



THE 31'
BERTRAM NAUTEC TM
Special
WHITE TORNADO

THE RACING ERA

THE REDISCOVERY

THE RESTORATION



THE 31'

BERTRAM NAUTEC ^N
Special

WHITE TORNADO



THE RACING ERA



THE REDISCOVERY

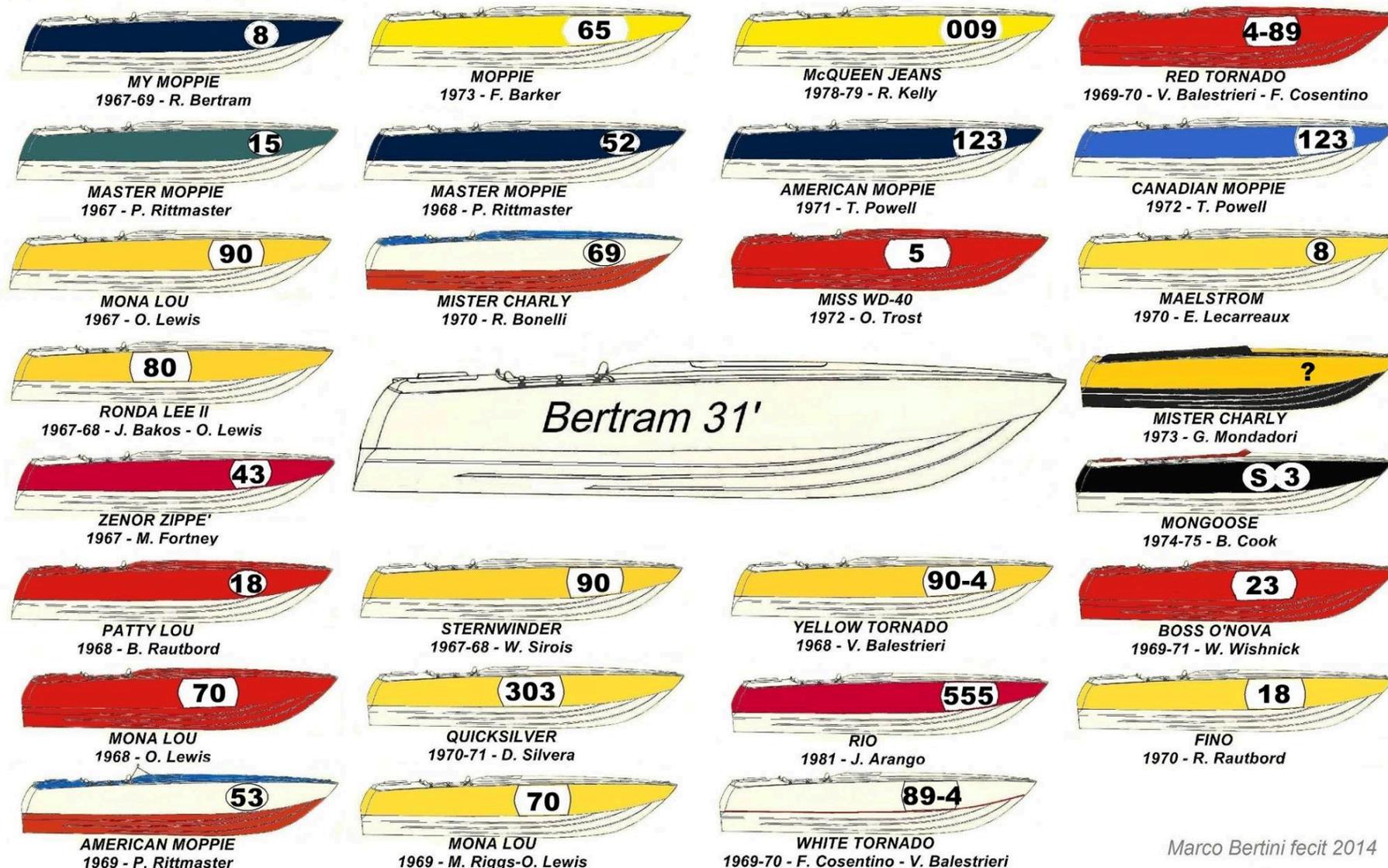


THE RESTORATION

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THE BERTRAM 31' – THE RACING VERSIONS - 1967-1981



Marco Bertini fecit 2014

Bertram Yachts built 13 Bertam 31's, developed in 27 liveries that raced all over the world from 1967 to 1981

