

STAY SAFE IN HIGH WINDS

**JURY-RIG THE
COOLING
SYSTEM**

sailmag.com

SAFARI

THE JUBILEE

We Celebrate
150 Years of
America's Cup

24-Volt Systems

The Way of the Future?

Cruising Ireland

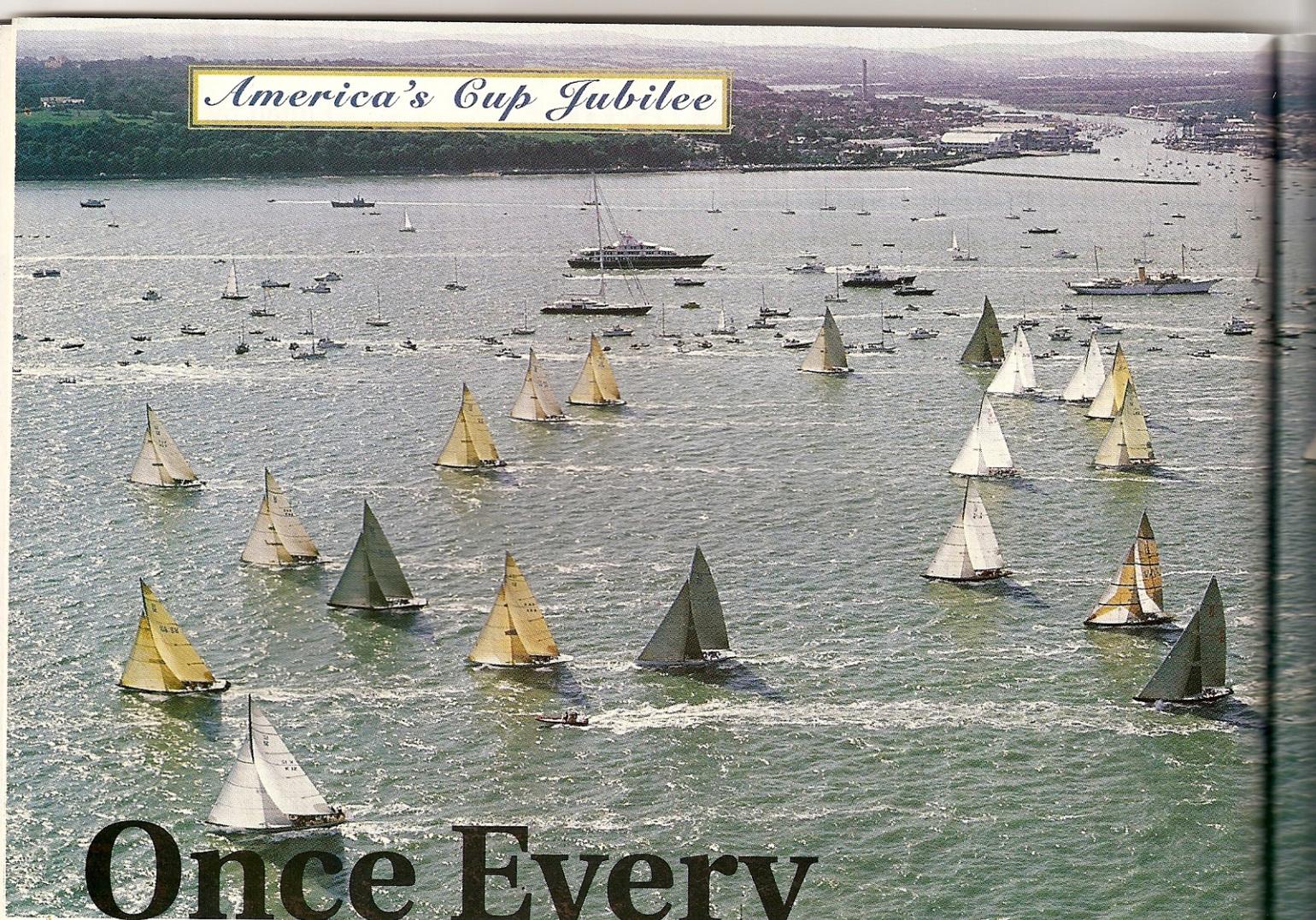
The Pubs and People
of the West Coast

November 2001

\$3.99 \$4.99 Canada



A PRIMEDIA PUBLICATION



America's Cup Jubilee

Once Every

150
Years

Jubilee might be putting it lightly.

The event—the week-long America's Cup Jubilee held last August in Cowes, England—could easily be called an epic. It combined 150 years of Cup lore—boats, people, racing, stories, lies, friendships, artifacts, pomp, circumstance—on the little Isle of Wight, where it all started

Story by Tim Jeffery; photographs by Onne Van Der Wal

Were it just one day's celebration, not seven, it would still have been worth waiting 150 years.

