan Design and Wicklow SC who made the race tracker happen.

## RACE RESULTS

- 1 IRELAND WEST**  
IRC 1, 101:47:40
- 2 DINAMITE-TEE**  
IRC 1, 103:1:32
- 3 MCCARTHYMOTORS.IE**  
IRC 2, 103:14:46
- 4 GALILEO**  
IRC 1 103:24:50
- 5 CAVATINA**  
IRC 3, -
- 6 BJAYSUS**  
IRC 1 104:48:59
- 7 TEAM KINGSPAN**  
IRC 0, 104:59:53
- 8 MUMBO.IE**  
IRC 3 105:38:48
- 9 OCEAN SPIRIT OF CARLINGFORD**  
IRC 2, 105:44:15
- 10 NADIE**  
IRC 0, 105:44:15

## WIORA

# ALLIANCE IS ATLANTIC WINNER

As Ireland's centre of sailing gravity begins to move west, further evidence that our Atlantic coast is the place to be came with a closely-contested WIORA series in Clifden bay last month.

Thirty-nine boats lined out off the Galway coast in blistering conditions for a long weekend on the water.

Vincent Gaffney and the crew of his Albin Express Alliance secured both the North West Offshore Racing Association (NORA) title and the West of Ireland Offshore Racing Association (WIORA) title over the weekend of June 20/21, with classes 1, 2, 3 and White Sails Class 4 competing.

Race Officer Alan Crosbie and his team utilised a combination of windward

– leeward, triangle and coastal races for all classes, meaning a multitude of disciplines came into play.

In Class 1 Sligo X332 Roxanne took the spoils ahead of two J109's – Catalpa and Joie de Vie. She looked to have one hand on the overall trophy scoring three bullets and three seconds. However, another skipper who had eyes for the silverware was Conor Rohan's Class 2 winner Ruthless, a Corby 26, that fended off the advances of Treyona and Boojum, both Sigma 33s, scoring three wins and two second places.

However, it was Vincent Gaffney who firmly grasped the cup with five race wins and just one second place to secure the Class 3 title ahead of local boat Hallmark and

Galway boat RhoCodar to win the overall WIORA/NORA titles.

Afloat caught up with Vincent on his return from Clifden "We were pushed hard this year but we are delighted with our win," he said. "I would like to thank my crew of Garret May, Noel Davidson, Suzanne Carroll and Aideen O'Kelly who sailed faultlessly throughout the week.

"We are honoured to bring both the WIORA and NORA titles back to Howth and we look forward to Fenit 2009"

WIORA 2009 will take place in Fenit, Co. Kerry, with Tralee Bay Sailing Club hosting the event in conjunction with the ICRA National Championships.



Alliance and her crew





# BLIND TO THE SEA

“This Island Nation...” are words which I have used to introduce Seascapes on RTÉ Radio 1 for nearly 20 years. They have come to be used regularly in everyday conversation to describe how this country is physically placed on the western extremity of Europe. They are words which have been adopted and used by politicians, forming a phrase regularly used in the Dail. They have been spoken by Government Ministers.

It can, therefore, be accepted that there is a degree of awareness that Ireland is an island nation and that this physical entity on which we live is surrounded by water. People have lived in the coastal regions of Ireland for more than 9,000 years. It would be reasonable to expect that from such a tradition politicians who lead our nation would have a pride in our maritime tradition.

Why, therefore, is the Government so dismissive of the marine sphere? Why does it disregard it so much?

Brian Cowen may have reshuffled his Cabinet but has done nothing to improve the position of the maritime sector within his administration. Former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern does not leave behind him a positive record of innovative maritime development. He disbanded the Department of the Marine and spread it amongst several Departments to the stage where it is often difficult to know what is where.

At the Boat Show in Malahide, several exhibitors in the leisure section told me of their difficulties in getting a response from Departments in which marine sections are located. One company has been trying for 18 months to get an answer. Sent from one Department to another, he was still awaiting response.

Brian O’Sullivan, President of the Federation, was strong in his criticism of the Government over the lack of a national maritime policy, but is anyone listening – either civil servants or politicians in Government?

Minister Eamon O Cuiv, opening the Boat Show, spoke of the importance of the marine sphere and the opportunities it provided. To exhibitors, he appeared to be committed to the coastal regions and the marine communities.

But in the larger context of the State’s administrative apparatus, it appears that the marine sphere is meaningless. I have been told that a committee of senior civil servants decided that there was no need to include the word ‘Marine’ in the title of the Department of Transport. Noel Dempsey holds the title ‘Minister for Transport and Marine’ but his civil servants don’t see any point in using ‘Marine’ in the official name of the Department, even though the Marine Safety Directorate is based there and it also has responsibility for the ports.

This is the same Department where senior Coast Guard managers are trying to close the Valentia Island and Malin Head Coastal Radio Stations and move them to an urban centre, one of the reasons for which they have given is that an urban location would be closer to shops, schools and entertainment sources!

How insulting, how dismissive of coastal people and coastal lifestyles. The Coast Guard managers told the people of Valentia Island, who are opposing the closure of the radio station, that Valentia was open to “terrorist attack...”! This is not a joke, it’s actually what was said. They want to move the station to Shannon – a location more likely to be the target of such attacks, one would have thought.



The IMF De-fo-Water Boat Show at Malahide

Apart from occasional circumstances, no long-term consistency has been shown by Irish politicians towards the sea.

Irish population history stems from those who arrived first on our shores to establish communities. There is some disagreement amongst historians as to the date on which a land connection existed between Ireland and Britain, but it is believed this did not survive beyond 10,000 years ago. Historical records indicate that the first inhabitants of Ireland arrived after the last Ice Age, some 9,000 years ago in the Mesolithic period. This is based on artefacts such as stone tools and domestic debris found in coastal areas, on lake shores and riverbanks, associated with water and the sea. These maritime connections indicate that the first people to arrive in Ireland came from the sea, crossing open water in some form of boats.

Seascapes is out a new mooring – we have moved to Mondays at 10.30pm on RTE Radio 1, and is repeated at 9.02am on Friday mornings. Tom MacSwiney is Marine Correspondent for RTE.

#### MORE SEASCAPES FOR AFLOAT READERS

Readers will get a quarterly newspaper-style Seascapes in the next edition of Afloat. This will build on the success of the Seascapes Newsletter which has been produced over the past year in association with the Marine Institute. The 'Seascapes Quarterly' will expand coverage of maritime matters in Afloat, widening content to include more maritime news, articles, miscellany and developments across the marine sphere. This is in support of the policy of Irish Marine Press to advance and develop the marine sphere. Look out for the 'Seascapes Quarterly' from the next edition of Afloat.



The Mesolithic travellers who first arrived on Irish shores found an island and established their settlements close to the coast. Today our major cities are all based on the coast.

The first inhabitants were the forbears of our 'island nation,' but modern-day politicians have not appreciated the value of the sea. The maritime sphere has been treated dismissively by the State, by politicians and civil servants who turned their backs on the sea and looked inwards, neglecting the sea and the bounty it offers.

How will history judge the Government's attitude to the marine sphere? By its geographic position, Ireland is a maritime nation but the Government seems to ignore the potential that exists, dismantling the marine brief and fragmenting its responsibilities across several Departments. There is an irritating phrase, often uttered by business and industrial leaders, academics and politicians, quoting 'the knowledge economy' as an ideal towards which the nation should aspire, a meaningless utterance, when contrasted against State-led disregard of what the marine sphere could provide.

It is time for a national marine policy, according to Brian O'Sullivan, "Ireland, an island nation with over 9,000 kilometres of coastline – a vast expanse – and almost 1,000 kilometres of navigable waterways, is a country with unexploited and underutilised natural resources. We have some of the best coastal cruising grounds in Europe, but with little or no facilities. The fishing

industry is on its knees. The marine leisure industry has the potential to grow but is being impeded by bureaucracy and the lack of any Government policy with which to guide the future. What is Ireland doing about this untapped potential?

"The answer is little or nothing. The European Union is developing a policy on the marine which identifies and embraces each maritime sector and calls for a co-ordinated European marine development policy. But our Government has disregarded its maritime resources and reduced the marine sphere to amongst the least important of its concerns. What is required is a national integrated marine policy which considers all the sectors, evaluates their contribution to the economy and also the wider socio-economic impact that development can have on coastal communities."

The Irish Marine Federation values the economic contribution of the marine sector at €700m, with another potential €400m to be earned from leisure tourism.

Time is critical, further delays and procrastination unacceptable, the Federation says. "It is time for a politician with vision to initiate a national debate and ensure that an informed integrated national maritime policy is developed and implemented."

Is there such a politician? The record would not give encouragement.



With new 'mega motors' changing our perceptions of what an outboard motor is and what it can do (see separate story on page 38) it's easy to overlook developments lower down the scale, which is where the volume sales are. Tony Jones reports on what's new for this season in the real world

# GENTLEMEN, START YOUR OUT BOARDS!

## UNDER 20HP

### Yamaha FT9.9G and FT9.9T

10hp outboards make excellent motors for a wide range of tenders, but the move to 4-stroke from 2-stroke has bumped up the weight considerably. For 2008, Yamaha's popular F9.9D has been superseded by the F9.9F and FT9.9G models; the T prefix and G suffix of the latter indicating a High Thrust version. Including short, medium and long leg options, there are nine separate versions altogether, starting with the tiller-controlled, manual start, short shaft, F9.9FMHS, and going on up to the FT9.9GEPL, High Thrust with remote control, electric start and power tilt.

The new models are generally 4-5kg (about 9lb) lighter than their predecessors at 39.9kg to 44.3kg. That's a useful reduction. The main reason for this is a completely new powerhead of 212cc compared to the old 323cc. To make-up for reduced capacity, the new motor revs to a maximum of 6000 compared to the old model's 5500 rpm.

With a new 212cc powerhead, Yamaha's new 9.9hp motors are smaller, lighter and higher revving than their predecessors



## 20HP TO 100HP

### Honda BF40 and BF50

Honda have upgraded and modernised their well-established and very popular BF40 and BF50 outboards for this season by replacing the carburettors with electronic fuel injection and changing the shape of the gearcase. The core powerhead remains the extraordinarily effective 808cc, 3-cylinder SOHC unit that has been in continuous production for 13 years now.

**Honda's BF40 and BF50 are even neater and tidier under the hood now that electronic fuel injection has replaced the carburettors**

Honda call their brand of injection PGM-FI for Programmed Fuel Injection, but of course all EFI systems rely on some form of computer and are therefore 'programmed'.

Honda's approach to fuel economy is interesting. It involves getting the boat up onto the plane as quickly as possible, more or less regardless of consumption during acceleration. The ECM mapping to achieve this is called BLAST for Boosted Low Speed Torque. Basically, it involves richening the mixture and advancing the ignition timing as close to the detonation (pinking) limit as possible between 1000 and 4500rpm.

Once in the cruise at low load between 3000 and 4500 rpm, the computer goes into 'ECOMO' super-lean mode, richening up instantly if further acceleration or full power operation are required. Honda say ECOMO reduces normal cruising consumption by up to 18%. This technique is rather clever as ISO fuel consumption and emissions are measured at five fixed throttle positions in the rev range, so the bit extra used for rapid acceleration doesn't show up in the official figures. But most owners won't begrudge a few grams more if it means improved standing start performance anyway.

A new 17A alternator replaces the old 10A one, providing 'best in class' charging performance. Some minor changes have been made to the gearcase for less drag and water splash, and the hood has been subtly changed for pure cosmetic reasons. The gear ratio remains unchanged at 2.08:1. As before, the motors are available with a comprehensive tiller or rigged for remote control.

With a dry weight of 216lb (98kg) including propeller, these are the lightest 40/50hp outboards available – beating even the Evinrude E-TEC direct injection 2-strokes.



## 100HP TO 200HP

At first, there doesn't seem much point in Suzuki's 'new' DF100, which squeezes into an almost non-existent gap between the DF90 and DF115 models. And like those engines, it uses the established 1950cc with sequential multi-point fuel injection and transistorised ignition. Even the 2.59:1 reduction ratio is the same.

In fact, it's the first in a revamp and rationalisation of the company's medium power range which will see new DF70, DF80 and DF90 models with all-new powerheads for 2009.

Mercury's 1700cc, 4-cylinder Verado range gets a new flagship in the form of the 200 L4. The changes here are difficult to spot: the spec sheet remains identical and presumably the 'new graphics and minor cosmetic enhancements to the cowling' are not the answer to the extra 25hp. So I think we can assume that the SmartCraft engine management system has been tweaked to allow in a bit more fuel and air. Interestingly, Mercury recommend normal 87 octane unleaded fuel for this engine, whereas the six cylinder units require Premium 92 octane (super unleaded) for maximum performance, with 87 as the bare minimum.

The 'entry level' 6-cylinder 200hp will continue in production, so those in the market for an engine of this output now have even greater choice.





## 200HP – 300HP

Until very recently, if you wanted a 300hp outboard the only option was the Suzuki DF300. But suddenly, there's a choice of three – all distinctly different.

Yamaha's new F300 is a 'detuned' version of their awesome 5.3 lt F350 V8. With an extra 1.4 lt compared with the Suzuki, the F300 will obviously be less stressed than the Suzuki at max rpm, making it eminently suitable for long hours on larger boats – particularly working RIBs where power-to-weight is less important than bullet-proof reliability and longevity – that can cope with its 799lb (363kg) weight, almost 200lb (91kg) more than the 603lb (274kg) Suzuki.

The other DF300 challenger couldn't be more different: it's Mercury's new 300hp Verado. This is a new development of the Verado 275 that started the Verado ball rolling at the Miami Boat Show back in 2004. Mercury obviously wanted to be sure the Verado platform would prove reliable in ordinary service before increasing its output. The technical specification is almost identical to the 275, the only difference I can see is a change in gear ratio from 1.85:1 to 1.75:1, so at any given rpm the prop will be turning 5.7% faster. Unfortunately, outboard manufacturers just will not supply power and torque curves, but max rpm at full throttle remains as before: 5800 – 6400.

300hp from a standard, production outboard motor of 2.5lt is undoubtedly a technological tour-de-force. The extra 25hp improves the Verado's power-to-weight ratio from 95.5hp/100kg to well over the magic ton at 104hp/100kg, but at 634lb (288kg) it's still heavier than the Suzuki which must remain the motor of choice if you are trying to pack 300hp – or its multiples – into a relatively small boat.

# IS MEA



Okay, so it looks as if the 350hp outboard is here to stay. Less than a month after Yamaha announced its staggering 5.3 litre (323 cu in) F350, Mercury have come up with the Mercury Racing Verado 350 Sci

# BETTER?

The Verado represents the diametric opposite to the Yamaha when it comes to design philosophy. The F350 is a naturally aspirated, big block V8 with an output that is actually quite modest for its capacity; the Verado is a highly tuned and supercharged small capacity (2598cc/156 cu in) straight six. It's the Japanese who seem to have adopted the Yankee motor racing saying: 'There ain't no substitute for inches'.

The 350 Sci sets a new benchmark in terms of output/capacity ratio – an amazing 135 hp/lt from a mere 2.6lt. The F350's 65.7 hp/lt is almost exactly half that and is pretty relaxed for a 4-valve DOHC motor with all sorts of sophisticated induction and exhaust features. That suggests that there's yet more to come sometime in the future.

But while hp/lt is interesting, in the real world, power-to-weight – best expressed as horsepower per 100kg of dry weight – is of more practical interest (not to mention money which we'll come to a bit later). That's because weight not only affects top speed but acceleration and handling as well. The Verado may be of small capacity, but light it isn't. But at 634lb (288kg) – exactly the same as the 300hp 'cooking' version – it is still 170lb (77kg) lighter than the Japanese engine, giving it a PWR of 121.5 hp/100kg against 95.9hp/100kg. So if all else remains equal, the Yamaha extra bulk is the equivalent of having an extra person in the boat. Depending on the boat in question that may matter a lot – or not much.