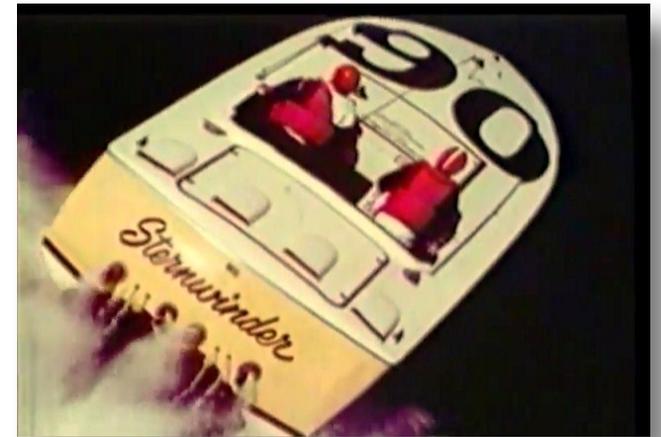
The most important 31's



"Mister Charly" – Ronny Bonelli - 1970



The first: "My Moppie" – Dick Bertram



"Sternwinder" – Bill Sirois – 1967-68



"Maelstrom" - Ed Lecarreux - 1970



"Boss O' Nova" – Bill Wishnick – 1969-71



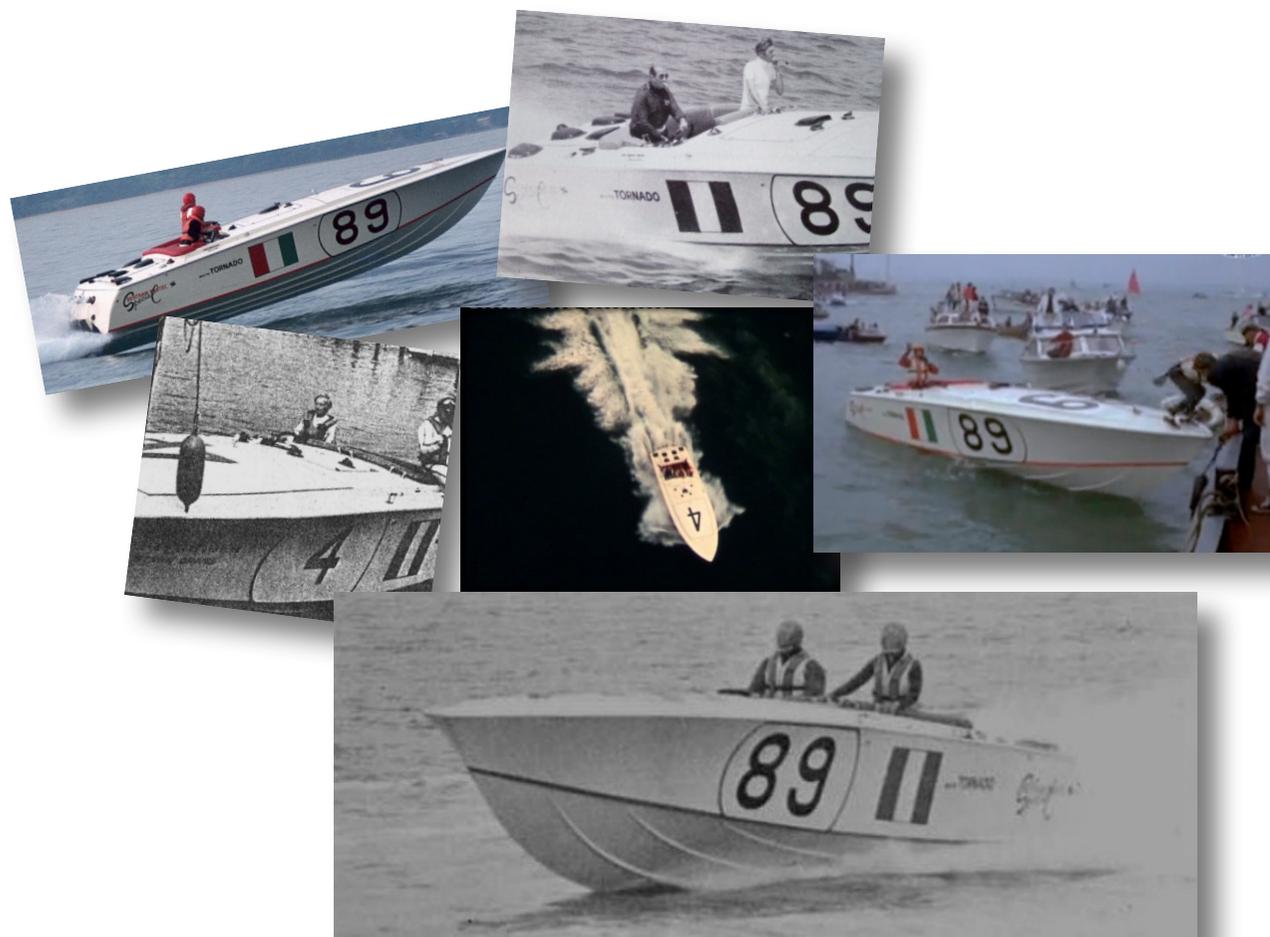
"Quicksilver" – Doug Silvera - 1970

and the ...



...“WHITE TORNADO” – Cosentino-Balestrieri – 1969-70

The racing days...



The Tornado Racing Team



In 1969, Vincenzo Balestrieri and Francesco Cosentino formed the Tornado Racing Team in preparation for competing during the racing season.

They had several boats at their disposal for this mission, including the two new Bertram 31's, just purchased, which were identical in every respect, just

like the pair of Mercruiser 496 motors coupled to the related stern drives. The two Bertrams differed only in their livery, which was red for the "Red Tornado", #4 for Balestrieri, and white for the "White Tornado", #89 for Cosentino.

The other boats at the team's disposal were a Donzi-Magnum 28', a Delta 36' and a pair of SAI 28's made of aluminum. Veteran Attilio Petroni and Nicola Chiatante also joined the team.