The race around England's Isle of Wight on August 21 was, to even the most hard-hearted observers, one of the most wonderful sights in sailing anyone could recall. The race commemorated the occasion when Commodore John Cox Stephens and his fellow syndicate members from the New York Yacht Club sailed their schooner, *America*, to England. They had challenged the cream of the British yachts to a race around the small island across the Solent from England's south coast. For the race the Royal Yacht Squadron put up a cup, a rather gaudy wine ewer made in 1851 as a stock item by royal jewelers Garrard & Son.

America not so much won the race, and the wager riding on it, as trounced the 14 other starters. One duly impressed observer was quoted in a contemporary account: "D'ye see that 'ere steamer?" he said, gazing out over the Solent. "I'm blessed if the Yankee don't beat her out of sight round the island!" George Schuyler, the last surviving owner of *America*, donated the ewer for perpetual competi-



tion—the oldest trophy in sport. It was, the *New York Herald* proclaimed, “a challenge to the world and the rest of mankind.”

History took its course. There can't be a sailor anywhere unable to recite at least part of it. How wonderful, then, that so much of it came to Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, for the 150th America's Cup Jubilee. Let's not brush off a century and a half too lightly; it's an awfully long time. The America's Cup predates the American Civil War and the internal combustion engine. The history of powered flight, from the Wright brothers to the first landing on the moon, is shorter.

The day at the Jubilee was the day of the round-the-island race. As with the original race, both mainland and island Hampshire were packed with thousands of spectators, from Lepe Point to Hurst Castle, from Culver Cliff to the Needles, from Fort Albert to Cowes Green. On board spectator yachts were sundry royals: the Aga Khan on his gas turbine *Shergar*; Den-

mark's Prince Henrik on the Royal Yacht *Dannebrog*; Monaco's Prince Albert on his splendidly restored Fife-designed 15-Meter, *Tuiga*; and Spain's King Juan Carlos, competing with his IMS 50-footer. Prince Philip, great-grandson of Queen Victoria (who witnessed the race in 1851) opened the regatta, and his daughter, the Princess Royal, closed it.

Perhaps foremost among the sailing royalty was Olin Stephens, whose designs dominated the Cup from 1937 to 1980.

One hundred fifty years after the race for the Hundred Guinea Cup—the progenitor of the America's Cup—around the Isle of Wight, the 12-Meter fleet heads east from the Royal Yacht Squadron's starting line off Cowes. More than 200 boats, plus hordes of spectator boats, participated in the reenactment. In 1851 it took John Cox Stephens's schooner, *America*, 10 hours, 35 minutes to complete the course. This year's winner, the all-carbon-fiber racer *Stealth*, sailed the course in fewer than 5 hours

The Royal Yacht Squadron, where the America's Cup saga began. Race operations for the Jubilee were masterminded from the platform, under the striped canopy



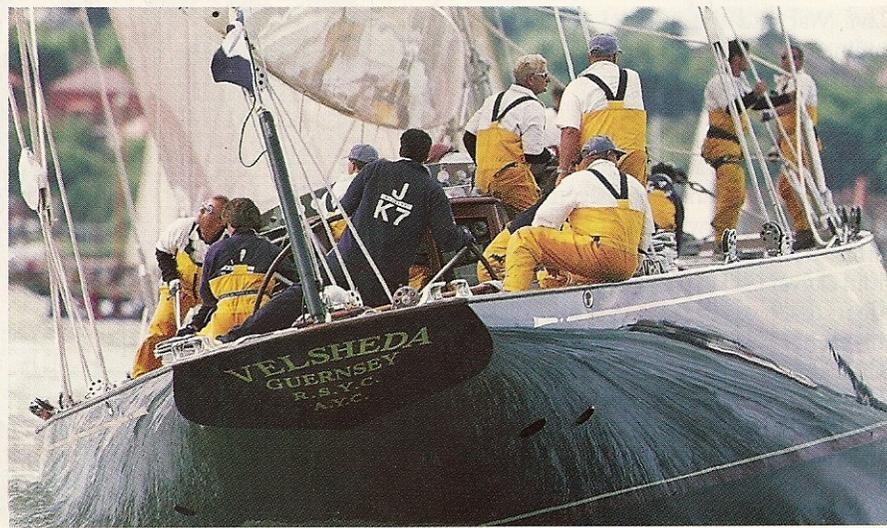


Stephens, 93, gave few concessions to his age while sailing aboard his famous 12-Meters, *Valiant*, *Intrepid*, and *Freedom*, and being reunited with *Dorada* and *Stormy Weather*, the two Transatlantic and Fastnet Race winners he designed.

