

THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL



Boat Show



Sunseeker's secrets

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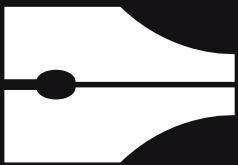
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Hi-tech punch at ExCeL

The London International Boat Show runs from 9 to 18 January at ExCeL with over 500 exhibitors showing power and sailing boats, dinghies, deck equipment, charter holidays, sailing courses and lots more

On the Main Stage - powered by Fairline - visitors can watch theatrical shows, marine-inspired catwalk collections and seminars running throughout each day. Shows scheduled include "A Mermaid's Tale" which features an array of mythical creatures and peaks with a performance of extreme acrobatics.

At midday each day "Seaskool", in association with the Maritime Coastguard Agency, marks the new educational slot that aims to teach you how to enjoy and get into boating.

The fashion shows will feature clothing from some of the top names and brands in the industry including: Henri Lloyd, Helly Hansen, Musto and Puma.

To add a touch of sparkle, luxury swimwear from Elizabeth Hurley Beach and RRD and evening brands will also be shown.

In the Deck Games zone you are invited to go canoeing and kayaking on the specially built indoor pool, or colour to your heart's content with International Paints.

A fleet of "Micro Magic" radio controlled yachts will compete throughout the week in match races and regattas, while the more active can compete in rowing competitions using the new Oartec rowing machine.

Traditional elegance combined with hard-edged modern technology is a recurring theme of many of the new exhibits at this year's show.



Launches at the show of new boats include the new Moody 41 Classic cruising yacht which has been designed by the yard's long-time designer, Bill Dixon, and it is making its UK debut.

It is the first of a new range of Moodys combining traditional looks and new technology, a new design direction since Hanse took over the Moody marque.

There is lots of glossy varnish and chrome fittings on display giving the Moody a whiff of nostalgia and elegance, but the high specification and finish quality of this boat disguises some very modern technology which means she can be sailed short handed in comfort. The launch price is around £180,000.

The same theme of the classic features and modern comforts is continued for those on a smaller budget with the new Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 30i, also making a debut at the show. This boat comes with many of the features normally seen on larger yachts, shore power, heating, electric anchor windlass, and hot and cold pressurized water. It is initially offered with fixed keel, with a lifting keel with twin rudders available in mid 2009.

In the powerboats Beneteau is bringing the latest in the Monte Carlo range to ExCeL.

Here, designer Pierangelo Andreani has combined a piece of sunny Mediterranean style with fittings still able to provide

protection when the weather freshens on grey summer days scudding around in the English Channel. The opening roof and the sun awning extension are run on electric motors. Guide Price: EUR445,000 (excl tax).

Fairline is introducing a smaller version of its classic design Squadron range at the show. The Squadron 70 boasts an extended hydraulic hi-lo bathing platform, previously only featured on her flagship sister, the Squadron 78 custom. The height adjustable platform makes launching and storage of the Jet RIB tender much easier and safer, but also provides sea access for guests.

Out on the dockside The Royal Navy will be present at ExCeL with HMS Westminster, one of the 13 type 23 frigates in the fleet; powerful and versatile war ships which are the mainstay of the modern surface force with the capability to operate anywhere in the world.

Westminster has recently returned from international waters off Burma, where at short notice she was put on standby to assist with the humanitarian response in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis that caused devastation across the country.

Suzuki GB unveils a major investment in an indoor harbour which will enable Show visitors to see and inspect boats on water.

Inland joys

Did you know that there are twice as many miles of inland waterway as there are miles of motorway in the UK? And the next time you are stuck in a traffic jam at 0mph, bear in mind that the top speed on the inland waterways is only six mph anyway. While the horse-drawn coal boats are a distant memory, the arteries of the Industrial Revolution still thrive today with all types of craft from rowing boats and skiffs through to motor cruisers, wide beam house boats and traditional narrowboats. Although the network has shrunk since its heyday, there are still more than 4,500 miles to explore in a boat, by bicycle or on foot - it's your choice.

There will be a wide range of boats for exploring the inland waterways on show in the North Hall and more than a dozen narrow and wide beam boats for holidays and purchase floating outside the South Exhibition Hall.

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Code: L23

Singapore bound



Rick Tomlinson/Volvo Ocean Race

Tensions were high on board the four vessels leading the pack in Volvo Ocean Race on the run down the Malacca straights, reports Tom Rowland

It is tough when things are as tight as they have been in the latest leg of the Volvo Ocean Race. The margin for error was non-existent.

Days of agonizing headwinds and foul currents had brought the pack almost to a standstill.

"We had a good position at the gate and then there were lots of changes in position and

unfortunately it did not go our way, but we are happy to be out there and fighting," explained Torben Grael, skipper of the overall race leader, Ericsson 4.

He was relaxing in the cockpit of the sleek craft a few moments after it was securely moored in the marina at Singapore.

Each of the four leading teams realised that the difference

between finishing first and fourth was going to come down to one unlucky gust of wind or one poorly executed manoeuvre.

"Sailing up-wind is always slow so it is not fun. Once you get used to sailing at the high speeds that these boats are capable of, which can be an average of 25 knots, and you then have to sail up-wind slowly it feels like a different boat," said Grael.

In the end, Telefonica Blue won leg three but behind, PUMA grabbed second place, while the Nordic crew on board Ericsson 3 pushed their stable mates, Ericsson 4 into fourth place for the leg although it held on as overall race leader. "We knew from the start it would be a very hard leg," Grael added.

"Days of agonising headwinds and foul currents had brought the pack almost to a standstill"

The wind was holding strong and the boats were making about 12 knots through the water for the hour before the leaders arrived. The Whitbread round the World Race is a long and notoriously demanding sailing contest.

Clothing specialist Helly Hansen has developed new fabrics that it claims will give the Ericsson team in the Volvo Ocean Race

an edge. "We see the Volvo Ocean Race as a perfect match to the Helly Hansen way of life", says Karl-Einar Jensen at Helly Hansen.