### Better lose weight

So let's expand our attention downwards to include the current generation of 300hp motors but focus on power-to-weight rather than sheer grunt.

above: Yamaha's amazing 5.3lt F350 is the world's largest capacity outboard motor. For big boats only

Sticking with 4-stroke for the moment, the 4lt, V6 Suzuki DF300 has to be a contender. It's has a 200lb (kg) advantage over the Yamaha and a still useful 30lb (kg) over the Verado. It's the second lightest engine of the top six and 3rd in terms of PWR. In smaller boats that might well cancel out the 'missing' 50hp, and in larger, heavier boats, at least compensate significantly.

But in performance terms, there's one engine that stands head and shoulders above the rest: the new Evinrude E-TEC E300. The 300 uses the powerhead first seen on the 275hp E250 H.O 'bass fishing special' announced earlier this year. This is pretty much a bigger bore (by 3mm) version of the standard 250hp block, raising the capacity from 3279cc (200 cu in) to 3441cc (210 cu in).

It also comes with a beefed-up gearcase and gearset to handle the extra torque featuring modified side water intakes plus six holes on the forward upper curve of the bulb to allow for shallow water running. The overall shape is also slightly modified to further reduce drag.

Emissions-wise, this direct-injection 2-stroke is compliant with the CARB 2-Star

standard, USA EPA regs and the latest RCD amendment.

The E300 is a considerably 276lb (125kg) lighter than the F350, 106lb (49kg) less than the 'racing' Verado and 76lb (35kg) less than the Suzuki. This gives it a truly exceptional power-to-weight ratio of 125.5hp/100kg.

### Conclusion

If sheer grunt and bragging rights are your only concern, you have a choice between a highly stressed, supercharged 2.6 a behemoth 5.3 litre V8. Your call.

We know that that the Suzuki DF300 V6 delivers very smooth and quiet performance throughout the rev band and this would be an excellent choice for long distance cruising. And in most boats the performance deficit, if any, would be minimal.

But if acceleration and sporty performance is what you're after, the direct injection E-TEC has to be the favourite. The downside is a slightly rougher idle and a more strident exhaust note at max rpm than any of the 4-strokes. But at cruising rpm there's not much in it.

These two engines have another advantage over the two championship contenders: performance per euro.

Engine	Capacity/Propshaft power	Hp/lt	Dry weight	Power-to-weight
Mercury Racing Verado 350 Sci	2598cc St6 350hp (261kW)	134.6**	634lb (288kg)	121.5hp/100kg
Yamaha F350	5330cc V8 350hp (261kW)	65.7	804lb (365kg)	95.9hp/100kg
Evinrude 300*	3441cc V6 300hp (224kW)	87.2	528lb (239kg)	125.5hp/100kg
Mercury Verado 300	2598cc St6 300hp (224kW)	115.5**	634lb (288kg)	104.2hp/100kg
Suzuki DF300	4028cc V6 300hp (224kW)	74.5	604lb (275kg)	109.1hp/100kg
Yamaha F300	5330cc V8 350hp (261kW)	56.6	804lb (365kg)	82.2hp/100kg

\* Direct injection 2-stroke \*\* Supercharged



Docking. You either love it or hate it. Love it because it gives you a chance to show off your consummate boat handling in front of an audience just dying for you to make a mess of it; or hate it because that's inevitably what happens. Tony Jones reports.

# TURNING ON YOUR

# AXIUS

If you fall into the latter group, please be assured that the recreational marine industry is firmly on your side. 'Accessibility' – by which they really mean 'making things easier for newbies' is seen as a key strategy for its future financial well being.

The appearance of Volvo Penta's IPS and CMD's Zeus pod drive systems were huge steps forward in this respect. Neat berthing now requires only the most rudimentary hand-eye coordination. Push the joystick in the direction you want to go (push harder for faster), twiddle it to make sure you keep straight, and 'Bob's your Master Mariner'. Another step in that direction has now been taken by Mercury Marine with Axius, which takes advantage of CMD's Zeus technology to bring joystick control to boats fitted with twin Mercruiser sterndrives – and no need for a bowthruster either.

On first hearing of it, I confess to being a bit sceptical; generating the necessary sideways force by individual computer control of each leg's thrust vector wouldn't be the problem; controlling yaw at the same time might well be, particularly with long, thin sports cruisers and RIBs with strong weather-cocking tendencies.

**On the water**

I was recently invited to come and find out for myself in a Sealine SC29 fitted with twin Mercruiser V8 petrol sterndrives featuring Bravo III legs at Ancaster's Port Hamble marina. On the day, I was pleased to find a 15mph wind was blowing straight down the river against the tide: ideal conditions for a test.

First, I carried out some routine berthing manoeuvres in the confined space between the pontoons where it was relatively calm. Using Docking Mode (rpm restricted to just above idle) the boat performed exactly as advertised, and yaw control – by twisting the joystick – was encouragingly authoritative.

True sideways movement was available at docking speed without difficulty. But decent hand-eye coordination was still required to pull off a smooth backwards-and-sideways-and-line-it-up-at-the-same-time manoeuvre into a tight finger pontoon berth. It was then time to venture out into the river proper and see whether Axis could cope with that crosswind. As luck would have it, the counter tide ensured the Sealine was held firmly against the full force of the wind and unable to scurry sideways away from it. Once out of Docking Mode, with 2000rpm available at full stick deflection, I found it quite possible to push the bow upwind and do turns on the spot with aplomb.

As I was twisting and turning, it struck me that a lot of all the in-and-out gear shifting was going on behind me without the usual jerks and snatches. Mercury's rolling improvement programme for the Bravo III drive has certainly reaped dividends.



above: Axis works its magic by vectoring the thrust from each outdrive leg independently



above: It's difficult to believe that sterndrives can produce this sort of agility

left: Control via the three axis joystick is completely intuitive

**Hardware and pricing**

Apart from the joystick, the only new hardware required for Axis is an electro-hydraulic steering actuator unit (one per leg) which takes its commands from the central Axis/DTS computer.

Axis will initially be available on petrol sterndrives with freshwater cooling and the advanced SeaCore anti-corrosion system, but should be released for the new range of CMD diesels by the end of next season. For technical reasons it will be restricted to the Bravo III leg.

The standard petrol option on the SC29 is twin 205hp (151kW) Volvo 4.3 GXI V6s and DPH legs. With the optional bow thruster, the list price is £127,005. The Axis boat uses twin 250hp (184kW) Mercruiser 5.0 MPI V8s and Bravo III legs. No bow thruster is required, and the price comes is £135,066. So an additional £8,000 gets you not only the convenience of Axis but another 90hp. I hope Sealine are ready for the push.

**Conclusion**

To use a phrase rapidly becoming part of the standard English lexicon, Axis does exactly what it says on the tin. Personally, I was pleased to find that it doesn't completely de-skill close quarters boat handling; it makes things much easier and safer for the less confident while still allowing a bit of showing off for the 'experts'. You can certainly call that progress.

# ENTER THE DRAGON



Markham Nolan runs the rule over the Green Team entry for the Volvo Ocean Race, Ireland's first entry to the Round-the-World since NCB Ireland almost 20 years ago

After months of speculation, hide-and-seek, and guesswork by the media, the long-awaited Green Dragon Volvo Ocean Race entry has become a reality. The promises have become manifestly real, with a boat designed, built and launched, a crew assembled and presented in the flesh, and the project officially well underway.

In terms of Irish sailing news, this is clearly the biggest thing to happen in decades. For the first time ever, Ireland plays host to the world's greatest ocean race. For the first time since NCB Ireland in the 1989/90 Whitbread Race we have an entry, if not two entries, in the 'Round-the-World'. And unlike NCB, we are in with a chance of a podium finish or two.

#### UNVEILING THE CREW

Green Team have played their cards close to their chest, leading to much speculation about who would be on board the boat for the race. On June 12, they finally showed their hand, unveiling a full house of ocean race

experience backed with talented youth. Just three Irish names are on the boat, with another big name among the support crew on land.

The trump card in the Irish pack must be Derrynane-born Kerryman Damian Foxall, fresh from a win in the double-handed Barcelona World Race, and a sailor with seven circumnavigations, 18 transAtlantics and more than 310,000 nautical miles in his logbook. He comes aboard as watch leader, a steady presence that will breathe huge confidence into the project as a whole. Foxall has said that he is happy with how the crew selection has gone so far.

"We've got a good, strong crew base to draw from, and we've put together a squad of guys. It's a really long race, with ten legs over nine months, and with inshore races it's going to be very demanding, so I can see the potential of doing some planned crew changes as we go around to give guys a break and let them come in again fresh."

## KEY DRAGONS

Damian Foxall



Joining Foxall, but spending most of his time up the pointy end, is world-class Bowman Justin Slattery.

Slattery ran the bow on ABN Amro 1, the winning boat from the last Volvo Ocean Race, making him the most sought-after forward hand in the business.



Justin Slattery

"He's one of the best bowmen in the world," says Foxall, "and he's really got a huge amount of experience to draw from in terms of gear and the rig - he's going to manage the rig."

Rig management is critical. Loads of more than eight tons are exerted on running and standing rigging in VO70s, which have a complicated running backstay system that splits four ways, with different elements of it working depending on what sail plan is chosen. Masts aren't cheap, and Green Team have already flown one in from their spar supplier in New Zealand.



Ian Walker

Next on the crew list, again in the rearguard, is navigator Ian Moore. Another internationally-recognised yachtsman, Moore is best known in Ireland for helping Woodoo Chile to a win in the 2004 Round Ireland. He is a man with extensive America's Cup and VOR experience, however, having won the race in the 2000/01 edition aboard VO60 Illbruck.



Ian Moore



Johnny Murdoch

"He's one of the best navigators in the whole world," says Foxall, "so that's probably one of the most important decisions in the whole campaign in terms of crew."



Scott Millar

"It's all very well to sail the boat fast but we've got to go in the right direction, and make the right strategic and tactical decisions, so to get Ian Moore, who's not only one

of the best but is also Irish, is great. That'll work to our benefit."

Among the up-and-coming crew members is youngster Scott Millar.

The 25-year-old from Newtonards, the youngest on the boat, claims he was chosen because he's six foot four, Irish and under 30. A former representative rugby player for Ulster, Millar is also a graduate of the RYA's Keelboat programme, sailing as trimmer on board a Farr 45 in last year's gruelling Fastnet Race. Green Team skipper Ian Walker extended a personal invitation to Millar, having kept an eye on him as a member of the John Merricks Sailing Trust, set up after the tragic death of Walker's former sailing partner.

Since joining the squad he has been working hard on physical preparation. "It's very strange physical training in that we are trying to put on fat as well," he said.

"According to the guys who did the race last time, if you start out at your physical peak, you'll just waste away. If you have a bit of fat on, you'll be at your peak by the second or third leg, which is perfect."

During recent first aid training, Millar found himself paired with Damian Foxall.

"We were learning how to put in an IV drip and I was practising on Damian. I said to him: 'Two weeks ago I was reading about you winning the Barcelona World Race, and now here I am putting a needle in your arm.'" The ocean race novice told Afloat: "I haven't done a lap of the world, so the first leg is the only one I can think about. It's very daunting. I'm told that I'll do my best and worst sailing in this race."

Damian Foxall deals with Cape Horn in his last rig on a Volvo Open 70.  
Photo: Magnus Woxen/Volvo



Leaving home: The Green team boat leaves the shed, ready for the water



First shots: The Green Dragon's maiden sail. The boat hit 25 knots in trials

Miller was too young to even remember Ireland's only other entry in a round-the-world yacht race, which Foxall cites as his inspiration to get involved in the world of ocean racing.

"I was in the Canary Islands on my first transAtlantic when I saw NCB coming through Gran Canaria. "Later on, seeing one of those coffee table books, seeing the Irish boat, I felt suddenly there was something on the horizon which was interesting and exciting that I hadn't necessarily been exposed to."

Also confirmed in the squad are Australian Tom Braidwood, a helm/trimmer who sailed with Ericsson in the last VOR. Joining Justin Slattery on the bow will be Kiwi Andrew McLean, a 100kg heavyweight who has sailed with Team New Zealand and has sailmaking and rigging experience with North and Southern Spars. Trimmer/driver Aussie Phil Harmer is another double VOR veteran, and another RYA academy graduate, Freddie Shanks, also comes to the bow from Walker's Patches campaign.

**BACKING UP ON SHORE**

The shore crew are a vital component in a professional campaign of this calibre. Bringing years of valuable experience to the shore team is Johnny Smullen, who worked and sailed on the NCB campaign, and has been a long-time collaborator in boatbuilding projects with America's Cup legend and Whitbread veteran Dennis Conner. He has also worked for the US navy, building high-speed stealth catamarans.

He'll be working with Johnny Mordaunt,

another Irishman involved in the shore sides of the Artemis Open 60 campaign and Ellen MacArthur's Jules Verne challenge, as well as being an accomplished big boat sailor in his own right.

And rounding out the Irish shore triumvirate is Boat Captain James Carroll, who managed the build of TP52 Patches for Walker and owner Eamonn Conneely, and has sailed super-maxis around the world.

**MADE IN CHINA**

Green Team's Reichel Pugh design emerged from the yard in China on May 13 to begin its journey to the UK for fit-out. Already, two teams had their boats in the water – the American Puma team and Ericsson, based in the Canary Islands – and Green Team eventually headed out on the water on June 16.

As a member of the second generation of VO70 designs, Green Team could also draw on the experience of a full race worth of mistakes and design errors to get their spec right.

Although their design is among the more traditional, eschewing the experimental spray rails on the bows of the Russian and Spanish boats, Foxall seems happy with the end result.

"The drawings for the boat were specced correctly," said Foxall after the first sail.

"Everything's working well. The rig was very straight, we had code zero up and full main in the building breeze, and were able to come in, tick the rig off, and now

can move on to more extensive sailing."

Walker agreed. "Starting in no wind, we slowly loaded the boat up and quickly got sailing with full cant on the keel in 15 knots of wind. As always with new boats, there were some glitches and we already have some modifications to make, but it was overwhelmingly positive. The boat feels beautifully balanced, the keel system is working well and the mast and sails set up nicely."

The glitches he referred to weren't exactly cosmetic. Word spread quickly that Green Team had broken their bowsprit on their maiden voyage. However, team insiders told Afloat that it was simply a matter of beefing up the structure with a thicker layer of carbon fibre.

After initial sea trials, the boat will move to Galway for more training and its 2,000-mile qualification voyage.

Miller was eager to play down the early gremlins, and showed he has a good view of the big picture.

"Once everything's signed off, we can start the really hard training," he said. "The plan is to break as many things as we can, really. To see how far and fast we can push it and see where we can make any weight savings.

"Galway's the perfect place to put the boat through its paces. In a few hours we can be in the middle of the Atlantic – that's where the most damage was caused last time around. Perfect."



BY DAVID O'BRIEN

## O'ROURKE GOES

# GLOBAL



ABN AMRO One, the winner of the 2005/6 Volvo Race, has been purchased by Limerick's Ger O'Rourke for the 2008/9 race and is pictured here sailing on Dublin Bay. Photo: Gareth Craig

A second Irish entry to the Volvo Ocean Race (VOR) is imminent following the purchase of the winning boat from the 2005/6 race by Ireland's top offshore sailor, Ger O'Rourke.

After a gap of 20 years since Ireland last had an entry, the news that the tiny west coast sailing community will field two of the eight teams in the 2008/9 race – at an estimated cost of €16m – is not only the biggest investment ever seen in Irish sailing but a global sports story to boot.