From the very first race, the Naples Trophy, it was clear that there were three main contenders – Balestrieri, Cosentino and Don Aronow, an American who was raring to go with his brand new boat, the Cary 32' "The Cigarette", which was carrying the same motors as the two Italians. Cosentino defeated Aronow in Naples, but the American went on to win the next three races - Viareggio, Les Embiez and Cowes – where the Italian placed third once and second twice, thus becoming number two in the world.

After his victory in the first European race, England's Wills Trophy, Balestrieri achieved other victories towards the Italian championship in Roseto, Santa Margherita and Imperia, becoming the first Champion of Italy.

In 1970 the team acquired two of the three Cary 32'ers which had been driven by Aronow in the United States and Europe in his victorious season of 1969. The twin boats were both named "Black Tornado" and could be distinguished only by their racing numbers: #4 for Balestrieri, #89 for Cosentino.

Balestrieri and Cosentino also had the two Bertram 31's from the first year at their disposal, but they exchanged them: Cosentino now had the "Red Tornado" and Balestrieri had the "White Tornado". Cosentino used the Bertram often,

preferring it to the Cary. He used it to win the first race of the year, off Capetown, while Balestrieri won the first race in Europe, the Wills Trophy, and then Naples, Viareggio and the Miami-Nassau, obtaining his second World Offshore Championship. Thanks to placing second in Naples, Roseto, Viareggio and Cowes, Cosentino finished third behind an Englishman, Sopwith, who had been challenging the two Italians for the crown, down to the very last race. Cosentino won the Italian Title. The Tornado Racing Team fielded other drivers in several races that season, such as newcomer Ronny Bonelli with "Mister Charly", a Bertram 31', ex Rittmaster, Chiatante as usual in the aluminum 28', Walter Pasquini in the "Blue Tornado" Donzi-Magnum 28', which been Balestrieri's the year before, and Captain Petroni, who raced, with Mel Riggs, in the Hennessy GP off of Long Beach in the new cat designed and built by Ron Jones, the "Navalcat". All of the team's boats had MerCruiser motors except for Chiatante's, which had BPMs.

In 1971 the team's staff shrank in numbers as Cosentino, Petroni and Bonelli moved on to form other independent teams as Balestrieri himself, even though he was maintaining his TRT by himself, joined the Cigarette racing Team which Don Aronow had formed in the meantime as he established his new Cigarette boatyard.

The two Bertrams, the White Tornado and the Red Tornado, were abandoned at that point, being considered less competitive than the new Cigarettes.



The two Bertram 31's, Red Tornado and White Tornado, driven by Balestrieri and Cosentino during the Cowes-Torquay-Cowes race in 1969

The driver in 1969 - Francesco Cosentino



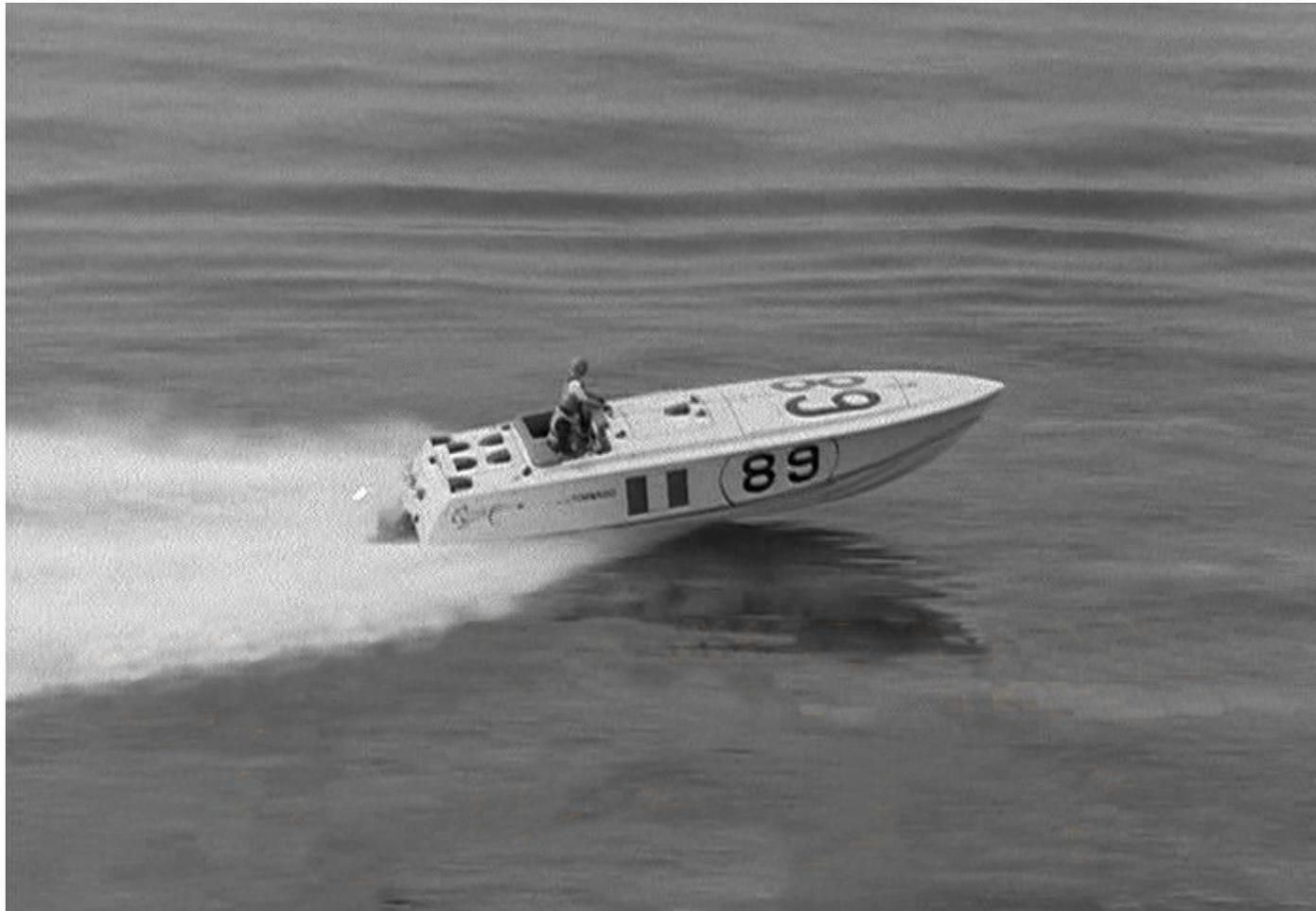
As one of the most significant Italian champions in international offshore, Francesco Cosentino definitely played an important role. Not only because he won the 1978 world title at Mar del Plata, beating a hardened group of competitors including the very best in the world, and the European Championship that same year, 1978, and the two Italian Championships in 1970 and 1978, but also because his successes never resulted from luck or good fortune, but instead because he stood out from his colleagues for his sportsmanship, navigational skills, tenacity and desire to experiment with new directions, like the carene cat.