In the very first race three competing sailors were lost after being washed overboard. This led to the call for that inaugural contest to be the last, but the re-badged Volvo Ocean Race was run for the first time in 2001/02. The teams will sail over 37,000 nautical miles during the nine

months of the 2008/09 Volvo, which started in Alicante, Spain in October 2008 and concludes in St Petersburg, Russia, during late June 2009.

The route will have taken them via Cape Town, Kochi, Singapore, Qingdao, around Cape Horn to Rio de Janeiro, Boston, Galway, Goteborg and Stockholm.

Each of the seven entries has a sailing team of 11 professional crew.



Guy Saker/Ericsson 4/Volvo Ocean Race

Boat Show Bonus

Marina on the Royal Victoria Dock

The Royal Victoria Dock will feature some of the largest exhibitor boats in production which cannot physically fit through the doors of the ExCeL building, as well as the Royal Naval Frigate HMS Westminster and a number of inland craft, both narrow and wide beam. The dock will also play host to the Show Regatta which boasts fast-paced exciting Thundercat demonstrations and to cap it all off, the Yachts & Yachting Battle of the Classes, a Pursuits Race will provide a great finale to the Show over the last weekend.



Hugo Andreae with his wife Rebecca and son Ned aboard his Karnic Bluewater 2250

Buying your first motorboat

In a world obsessed with rules and regulations, powerboating remains one of the last great liberties.
By Hugo Andreae, editor of Motor Boat and Yachting magazine

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You still do not need a license to drive a privately owned vessel below 24m in the UK, speed limits rarely exist beyond the obvious harbour boundaries and the last time I checked nobody had put a congestion charge on the Solent.

The credit crunch means there are some fantastic bargains to be had on new and used boats while advances in technology such as joystick steering and satellite navigation means that even a complete novice now stands a decent chance of getting from one marina to the next without ricocheting off the rocks.

If you can drive a car, with a bit of training, you should be able to helm a boat. Just don't make the mistake of thinking that the same rule applies for buying one.

The first thing to appreciate is that boats are not built or engineered like today's mass produced cars. There are no fleets of prototypes being tested in 15 different countries. They also have to live in an extremely harsh environment and are often left unused for months at a time. So learn how it all works and make sure you have a local dealer or at least a servicing agent that you trust.

The second key difference is that people don't use boats in the same way that they use cars. Consequently there is a far wider variety of boats on offer and an even greater disparity of opinions on what is the best one to go for.

This may sound obvious but it's worth spending some time working out what you intend to use your boat for.

Then there is the issue of actually purchasing your chosen dream.

If you are spending a lot of money on a boat, employ the services of a qualified marine solicitor. It is much harder to spot potential problems with a used boat than a car and the way used boats are sold is different.

Rather than brokers buying used boats for stock and then selling them on a like a car dealer does, they agree to market them for a percentage fee of the selling price much like an estate agent would.

This means you are effectively buying the boat from a private individual rather than a business. The solution is to have it inspected by a qualified marine surveyor and engineer with appropriate indemnity insurance.

Approach it with your eyes open, read the boating press, seek advice from professionals before you put any money down and it should be the start of a lifelong passion. Whatever people say, boats are not like cars - choose the right one and they are a whole lot better.

Suggestions to get you started (All these companies have stands at the show)

Karnic Bluewater 2250

This is the boat I spent my own money on, not because it's particularly brilliant at any one thing but because it's a safe, versatile, easy-to-look-after family boat that can cope with anything from waterskiing to fishing trips. It even has a small cabin for overnighting. **Contact: Yellow Penguin**

Linssen GS299AC

This attractive little cruiser is perfect for river and estuary use. **Contact: Berthons**

Sealine SC35

This won our Motor Boat of the Year award for sportscruisers under 45ft. **Contact: Sealine**

Avon 620 Adventure

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Code: L23



With cash-rich buyers from Euroland picking up bargains in the UK market, many are considering ways of joining the exodus and taking a boat abroad to shelter from the economic winter. By Tom Rowland

The memory might be fading remarkably quickly but it is worth recalling that in the heady days of the property boom buying a sparkling new sailing cruiser was remarkably straightforward, even if you did not exactly have the cash to finance the transaction.

All many people needed was an extension on the mortgage on their homes by enough to raise a 20 per cent deposit on a self-certified marine mortgage.

"Showing an interest in taking out the loan was sufficient to qualify many people," says Nick Ryley, Chairman of the UK Association of Yacht Brokers.

Things have changed fast since then. The finance houses now typically require a minimum of 30 per cent to be put down as a deposit for even the most mainstream of boats, and they also examine the ability of applicants to keep up payments on the loan much more critically, while the upward drift of house prices which created the collateral to underpin many marine loans has come under pressure, says Mr Ryley.

However, if you are fortunate enough to be buying a yacht using Euros then it is a great time to be trading up and dealers and brokers around the UK report that they have had a flood of enquiries and sales from residents in other parts of the EU, with Scandinavian demand particularly strong in the last few weeks.

The advantage applies principally to second-hand boats because many of the higher volume new brands are already priced in Euros, says Leighton King, group marketing manager at Ancasta, the network of new and used boat dealerships and brokers.

The effect has been to buoy up the prices of sail-powered cruising yachts, a market that traditionally has been more mature and stable than many of the powerboat sectors, he says.

If you can not think of a quick way to join the victorious Europeans on their way home with our keenly-priced maritime booty, then there are ways of removing your boat from the UK while you stick it out here, and saving considerable sums in the process. At the risk of stating the obvious, one of the nice things about boats is that they can float away to sunnier economic climates.

"The most obvious option is to abandon UK moorings, with the wildly expensive fees charged along much of the South coast, and head for the other side of the Channel"

The most obvious option is to abandon UK moorings, with the wildly expensive fees charged along much of the South coast, and head for the other side of the Channel.

Despite the rise in the value of the Euro, French marinas can still look a considerable bargain.