After a 24-month spell at the top of the world offshore circuit in which he conquered the Fastnet and the Sydney-Hobart, many wondered what O'Rourke, a property developer, might do next; few imagined a full VOR campaign, where competitors include Ericsson, and spends of €40m on a two-boat campaign.

O'Rourke's new vessel, the previously named ABN Amro 1, is due to arrive in Ireland shortly following substantial upgrade work to compete with a new generation of Volvo 70 designs, the fastest monohulls in the world. Although the other Irish entry, Green Team, expected to meet stiff competition in its nine-month

voyage round the world, it certainly did not expect it from its own back yard.

It is understood the two teams have already held preliminary talks on areas of co-operation and will collaborate on a number of pre-race projects including sail testing off Galway in August.

Pundits will expect O'Rourke to struggle against the six other new builds designed specially for this race, but O'Rourke has been cast as underdog many times before.

The Western Yacht Club sailor has secured a boat that wiped the eye of the last VOR fleet two years ago and it remains the benchmark from which all new designs for the current race are still being measured.

He confounded experts before in his previous yacht, the Cookson 50 Chieftain, when he won some of the biggest prizes in the offshore world, including a class win in the 630-mile Sydney-Hobart race. He had an overall win in last year's 600-mile Fastnet race, but readily acknowledges this is his first 33,000 mile marathon, and that he will begin the race as an outsider.

## KEEPING IT PRIVATE

The Green team entry has received state backing of €8m for its entry and the staging of the Galway stop-over leg, but O'Rourke aims to go round the world on half that amount, all of it funded from the private sector.

With just over 100 days to go to the start of the race in Alicante, Spain, O'Rourke has hatched a marketing plan to tap into the Volvo Ocean Race's estimated two billion television viewers over a nine-month period, and the hunt for a title sponsor for the craft is underway.

The race organisers claim a 200 – 300% return on investment on media exposure alone for syndicates involved with the 2005-6 race.

It is understood that a launch event will be held on the river Liffey at the International Financial Services Centre in June for O'Rourke's campaign.

# ALIVE AND KICKING



**Louay Habib was at Howth Yacht Club for top level racing and fine hospitality at the Saab Irish Cruiser Championships**

An impressive fleet of well over 100 boats gathered at Howth Yacht Club for the fifth Saab Irish Cruiser National Championships in May. The competition was fierce right through the four classes and the standard of boat handling was impressive, to say the least. The event showed that Irish level boat sailing is very much alive and kicking.

Racing was organised over two courses, providing both windward leeward and round the cans racing and the weather served up different conditions which kept the competitors on their toes over three days of fast and action-packed racing. The sailing area around Howth is superb; subtle tides combine with land influences to provide varied conditions. There is also a lack of any kind of commercial traffic which can cause problems for a racing fleet.



The Class Zero fleet was a star-studded affair with some top professional sailors from Ireland and the UK, including Etchells European champion Andy Beadsworth and veteran round-the-world-yachtsman Guy Barron on Mariners Cove; Olympic sailor Mark Mansfield at the helm of Jump Juice; and past J80 World champion Ruairidh Scott on board Teng Tools, Voodoo Chile.

Volvo Ocean Race winner Rob Greenhalgh and his brother and Extreme 40 champion Peter were part of a top class crew on Antix Eile, along with Irish Olympic sailor Peter O'Leary. Past Mumm 30 European champion and North Sails designer Dave Lenz was on Blondie IV.

In IRC Class Zero, it truly went to the wire with Dave Dwyer's Mills 39, Mariner's Cove, winning on count back, having scored the same points as Conor and Denise Phelan's Ker 37, Jump Juice. It is a shame that this boat will not be representing Ireland in the forthcoming Rolex Commodore's Cup. In third place was Eamon Rohan's Mills 40, Blondie IV, ruing a prop that wouldn't fold on day one and hitting a mark on day two, putting them out of contention. Anthony O'Leary steering the Ker 39, Antix Eile, had a great first day, scoring two bullets but could not repeat the form throughout the championship. It is understood that the sail design team is looking at some new sail shapes, especially downwind.

Andy Beadsworth, tactician on Mariner's Cove commented, "It really has been a great weekend of racing and I am very pleased for Dave Dwyer, as he was definitely raring to go and to come out on top was our goal. The hospitality at Howth has also been excellent and the organisers deserve applause for laying on a professional event."

With an eye on this year's Rolex Commodores Cup, it was notable that the bowsprit designed boats didn't seem to fare as well on the windward leeward course as they did on the round the cans course which had an element of reaching to it.

IRC Class One saw probably the tightest and most competitive racing of the weekend. Going into the last day, two yachts were vying for the class win, both of the yachts were apply named 'checkmate' as the two foes circled each other in the pre-start of race 6. Tino Hyland and Nigel Biggs' J/109, Checkmate XII-Sail4Cancer, came out on top with Mike MacCarthy's Ker 32, Checkmate, second overall. Barry Cunningham's Corby 33, Cantango, was close behind in third.

IRC Class Two saw Colwell and Murphy's Corby 25, Kinetic, winning by some margin but stress levels were high throughout the championship as the crew carried an OSC from the first race of the regatta. In second place was veteran Royal Irish Yacht Club sailor Tim Goodbody helming his Sigma 33, White Mischief. Cork sailor David Rose was third in the Corby 25, Obsession VII.



**CLASS 0**  
The tie-break decision went in favour of Dave Dwyer's MarinersCove.ie which pipped fellow RCYC entry Jump Juice (Conor Phelan) by virtue of two wins on the second day to the Ker 36.7's solitary race on the same day



**CLASS 1**  
Tino Hyland and Nigel Biggs of the Royal St. George YC made the most of their J109 Checkmate XII's performance capability and handicap to win Class 1 on IRC with a string of good results. Their only place outside the top two - a third in the third race - was their discard and the win will give their Sail4Cancer appeal even more profile!



**CLASS 2**  
The disappointment of being OCS in the first race was quickly forgotten about on board Kinetic (Richard Colwell, John Murphy and crew) as the Howth boat set about winning the Class 1 IRC title in some style. Four firsts, a third and a fifth allowed the Corby 25 to head the single biggest fleet by the single biggest margin (15.5 points) as the only host club success

in IRC Class Three, veteran J24 sailor Fior O'Driscoll scored the lowest points of any of the classes and was the run-away winner of class. In second place was Vince Gaffney's Atom Express, Alliance.

"All credit to Fior and his crew on an impressive performance," said Gaffney. "We will be back next time and hope to give him a run for his money but they sailed extremely well and deserved the win." In third place was Starlet, the modified Formula 28 owned by O'Kelly, Walsh and Wormald.

The ECHO is a personal performance based handicapping system for cruiser racing which is also used in Australia. It has overtones of the declining IMS system (International Mystery System). After each race the performance of each boat and crew relative to every other boat is calculated by the results program. After a series of races these calculations are averaged and handicaps are revised and adjusted based on these averages. In my opinion this system does not work as well as IRC, as it's like loading more and more weight onto a racing horse until it gets beaten. My problem with the system is that you are not just handicapping the boats but the tactics and the boat handling as well. I like a system which rewards smart sailing, not one that penalizes it. I think ECHO can be useful but I see it as being used for youth sailing for example: the kid at the training camp who keeps coming last still has a chance to have the last laugh right up to the last race.

However the results under ECHO were as follows: in Zero, Blondie IV was the winner and after a folding prop problem and hitting a mark, it's easy to see how this progressive handicap system had them top. The three bad results put them out of contention for IRC but ECHO smoothes out these poor results and gave them the title. Howth's Stephen Harris/Frank Hughes in the First 40.7 Tiger won the last three races in the series, propelling them to second overall.

In ECHO One, consistency paid for Paul O'Higgins'

new Corby 33, Rockabilly V, which emerged at the head of the 31-boat fleet without a single win. Nigel Biggs' J/109, Sail&Dancer, was second. Third place went to the sole Rush Sailing Club representative, Storm. Pat Kelly's First 36.7.

In ECHO Two, it was a close-run affair with Brian Cusack's veteran half-tonner Dick Dastardly from the OMYC notching up a fourth and first on the last day to move ahead of yet another Corby 25, Win2Win, from Pwllheli. Howth's Conor Nolan in Alpha actually tied overall with the Welsh boat but lost out on better discard.

In ECHO Three, Fior O'Driscoll's J/24, Hard on Port, from the Royal St George was the deserved victor and another J/24, Brian McDowell's Scandal from Malahide, was second.

The buzz amongst the competitors showed the Championships had been a huge success. Derek Bothwell and David Lovegrove, both past Commodores of Howth Yacht Club, provided challenging courses which were very well managed. Once ashore, the competitors and their family and friends were treated to a fantastic welcome from Howth Yacht Club, including your intrepid reporter who was drip fed coffee most mornings! Each evening, entertainment was laid on in the form of live music and fine food and if the Scottish Rolex Commodore's Cup team can sail as well as they dance, then we may as well just give them the trophy now! The laughter in the bar was a sure sign of a happy, well-run event. The competitors should also be congratulated, right through the fleet, as the standard of boat preparation and handling was a credit to Irish sailing.

On a final note, I think that Howth has probably one of the best fish and chips shops in the world - Beshoff's. However, I doubt if it usually stays open after midnight with a free glass or two of grape! Thank you Howth, I was well looked after!

Full results are available at [www.hyc.ie](http://www.hyc.ie)



CORK  
WEEK  
PREVIEW

# 380 BOATS AND A FLEET PACKED WITH QUALITY



Markham Nolan previews ACCBank Cork Week that has announced a new Cup for the amateur cruiser-racer



It's now 30 years since the concept of Cork Week was born. In 1978 Royal Cork started the tradition of a biennial regatta with just 50 enthusiastic boats and a smattering of volunteers. Little did they know what they had started. The regatta gained momentum, and ten years later the club had a major event with a cult following on its hands. Cork Week had arrived.

At that stage, Cork Week was a welcome antidote to the hot-shot racing that pitted the disgruntled amateur against the pro. No pros were allowed at Cork Week, a Corinthian ethic reiterated this year with a new trophy for the amateur cruiser-racer, the Corinthian Cup supplied by the Sisk Group. Boats in IRC Class Zero, in which professional sailors are allowed, are eligible if they have a maximum of one Group 2 classified sailor on board.

However, the pros are out there, in the one-design classes and in the big boats, and part of the experience of something like Cork Week is racing at an event which can still attract top names in yacht racing. Racing against the best is an education, and there's always the chance that you'll rub shoulders at the bar, and perhaps learn a trick or two from a friendly pro over a pint.

Since those early days, then, Cork Week has become something of a sailing must-see. It's a rite of passage, providing milestones every other year by which Irish sailing is measured. Do you remember your first Cork Week? Of course you do. You still tell the stories. The memory will be blurry, sunburnt and caked in salt, but you'll remember it - for many reasons.

There's the fact that Crosshaven, geographically, was never meant by God to see this much action. The narrow tidal estuary has overcome its limitations through innovation, expansion and pure can-do moxy to accommodate all-comers. As craft of every conceivable shape and size funnel into the harbour at the end of the racing day, you could practically walk from shore to shore without getting your feet wet, using the moving boats as stepping stones.

There's the fact that, for plenty of us, this is, undoubtedly, the biggest and best event available.

Until recently, nothing came close to Cork Week for sheer volume, with several acres of canvas hoisted by thousands of competitors every day, and gallons of liquid refreshment sluiced through bodies every evening. It has been Ireland's yacht racing behemoth for decades, and the numbers, when all is said and done, are mind-boggling. There's the craic, the unquantifiable charisma that is a factor of place, people and shared experience.



# THE ADMIRAL'S VIEW



Describing himself as a 'reluctant admiral' when it comes to telling his story, Mike MacCarthy started sailing in dinghies at the Royal Cork Yacht Club at about nine or ten years of age. He's now been involved for 30-odd years having worked up to admiral, a position he will fill for the next 18 months having started in the position in January 2008.

Enjoying his tenure, looking forward to Cork Week and commenting on what it means to be admiral, MacCarthy maintains that, "the club here is quite large and there are a number of different sections: racing, dinghies, cruising, and motor-boating, and each group has their own social element. I have to try and represent every one of these and not just the club itself, which makes the job time-consuming, yet very interesting".

Putting a slight sail to his own story, MacCarthy acknowledges "I'm from the racing fraternity and the name of my boat is Checkmate – a family association – which is a racing cruiser, and I enjoy racing in West Cork and go to Dublin on a regular basis, and I've been to Dún Laoghaire Week several times".

If the Royal Cork Yacht Club had the ear of Government, MacCarthy would like to see "a better system to allow the club develop its facilities, both land- and water-based. For instance, if I had a €5 million donation tomorrow, I wouldn't be able to build a marina. Or a slipway. The planning regulations and the red-tape between The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, valuation departments and county councils (even though Cork County Council has been very good to us and has been very understanding) is a nightmare. We have a wish list of a number of projects we'd like to do including extending our marina, putting in a crane, and developing an extra slipway. However, with all the different departments to negotiate with, it's incredibly difficult to improve the quality of the club."

For more information on the Royal Cork Yacht Club see [www.royalcork.com](http://www.royalcork.com)

And then there's the racing. Outside the heads the fleets go their separate ways in the morning, returning to the marina, bar and bandstand together at the end of the day. The middle part of the day is filled with the reason most go to Cork – a mix of courses, conditions, classes and competition that is unsurpassed.

The secret, as always, is in the successful mix of onshore and offshore pleasures. The tent city provides as many memories as do the racecourses, and with 10,000 visitors through the gates in any given year, its status as one of Ireland's biggest sporting events is assured. Landlubber delights this year include several top music acts, with Paddy Casey and Aslan just two of the big names gracing the tent city in '08.

But what of the racing at ACC Bank Cork Week, the 2008 edition, which is likely to be as memorable as any other? Entries have already reached a respectable 380, down from the heady, chaotic days of 600 boats and more, but it's a fleet packed with quality. Again, it'll be a spectacle like no other at the top end of the ratings, where the big money and the pros live.