His first race, as for nearly every Italian driver, was the Viareggio-Bastia-Viareggio, for him it was in 1963, with a 7.80 meter motor yacht by Italcraft. His job, as Secretary of the Chamber of Deputies for the Italian Republic, prevented him from dedicating much time to this sport, to which he was immediately drawn. He returned to racing in 1967, and he did so alongside Balestrieri in his 36' designed by Levi. Due to the unreliability of the Daytona motors, however, the two earned the less-than-admirable record of 6 consecutive withdrawals.

In 1969 he, together with Balestrieri, formed the Tornado Racing Team, and while driving the new Bertram "White Tornado" he won two victories in Naples, where he defeated an incredulous Aronow, thanks to Cosentino's navigational skills, and with another [sic?] placings he finished second behind the driver-boatbuilder.

In 1970 at the helm of one of Aronow's Cary 32's from the year before and the Bertram 31' Balestrieri had driven in 1969, he had one win and additional placings that earned him third place in the world championship and the Italian Title. Then, in 1971, he left the Tornado Racing Team to spend 5 years experimenting with the cats being built in Italy, and with the first one of these cats he won a historic victory in Bellaria in 1971. He came back to monohulls in 1977, with his new Alitalia-Cigahotels team, on board the new CUV 38' designed by Don Shead and made of aluminum, and after a memorable duel with the best drivers in the world and, most importantly, against the seas of Mar del Plata, won the 1978 world championship. Cosentino ran his last race in Venice during the 1979 Worlds.

WHITE TORNADO – THE RACING YEARS 1969



“WILLS INTERNATIONAL TROPHY” – June 14th – Hamble(UK) – 160 n.m. – World Championship - 1st Balestrieri (Red Tornado) 69.5 knots – 2nd Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado) 67.6 knots



The race started at 10:00 in the Canale del Solent, and Balestrieri and Cosentino, in that order, with the *Red Tornado* and the *White Tornado*, took the lead ahead of all the other competitors. On calm waters, the two Italian drivers covered the entire route in a flash: 2h 38'18" for Balestrieri, who won with a new world record - an average speed of 111.818 km/h. Cosentino was just a few seconds behind, a half hour ahead of Englishman Beard on his *Volare II* cat, the class OP II which placed third. The *Surfury* and the *Delta* of the two Gardners were forced to withdraw.