For instance, it is far cheaper to berth a cruising yacht in Calais than it is in Dover. The fare over the Channel as a foot passenger is only around £15, the ferries take 90 minutes and leave frequently and it is a short, pleasant

walk from the ferry terminal to the town marina in Calais.

This December, a new, much faster rail link is due to open from Dover to London St Pancras, with 140mph Japanese bullet trains speeding along sections of the Channel Tunnel rail line. It will open up the Calais option as a practical alternative to those who do not live within easy reach of the Dover ferry port.

New ferry routes are planned to open to Dieppe and Boulogne this year from Dover as well.

Then there are the esoteric joys of French and Italian leasing schemes. In a nutshell, the aim of these schemes is to take advantage of the much more lax and favourable VAT treatments on offer in other EU territories to boat owners.

You need to ensure that you comply with the residency requirements however, as the UK authorities can take a dim view.

One of the masters of these schemes are SGB Marine Finance, the financial subsidiary of the Bénéteau group, which has a thriving business arranging finance for a wide variety of craft.

French regulations provide that for a boat in a leasing scheme time spent outside community territorial waters entitles the renter to a reduction in the VAT on the boat. Thus you are entitled to a reduction in the taxable base in proportion of the time spent sailing or parked outside such waters.

But - and this is the good bit - because the proof of the time spent outside territorial waters is often difficult to furnish by the renter, the French tax authority allows a 50 per cent allowance as a taxable base.

"In accordance with article 172 of appendix II to the General Taxation Code, the evaluation of the time spent outside community territorial waters (when the renter is based in France) or outside French territorial waters (when the renter is based in another country) in relationship to the total boat rental time is done by the taxpayer under his responsibility and subject to the tax authority's right to inspect. That evaluation, which may result from the terms of the rental contract, should be supported by all means of proof.

"However, it is accepted that renters finding it difficult to carry out such an evaluation can determine the time spent outside community or French territorial waters by applying a 50 per cent allowance to the total rental time, whatever the category of boat."

Italian leasing offers access to lower VAT depending on 3 criteria: boat length; boat type; the fixed time spent outside community waters. This concession is on a sliding scale and

is greater the larger the boat and the longer the time spent outside Italian waters. A sailing boat less than 10 metres in length that spends only 40 per cent of its time outside community waters only has to pay VAT on 60 per cent of the value. A sail or motor boat over 24 metres in length spending 70 per cent of its time outside community waters only pays VAT on 30 per cent of the value.

SGB argues that even if you can afford to buy the boat outright, you will not only save money by paying less tax but you can also continue to allow your capital to work for you, making bigger savings.

Unfortunately it is not always enough just to change the flag on the boat. The law that applies depends on your financial residence - the country where you pay your income tax. But with UK tax rates set to skyrocket the moment that a break in the economic gloom is visible, many people will be thinking of ways of taking that abroad as well.

Boat Show Bonus

Classic Boat - in association with Classic Boat, Old Pulteney and International Paints

Ever popular with visitors, the area will provide an opportunity to experience the atmosphere of a friendly working boatyard; watch, learn and talk to experts about classic boats and find out about the traditional skills involved in their restoration. Look over the shoulders of renowned marine artists as they paint beautiful boats on display which include a gorgeous four-berth gaff-rigged cutter, a pretty little trailer-sailing ketch, and a majestically sleek Thames launch.

The Classic Boat feature will once again be supporting the 'Cutty Sark' conservation project. See how selected artefacts from the famous tea clipper 'Cutty Sark' that were badly damaged by fire in 2006 are being brought back to life using a mix of cutting-edge science and time-honoured skills.

Sunseeker powers on to new successes



It is the combination of champagne living and raw speed that is at the root of the success of the company which started producing fast motor boats in the backwaters of Poole harbour 35 years ago, writes Tom Rowland



Today its boatyards dominate much of the Poole quaysides and nearly all of Sunseeker's production is sold overseas.

The firm has plans to expand further down the coast with planning permission recently granted for new boat sheds in Portland.

If it is watching Sunseeker racing cruisers charging around that delivers the adrenalin hit for most who see them in action, the firm has plans to diversify away from its traditionally preferred construction medium, fabric reinforced plastic (FRP) and to move into aluminium hull design, with bigger boats on the drawing board.

If you do not fancy running the risk of getting a bit of spray in your face, then the Sunseeker 37 Metre Yacht points the way to this luxurious future.

"The Snapper", Eddie Jordan's 37-metre yacht, was launched in 2007. The former F1 team owner sold his Silverstone-based racing team at the end of 2004, and his yacht can be chartered for around €120,000 per week.

It comes complete with five guest cabins (three double, two twin) and a large hot tub on the sky deck where there is also an outside bar and dining area.

The upper deck houses a large saloon and another bar. Sliding glass doors open onto its own private aft cockpit. An elegant table made of American black walnut can seat 12 guests for alfresco dining.

Sunseeker has three 37-metre yachts in production at the moment and four are on the water. Each will have cost the new owners around £11.5 million to buy.

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Spirit of the East in full sail

A fraction of the price

One sector expecting to see a rise in demand during the recession is a form of boat ownership where you share both craft and all the costs with others. By Tom Rowland

The idea of fractional ownership is that having joined a scheme you are guaranteed regular use of a properly maintained yacht for a small part of the cost of owning one independently.

Members have access to a yacht or powerboat, which they can book in advance.

With SailTime the monthly membership fee for a Bénéteau Oceanis 323 is £499. That buys six weeks of sailing a year. The company pays for all the marina fees, maintenance, insurance and running costs. If you get bored sailing along the same stretch of water, SailTime have introduced flexibility, and have extended the concept to 12 locations in the UK, and 50 worldwide, with the additional costs claimed to be much below chartering.

"Members travelling for business can entertain clients on a luxury yacht, while those on vacation can enjoy up to a week on the water with their family," said Jonathan Duffy, UK Managing Director of SailTime.

The Classic Sailing Club, based at Pin Mill on the Suffolk coast, uses the same basic concept, except that in place of new yachts members get to sail beautifully varnished classics with wooden hulls. The other key difference is that in place of a fixed monthly fee they purchase points that are then redeemed against boat use.