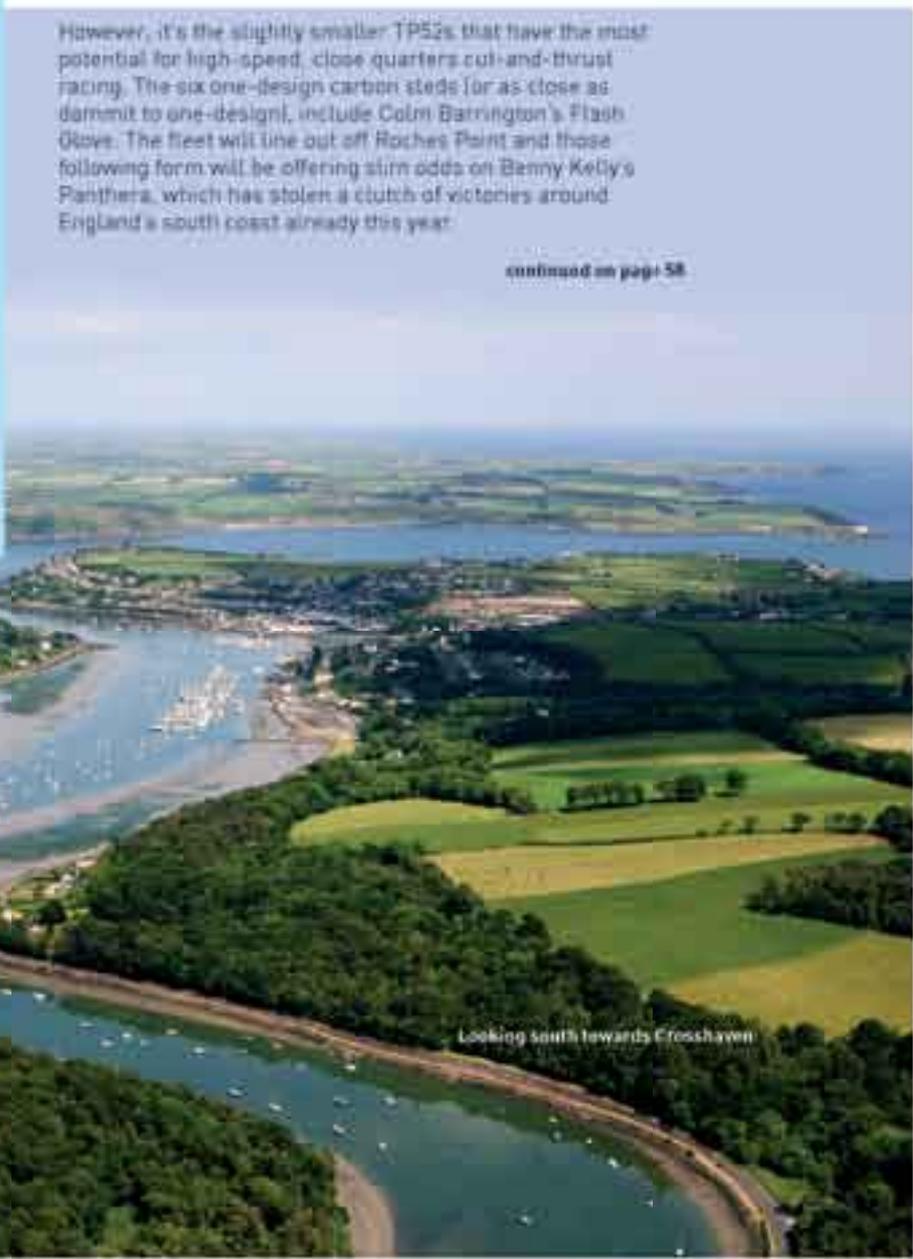
For those who enjoy the skyscraper effect of superyachts, as you crane your neck upwards to take in their monstrous rigs, there are a handful of over-60s, including the awesome STP 65 Moneypenny, owned by San Franciscan Jim Schwarz, and the enormous 90-foot Reichel Pugh, Rambler, one of two maxis which featured in last year's Fastnet Race.

However, it's the slightly smaller TP52s that have the most potential for high-speed, close-quarters cut-and-thrust racing. The six one-design carbon sleds (or as close as dammit to one-design), include Colin Barrington's Flash Glove. The fleet will line out off Roches Point and those following form will be offering slim odds on Benny Kelly's Panthers, which has stolen a clutch of victories around England's south coast already this year.

continued on page 58

Picture: Bob Harrington

Looking south towards Crosshaven



Ten Farr 45s form another high-performance one-design category within IRC class Zero, as well as, further down the ratings, ten X332s, a dozen Beneteau 31.7s and more than two dozen J109s, which will share guns for some toe-to-toe action in their Irish Championships.

And among the cruiser-racers, the beating heart of the event, you'll find a

slew of top club racers facing off against crews returned from the Commodore's Cup.

The newly-swelled ranks of the SB3 class are expected to number into the forties, with entries coming from as far afield as Australia.

For the slightly more sedate, yet no less

competitive, forty-something entries flesh out the increasingly popular white sail gentleman's class.

All that remains is to get thee to the Rebel County for another edition of Ireland's premier regatta: it's all there once again – everything that makes the week as special as it is. The line-up is solid. The stage is set. Cork it.



185

# DUFOUR YACHTS

The Ultimate Sailing Pleasure

34 | 40 | 44

performance

35 | 37 | 39

grand large

42 | 44 | 46

48 | 50 | 52

Crosshaven Boatyard – Donal McClement – Crosshaven, Co. Cork

+353 (0) 21 483 1161 - cby@eircom.net - www.crosshavenboatyard.com

## THE VIEW FROM THE MARINA

# THE ROYAL CORK YACHT CLUB

The Royal Cork Yacht Club is counting down the years to its 300th anniversary celebrations in 2020



William O'Brien, the 9th Lord Inchiquin, and his five cohorts had the maritime inspiration to coin The Water Club of the Harbour of Cork.

Now, a name-change and couple of port-swaps later, it's one of Ireland's most innovative and welcoming clubs with a membership totalling around 1,500 with 280 berths, which regularly hosts major world, European and Irish championships. If the planning authorities were a bit more lenient, it could extend its marina to 500 berths. Recently it elected Deirdre Tingle, it's first lady rear admiral, who is in charge of dinghies. It has three representatives in the Optimist World/European team and one of its sailors – Peter O'Leary – along with Stephen Milne has secured a place at the forthcoming Olympics in the Star class. Always interested in recruiting new members, the club is involved in a primary school initiative locally where students are

being taught sailing as part of their sixth class sports curriculum. From July 12th to 18th, Cork Week – the popular biennial sailing regatta and Ireland's biggest – will be in town bringing with it sailors from all over the world to race six courses in 20-odd classes in what many refer to as one of the great fun and party regattas anywhere, once the serious competition has concluded on the water.

While the Royal Cork Yacht Club has full dining and bar facilities, there are a number of other options around Crosshaven, the peaceful sailing village in West Cork, that lies guard where the Owenabue River enters the sea at the mouth of Cork harbour. One of the landmark must-see pubs is Croinin's on the Point Road harbour-front which, while a popular haunt for sailors, is also home to the Mad Fish seafood restaurant. Next door to the pub is Thecla's gallery and craft shop which is well stocked

with all sorts of craftwork by local artists including handmade candles, pottery, children's clothing, paintings and jewellery.

Elsewhere the Moonduster Inn and Restaurant – also highly thought-of on the waterfront – Fusion, The Admiral Drake and the China Sea provide an eclectic choice for visitors eager to soak up the atmosphere, particularly around Cork Week. For those more interested in putting together their own meals, there's the farmer's market every Saturday in the village square.

Accommodation-wise, there isn't really luxury on a grand scale with most offerings down the guesthouse avenue or small family hotels that have been in business a long time. A selection of what's available can be checked out at [www.crosshaven.ie](http://www.crosshaven.ie) and includes directions to most of those featured.

# PARTY TOWN

## BIRD'S EYE VIEW

LIMERLEN

ROYAL CORK YACHT CLUB

SLIP

FUSION

MOONBUSTER INN

THE ADMIRAL SHARPS

FARMER'S MARKET

CORK SEA

CROWN'S PUB

RIVER'S EDGE COFFEE SHOP



Once in or around Crosshaven, when you're not mesmerised by the delights in the marina, there are walks in every direction to clear the mind or exercise the body, including a number of designated coloured routes like the rising blue and yellow lines which, while having spectacular views of Spike Island, Rautbowline, Rushbrooke and Gobb, also offer a good vantage point to see the starting line for Royal Cork Yacht Club racing. On this walk you'll also come across Camden Fort (or Fort Meagher), one of the region's historical landmarks famous for its magnificent tunnel and fortifications. Crosshaven is also famous for its two holy wells on the edge of Drachan woods, and its breakwaters, as

the Carrigure Road, which were once used for firing, baking, drying and hardening clay.

While there are a number of ways to get to Crosshaven (prices to Cork, from say Dublin, are around €90 (per round return) by train, or €85 by plane), if you're driving, the route goes through Cork city following the signposts for the Ringaskiddy Ferry Port until you arrive at the Shannonpark roundabout. From there take the second exit towards Carrigaline and finally at second next roundabout take a left and follow the signs, and 13 miles to Crosshaven. If you're thinking of visiting you won't be disappointed. See you there for Cork Week!

# CORK REVEALED



YOUR GUIDE TO CORK HARBOUR BY LOCAL MARINERS ANTHONY O'LEARY AND EDDIE ENGLISH



## TO TRABOLGAN

To the east of Roches Point, there's negligible tide and often a tide line can be observed

## ROCHES POINT

Beware when entering on the east side of the harbour mouth - the cow and calf rocks are extensions of Roche's Point up to one cable off shore

## WEAVER

It's possible to... if involves rock past Weaver's Rock in Myrtle

Beware of the strength of tide when transverseing the harbour entrance channel

## START LINE AREA

It's possible to lodge into White Bay but be wary of rocks and shallows on the south end of the bay

## FORT DAVIS

Once past the refinery jetty, the tide running north-east/south-west but the east ferry channel can suck you in or push you out

The area south-west of Spika is littered with rocks and, in particular, off the eastern end is a large rock marked by a perch

## THE SPIT BANK

The bay here is to go as close as you dare!

## WHITEGATE REFINERY

The harbour race finishing line - meet to the No. 7 (starboard) buoy, south of the refinery

### ROUTING IN VARIOUS WINDS/TIDES

The tide will be flooding (north-going) for the vast majority of the racing at AOCBank Cork Week 2008.

This presents challenges, particularly if the wind is anywhere between 145° and 225° which will involve some element of windward work when yachts are routing in a southerly direction from the inner harbour. The conventional wisdom would be take the westerly route initially along the edges of the Curliane Bank, crossing

the tide between the Forts (Davis and Meagher) and seeking the refuge of White Bay en route to the harbour mouth - but it is not always that simple!

If the wind is sufficiently left to allow a minimum of time on starboard tack, it may be possible to skirt round the western point under Fort Meagher and continue onward toward Weaver's point and thereby avoid crossing the tide. Another consideration is where

the course takes you after the harbour mouth - to the west or east - as you are advised not to cross the foul tide at the Harbour mouth if you can avoid it.

If the wind is anywhere west of south, the high ground inside the western entrance to Cork Harbour causes a shortage of wind south of Weaver's Point, which makes this route unattractive regardless of the tidal flow.

**DUTCHMAN'S POINT**  
Hug the western shore and  
be hopping from Ringabella to  
Point. Beware the Dutchman  
at low tide

**RINGABELLA**

**CROSSHAVEN**

An option is to duck into the Owenbeg  
River at Crosshaven - the tide ebbs here up  
to 30-40 minutes before HW Cobs

**CURRABINNY**

Usually the north shore offers no significant gains

# HM YACHTS

CORK'S AWARD WINNING DEALERS

Afloat in a Jeanneau Sun Odyssey

Photo: David O'Brien, Bill Kennedy and Harrison Jones

## Success first came by focusing on customer service and, a decade later, HM Yachts is still putting customers first

With thirty years of experience in and around the Cork waterfront, Hugh Mackler and his four-strong Crosshaven-based team have come to know their clientele extremely well. There is an organic evolution, beginning at the grassroots of Cork's sailing community and now leading the way in yacht brokerage and yacht management.

A trio of Jeanneau Prestige motorboats on Cork Harbour



Today, HM Yachts is among the big five in Ireland, an award-winning dealer of Jeanneau yachts and motorboats, Najad yachts and Finnmaster motorboats. As well as their extensive brokerage business, the HM team see close to 40 top-of-the-range powerboats and sailboats safely onto Irish waters every year.

Based at Crosshaven Boatyard, HM Yachts has grown from a small yacht management firm into a fully-fledged brokerage with several of the world's best marine marques in their stable. Surrounded by a range of providers of marine services, HM Yachts can call on a range of external experts to compliment their in-house knowledge base for after-sales service.

The story behind the company and the roots of its customer-centric ethos stretch back to Royal Cork in the 1970s, where Mockler served in the club as ferry boy, working in the club bar and crewing aboard the legendary Moonduster.

"I've been involved in boating since I was about 12. I really grew up with it," said Hugh. "I sailed Moonduster for five years as a paid hand and built up a lot of experience."

While treading the boards of Crosshaven's marinas, Mockler worked maintaining boats. He was marina manager at Royal Cork for ten years and moved into second-hand brokerage before setting up HM Yachts in 1997.

It wasn't long before HM Yachts was able to commandeer the dealership for the French-built Jeanneau line of sail and powerboats. Jeanneau are one of the world's largest and best-known firms of boatbuilders, and contribute 50 per cent to the Beneteau Group's output of almost 10,000 boats a year.

With the Jeanneau franchise in place and doing well, HM Yachts 'fell into' partnership with a smaller but complementary marque, Najad. With a smaller range and a fraction of the annual output of Jeanneau, Najad allows the customer tailor the boat to their individual desires.

"We grew into Najad through a friend of mine who also happened to be a customer as well. I ended up travelling to Sweden to look at the factory with him in 1996 and got introduced to the quality of Najad." With Najad, as with HM Yachts, constant involvement with the customer is the key to success





**JEANNEAU**

**JEANNEAU SAIL**

Jeanneau's stable is split between the Sun Odyssey cruiser and performance range. A major player in the cruiser-racer market, Jeanneau was founded in 1957 and is part of the global Beneteau group. The group supplies the world's biggest charter cruiser fleets, and puts global feedback back into their production processes to craft a range of cruisers that caters for almost every need, desire and whim.

The Jeanneau marque will be a familiar one for most Irish sailors, and their racy SunFast 3200 was voted European Yacht of the Year for 2008 by a panel of European journalists. At the beefier end of the scale, the Sun Odyssey 54DS offers the height of cruising luxury.

**JEANNEAU POWER**

Jeanneau's power range is extensive. From the nippy Cap Camarat outboard speedboat, the Bond-esque Runabout 755 and on to the more substantial Merry Fisher range, through to Jeanneau's hardtop and flybridge Prestige range, HM Yachts has watched its motorboat business expand as powerboating opens up in Ireland to a new clientele.

In turn, Jeanneau's relationship with HM has already seen the Cork outfit win Distributor of the Year, and sales fly in the face of talk of economic gloom. Every possible activity is catered for in the Jeanneau Power range, from skiing to fishing to simply getting about in luxurious style. Jeanneau has stamped out a decent reputation in the motorboat market, and the Prestige line has expanded to nine models between 30 and 50 feet, all providing high levels of comfort and performance.



A 755 Runabout



SunFast 3200



Merry Fisher



**HM Yachts has grown from a small yacht management firm into a fully-fledged brokerage with several of the world's best marine marques in their stable**



Crosshaven, the home of HM Yachts



Inside the Najad factory, where customisation is a speciality

"Most Najad buyers will actually come to the factory, where they meet the management team and the guys who are working on the customer's boat. So there's more of a personal touch, more one-to-one with customers."

To that end, Darren McGrath manages HM's Najad sales and after-sales, and personally delivered the first Najad 355 from Sweden to Ireland in time for April's Malahide Boat Show, crossing the North Sea and down the Caledonian Canal.

"It was freezing," said McGrath, "There was snow on the mountains either side and we lived in our thermals. But the boat was lovely, we had force five and upwards – she's beautifully balanced. No trouble." His boss sympathised, but the end result is, yet again, better service for the client.

"It's great – the fact that we can show the owners the boat and say: 'You know, when we came back from Sweden, this is what we found, and we know what the boat is capable of.'"

Mockler says that attitude is key to providing customers with a full-spectrum experience. "Some companies would have a salesperson and a different individual to deal with after-sales. Our policy is that if they've sold the boat to the client, they deal with that same client for the entire life of their boat."

Alan Barton came on board in 2003 to take on the Jeanneau power sales and aftersales, and Mockler and his wife Amy deal with Jeanneau sail customers and provide other peripheral services.

As HM has grown, the emphasis has remained on one-to-one service relationships with clients. "One gets concerned that the more boats you sell, the less you're concentrating on service – that success in sales will be detrimental to the essential service side. Half the battle is that we're aware of that and do everything we can to combat it."

A clear focus on customer satisfaction has paid dividends, and as well as happy boat owners, the men in suits from Jeanneau have also expressed their gratitude. "I'm not saying we're the world's best, but we did get an award from Jeanneau back in 2005 as Distributor of the Year, which was for best after-sales throughout the whole Jeanneau dealership in the world at the time."