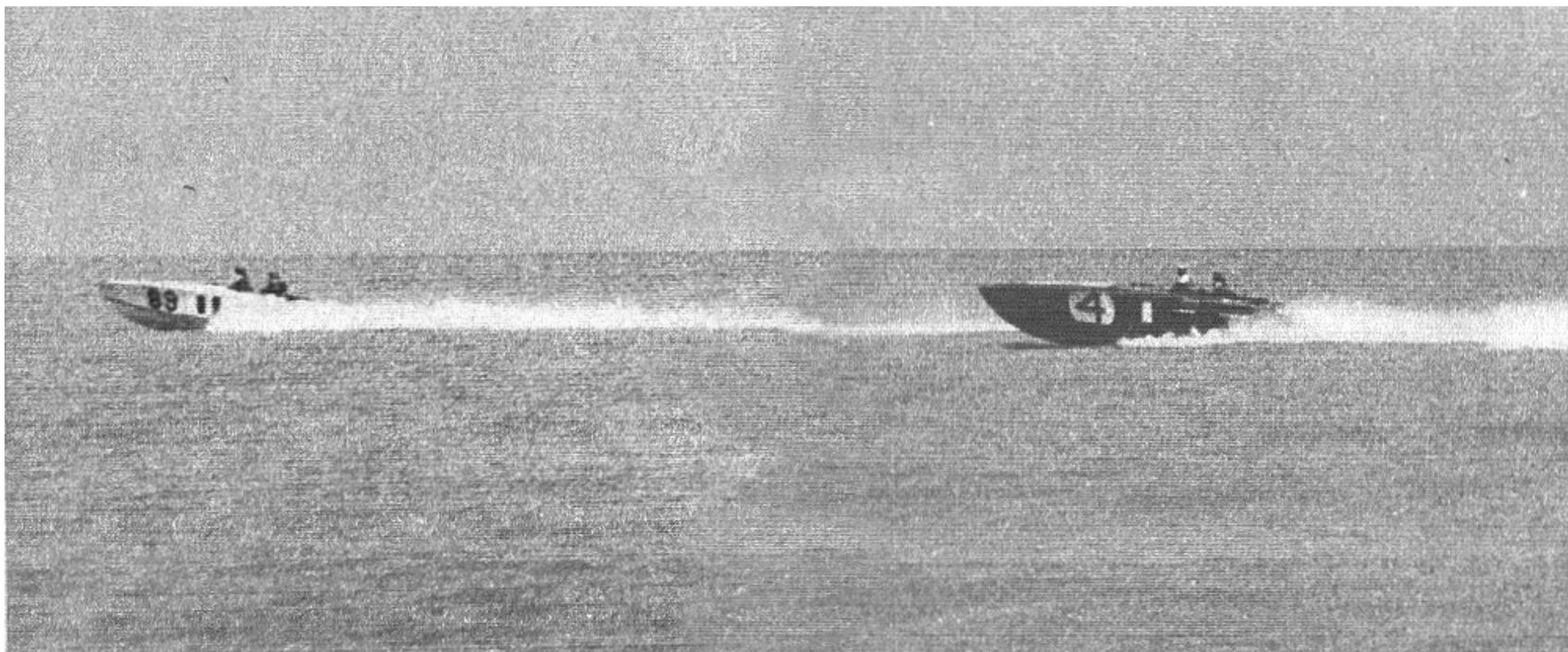
“TROFEO NAPOLI” – June 29th – Naples (ITA) – 166 n.m. – World Championship – 1st Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado) – 46.46 knots – 2nd Aronow-House (The Cigarette)



Three contenders for the win in Naples: two drivers from the Tornado Racing Team, Balestrieri and Cosentino in their Bertram 31's, joined by Don Aronow, determined to win his second world title in one of his Cary 32's. The three boats had the same kinds of motors and transmissions, so the crucial difference would boil down to hulls and navigational skills. Balestrieri dropped out of the race almost immediately due to a problem with the trims. Aronow went very fast, but towards the end of the race Cosentino managed to chart a better route and, without the American even realizing he was being passed, went on to win with a twelve-minute lead. When Aronow arrived at the wharf, he found Cosentino already celebrating and protested, claiming that the Italian had skipped a check point. Cosentino calmly explained where he had passed Aronow without begin noticed, and the polemics ended there. This was Cosentino's first victory in an offshore race.

“ROSA D’ORO TROPHY” (1) – July 11th - Makarska YUG – 180 n.m. – World Championship – 1st Balestrieri-Pruett (Red Tornado) 45 knots – 2nd Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado)

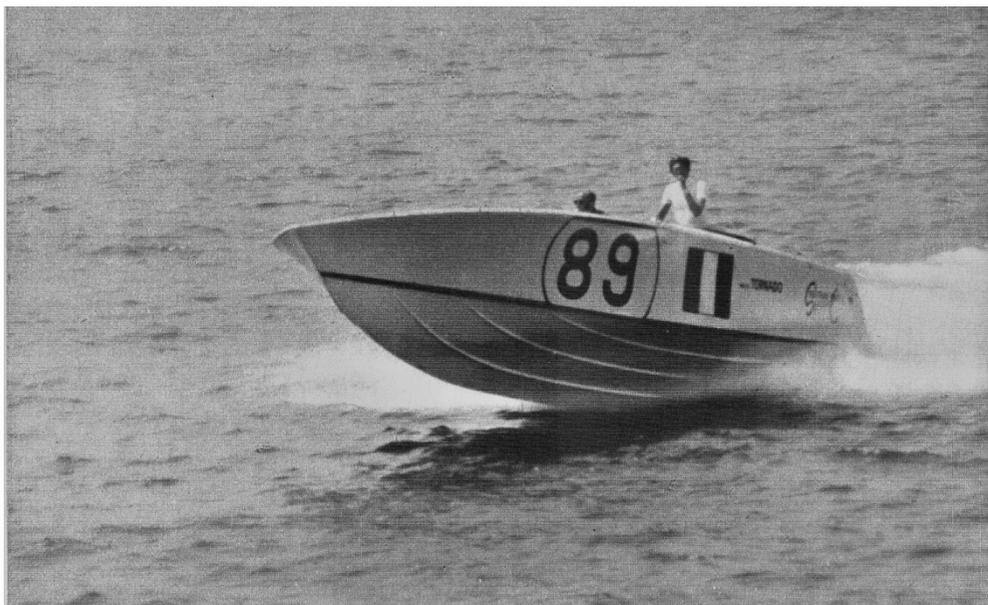
“ROSA D’ORO TROPHY” (2) – July 12th – Roseto ITA – Italian Championship – 1st Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado) – 2nd Balestrieri-Pruett (Red Tornado)