Hampshire Maid is a little South Coast One Design, built on the Isle of Wight in 1957. Caressa is a six-berth Prior 37 Buchanan built at Burnham on Crouch in 1966. "She represents the pinnacle of wooden racing yacht design," says Ian Welsh, joint owner of the club fleet.

Bareboat prices for the whole of a boat range from £32 for a midweek day in July on Hampshire Maid to £240 for a Saturday in May on Caressa. A two-day weekend berth on a skippered yacht £180 per person. Another variation on the fractional ownership concept is being promoted by Peter Burnet, designer of the majestic ketch Spirit of the East which was launched in 2006, 100 ft of sublimely beautiful, fast cruising

yacht in which fractional shares are being offered, principally to anyone with the ambition to spend lazy summer days on a very elegant yacht in the Mediterranean.

The ownership of Spirit is in an offshore company in 12 shares, seven of which are retained by the original consortium who handle the management and winter maintenance during the period October to April. The remaining five shares are available for a term of five years, thereafter the yacht will be sold and the proceeds distributed amongst the shareholders.

"The investment can make a return healthy return of seven per cent in 2009 by allowing the company to charter the yacht and still enable the investor to take two weeks holiday", explains Peter Burnet.

The total cost of an investment per 1/12th share including all the above expenses for the full five-year term is 450,000 euros. (£400,000 converted at £1 to 0.90euro).

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Beach to beach



Fast-moving commercial shipping converges on this patch of sea from three directions and the two-cylinder Lister engine on Tom Rowland's veteran wooden fishing boat, Julie, has just stalled. What happens next?

It is a glorious sunny afternoon, the sea is calm and we are outside the entrance to Dover harbour. It is not particularly relaxing as it happens, there is a stream of ferries nearby and we are drifting towards the traffic separation scheme as the engine has stopped. On past experience it will take at least a quarter of an hour plus much effort with the starting handle to get her going again.

We had a party to launch her after a long restoration and the idea is to take the boat across the

English Channel from the beach at Deal where she is kept (left) to a beach near Boulogne on the French side and back again. Beach to beach - marinas and harbours are for wimps.

The standby motor is also misbehaving and the poor passengers could be forgiven for asking themselves exactly how they came to be bobbing about in the Channel with a couple of apparent chancers like me and Dave Lees. Dave (48) mends old marine engines virtually in his sleep and has 20 years experience fishing the waters from Deal to Folkestone.

Travelling from beach to beach sounds romantic. You are liberated from the constraints of bossy harbour masters, greedy marina operators and the flock of leisure boats processing gingerly from port to port. We are free to go where we like when we like.

"Putt, putt, putt", Dave has got the engine going again. Thank God for that. My old Rye fishing boat has a fat belly and just flops on her bilge keels when driven

at a beach, making landings in unconventional places fairly simple. It increases hugely the number of potential stopping off points along the Channel coast. We can fish on the way and the restaurants in the French villages cook the catch to perfection. At least that is the theory.

Sadly there is a bit more to it. Getting up and down beaches involves skills that most boat owners never have to bother with. Julie might be only 18 ft long but she is made of elm on an oak frame and weighs around 2 tons. The beach at Deal is soft shingle and it is terribly steep. Sometimes the tide creates ledges you have to manoeuvre the boat down. The air-cooled Lister engine is started when the boat is still on the beach. Then the cable is unhooked, the crew hop aboard, you recruit some bystanders to push you down the steep slope and off you go.

We were off to Audresselles, a pretty little village north of Boulogne, a few miles past the Cap Gris Nez. The beach conditions at Audresselles are very different

from Deal - gently sloping sandy bays between ferociously sharp rocks. But because of the gentle slope of the solid sand beach the French fishermen use tractors to pull their boats up and down on trolleys.

But before we get there the two sea-lanes that make up the traffic separation scheme must be crossed. One would be mad to take chances here. The ships can have a draft of 90 ft and be over 700 metres in length. They travel at up to 25 knots, are forced close together and they have the right of way. This time on the way over we encounter a section of pre-cast concrete the size of a small island being towed down the Channel. There are two tugs and the length of the tow is half a kilometre, according to the Coast Guard.

We stop on the Varne for half an hour to let this procession pass. The Varne is a convenient sanctuary for small craft in the centre of the South West lane of the separation scheme. An area of shallow water ringed by warning buoys where the big ships do not

go. It is also teeming with fish, so attracts many of the Folkestone fishermen. "They can't get us when we are here", says Dave repeatedly. He has something of a persecution complex when it comes to big ships, not to mention all forms of bureaucracy and officialdom.

To tackle this sort of journey, Julie has been transformed into a blend of old and new technology. To help keep the big ships at bay I have installed an Automatic Identification System (AIS) receiver. It might not have Dave's charm but it is a brilliant navigational aid for doing this sort of trip. Its installation was possible because the price of these has tumbled in the last year or so making it realistic to put one on a small vessel. It identifies the name, MMSI number, radio call sign and type of cargo as well as the course, speed and heading of all the big ships fitted with the equipment, which is now compulsory for most. All of this information is displayed on a chart plotter, a big help specially in poor visibility or congested waters like the Channel. Mine is

an AIS250 from Raymarine and cost around £750. It interfaces with a chart plotter that displays each AIS vessel as a triangle on the display and makes it much easier to judge the distance and timing of each traffic movement.