A Najad 355 in light breezes off Ireland's Eye, Howth

**NAJAD**

**NAJAD**

These Swedish-built cruisers are tough, highly customisable and provide the same peace of mind in terms of quality as the gentle 'clunk' of a Volvo car door. In business since 1971, Najad's range incorporates the sedate and the speedy, with sizes from 35 up to 57 feet. As the delivery from Sweden proves, even the diminutive 355 punches above its weight, and these sensible cruising craft have a solid air of immortality about them. You don't buy a Najad, so much as invest in one.

Clever Scandinavian ergonomics mean these boats live up to the tag 'live-aboard', with few sacrifices made in terms of comfort. The price tag reflects the build quality, and as the sole distributor in the Republic of Ireland, HM Yachts is proud to offer Najad as a premium option for the discerning yachtsman who doesn't want to buy 'off the rack'.



Hugh examines plans for a customer's yacht at the Swedish factory

**TEAM HM**

**Hugh Mockler**

Founder and proprietor. The driving force behind HM Yachts, Hugh's experience in boating spans all interests and levels of performance. Primarily in charge of the Jeanneau sail range, Hugh is an established member of Cork's boating fraternity, a former Admiral of the Royal Cork and the vice-chairman of the Irish Marine Federation. He prides himself on the level of personal service his company provides.

**Amy Mockler**

Married to Hugh and co-founder of the business, Amy is involved in all aspects of the business. She also manufactures dodgers, wheel covers and covers for booms, binnacles and cushions and the leathering of wheels. Amy has been with HM from the beginning, adding to the range of customer services provided from their Crosshaven base.

**Darren McGrath**

Najad and Jeanneau sales and after-sales manager, a powerboat instructor and an employee of Hugh's going back over ten years, Darren has been working in the marine industry since the mid-nineties and joined HM Yachts in 1997.

**Alan Barton**

Joined HM Yachts in 2003 to take on the role of motorboat sales. A qualified powerboat instructor, he has responsibility for after-sales in both power and sail.



**"Our policy is that if they've sold the boat to the client, they deal with that same client for the entire life of their boat"**

Finnmaster Grandezza 310C



**FINNMASTER**

A Finnish range of motorboats from 16 to 32 feet. HM took on the agency to provide customers with the option of buying something with a Northern European styling. With sporty lines, there is an excellent level of finish and the range stands out as different from anything else offered around the coast.

Hugh Mockler



**HM YACHTS**

Crosshaven Boatyard  
Crosshaven  
Co. Cork  
Ireland  
Tel: +353 21 483 1352  
Fax: +353 21 483 1350  
email: info@hmyachts.ie  
www.hmyachts.ie



# COUNTDOWN TO BEIJING



Games of the XXIV Olympiad – Qingdao, China  
August 9–21 2008



# CHINA

## HANDLE WITH CARE



**LIGHT FANTASTIC:** This is the typical Dinghies scene, making the best of less than eight knots of wind



The Olympics. It is, for many, the pinnacle of sporting evolution. Vast numbers of athletes use it to time their physical peaks, building their campaigns over four years to a crescendo of activity ending in glory for some and heartbreak for most. National pride comes to the fore, and prize money takes a back seat.

For sailors, it's a quirky thing. Hopefuls train and race against a slowly depleting but steadily improving throng, 80 per cent of whom are discarded before the games, as fleets are whittled down to an ultra-competitive nub.

Unlike the 100 metre sprinter, Olympic races for sailors are often hugely different from the preparation events. Fleets in excess of 100 boats shrink to under 20 in some cases, and the pressures change

completely. It's still athleticism in a fishbowl and, regardless of your personal feelings towards it, a unique competitive experience against the world's best.

This year, Ireland's sailing authorities have picked a squad of six individuals in four boats, down from nine sailors at the Athens Olympiad.

The squad is younger, with the oldest team member aged 31 (down from 43 in Athens), and the average age down to 26 (the Athens average was 30). Just one among them, Ger Owens, has been to an Olympics before, whereas the Athens squad contained three veterans.

However, their youth belies a shared depth of international experience.



All have raced each other at or around the top of Ireland's most competitive fleets since an early age, before graduating to compete in various international fleets. All have been to Qingdao several times, know the idiosyncracies of the venue well, and are fully alert to what it will demand. The Olympics may be new to them, but top-quality racing is not.

They have poured time, passion and money into sailing at the highest level, spent years hauling gear around the globe, and putting in intense physical preparation. For two teams this year, it meant controversy and tribunals. The Star selection has been mired in legal wranglings that threatened to overshadow the Olympic project as a whole. Treacy and Stanks qualified the country, but O'Leary and Milne won the nomination. An appeal ensued, and the outcome with a further appeal to CAS a possibility, so we go to press, still unclear.

So what can we expect of these new Olympians? In the 2000 and 2004 games, we were assured of big things from our squads. Medal hopes were hung squarely around the necks of at least one team at either games, and weighed heavily when the results disappointed.

This time, the squad has no massive promises to keep. The Irish Sailing Association has aimed to get one of the four boats into the top eight in Beijing – an act of realism or expectation management, depending on your level of cynicism.

Shooting for eighth place seems like an act of underachievement, a pre-emptive admission of defeat, until you realise we haven't done it since 1980 – a year when (and it's not popular to point this out) 62 countries decided to boycott the games.

But a top eight finish is a realistic prospect for many of the crews. All have hit the top ten at some stage during their qualifying regattas, and could easily do so again.

Now they have five days of sailing in China to do it when it matters. Over to the youngsters.



Beijing 2008  
Olympic rings logo

# CONTENTS

02 OVERVIEW

03 QINGDAO VENUE

05 KEEPER OF THE FLAME  
The manager's role

07 LEADING LIGHT  
Ciara Peelo

09 DRIVEN TO THE MARK  
Tim Goodbody

11 AN EYE FOR DETAIL  
Ger Owens and Phil Lawton

13 FEARLESS COMPETITORS  
Peter O'Leary and Steven Milne



Olympic Photography: Markham Nolan, David O'Brien, David Branigan, Bob Bateman and ISAF

left and middle: Qingdao has undergone a transformation, adding a world-class sailing centre to its waterfront. right: Ireland's end goal for 2008 is to break into the top eight – a feat not achieved since David Wilkins and James Wilkinson took silver in Moscow in 1980. But is a medal out of the question?



# FICKLE WINDS MAY BRING SURPRISE RESULTS

When the sailing venue for the Beijing games was announced, more than a few eyebrows were raised

Qingdao, a port town 880 kilometres from Beijing, is known for one thing – a distinct absence of wind.

Major Championships at the venue have been repeatedly frustrated by light airs, to the point that heavy-airs specialists may as well avoid the venue entirely, and even the most patient sailors grow restless waiting for an elusive gust. Racing typically takes place in eight knots of wind or less, with a tidal current of between 0.5 and 1 knots sluicing along the coast and adding to the mix of tricky conditions.

Average wind speed for the month of August, and the year

overall, is just eight knots, peaking at 11 knots in May. Average temperatures in August will be in the region of 28°.

The result is a tricky, sticky and unpredictable sailing environment that puts severe mental strain on competitors as they strive to eke the most out of every zephyr on the race course.

The British team have slammed the venue, with Finn gold medalist Ben Ainslie describing it as a sailor's nightmare and team principal Steve Park saying light airs means a risk of cancelled races and shortened series in which the results could become a lottery.

**CULTURAL REVOLUTION:** Sailing is an up-and-coming sport in China, but no expense has been spared on the event site



The Notice of Race for the Olympic event contains a provision that states only one race is required to constitute a regatta, should the worst come to the worst.

However, all venues have their down-sides. Sydney harbour was thought to be too fluky and had too much potential for local knowledge to play a big part, yet the games were an overall success and everyone is, so to speak, in the same boat.

As Irish coach James O'Callaghan puts it: 'Unquestionably, Qingdao is a difficult place to sail, but it's the same for everyone. The onshore venue is up there with the best in the world, and the Chinese couldn't do enough for you.'

'It plays into our hands to some extent,' he said. 'Maybe it's not as predictable as other sailing venues.'

For the Irish squad, it's become a matter of saving every gram of weight so that they can maximise their acceleration in the light, shifty breeze.

470 sailors Ger Owens and Phil Lawton have been training against the lighter ladies' 470 teams to see how they fare in light conditions, and Laser Radial sailor Ciara Peelo is known to revel in the light stuff.

All the crews have tried to shed weight, with low-fat, low-calorie diets rigorously controlled and professionally-monitored fitness regimes adhered to religiously.

Downtime off the water is restricted too, by a cultural gulf and solid language barrier between China and the west, which makes it hard to find familiar escapes from the pressures of sailing, according to sailors.

Qingdao hasn't escaped the pollution concerns underlying the whole Beijing Olympic project, either. While no sailors have pulled out of the games over pollution concerns (Ethiopian marathon runner Haile Gebrselassie pulled out due to smog), they haven't been immune to the effects of it.

Australian 470 sailor Elise Rechichi hadn't thought the waters around the slip would be all that hostile until she slipped while launching, gulping in a mouthful of seawater. That gulp contained enough bacteria and other raw sewage matter to put her off the water for six months, during which time the 50kg sailor lost a further 10kg through debilitating gastroenteritis.

She's back on the panel now, but this serves as a cautionary tale for everyone going to the games that on the water, rather than in it, is the place to be.



#### Courses

Each class will complete several laps on a course (above) designed for its own specific type of racing. Course length and shape varies according to the type of boat racing and the wind speed (below).

#### Race series - August

An Olympic class regatta consists of an eleven race series, from which sailors discard one race result (only counting ten races). After ten races, the top ten boats in each class move on to a final required and non-discardable medal race which counts as double points which are added to their standing score. The sailor with the lowest score will win the event.

Unlike other Olympic classes, the 470er class will sail a 16 race series, and discard their worst two results. After 15 races of the series, the top ten boats will move on to the final double-points scoring medal race. At the Paralympic Games, the Sonar, UD-15 and 2.4mR will sail eleven races and discard two races. Again the sailor with the lowest score at the end of the series is declared the winner.





# KEEPER OF THE FLAME

**JAMES O'CALLAGHAN HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH REBUILDING TRUST WITHIN IRISH OLYMPIC SAILING. THREE YEARS ON, THE SQUAD IS BEGINNING TO SPARKLE**



When performance director James O'Callaghan joined the ISA as Olympic coach in 2005, he inherited a squad in some disarray. Team cohesion in the aftermath of the 2004 Athens Olympics had been a "debacle", he admits. He had been in Athens, not in an Irish capacity, but with the subterranean Laser class, and watched a loose assembly of Irish individuals make their own way to the games, with little or no sense of a real squad.

The main aim, in the aftermath, was to rebuild trust between the administration and the sailors, and put in place a structure to build

the high-performance end of Irish sailing in the long term.

Now, a little over three years into the job, things are beginning to take shape, but it has taken effort, and even as O'Callaghan prepares to accompany Ireland's team to China, he admits that the overall goal has had to be the 2012 games, rather than in Beijing.

O'Callaghan says that the current squad members are at the Olympics "because of their own commitment and diligence – they're there in spite of the system rather than because of it".



# JAMES O'CALLAGHAN

## TEAM MANAGER

**Age:** 34  
**Hometown:** Malahide  
**Background:** A full time coach with Sailcoach, took the South African and Seychelles squads to Sydney in 2000, coached the German Star ahead of Athens and joined the ISA in 2005 as Olympic coach

The squad is younger, in terms of average age, than the one that travelled in 2004, by some four years, the length of an Olympic cycle. That means that, in theory, they can afford to look at full, eight-year Olympic campaigns, and O'Callaghan reckons that even those that have put in eight years already (Dwens in particular) may have another campaign in the tank. All have come through the junior ranks together and the squad gets on famously, nomination appeals aside.

"In Athens, I heard the reports that everyone operated in isolation," says O'Callaghan. "This year there's a very open atmosphere in the team, a real feel-good factor."

"They're a very driven bunch and are generally all very positive. The guys end up sharing accommodation at events off their own bat [largely unheard of during the previous games] and are very helpful in terms of the feedback they give us."

The team has given time back to juniors by way of coaching, and mutual knowledge sharing is common, with the example of 470 twin-Ger Dwens who, when he heard that Peter O'Leary had been nominated in the Star, handed a file of his own research on the venue to Peter, whose campaign had started later than most.

The atmosphere isn't the only change from last time, says O'Callaghan, who has been behind the review of how the ISA nominated its sailors for Beijing.

The prospect of a fickle, light-airs

venue (less than eight knots of wind on average, with up to a knot of tide) prompted the ISA to opt for a less rigid way of making its final decisions on nominees.

"It had a bearing on how we chose the nomination document we opted for. We felt that with a purely objective trials system, you could have three trials event and they could all be windy, which means you could have heavy airs specialists being selected."

The less rigid decision-making process has been a controversial move, with the Star nomination going to appeal. Although the negative attention this has drawn has been a headache, O'Callaghan maintains it was the right thing to do to allow the ISA choose the best team.

Six campaigns initially funded by the ISA were dropped in 2005 and 2006 for not meeting results benchmarks. Two of these (Prof O'Connell in the Star and Ger Dwens in the 470) subsequently changed crew and mounted a comeback, getting themselves back into funding and contention for selection.

All three now heading for Beijing have a depth of international experience, a lot with the goal of at least one top eight finish in mind, confidence is high.

"Top eight is the goal," says O'Callaghan. "We want to come away with one top eight, which doesn't sound like much, but we haven't done it since 1988. Ger [Dwens] and Phil Lawton would have to be the favourite to do it - I don't want to curse the guy [Ger] but he's been there the longest."



**TV STAR:** Unsuccessful campaigner Maurice 'Prof' O'Connell will represent Irish sailing as an RTE panel pundit

**FLYING SOLO:** Peelo earned her seat through sheer grit and determination. There's no-one to help in a Laser.

## LASER RADIAL



### SPECIFICATIONS:

Length: 4.23m  
 Breadth: 1.37m  
 Weight: 56.7kg  
 Type: Dinghy  
 Crew: 1  
 Designer: Bruce Kirby  
 and Ian Bruce  
 Year: 1969

The Laser Radial replaces the Europe class for Beijing. Ireland's representative in the Europe in Sydney and Athens, Maria Coleman had some outstanding performances and was ranked world number two in the lead up to Sydney. She finished 12th in Sydney and 18th in Athens.

# LEAD LIGHT

# ING



CIARA

# PEELO

## LASER RADIAL

DOB:	10.01.1979
Hometown:	Malahide
Sails from:	Malahide
World ranking:	46
Results:	World Championships 2006 - 29th Miami OCR 2008 - 11th Olympic test event, Qingdao, 2007 - 8th
In action:	11 - 21 August

Having grown up sailing Optimists in Malahide's Broadmeadows estuary, as part of a family of top dinghy sailors, Ciara has been a member of the Laser class's top flight in Ireland for several years.

A Radial sailor ever since the boats appeared in the country, Peelo now ranks 46th in the world and is seen as one of our best hopes for a top eight at Qingdao, where her light airs acumen will come into play. Working as a PE teacher helps her maintain her fitness outside of training hours.

The Radial is the smallest of the Irish boats this time round, and is one of the most widely-sailed dinghies in the world, with more than 190,000 Lasers produced since 1971. A purist's boat, the Laser is a rigidly controlled one-design, and has just five control lines, meaning the focus is squarely on the sailor's fitness and skill. The Radial rig is smaller than the standard rig used as the lightweight men's dinghy at the Olympics, and is making its first appearance at the games.

## THE COACH SAYS

HUGELY DETERMINED, RESILIENT, FOCUSED. "CIARA WAS ON HER LAST CHANCE IN 2007 - SHE HAD TO HAVE A GOOD EUROPEAN TO STAY ON FUNDING AND SHE DELIVERED. SHE HAS HAD A GOOD EXPERIENCE AT THE VENUE (8TH AT THE TEST EVENT) AND IS VERY POSITIVE ABOUT IT."