In the two Adriatic races for the Rosa d’Oro Trophy, between Roseto, in Italy, and Makarska, in Yugoslavia, the two Bertrams of the Tornado team had no challengers, since Aronow opted to take part in a race being held at the same time in the USA. The two teammates agreed to win one race each. Balestrieri won the first race from Roseto to Makarska valida for the World Championship and Cosentino the second, the day after, returning from the Slavic city for the Italian Championship.

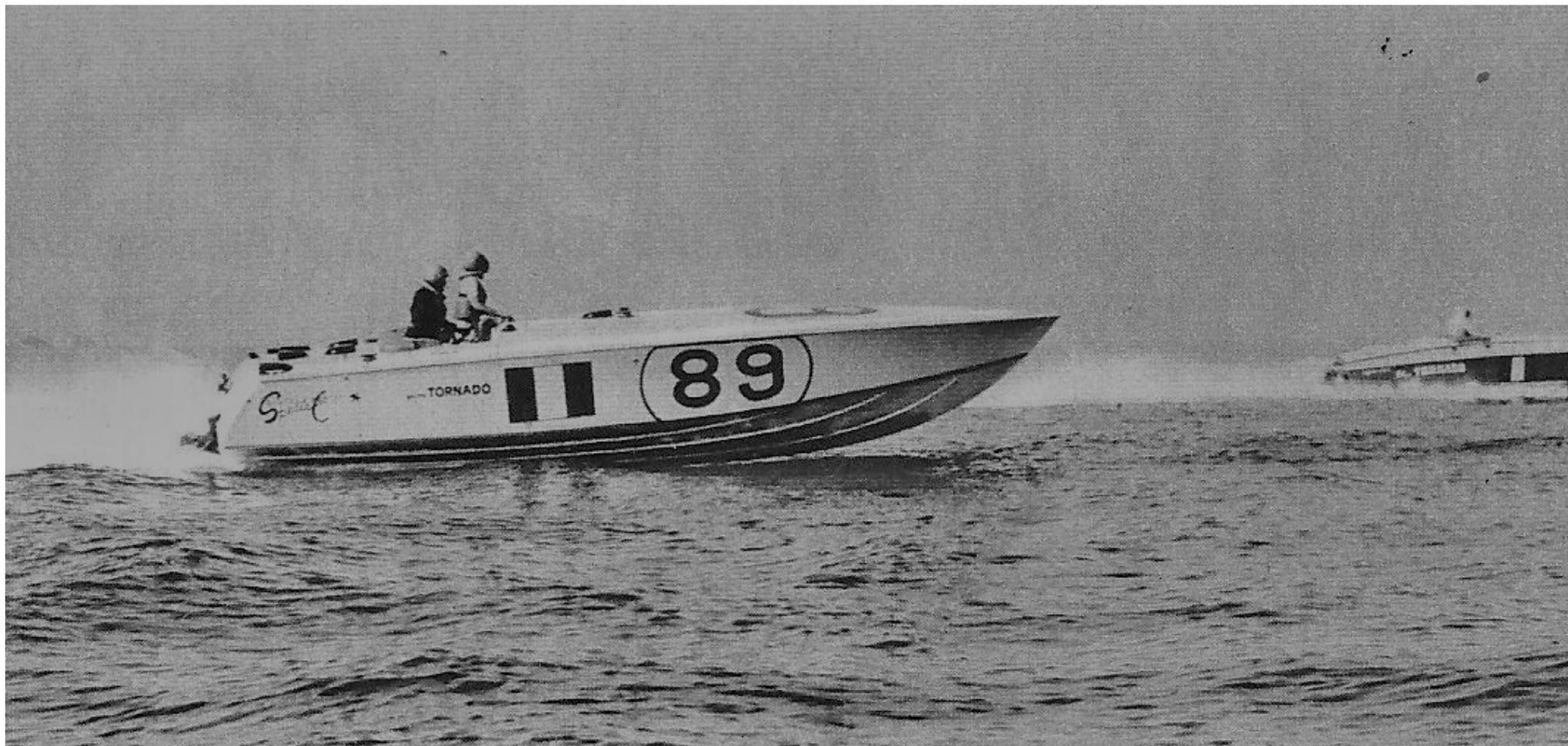


VIAREGGIO - BASTIA – VIAREGGIO – July 20th - Viareggio ITA – 185 n.m. – World Championship – 1st Aronow-House (The Cigarette) 64.5 knots – 2nd Balestrieri-Guidi (Blue Tornado) – 3rd Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado)



The Viareggio race found the same three who had contended at Naples vying for victory – Balestrieri chose the little *Blue Tornado*, a Donzi-Magnum 28', which was faster on calm seas, Cosentino was in the *White Tornado* Bertram 31', and Aronow had his Cary 32'. The first part of the race, along the coast, found Balestrieri in the lead, as expected. Then, in the stretch towards Bastia, Balestrieri ended up taking a slightly wider route due to a compass malfunction, while Aronow, perhaps to keep from repeating the errors from Naples, was having himself patrolled by air... as usual, Cosentino took the best route and gained back a couple of minutes. Aronow had a 5-minute lead ahead of Balestrieri, plus a couple seconds more over Cosentino. The return route was simpler, consisting of obligatory passages between the islands of Capraia and Gorgona up to Viareggio, as the trio held the same positions.