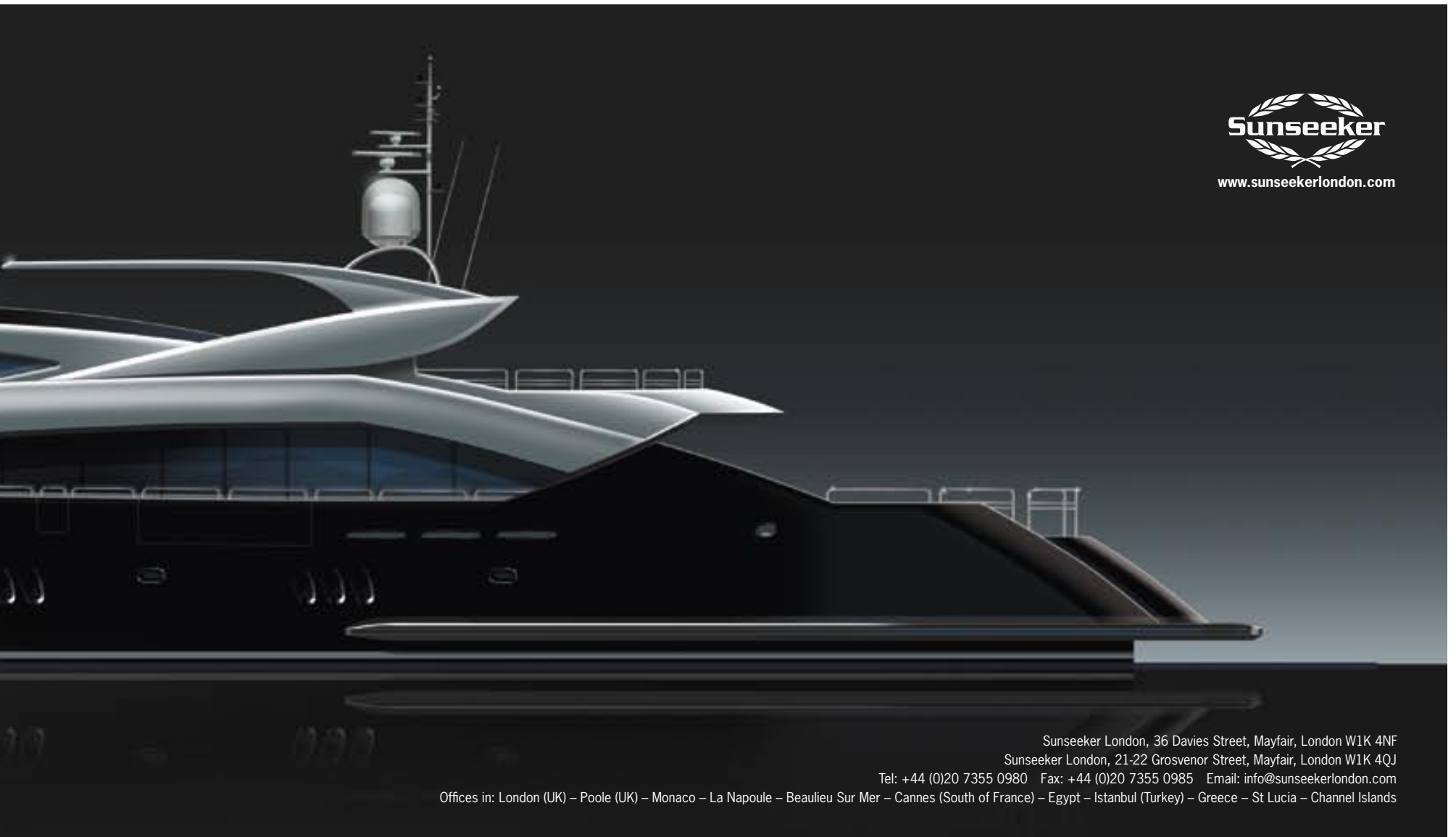
If one of the big boats gets close the system sounds an alarm that has to be manually cancelled on both my wheelhouse and on the bridge of the ship. At least they cannot claim they did not know we were there.

We make it over and as the cliffs of Gris Nez loom we are out of the lanes, out of danger and set for the coast. They are waiting for us on the beach and once the boat was safe we headed for a restaurant and a well earned and gloriously cooked meal.

On our trip back the weather was much rougher but with the tide and swell under the boat we made nearly 7 knots through the murk after an early morning start, no white cliffs to be seen this time but we made the fastest ever return journey back to Deal beach.



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Land's End or bust



When bad weather forced the cancellation of a leg of the Round Britain power boat race, most competitors headed off by road to Wales for the next stage - but not Greg Marsden. By Tom Rowland

The 2008 Round Britain Offshore Power Boat Race finished in Portsmouth on 30th June with only two boats completing the entire 1,600-mile course, following the cancellation of the second leg.

Because of the bad weather, the organisers decided to miss out the stage from Plymouth around Land's End, across the Bristol Channel and up to Milford Haven in the far west of Wales. In true gung-ho spirit, Greg Marsden, a serving major in the Royal Engineers, decided that as he had signed up to go around the whole of the UK in his 7.8 metre RIB powered by a 300 horsepower outboard, that was what he intended to do.

Marsden decided to challenge the elements and carry on with the original course along with one other boat - a 42ft Targa called Buro.

His boat was the smallest in the Round Britain fleet, but Greg said he felt confident in the abilities of his crew, Alex Rhodes, a fire station officer and

an accomplished powerboat skipper, and another army major, Spence Spencer. He also thought the RIB, Vampire, powered by a standard Suzuki 300hp 4-stroke outboard was up to the challenge. The navigational equipment was up to specification as well: Marsden is sponsored by Raymarine.

"His boat was the smallest in the Round Britain fleet, but Greg said he felt confident in the abilities of his crew"

"We made our way down towards Land's End on Sunday, stopping off in Newlyn for a beer and a Chinese takeaway," explained Greg.

"We left Newlyn for Milford Haven at 3am on Monday morning, blasted around Land's End in choppy seas but

nothing the boat could not handle, arriving at 7.35am".

Vampire arrived ahead of Buro to huge applause but the rest of the field, although full of admiration, was not about to wait for them. They were just in the nick of time to make the drivers' brief and re-fuel in time for the third leg to Bangor in Northern Ireland, which had been scheduled to start that morning.

So the crew did two legs in one day, adding the next 200 miles for the third leg to Bangor to the 100 miles they had already covered from Newlyn.

The next leg saw the arrival of Lieutenant Colonel Tim Wildish (Greg's boss) who had flown out to take part in the Bangor to Oban run, 113 miles.