## FINN



## SPECIFICATIONS:

Length: 4.5m  
 Breadth: 1.6m  
 Weight: 140kg  
 Type: Dinghy  
 Crew: 1  
 Designer: Richard Sarby  
 Year: 1952

Originating in Finland, the Finn is a one-person, single sail dinghy that has been part of the Olympic Games since 1952. It is an intensely tactical boat in which the top ten places are often seconds apart after several hours racing. The boat rewards sailors who are fit and able to perform the exhausting task of driving the boat full out and manage the tactical and psychological aspects of the race.

## IRELAND'S PAST

Malahide's David Burrows blazed a trail in the Finn class when he first sailed it in 1998 becoming Youth World Champion in the same year. He had two race wins and finished ninth overall in the Sydney Olympics. He also won a Bronze medal at the European Championships that year and in 2004 took a bronze medal at the world championships before finishing 12th overall in Athens.

ISA Olympic THE IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL SLAM

# DRIVE TO THE

**GOOD BODY.** Finn sailor Tim has changed his physical shape completely to step into the heavyweight dinghy



# FINN MARK



TIM

## GOODBODY

### FINN

DOB:	25.01.1963
Hometown:	Delgany
Sails from:	Dun Laoghaire
World ranking:	19
Results:	Delta Lloyd Regatta, Holland 2006 - 11th European Championships 2008 - 21st Sail Melbourne 2008 - 19th Miami OCR 2007 - 12th
In action:	10 - 18 August

As a former Laser sailor, Tim has built a Finn campaign on his experience in single-handed classes, and the understanding of single-mindedness. Bulking up to take on the larger Finn, Goodbody quickly found himself leapfrogging other contenders into the top flight of the class. One of the younger members of the squad, Goodbody is a top prospect for a podium finish in 2012, who should perform solidly in Qingdao. Inherits much of his competitive drive from Tim Goodbody Sr, his father.

### THE BOAT

The Finn is the heavyweight men's dinghy, with sailors typically weighing in at around the 100kg mark. A powerful and hugely physical dinghy to sail, Irish Finn sailor David Burrows was tested as one of the fittest members of the Irish Olympic squad - up there with the rowing teams. Many Finn sailors, including current gold medallist Ben Ainslie, graduate up from the Laser dinghy. Its carbon mast is testament to its status as a development class, while its heavy metal centreboard reminds you that the class has been around since 1952.

### THE COACH SAYS

FIERCELY COMPETITIVE, RELAXED AND PASSIONATE. "TIM IS PASSIONATE ABOUT HIS SPORT - HE WOULD SAIL ANYTHING TO GET AROUND A MARK BEFORE ANYONE ELSE. HE HAS AN ABILITY TO PUT EVERYTHING IN PERSPECTIVE, A VERY GOOD 'BIG PICTURE' FOCUS."

## AN EYE FOR

THE COACH SAYS

OUTGOING, FREQUENTLY  
DARKLY, CYNICAL,  
'BRIAN' UNDERSTANDS  
ATTENTION TO THE LITTLE  
THINGS OF SAILBOAT LIFE



GER

## OWENS

## 470 HELM

DOB	21.07.1971
Home town	Buckingham, Co. Wick
Sails from	Bea Loughrea
First 470 coach	78
First 470	Bea Loughrea, Ireland 2001 - 12th Rye Cove Olympic club, UK 2001 - 04 Sail, Mullingar 2006 - 08 Rye Cove to present 2007 - 08
1 coach	78 - 79 dingy

Ger Owens is one of Ireland's most successful small-boat sailors, as his record with his 470 is a testament to his gear-up sailing skills, where he's proved to have a head for the numbers. He's a 12th place finisher at the 2001 World Championships, having finished 11th in the 2006 and 2008, and 10th in the 2009. He's also a 12th place finisher at the 2008 Olympic Games, where he's proved to have a head for the numbers.

Owens has finished 12th in the 470 at the 2008 Olympic Games, and he's also a 12th place finisher at the 2008 World Championships. He's also a 12th place finisher at the 2008 World Championships.



HIGH WIRE ACT: Ger Owens (left) and Phil Lawton (trapezing) suit the traditional 470 dinghy perfectly - meticulous sailors of the classical school



470

## SPECS OF CLASSIC 470

Length	4.7m
Breadth	1.8m
Weight	120kg
Type	Dinghy
Class	2
Body work	Andri Coran
Year	1972

The 470 is a classic two-person keelboat, which has changed little in 40 years since the original was designed by the Spaniards in 1972. It's a simple, functional, and rugged boat, the 470 has a hull that's based on one of the most lightest materials in the world, with all the strength and stability of a steel hull.

Created in France, the 470 is a small, fast boat. Most of the boats, 4.7m long, are built by two people and has a one-person cockpit. It's a simple, functional, and rugged boat, the 470 has a hull that's based on one of the most lightest materials in the world, with all the strength and stability of a steel hull.

It's a simple, functional, and rugged boat, the 470 has a hull that's based on one of the most lightest materials in the world, with all the strength and stability of a steel hull.

It's a simple, functional, and rugged boat, the 470 has a hull that's based on one of the most lightest materials in the world, with all the strength and stability of a steel hull.

# DETAIL



WORLD SWIMMING

19



PHIL

LAWTON

WELSH

19.07.1977

Height: 5'10"

By a Longleat

Eye color: Blue

By a Longleat

Weight: 175 lbs

By a Longleat

Residence: London

By a Longleat

Phil Lawton has used a jet ski to swim across the English Channel, a feat that has earned him a place in the Guinness Book of World Records. He is a professional triathlete and has competed in the Ironman triathlon. He is also a member of the British Triathlon Federation. He has a degree in Business Management from the University of Exeter. He is currently living in London and is working as a triathlete coach. He is also a member of the British Triathlon Federation. He has a degree in Business Management from the University of Exeter. He is currently living in London and is working as a triathlete coach. He is also a member of the British Triathlon Federation.

## THE COACH SAYS

PHIL IS A CREATIVE AND ANALYTICAL PERSON WHO JUST GETS ON WITH IT. HE HAS A GREAT SENSE OF HUMOUR AND IS ALWAYS LAUGHING. HE HAS A LOT OF ENERGY AND IS ALWAYS UP FOR A CHALLENGE. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN HIS GOAL TO GET THE BEST OUT OF HIS CLIENTS. HE NEVER LETS THE PRESSURE OF A SITUATION GET TO HIM.

# SHOOTING STARS



STEPHEN

# MILNE

## STAR CREW

DOB:

Hometown: Bangor, Co. Down

Sails from: Ballyholme

World ranking: 47

In action: 14 - 22 August

A relative newcomer to sailing at this level, Stephen Milne is another sailor who has changed his body shape radically and hit the ground running. A take-no-prisoners attitude has seen him size-up to some of the world's best sailors without any fear, and he and Peter have proven a solid pairing in the Star.

## THE COACH SAYS

CONSCIENTIOUS, EASY-GOING. "STEPHEN IS ANOTHER GUY WHO HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED HIS BODY SHAPE. HE'S SHORT ON INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND GOT THROWN IN AT THE DEEP END. HE'S HUGEY COMMITTED TO DETAIL AND HAS TAKEN TO IT LIKE A DUCK TO WATER."



The pairing of Peter O'Leary and Stephen Milne were the official Olympic Star nominees of both the Irish Sailing Association and the Olympic Council of Ireland as Aloft went to press. However, there is still a chance that a pending appeal from campaigners Max Treacy and Anthony Shanks could see that decision overturned. Treacy and Shanks lost an appeal to the OCI, but are understood to be considering taking their appeal higher, to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne. Although it seems most likely in Aloft's opinion that O'Leary and Milne will remain Ireland's representatives, there is still a chance that Treacy and Shanks could be selected.



PETER

# O'LEARY

## STAR HELM

DOB:	29.03.1983
Hometown:	Crosshaven, Co. Cork
Sails from:	Crosshaven
World ranking:	47
Results:	Delta Lloyd Regatta, Holland 2008 - 11th Star World Championships, Miami 2007 - 17th Rolex Miami OCR, USA 2008 - 17th
In action:	14 - 22 August

Seven years ago Peter 'Gunnis' O'Leary posted Ireland's best ever Laser result in the Youth Worlds - sixth - before hitting the European campaign trail in the Laser. In the few months leading up to his nomination, he bopped into the Star class and instantly found his form, propelling himself to the top of fleets and fending off gold medalists at world-class regattas. As happy sailing big boats in offshore races as he is dinghies in coastal regattas, O'Leary simply knows how to make boats go fast. A very calm, collected sailor who rarely loses the head, and would be a top prospect for 2012.

## THE COACH SAYS

COOL CUSTOMER, NEVER INTIMIDATED. "PETER DOESN'T LIVE OFF REPUTATION - HE'S A HARD WORKER AND VERY COMPETITIVE, ALTHOUGH DECEIVINGLY LAID BACK ON SHORE. HE HAS A LOT OF EXPERIENCE ON THE CIRCUIT, HAVING CAMPAIGNED FOR ATHENS IN THE LASER."



## STAR

SPECIFICATIONS:

Length:	6.9m
Breadth:	1.73m
Weight:	671kg
Type:	Keelboat
Crew:	2
Designer:	Francis Swetsguth
Year:	1911

The Star was designed in 1911 by Frances Swetsguth and made its first appearance at the Olympic Games in 1922, making it the oldest Olympic Class. It's a highly technical double-handed keelboat which require both the helm and crew to be in tune with the boat. The 22ft open keelboat has a highly fragile and ultra sensitive rig, which needs the constant attention of the two crew. Many of the world's top sailors past and present have been involved in the Star Class.

### IRELAND'S PAST

**Ireland's past**  
Mark Mansfield's 20 year results saw him always in the top ten of the last five class world championships, the highlight being a bronze medal at the world championships in 2000 with David O'Brien, but at the Games itself these kind of finishes always eluded him, his best being in Atlanta in 1996 when he finished 12th, his worst Athens when he ended his Star career in 17th with Killian Collins.

**Athens 2004 Olympic Results**  
Gold: Torben GRAEL and Marcelo FERREIRA - Brazil  
Silver: Ross MacDONALD and Mike WOLFS - Canada  
Bronze: Xavier ROHART and Pascal RAMBEAU - France

**Sydney 2000 Olympic Results**  
Gold: Mark REYNOLDS and Magnus LILJEDAHN - USA  
Silver: Ian WALKER and Mark COVELL - Great Britain  
Bronze: Torben GRAEL and Marcelo FERREIRA - Brazil

# QINGDAO ROLLS OUT THE GREEN CARPET FOR THE IRISH SAILING TEAM

While many were expecting light winds and strong tides, at the Olympic Sailing venue the main issue has been the weed, or rather a very thick green algae growth which is choking the harbour.

We reported on this issue previously but the latest blight has got worse, and latest reports have it that 10,000 workers have been put onto the problem. Unfortunately this problem is not one that will be resolved with the old solution of 'many hands make light work'. The key lies in attacking the source of the problem as happens with the weed infestation that regularly occurs at rowing regattas at Lake Karapiro.





# WI AT WORK

Every year Waterways Ireland (WI) provides an account of what it has been doing and what's next on its list of things to do. In 2007, it spent €15.5 million on new and improved facilities including refurbishment across the network, an extra 770m of jetties and the continued restoration of the Royal Canal

Before we get into the capital works, it's worth noting a joint marketing initiative between Waterways Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Tourism Ireland, Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism and Shannon Development: the Lakelands Project, promoting the waterways between Belleek and Limerick. The project was launched in October 2007 at a ceremony on the banks of the Shannon in Clonmacnoise. The first phase included the development of a guide, website ([www.discoverireland/lakelands.ie](http://www.discoverireland/lakelands.ie)) and a multi-lingual DVD.

And so to the engineering. WI's isolated navigation is the Lower Bann, on which it has installed 35m replacement jetties at Mountsandel and at Vow, and has applied for planning permission for new jetties at Carnus and Portglenone Wood; in 2008 WI intends to carry out feasibility studies into new facilities and service blocks.

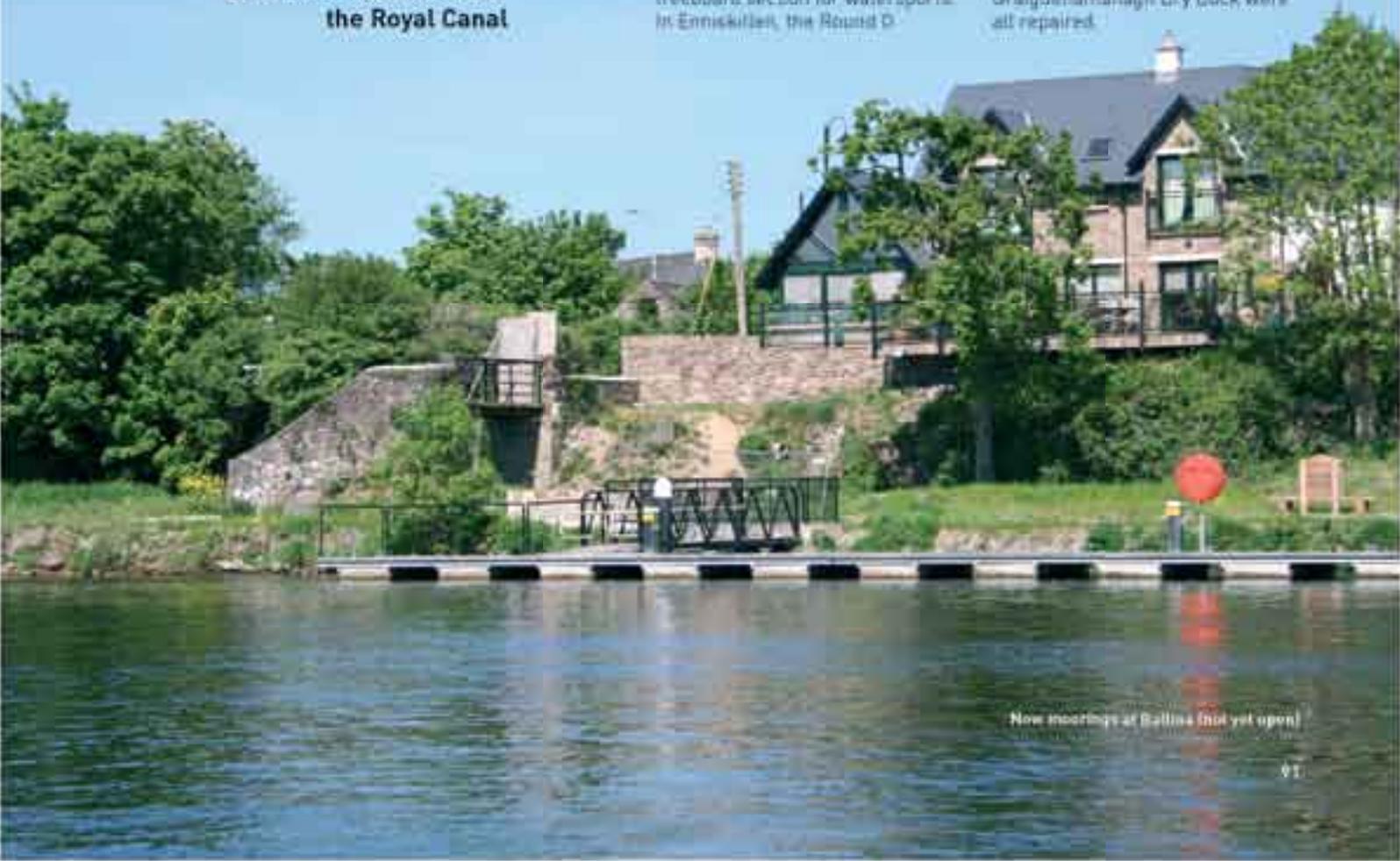
On the Erne, WI has replaced and upgraded 346m of moorings at Castle Caldwell, Muckcross and Geaglum. In many cases older timber jetties are being replaced. At Crevinshaughy Island near Castle Archdale WI has installed a larger jetty with a reduced freeboard section for watersports. In Enniskillen, the Round D

slipway has been improved and 240m of moorings will be installed in 2009.