The J Boats (left)—*Endeavour*, *Velsheda*, and *Shamrock V*—were like magnets, each with its own tender to shoo away over-eager spectators

You couldn't walk down Cowes's High Street without tripping over a sailing celebrity—Cup sailors then and now Russell Coutts, Dennis Conner, John Bertrand, Ted Hood, Halsey Herreshoff, Tom Whidden, Buddy Melges, Harold

History repeated itself when *Velsheda* (below), which lost a challenger series to *Endeavour* in 1934 and never sailed an America's Cup race, lost to *Endeavour*





West Cowes Marina hosted most of the 12-Meter fleet. The 36 Twelves represented a design timeline spanning from the 1909 *Magnolia* to New Zealand's fiberglass KZ 7, built in 1987

Cudmore, Brad Butterworth, Francesco de Angelis, Ken Read; syndicate heads Alan Bond, Tom Schnackenberg, Bill Koch; designers Ron Holland, Philippe Briand, German Frers, Doug Peterson; and J Class maven Elizabeth Meyer. The list went on. It was that kind of week. One of a kind.

J Class

Some yachts are achingly beautiful even standing still. The Js, with their 130-odd feet of overall length and long, graceful overhangs, possess that kind of beauty. Imagine the only three remaining boats of the 10 built between the wars—*Endeavour*, *Velsheda*, and *Shamrock V*—moored

***Shamrock V* was Sir Thomas Lipton's fifth and final challenger, ending his unsuccessful 30-year effort to return the Cup to England. Of the three surviving Js, *Shamrock* is 10 feet shorter than *Endeavour* and *Velsheda* and the only one built of wood**

off the Royal Yacht Squadron. Imagine them joined by Dennis O'Neill's "almost-a-J," the 23-Square-Meter *Cambria*. Then imagine all of them racing.

It was the first time in 37 years *Cambria* had raced in earnest and only the third time all three Js had joined battle proper after their various restorations and refits. Even in the 205-boat Jubilee fleet, they

stole the show. After years of decay in mudberths on the Medina and Hamble rivers, *Velsheda* and *Endeavour* were reborn in the 1980s. Ronald de Waal, a U.S.-based Dutch real estate developer, had SYS in Southampton, England, refit *Velsheda*, which never raced in the America's Cup. Elizabeth Meyer took Sir T.O.M. Sopwith's 1934 Cup challenger, *Endeav-*





Beach-side view: Spectators watch the round-the-island race from the shingle spit at Hurst Castle, near Lymington. Hundreds of spectator boats on the water, as well as crowds on both sides of the Solent, followed the racing

our, to the Royal Huisman Shipyard in Holland for her rebirth. *Endeavour's* new owner, Tyco chief executive Dennis Kozlowski, fielded a crew from his Volvo Ocean Race team.

Sir Thomas Lipton's fifth and final challenger from 1930, *Shamrock V*, was kept in better condition by Italian Piero Scanu. In 1986 *Shamrock* was bought by the Lipton Tea Company and donated to the Museum of Yachting in Newport, Rhode Island. She was later sold to Brazilian telecom billionaire Marcos de Maeres.

12-Meters

Even in such superlative company 12-Meters still look good; the way their sailplans crowd the hull and the boats push through the water is eye-catching. It was appropriate that the 12-Meters, the Cup's longest running class (1958–87), had the biggest fleet in the Jubilee. Thirty-six boats were divided into grand-prix, modern, and classic divisions; the grand-prix boats were holding their world championship, won by Ernesto Bertarelli and his Alinghi Swiss America's Cup team, led

by Team New Zealand defectors Russell Coutts and Brad Butterworth, on *South Australia*.

Skipper Coutts had a week of practice and polish before the event. The boat's wings were thinned, her mast was changed, and new sails were put on board, but *South Australia*, designed by Ben Lexcen as a near-sistership to *Australia II*, was pretty much the same as when she was Sir James Hardy's defense candidate back in 1987. This meant she was shorter and lighter than the last batch of Fremantle boats, which suited the conditions on the Solent just so.

Coutts has never raced a 12-Meter in the Cup, but his right-hand man Butterworth was Chris Dickson's tactician in New Zealand's first challenge in Fremantle (1987). The boat for that Michael Fay bid, KZ 7, raced in Cowes by Cameron Appleton and the current Team New Zealand squad, was the Jubilee runner-up. It was Fay's surprise big-boat challenge of 1988 that ended the 12-Meter's run as a Cup class. Not one has been built since. But this is not a moribund class. It predated the Cup by some 50 years, and like other meter-boat classes, has plenty of life left.

Launched in 1928 in Boston, Massachusetts, *Onawa* is one of six 12-Meters designed by Starling Burgess and built for members of the New York Yacht Club. Today she sails under her original name after having been named *Horizons* and *Lithuanica* in previous ownerships