Things started to go badly astray 18 miles out of Bangor when Greg managed to stuff the nose into a huge wall of water that brought the RIB to a standstill in spectacular fashion. With his boss in the passenger seat

and braced for impact he was ready for it, but poor Spence who was in the rear was caught unawares - the force of the impact sending him skyward and then back, with the full force of his landing caught by his elbow on the stainless steel handles of the seat. His elbow collapsed underneath him with a sickening crack.

The boss was directed to take the helm and maintain a heading and 15kn speed. They nursed Spence the 80 miles to Scotland in time to qualify for the next leg. Spence managed the final day of the race with his arm strapped up. They came in 20th overall, but claimed a moral victory.

Visit a Round Britain race boat at the London International Boat Show: Goldfish, winner of the 29 RIB Class in the 2008 Round Britain race, can be seen on stand S5B in the South Hall

Boat Show Bonus

Come On Board

Following its launch at last year's Show in London, the successful Come on Board initiative will return in January 2009.

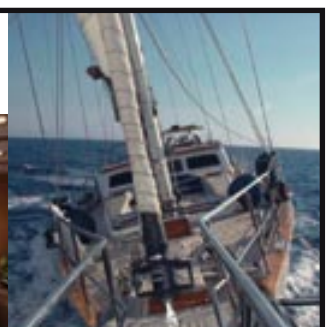
Come on Board is a scheme designed to enhance the overall visitor experience, and encourages people to interact more with exhibitors who are willing and eager to offer expert advice and introduce visitors to their Show offering.

All exhibitors taking part in the Come on Board scheme will visibly display the logo, indicating to visitors they can find out more about their products or climb aboard their boats at the Show.



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Séb Josse at work aboard BT

Heroes wearing lilac

The Vendée Globe, the round-the-world single-handed yacht race, sailed non-stop and without assistance, has produced acts of immense bravery in the last weeks. By Tom Rowland

There is no doubting the courage of Sébastien Josse, the competitor in the Vendée Globe, the round-the-world single-handed yacht race that is sailed non-stop and without assistance.

He was in third position, just 43 miles behind the race leader, battling mountainous seas and storm force winds of 55 knots in the Southern Ocean south of Australia, before having to withdraw from the race with rudder damage on December 29.

On one day, 17 December, there were three different leaders in less than 24 hours after the skipper of the lead boat for more than a week reported hitting a floating object and damaging his rudder system.

Then British competitor Mike Golding was knocked out of the race when his boat was dismasted and a major rescue operation was mounted to recover Josse's fellow French competitor, Yann Elies, after he broke his femur when his boat crashed into a giant wave while he was working on the bow of the boat.

But to British eyes what really puts Sébastien Josse streets ahead in the bravery stakes is his willingness to

wear a lilac-coloured sailing jacket and salopettes.

The supply of high quality protective clothing to teams in international sailing events is a competitive and highly organised process these days. One in which British-based companies feature prominently.



Séb Josse wears clothing specially commissioned from the UK company Musto. Like others supplying to race teams it argues that such an

environment creates a good test bed where fabrics and designs are tested in extreme conditions. Musto says that this year it is supplying to 70 per cent of the Vendée Globe and half of the Volvo Ocean Race competitors.

Sailing clothing has come a long way since the days of the traditional "oilskins", which may have been waterproof but were heavy, cumbersome and uncomfortable.

Musto is launching a range at the London International Boat Show made from an improved version of its popular HPX material. It is a three-layer Gore-tex® fabric with a "micro grid" backer attached. The benefits are that it is more rugged, more breathable, lighter and has superior waterproofing, the company says.

The company history spans 35 years. The sailing clothing industry in the UK has always been very strong. The world's three most successful marine clothing brands are all British: Gill, Musto and Henri Lloyd.

Today there is a garment for every type of sailing and boating, from thermal underwear that uses a kind of wick action to take moisture away from the

body, to full ocean-going gear in which you can sail round the world.

"Around 65 per cent of our sales are now overseas, North America being the largest export market followed closely by the European countries. More recently markets like Asia and Australia have opened up," according to Nick Gill, Chairman of Gill.

"The design process begins with a brainstorm session. We invite a panel of sailors, relevant to the type of product that is being discussed," said Gill.

"When the final products arrive in our warehouse they are subjected to the most thorough scrutiny, which in the case of an Ocean Jacket is a 120-point check list," he adds.

WIN THE CHALLENGE OF A LIFETIME

If you have been inspired by watching the world's top yachtsmen battle it out in the Volvo Ocean Race and Vendée Globe but thought you'd never be able to do it, think again. As an aspiring ocean racer you can turn your dreams into reality by competing in the only round the world yacht race open to everyone, regardless of previous sailing ability.

Win your chance to get onboard a stripped-down 68-foot racing yacht in one of the world's toughest challenges - the Clipper 09-10 Round the World Yacht Race.

As a Clipper Race crew member the Southern Ocean won't care if you had never set foot on a boat before you started your intensive pre-race training. You'll have to take on the same mountainous waves and ferocious storms as the pros. It's the challenge of a lifetime.

For your chance to win a place on the race enter the competition in the Daily Telegraph on Wednesday 7 January.



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THE CHALLENGE OF A LIFETIME

To the rescue

Winning entries in the RNLI Photographer of the Year competition revealed



The RNLI Photographer of the Year competition aims to document the rescue work of the lifesaving charity and RNLI volunteer lifeboat crewmembers and RNLI lifeguards have sent in their entries.

The overall winner and also winner of the “Adrenalin & Action” category is Hanna Nuuttila, 31, a volunteer crewmember based at New Quay lifeboat station in North Wales.

Hanna’s winning image, above, shows the 35-foot sailing yacht, Galasma, in force nine severe gale winds, high waves and poor visibility being rescued by the

lifeboat “Lilly and Vincent Anthony” from Pwllheli in September 2008.