On the Shannon-Erne Waterway, a new block is being built at Lock 14 (Leirrim) for the Patroliers, and the moorings at the far end, Lock 1 at Corraquill, will be replaced in 2008.

The Shannon has had an extra 250m of floating moorings: 50m at Portunna, 100m at Ballina (with safety booms at Killaloe Bridge) and 100m at Kilglass, replacing the wreck of a jetty that was owned by the County Council. Clarendon Lock is being automated. Teroonbarry Lock House has been refurbished to give keepers a better view of the lock chamber, the Camin has been dredged and Scarriff has a pump-out, which makes 21 pump-outs at 14 locations on the Shannon; in 2008, wear barriers will be installed at Athlone and Roskealy.

Down the Barrow, the 54m amenity jetty at Ardreich has been finished, and there is an 84m floating jetty at Carlow Town Park and a new slipway at Bagenalstown. Major dredging work was undertaken in Carlow and Leighlinbridge; the quay wall and landing jetty at Rathwindon Lock; and the retaining wall at Graigueanamanagh Dry Dock were all repaired.



New moorings at Ballina (not yet open)

On the Grand, a 40m long culvert under the canal at Rahan has been replaced, with associated canal embankment works and realignment of culverts to both upstream and downstream channels. Another 3km of the Barrow Line was dredged, between Ballymanus bridge and Vicarstown. In Dublin, major repair works were carried out to stabilise the walls in Grand Canal Dock. The General MacMahon lifting bridge over the canal basin (between the Inner and Outer Docks) was replaced by a fixed structure and, in a separate project, the Grand Canal Square was extended into the dock as a platform extending over the water body. With Dublin City Council, about 700m of towpath surfacing was improved, with overhead lighting, near Davitt Road at the start of the Main Line. In Sallins, works commenced in association with Kildare County Council to improve the harbour area: rebuilding the footpath, putting services underground and adding overhead lighting. For 2008, the main item will be the long-awaited service block at Shannon Harbour.

The Ulster Canal is now on the list. In July 2007 the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) asked WI to restore the section of the Ulster Canal between Clones and Upper Lough Erne. WI is establishing a project team for day-to-day management, reporting monthly to a Monitoring Committee chaired jointly by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (RoI) and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (NI). The project will take six years to complete.

Finally, much has been happening on the Royal. A new lifting bridge at Bagnagh has been finished and work has started to replace the bridge at Mosstown. A 600m section of bank reconstruction and lining was carried out between Ballydrum Bridge and the 44th Lock near Killashee. Investigative works were completed at Richmond Harbour Dry Dock, a major restoration of the 45th Lock was completed and Cloonsheerin Culvert was fully restored. Lighting and railings at Maynooth Harbour were upgraded and deep gate landing jetties were installed at the 41st and 42nd Locks. Negotiations continued with Westmeath County Council to provide an adequate water supply to the Royal Canal.

In Dublin, between Binns Bridge and Croke Park, 400m of towpath and wall were improved. Spencer Dock was widened from 12m to its original 30m width. Works included exposing and strengthening the original dock walls. Access was granted for a new LUAS bridge across the Dock. All of these works are part of large scale re-development of the area, in which the Royal Canal is an important central feature. Work began on the new Sea Lock, which has the dual purpose of facilitating navigation at all stages of the tide and providing flood protection to the area in the event of high water levels in the adjacent River Liffey. The project includes construction of new mitre gates and new sector gates, together with a control building for the operation of the Sea Lock.

In our next issue, we'll have information on plans for the reopening of the Royal Canal in 2009.



An obstruction to navigation on the Grand Canal in Dublin

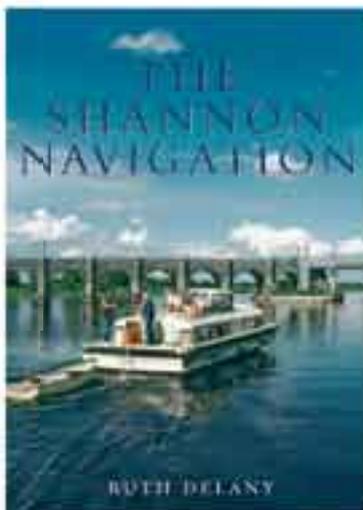
### Dowra

Waterways Ireland had applied for planning permission to extend the Shannon Navigation upriver from the head of Lough Allen to Annagh Upper, near the village of Dowra. The plan included dredging of the river and the construction of a 16-berth public harbour at Annagh Upper, with an amenity area, car park and road access. In the lower stretches of the river, dredging would have been mostly of silt, but near Annagh Upper some bedrock would have been removed and used to build a weir upstream of the moorings.

In July 2007 Leitrim County Council gave planning permission for the development, subject to some conditions; the decision was appealed to An Bord Pleanála, which in April 2008 refused planning permission on three grounds.



The quay wall at O'Briensbridge awaits the return of the boats



Ruth Delany's new history of the Shannon Navigation

### Rush out now ...

... and buy a copy of Ruth Delany's history of the Shannon Navigation, just published by Lilliput Press (paperback €29.95, hardback €60). Ruth's reputation as a waterways historian is solidly established, but this book takes her work to a new level.

The structure of the book is broadly chronological, starting with works carried out before 1800 and then devoting two chapters to the achievements of the Directors General of Inland Navigation up to 1830. But most of the infrastructure we know on the Shannon today came after that, based on a survey by Thomas Rhodes for the Shannon Commission and a report to the government in 1833.

That led to the passing of the Shannon Navigation Act in 1834 and the appointment of five commissioners (including Rhodes) to carry out work on the Shannon. Between then and 1850, mill dams and eel weirs were removed and bridge arches were unblocked. In the lower Shannon, the Black Bridge was built at Plassey and weirs were built at Worlds End (Castleconnell) and Corbally. At Killaloe the bridge was improved, a large L-shaped weir was constructed across the river and the canal retaining wall was built. On Lough Derg the navigation was opened to Scarriff, Mountshannon harbour was built and the Ballyshrule and Woodford rivers were dredged.

Upriver, boulders removed in dredging out shallow places were used as bases for navigation markers. Portumna bridge was replaced and the new cut, weir and lock at Meelick were built. The old Banagher lock was bypassed by a new navigation channel in the river, with a swivel arch in the bridge; Shannonbridge too got a swivel arch. A new lock and weir were built in the river at Athlone, with a new bridge (again with a swivel section), and the old canal was abandoned.

On Lough Ree the marking system was improved. The old lock at Lanesborough was removed and locks and weirs were built at Tarmonbarry and Roosky (abandoning the old Roosky canal). The bridge and quay were built at Carnadoe and the shallows at Derrycarne Narrows were excavated. Jamestown canal was re-sited and new bridges were built across it, but Drumsna bridge was just strengthened. Carrick-on-Shannon bridge was replaced and some improvements were made in the river to Battlebridge and in the Lough Allen Canal, while on the Boyle Water bridges and a lock were built.

There were some small changes to the infrastructure in later years, and they are covered in this book; the most important was the building of Ardnacrusha and the abandonment of the old navigation between Limerick and Killaloe. But most of the Shannon as we know it today was defined during that twenty-year period in the middle of the nineteenth century, and Ruth Delany brings it to life: the surveys, the plans and the changes, the incidents during construction.

First, it was not satisfied that the Environmental Impact Statement and other documents had adequately assessed and addressed the likely effects of the development on the environment and, in particular, on the very rare fish, the Irish Pollan, which is unique to Ireland but whose status, according to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, is bad, with poor prospects.

Second, the board pointed out that the Leitrim County Development Plan 2003-2009 sought to encourage location of facilities in or near existing towns and villages, to maximise the economic and social gain for the local community. As Annagh Upper is "an unserved rural area at a remove from the nearby village of Dowra", the development would be "contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area."

Third, the board said that the local road serving the proposed site was very poor and that the proposed development would endanger traffic safety.

I'm not convinced that the rejection of this development is a disaster. Relatively few boats use Lough Allen, and they've had improvements to two existing moorings in recent years. Does the traffic justify a further development? Or would the money be better spent elsewhere? Perhaps an extension at the southern end of the navigation, through Parteen Villa Weir to O'Briensbridge, would be a better investment. Not that I'm biased.

Royal Canal Lock 43 in 2007



There are chapters on flooding, on the Shannon steamers and other trading vessels and on the changes reflecting new uses: recreational boating, fishing, hydroelectric works, the development of bogs, the hire industry and the need for water management. Even looking at the pictures of boats would provide hours of amusement.

Some people may shy away from the prospect of reading a 250-page history book, but there is no need to do so. The book is indeed full of information but it is also extremely well written: any technicalities are explained fully and indeed entertainingly.

But there is more: this book is extremely well illustrated and produced. Sponsorship from Waterways Ireland enabled the publishers to use full colour throughout, with an extraordinary number and range of illustrations ranging from maps and charts, through drawings of the tools used in construction, to early black and white photographs and to contemporary colour photographs. The result is a magnificent book, whose quality is a fitting tribute to the research Ruth Delany has put in to her subject over the years — and to the work she has done in campaigning successfully for Irish waterways.

The old moorings at Kilglass in the Carnadoe Waters



The new moorings at Kilglass in the Carnadoe Waters

One of the sunken boats removed from Grand Canal Dock, Ringsend



### Registration

The proposals for registration of vessels are covered elsewhere in this issue, but I have a few comments from an inland perspective. I should say that I am not opposed to registration in principle. I sold a boat once to a man who was surprised that there was no way for him to be sure that I had title to it; registration would have provided reassurance to him. If it enables the Revenue Commissioners to check on people's tax affairs, I have no objection to that either.

I have made some suggestions to the Department of Transport: that the old registers should be computerised and made available online for research and that Killaloe (where boats were sent to be gauged) should be the port of registry for inland vessels.

I also commented on the requirement that I display a flag. I don't really like flags (apart from our own) and I don't see the point when I'm inland. More seriously, there have been times when boats from Northern Ireland might have been reluctant, for fear of violence, to fly a red ensign in the Republic and when southern boats might have preferred not to fly their ensign when north of the border. I hope those days may be behind us, but if the temperature should rise again I think boaters should be free to avoid calling attention to themselves.

I am not clear whether houseboats will have to be registered. And it would be nice to have a register of wrecks: I don't mean boats that have been wrecked while under way but rather those that have been abandoned and have sunk at their moorings in Killaloe, Shannon Harbour or Lowtown. And that brings up the point of how this registration will affect Waterways Ireland and its register: the proposals are silent on the matter.

Finally, the big threat in the scheme is in the sentence "Only vessels which meet the applicable standards under national, EU or international law in relation to safety, security and environmental protections in force at the time of application for registration will be allowed to register" and in the requirement for tonnage measurement. Owners might be hit with any number of demands under those provisions, and there are no details of what we might be in for. I don't like buying a pig in a poke: I want more details.

### Getting tough

Waterways Ireland has issued Marine Notice 25 of 2008 saying that boats that have been parked in one harbour for more than five consecutive days, or for more than seven days in a month, may be removed from the navigation. This would be good, although I don't know how it's to be done. It probably won't be as drastic as the recent removal of sunken vessels from the Grand Canal Dock in Dublin.



THE OCEANIS 37 IS THE NEWEST ADDITION TO THAT RANGE WITHIN THE BENETEAU FAMILY AND AFLOAT'S GRAHAM SMITH PUT IT THROUGH ITS PACES OFF MALAHIDE AND HOWTH



Coping well with the chop off the Baily

Beneteau is understandably proud of its reputation as the builder of highly attractive boats, both cruising and racing, and the new Oceanis 37 certainly maintains the tradition.

Nauta Design, who have built up a close relationship with Beneteau, were again given the brief to handle the interior design while the hull and exterior design contract was awarded to Finet Com Group. Its ambitious task was to achieve 'a harmonious balance between flowing lines, comfortable layout and performance'.

The design office, winners of the last four Vendeé Globe races and with a talent for designing hulls that combine spaciousness and performance, would appear to have notched up yet another success as it is another striking design and as our test proved, it can certainly perform.

It also features a number of innovative new design ideas which will add to its appeal and will doubtless be incorporated into other new boats in the future.

## ANOTHER FINE YACHT MONSIEUR BENETEAU

### First impressions

Moored with its transom on the pontoon during the recent Lombard On The Water Boat Show in Malahide Marina and packed close to other Beneteaus may not be the best way to get a first look at a new boat, yet the new 37 still stood out.

From the stern view, it had a distinctly racing boat look about it, with a beamy, straight-sided aft section, immediately appealing to a cruising sailor who is still a racer at heart.

The test boat had already been sold by Beneteau's Irish distributors BJ Marine and, not surprisingly, there are a few more potential sales in the offing.

**On Top**

The innovation starts on deck. The first to catch the eye is all-new companionway door system. Exclusive to Beneteau, it's one of those 'why didn't someone think of that before' inventions: two interconnected perspex sheets forming a hinged, see-through hatch cover system. Simple, yet highly effective, it has the added advantage of flooding light into the cabin as well as being considerably more secure than the traditional methods.

In the cockpit, one of the aft lockers turns out to be a very clever life-raft storage arrangement. The entire portside corner of the cockpit lift ups to reveal the life-raft ready to slide easily into the water without any heavy hoisting.

Right next to this locker is a pivoting helmsman's bench which swivels out of the way to give easy access to the transom bathing platform.

cruising boats, in which all lines are lead along the coachroof, the Oceanis maintains the more conventional, racing layout with the genoa sheet led to a fairlead and track on the side-deck and along the cabin side to winches mounted next to the helming position.

Where other larger Oceanis models feature a large almost tear-drop shape side window on the cabin, the 37 has reverted to a long rectangular shape which is very much in keeping with its design.

Elvstrom Sobstad sails are becoming a popular choice among boatbuilders these days and they come as standard on the Oceanis, together with lazy jacks and furling headsail.

The steering wheel is large and comfortable without restricting movement around the stern, and is linked to a convenient, easy-to-read instrument console.



THE QUALITY OF FINISH SO LONG ASSOCIATED WITH BENETEAU IS EVIDENT FROM THE MOMENT YOU STEP BELOW



Good turn of speed on a close fetch, while every inch of space is well used below





### Down Below

The quality of finish so long associated with Beneteau is evident from the moment you step below, enhanced by the massive amount of natural light streaming in through the large side windows and large roof hatches.

The two-cabin version allows for a sizeable shower/head/washbasin compartment and a deep sail locker accessed from the cockpit. The three-cabin model reduces the size of the bathroom facility and removes the sail locker but clearly offers more comfort and accommodation.

The galley features a double sink, a front opening fridge, a sliding crockery storage container with drainer, loads of drawers and, as befits a French boat, plenty of stowage for the wine bottles.

In the cabins, every conceivable nook and cranny is utilised for storage space, including room for the better gear required for going ashore after a day's cruise.

The chart table is not given its own separate seat but instead uses the end of the saloon bench seat to maximise the space around the centre table (which can easily accommodate six adults). A boxed-in unit above the chart table is designed to house a microwave if so desired, or act as extra storage, although without the microwave it looks a little strange.



### Under Sail

The 37's predecessor was said to be a tad disappointing on the performance stakes but the new edition hardly fits into that category.

In a fresh south-easterly 20-knot wind off Howth, she ramped along upwind at over 6 knots without being put under any real pressure and at 30° off the wind close-hauled. She glided effortlessly downwind, 170° off the wind at over 7 knots without a spinnaker.