**“DAUPHIN D`OR” – August 3rd – Les Embiez FRA – 172 n.m. – World Championship – 1st Aronow-House (The Cigarette)
70.7 knots – 2nd Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado) 69.3 knots**



It was the same story at the "Dauphin D'Or" in France. Another race on calm seas that followed a route initially involving a more complicated stretch between islets and promontories in the Tolone area, followed by a shot over to Montecarlo and back without ever losing sight of the coast. Aronow took charge from the start, also because Balestrieri, on the shorter *Blue Tornado 28'*, was forced to withdraw due to problems with the wheelhouse. Cosentino had no hopes for challenging the American and could only finish second, even though he was only four minutes behind at the end of a 172 mile race. In the photo above, Cosentino's *White Tornado* is trailing Balestrieri's *Blue Tornado* at the beginning of the race.

COWES - TORQUAY – COWES – August 30th - Cowes UK – 204 n.m. – World Championship – 1st Aronow-House-Curtis (The Cigarette) 66 knots – 2nd Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado) 63 knots



The song remained the same at Cowes, as the local papers coined the term “The Aronow Express” the day after his victory. Another race on calm seas throughout the entire race, which was unusual for the waters of Manica. The first part of the race around the Isle of Wight and in Solent found the new *Miss Enfield* in the lead, a 33’ aluminum hull designed and driven by Shead. Aronow followed close behind the Englishman along with Cosentino, while Balestrieri was already out of the race due to problems with his stern drives. By taking the route towards Lyme Bay and Torquay, Aronow closed the gap and passed Shead, who was soon forced to abandon the race. Cosentino kept following Aronow, hoping the American might experience navigational or mechanical problems. But Aronow had Clive Curtis on board, an expert in these waters, and kept running like an uncatchable train, going on to win 12 minutes ahead of Cosentino, who was instead turned out to be the one to complain of mechanical troubles in the final part of the race.







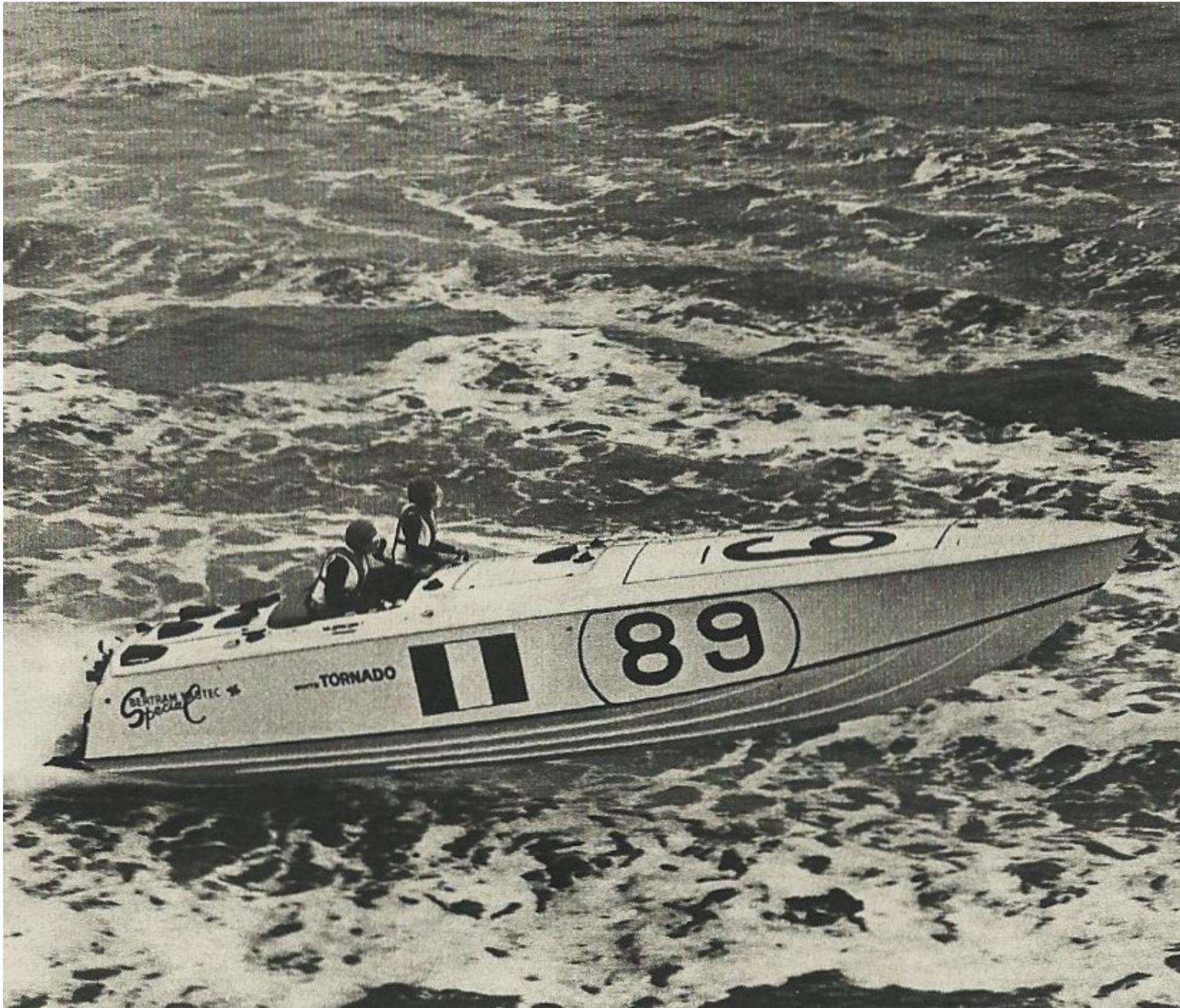
Initial stages of the race with the two Englishmen, Tommy Sopwith in T2 and Don Shead in “Miss Enfield”, in the lead, with the two Bertrams of the Italians, Balestrieri and Cosentino, following close behind.