Hanna was part of the crew on board New Quay’s all-weather lifeboat when it went to rescue of the yacht with five people on board at midday on 6 September 2008.

The yacht had been hit by a double failure of its electrics and engine.

Hanna’s lifeboat took the yacht under tow and made way towards Aberystwyth, but the severe weather conditions and wind direction meant the coxswain decided to tow the yacht toward Pwllheli.

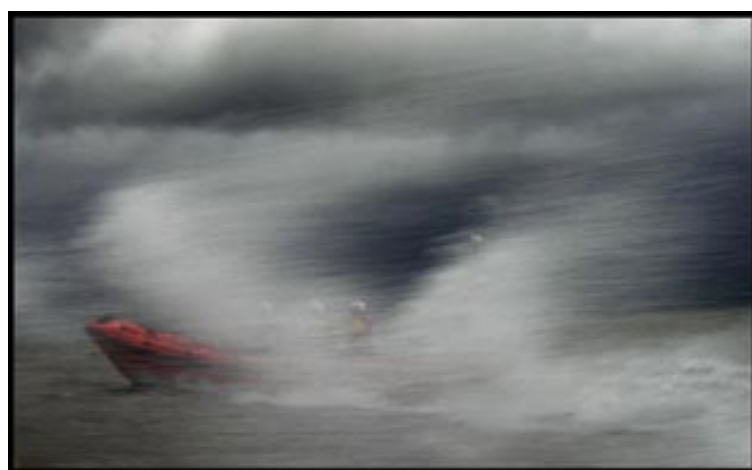
After six hours at sea, the Pwllheli lifeboat launched to take over the tow and to take the yacht into Pwllheli harbour where they arrived safely at 9.45pm that evening.

“It was a tremendous relief to see the lifeboat coming towards us, it was phenomenal,” said John Phillips from Kidderminster, skipper of Galasma, who had been delivering the yacht for the owner from Falmouth to Shell Island, near Barmouth, North West Wales.



“Once the lifeboat arrived, the adrenalin left me, as I knew we were in safe hands. We are all extremely grateful to the volunteer lifeboat crews and we’ll be inviting some of the crew from New Quay and Pwllheli to our annual RNLI fundraising dinner dance in Holyhead next August bank holiday as a thank you.”

“I had time to take the photograph once the other lifeboat arrived and took



over,” explained Hanna, a scuba diving instructor who has recently started her own diving, marine biology and underwater photography company, SeaMor, in New Quay.

Hanna is a member of the New Quay lifeboat crew and holds a commercial skipper’s license. She also studies the acoustic behavior of dolphins and porpoises in Cardigan Bay for Sea Watch Foundation and Countryside Council for Wales.

Prizes will be awarded and all the winning entries will be exhibited at the 2009 London Boat Show, giving visitors a snapshot into the training and rescue work of RNLI volunteer lifeboat crews.

Category 1: “Mean Machines” (above)

Paul Marsh, RNLI volunteer crewmember based at Minehead [Minehead, surely AB] lifeboat station in North Somerset, took the photograph.

Category 5: “Wild Life” (centre left)

Tom Wakenshaw, Lifeboat Operations Manager at Berwick-Upon-Tweed lifeboat station, Northumberland, took the photograph. The image shows Berwick-Upon-Tweed’s D Class inshore lifeboat “Howard and Mary Broadfield” with volunteer crewmembers after rescuing a dog from Tweed dock.

Boat Show Bonus

Suzuki Harbour

The Suzuki Indoor Harbour will enable Show visitors to see and inspect boats powered by Suzuki 4-stroke outboards in their natural element – on water. At over 1,000sqm, the unique stand will incorporate a large pool for displaying boats and engines afloat. With its fantastic 10 metre high backdrop, the huge pool, containing around 15,000 litres of water, will feature 14 sports boats, RIBs and fishing boats. A further nine boats will be displayed on the stand making a total of 24 boats from 11 different boat brands, giving visitors to the stand a wide variety to view both on water and on land.

Sailing for gold



Sweet Victory: left to right, Pippa Wilson, Sarah Webb and Sarah Ayton on the Olympic podium in Qingdao

Getty Images

Britain's Olympic sailors once again did the nation proud in the Olympic regatta in China. They dominated their opponents and brought home a treasure-chest full of medals. What is the secret of their success? Andrew Baker reports

Britain's Navy and merchant fleet no longer rule the waves as they did in the days when Victorian composers celebrated their might. But in the sporting and leisure market, the nation's maritime skills are still worthy of a lusty chorus or two. Britain builds great boats, and our sailors remain the equal of any on the planet.

Dame Ellen MacArthur has earned worldwide fame for her achievements, and her now much-diversified Offshore Challenges team based on the Isle of Wight continues to raise the bar for the integration of commercial and sporting interests.

But most recently it has been Britain's Olympic sailors who have done most to embellish the national maritime image.

Ian Percy and Andrew Simpson wrapped up the Olympic regatta with victory in

the Star Class off the coast of Qingdao in China, a popular victory for two long-serving and dedicated athletes.

Their old friend and sometime rival, Ben Ainslie, started Britain's rolling wave of success in Qingdao with victory in the Finn class, the first medal of the sailing competition, and the two big men in the Star won the last. In between the rest of the squad collected a treasury of medals, and while the Three Blondes in a Boat - Sarah Ayton, Sarah Webb and Pippa Wilson may have garnered the most publicity, they also exemplified the professional approach of their squad.

British sailors not only topped and tailed the regatta: they dominated the rest of it as well. Four golds, a silver and a bronze gave them twice as many medals, and twice as many golds, as their nearest rivals in the sailing competition, all the

more satisfactory because those rivals happen to be Australia.

Percy and Simpson were in silver medal position at the start of their double-points medal race. The daily weather lottery of Qingdao had thrown up gale-force gusts and torrential rain: had it not been for the heat and the humidity, it could have been a grey day off Portland Bill.

The two British Star sailors certainly seemed quite at home, surfing their heavy keelboat through the swell into second place at the second mark. They fell down the fleet to an eventual fifth place, but their decline coincided with an error by their main rivals which saw the Swedes finish tenth and last. The gold was safe.