She handled easily, with the large wheel and good balance allowing finger-tip control, even in those conditions.

If you feel your racing days are over but want a cruising boat that gives some reasonable performance, then the Oceanis 37 can neatly fit the bill. It has a feel of a racing boat, it looks like a racing boat yet has the creature comforts associated with cruising.

### Under Power

Like a lot of boatbuilders these days, Beneteau has opted for Yanmar engines for the Oceanis range and the new 37 benefits from a 29hp unit that is more than adequate for the purpose.

Indeed, it proved highly responsive when returning the boat to its marina berth under tricky wind conditions.

Controls are to the side of the steering wheel console for ease of use while the engine itself is easily accessible under the companionway steps. Sound-proofing has received considerable attention, so the Yanmar hums along without being too intrusive.

### To Buy For

A cruising boat with all the comforts that entails but with the style and panache of a racing boat – the best of both worlds, really – plus the new innovations such as hatch-covers and life-raft storage.

### To Cry For

The 'box' to house the microwave over the chart table is a little cumbersome and looks out of place with the rest of the interior design – it has the feel of an afterthought, even though it can be viewed as a useful addition.

### How Much?

Basic Oceanis 37 on the water Dublin €130,032. Review model (including Exclusive and Electronic Packs) €150,733.

### Go For More

The standard specification, as you might imagine from Beneteau, is extremely good but the Exclusive Version with extras like teak cockpit sole, electric windlass, radio/CD/MP3 player, electronic pack, etc., are always worth considering.

### Afloat Verdict

If there was a doubt over the performance of its predecessor, the new Oceanis 37 more than makes up for any previous shortcomings. It's an attractive, competitively priced cruising boat that has sufficient pace to be raced in the White Sail Cruiser Class. Not a bad combination at all.

**Oceanis 37 is distributed by the Irish Beneteau agents BJ Marine of Malahide, Tel: 01 806 1560. BJ also have branches in Crosshaven, Bangor and Malta.**

### OCEANIS 37 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Length (LOA)	11.47m
Beam	3.9m
Displacement	7,470kg
Sail Area	65m <sup>2</sup>
Fuel Tank	140 litres
Engine	Yanmar 29hp

# IN HARMONY WITH NATURE



AFLOAT'S GRAHAM SMITH CHECKED OUT A RELATIVELY NEW NAME ON THE IRISH SAILING SCENE, THE HARMONY 47, FROM FRENCH BUILDERS HARMONY YACHTS



The Harmony 47 powering along close-hauled on Dublin Bay

According to the dictionary, one of the definitions of 'harmony' is 'a pleasing arrangement of parts in colour and size' and that would be a fitting description for the new Harmony 47, distributed in Ireland by Viking Marine of Dun Laoghaire and West Cork Marine in the south.

It is the second largest in a range of boats (from 31ft to 52ft) from Harmony Yachts, part of Groupe Poncin, which may be relatively unknown here until now but is clearly setting out to take on the more established French boatbuilders on a number of fronts.

The La Rochelle-based manufacturer says it has invested €25 million in developing a revolutionary process with new technologies which the competition have yet to discover. In partnership with specialists in composite materials and industrial engineering, Poncin has created a ten-stage process that involves vacuum injection and infusion that will produce greater rigidity and constant weight.

The technology, including robots and environmental protection measures, is quite impressive when you read

the company's literature but for the potential owner, the proof will probably be a few years on, when claims of strength, quality, etc., will undergo their severest test.

Harmony, however, is clearly confident that it has the right formula. The company says the processes it has developed actually help to reduce costs and production time and the price tag would seem to reflect that, with the 47 particularly competitive on the cost front.



Nicely balanced upwind



Cruising past the Bailly

### First Impressions

First view of the Harmony 47 was in Malahide Marina at the recent Lombard On the Water Boat Show and as one of the larger boats on display, she was hard to miss. Moored on a pontoon hammerhead, it was an impressive sight at the end of a row of boats moored stern-to the dock.

A boat with a high freeboard can often look bulky but the 47 has elegant lines, with a wide blue band along its full length to break up the mass of white hull. The coachroof that sweeps gently aft from the middle of the foredeck and features five rectangular portholes on each side to add to the pleasing side-on view. A specially designed 'dolphin nose' overhang stemhead on the bow, with metal strut support, houses the anchor while protecting the hull and is an unusual, yet practical addition.

Designers Mortain & Mavrikios were charged with creating a racy and slim look, but to give large living spaces and good sailing performance and they seem to have managed a fine balance between classical and modern.

### On Top

The immediate impression once onboard is of wide side-decks without the clutter of ropes, with halyards and sheets all led aft along the top of the coachroof to self-tailing winches at the front of the cockpit under the sprayhood, as per the norm now in cruising boats.

The cockpit can accommodate up to eight people with some comfort, with a detachable table mounted on a permanent stainless steel structure (a little cumbersome when trying to move around during sailing). One neat touch is a step up from the cockpit to companionway which doubles as a very handy halyard and sheet storage unit.

The steering wheel seemed, at first glance, to be a shade on the small side for a large boat, but that viewpoint changed after only a short time on the helm, as it was more than adequate for the task. The instrument cluster is mounted on the steering wheel cluster, above the top of the wheel and nicely in the line of sight. The helmsman's seat behind the wheel tilts easily backwards to be transformed into a comfortable bathing platform with stainless steel ladder.

Harmony opts for larger masts for strength and safety and the shrouds are fixed to chainplates at points where the hull is specially reinforced, with the aim of reducing structural loads and removing the need for tie-rods below.

Elvstrom Sobstad are the sails of choice on the Harmony, with a fully-battened mainsail and lazy jacks as the norm, and a choice of cloths and cut to suit the individual owner.

### Down Below

If the 47 seems big on top, it is generously spacious below! The norm is a three-cabin layout, with a large master cabin forward – complete with its own en-suite, island berth, desk/vanity table and two hanging lockers – and two double-berth cabins aft.

A four-cabin layout is also an option, which means the master cabin loses its en-suite to allow for two single bunks forward and the island berth is replaced by a standard double-bed.

In the old style of things, the chart table is a self-contained navigation station and the galley is a single-piece facility on the port side, complete with hob/oven, sink, drainer, double refrigerator and loads of storage space.

Three portholes on each side of the main saloon and a couple of hatches provide plenty of natural light, although our test model featured a rich dark cherry wood finish, much favoured in hotter climates, apparently. It doesn't seem to work here, as it seemed too cold; the lighter birch finish in the brochures gives a warmer feel for Irish temperatures.

It's a personal choice, of course, but either option gives a lot of large-volume cupboards, wardrobes and shelving. The saloon can easily seat eight people around the table in considerable comfort.

### Under Sail

The 47 was a major surprise when it came to sailing. There is a preconceived notion that if it's big, then don't expect too much on the performance front. The 47 begged to differ, it has to be said, and was something of a revelation.

Initial doubts about the size of the wheel were quickly dispelled when sailing out of Malahide Estuary in a brisk Force 4-5 southerly wind. The fully-battened mainsail had a good shape to it, unlike the often flat cruising mainsails that can be found, and she powered along without any problem at around 8 knots upwind.

The profile under the water has a long rudder blade and a bulb keel which certainly enhance the performance and she was well balanced on the wheel, without recourse to straining the arm muscles too much to ease through the waves. The straight bow and fine entry add to an easy passage through a chop.

Acceleration, particularly after a tack, was impressive for a big boat. You would expect it to take a while to get back up to speed, but again it came through with flying colours. If you were thinking large, possibly sluggish, cruiser, please revise to large cruiser with attitude.



The cherry finish on the test model needs some change for Irish conditions

### Under Power

Harmony has opted, as standard, for the latest generation of Volvo diesel engines and the 47 features a powerful 55hp unit that has no difficulty in driving the 10,650kg displacement boat along.

Of course, the engine is not only there to help power the boat when sails cannot be used but also to produce electricity and hot water that are such a vital component on a cruising boat.

For a big engine, it is relatively quiet and attention to sound insulation in the engine compartment means noise is reduced to highly acceptable levels below deck.

The engine controls are conveniently located on the central console housing the steering wheel so no bending down to an inaccessible throttle on a cockpit floor is required.

### To Buy For

A lot of thought has clearly gone into the French marine industry's 'Young Pretender', with attention to detail, loads of space and top class equipment, but the surprise package was the turn of speed, so performance was the major plus factor when it was least expected.

### To Cry For

The cockpit table support is too big for the space it fills, as it restricts movement of anyone around the companionway or tailing a winch. A smaller unit or a demountable version might be a better option. The dark wood interior finish is likely to be considered simply too cold for Western European climates – it needs the bright, warm feeling of the lighter wood effect.

### How Much?

Boat Show model, the 'Limited Edition Esprit Vintage' option, costs €227,870, inclusive of VAT and delivery, a competitive price for such a big boat.

### Go For More

There is €21,000+ in the pre-VAT, ex-factory, price difference between the basic boat and the Elegance model (with Comfort Pack) and another €12,000+ to upgrade to the Esprit Vintage. At that level, the top-of-the-range is the only option.

### Afloat Verdict

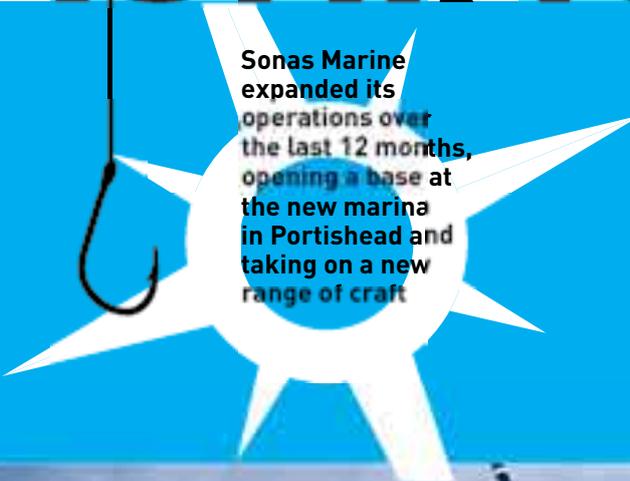
The new kid on the block, so to speak, was a pleasant surprise. If the build quality matches the claims – and the performance certainly does – then this can be a serious challenger to the status of the better-known French builders. Watch this space, as they say.

Harmony is distributed in Ireland by Viking Marine in Dublin, tel 01 80 6654; and West Cork Marine in Cork, tel 021 458 0174

### HARMONY 47 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Length (LOA)	14.39m
Beam	4.25m
Displacement	10,650kg
Sail Area	93m <sup>2</sup>
Fuel Tank	200 litres
Engine	Volvo 55hp

# SONAS GOES FISHING



Sonas Marine expanded its operations over the last 12 months, opening a base at the new marina in Portishead and taking on a new range of craft

Sonas Marine's new UK base in Portishead was an expedient decision. "We had a number of customers in Britain already so the new office is a natural progression for us," explained David Maguire. "Our best selling range during the year was that of ChrisCraft and they've expanded into a whole new market. We're very excited."

ChrisCraft's reputation is built on designing boats such as the closed-deck Corsair line, the sporty Speedster and the classic 40-foot Roamer motor yacht. The new development seeks the launch of a fishing boat range, with the Catalina 23, 26 and 29.

The 26 boasts an array of features that were created with the serious fisherman in mind. Its innovative design features the same sleek deep-V hull and flared bow as is found on ChrisCraft's popular runabouts. The wood free construction of the Catalina's hull allows the boat to move effortlessly through the water at speed.

"One of the most popular features on the Catalina 26 is its abundance of storage options," says Maguire. "The cockpit features both port and starboard storage for fishing rods with stainless steel fittings and PVC gunwale tubing for rod ends. Two macerated fish boxes can also be found on both port and starboard. Other storage areas are found beneath the bow seats and in the floor."





The cockpit of the Catalina 26 is self-bailing and contains stainless steel fittings throughout. Both a fresh-water wash down with 20-gallon tank and a raw-water wash down with coiled hose and nozzle help keep the boat tidy when reeling in a big catch. Teak accents are found throughout the cockpit, including transom platform inserts,

a console footrest lid, side console plaques and a recessed foredeck area. Five custom stainless steel ChrisCraft rod holders are also featured in the cockpit. In addition, one of the most unique features in the Catalina 26 is a concealed head located inside the forward console. **More information at [www.sonasmarine.com](http://www.sonasmarine.com)**



## Corsair 36

Nothing compares to the first time you drive a Corsair, except for the next time and the time after that...

Experience our full range of boats at [www.chriscraft.com](http://www.chriscraft.com)



*ChrisCraft*

Tel 00353 1 676 5414  
Email [info@sonasmarine.com](mailto:info@sonasmarine.com)

[www.sonasmarine.com](http://www.sonasmarine.com)

SOUNDINGS  
WITH WM NIXON

# MAGIC OF MALAHIDE

Malahide Yacht Club is its own little bit of heaven on a gently sunny spring evening. From within the friendly bar, it provides a vista of quiet enchantment across its sandy estuary. The last of the flood tide is making, and the view is framed by trees as the shimmering water bubbles past the boats on mooring. Beyond, the lights are twinkling in the marina. The floodlit Cruzzo restaurant in its midst may look glitzy, but it is comfortably part of the picture of a very pleasant place at peace with itself.

It's comfortable with itself, yet this is the happening place. The clubhouse is right on the heart of the waterfront, with the Sea Scouts' boat hall on one side, and the tennis and croquet club on the other. Just across the way is the Georgian splendour of St James's Terrace, complete unto a Michelin starred restaurant. Along the waterfront nearby to the east is the Grand Hotel, the very personification of a

neighbourhood hospitality complex which can function successfully at both local and national level. And a few yards westward, beside the green which fronts the marina, is the centre of the village itself, with good shopping, some friendly pubs, and a classic hardware shop which is cherished by all who use it.

Add to that a couple of churches which look like churches, a railway station that wouldn't go amiss as the setting for Brief Encounter, a castle with dreaming towers among the trees in accessible parkland with some luscious suburbs snoozing in the sun, and you'd expect a place where little happens. You'd be so wrong. Having got their space nicely sorted, the Malahideans have a prodigious appetite for life, but they'd think it bad taste to make a lot of noise about it.

Part of the energy derives from the airport nearby. Modern Malahide's growth

stems from its vitality, and the pilots and top administrators made their homes in this quiet estuary village which is only a few miles from the airport, yet - very important this - it's not on the flightpath. So they have all the benefits of the money-machine of aviation, but without the noise.

As the place developed in the 1950s, the number of locally-based boats grew. And in 1957 or thereabouts, the sluices through the long railway viaduct across the estuary were dammed, thereby creating Broadmeadow Water to the westward, the most extraordinary watersports introductory amenity in all Ireland. So by 1958 the new Malahide Sailing Club came into being, sailing on both the tidal estuary on the coast of Fingal, and on the sheltered Broadmeadow.

This year - as Malahide Yacht Club - it is celebrating its Golden Jubilee with a busy season of special events.

and with the publication - launched in the clubhouse in April on a classic evening of springtime perfection and promise - of the Club's history, '50 Years of Sailing', by Graham Smith. It was sent down the ways by David Wilkins, Malahide's own Olympic silver medallist of 1980. The reception was filled with national and international champions, and renowned cruising and offshore racing types who think of Malahide as home.

They're all there in the book, with a plethora of photos old and new. What isn't in the book is a map of the place, nor even an aerial photo. With so many legendary aviators associated with the club, it must be a case of the shoemaker's children. To understand Malahide, you need some notion of the topography. We can remedy that right here with a panorama. As for the book, it's €25 from [www.myc.ie](http://www.myc.ie), and highly recommended.

Malahide's classic estuary waterfront seen across the bows of the modern boat show.  
Photo: David O'Brien