"We looked at the weather and thought: 'Great'," Percy said afterwards. "There

has been no room for fun and games for us this week, no Olympic paraphernalia, no mucking around when other people have won medals. We have been full-on all week."

The same goes for the rest of the British sailing team. The medal-winners celebrated with a discreet beer or two, mindful of the need not to disturb those who were yet to complete still competing. That exemplifies the musketeer spirit of the British squad: all for one, and one for all. Then several beers for all.

"We got into the team house, shut the door behind us, and did a bit of partying," said Team GB sailing manager Stephen Park. "I think we deserved it."

Park was a wanted man in Qingdao: every other team principal wanted to know the secret of Britain's success,

and they would have been perfectly happy to torture it out of him. Luckily, he has a series of plausible but still elusive explanations.

"The secret is people," Park said. "Good people who are driven to win. You start with talented athletes, then put behind them a team of people to support and allow them to perform at their best. And you need a budget."

The budget is not enormous, but Park and his colleagues spend it with great care. There are boats to buy, and all the latest equipment. But any nation can buy the best boats. Fine-tuning the people aboard them is much harder.

As well as coaches, the crews are backed up by a team of what Maureen Lipman might have called "ologists": physiologists, psychologists, nutritionists and so on.

Diet and exercise are finely tuned to the requirements not only of the athlete but of the class in which they are sailing.

“Four golds, a silver and a bronze gave them twice as many medals, and twice as many golds, as their nearest rivals in the sailing competition, all the more satisfactory because those rivals happen to be Australia”

No doubt other nations are employing similar methods: there is not much you can teach Australia, China or the USA about sports science. But Britain's sailors have something that no amount of diet and exercise can bring you: experience, of the right kind.

The winning kind. Three of the British gold medal boats in Qingdao had previous gold medallists aboard. Simpson has been an understudy to both Ainslie and Percy, while Paul Goodison is sailing in the wake of Ainslie's gold in the Laser class.

This team carries with it weightless but invaluable cargo, and because they are such a close-knit bunch, working day to day out of the same equipment container, living in the same house, the gold-standard advice is disseminated to all. So the strong keep getting stronger. For the third time in a row, Great Britain is the most successful Olympic sailing nation.

And Park is determined that they should be even more successful when the 2012 regatta comes to the home of the RYA in Weymouth. “There are ten sailing events at the 2012 Games in Weymouth,” he said. “I am very confident that we will have 10 sailors capable of winning medals.”

The cards in the wining hand are already being shuffled: only last week Ayton, Webb and Wilson announced that they

would not be competing in the Yngling Class at Weymouth. But they are likely to pop up in other permutations.

It should also be remembered that Olympic sailing regulations state that only one vessel per nation can compete in each class: so there is a huge fleet of talented British sailors constantly snapping at the sterns of those established stars.

Even if some of the biggest names move on, Britain can still be assured of a confident showing in 2012: fact that reflects not just on the quality of the sailors, but the standards of the vast and thriving industry that supports them.

Sarah Ayton and Sarah Webb, double Olympic gold medallists in the Yngling class, will be discussing their future plans on the main stage at the London International Boat Show at 1.30pm on Friday Jan 9th.

Ben Ainslie, Finn class gold medallist



The good sailing school guide

What to look for and where to find it. By Tom Rowland

The highlight of the first sailing school course on board a yacht that I attended was being woken up at 2am on the second night by the instructor who was brawling on deck with one of my fellow crew members.

They had been knocking it back for hours, were both paralytic and it turned out the instructor had a drink problem.

Choosing a good sailing school is inevitably a bit of a lottery. The most brilliant instructor and gifted teacher

might not manage to scale the business properly, so that you find that the teaching on the second boat is inferior because the boss is not there.

But as with other educational establishments, the best sailing schools are run by gifted individuals who put the right people in charge when they are away and such disasters are never allowed to happen.

A Royal Yachting Association [RYA] accreditation is a must for the staff, but you should also check to see how

old the boats are, and what condition they are in, as some big names have a reputation for running leaky, clapped-out ones.

Here is a personal choice of three of the best. They all feature great boats, superb instructors and owners who really care.

Two are close together on the Kent coast just because I know that patch. It is a good place to learn with lots of sea lanes to cross, estuary gravel banks to avoid and soft muddy creeks to explore.

• The chance to get onboard a stripped down 68-foot racing yacht in one of the world's toughest challenges - the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race.

Clipper Round the World started training for its first global challenge in 1996 and now offers yachting and race training to all with a mix of RYA qualifications up to Yachtmaster level, plus more specialist race training for those who want to go in for the Challenge. The race itself is divided into seven legs, each priced at around £4,000.

www.clipper-training.com

• Chris Bordas is a senior ships' pilot on the Thames estuary and river Medway and the area examiner for ships' masters and pilots.

He also runs the Kent Sailing School, based in Ramsgate, with his wife Helen, offering RYA training courses including

Introduction to Sailing, Competent Crew, Day Skipper, Coastal Skipper, Yachtmaster and ICC. Brilliantly run by charming people.

www.kentsailingschool.com

• Learn2Sail brings you sail training whether you are taking your first step aboard or if you are already an accomplished sailor. It has tailor-made courses at each level to help you increase your knowledge and enjoyment of this totally absorbing sport.

It is a family-run business as well, so from your first contact you will be speaking to the very people who will be teaching you on your chosen course.

In addition to regular training courses around the coast of Kent they also offer winter training courses in the Algarve, Portugal.

www.learn2sail.com



Boat Show Bonus

Kid's Discovery Trail

Keep your kids entertained and active as you explore the London International Boat Show, with the downloadable World of Water Discovery Trail. The interactive map includes points of interest, a suggested route and quick quiz questions for inquisitive kids, along with information on The Green Blue initiative – the BMF and RYA's environmental initiative. This fantastic and helpful map will help you and your kids navigate the Show in a fun, entertaining and educational way!



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