**LES TROPHEE MOTONAUTIQUE DE DEAUVILLE – September 13th - Deauville FRA – World Championship –
1st Sopwith (Miss Enfield) – Withdrawn: Cosentino-Vandenburg (White Tornado)**



The final European race, the Deauville Trophy, on the coast opposite from Manica, with Cosentino in the White Tornado and Tommy Sopwith in the Miss Enfield as the only contenders, as both Balestrieri and Aronow had decided not to participate. The duel ended early, though, because Cosentino was forced back to port shortly after the start due to a... terrible toothache. Sopwith was unchallenged and won with ease.



“Francesco, you didn’t get me this time!” an invigorated Aronow seems to be saying to an exhausted Cosentino shortly after the finish at the ever-challenging Cowes-Torquay-Cowes, and the American was entitled to say so after a difficult competitive season in which the European theater played center stage as the two drivers battled it out for the prestigious Sam Griffith Trophy. Aronow with his new Cary 32’ prevailed in three of the five races he took part in, while Cosentino won one out of six. Head to head since the first round in Naples, Aronow always managed to prevail, while also collecting other victories and important points in the races back home, against a more difficult field of competitors. Cosentino was able to exploit the full potential of his Bertram 31’ *White Tornado*, always placing among the top three in every race he ran, except for the final race in France, which he had to drop out of for health reasons. Cosentino’s only regret was that he never raced in the American races that counted towards the world championship. There were seven of these races where Cosentino was not present, yet Aronow was. Herein lies the secret to victory and the cause of defeat.

1969 World Championship: 1st Don Aronow (USA - Cary) 60 pts – 2nd Francesco Cosentino (ITA - Bertram) 37 pts – 3rd Vincenzo Balestrieri (ITA – Bertram + Magnum) 28 pts - 4th Peter Rittmaster (USA - Bertram) 23 pts – 5th Bill Wishnick (USA- Bertram) 21 pts

The 1970 driver Vincenzo Balestrieri



Two world titles, one European title, two Italian titles, 27 victories during a thirteen-year career... This might suffice as a summary description of one of the icons of offshore history, but there are also thousands of other facts, some more positive and others a bit negative, that make Vincenzo Balestrieri-Cosimelli one of a kind.

Law school graduate and famous businessman in the construction industry and with other businesses handed down from his father, sports occupied a good part of Balestrieri's time and energy. With his top-level background in sports: boxing, soccer, basketball, judo and cars, already a gold medalist in track and field in 1940 at the age of 14, Vincenzo Balestrieri ended up in offshore competitions by chance. The first one to detect his champion's temperament was Picchiotti, engineer and owner of the Pichiotti shipyards in Viareggio, who "forced" him to sign up in the first edition of the Viareggio-Bastia-Viareggio in 1962, exploiting Balestrieri's enduring and instinctive passion for the sea and yachting. Balestrieri already stood out, both before and during the race. The morning before this first edition of the race, as it happened, the seas were pretty rough and several drivers were doubting whether they were up for it. Franz Furrer, the president of Club Nautico Versilia at the time and founder of the race, was discussing, with Viareggio Port's Harbor Captain, whether or not the race should be held. Balestrieri showed up at one point, navigation charts in hand, a complete stranger to Furrer, asking him why they had not yet decided to move the boats into the starting area. Furrer explained how some of the drivers were concerned about the sea conditions, to which Balestrieri curtly responded: "What sea conditions? Anyone who does not want to race should just stay on the docks, I want to race!" Furrer turned to the Port's Harbor Captain, who confirmed that since the boats had their navigation certificates, anyone who wanted could take to the sea. Furrer decided to hold the race, since there was at least one competitor was ready and willing. Nine of them started the race while others remained in port, but the race had been saved.

This first race of Balestrieri's ended with an act of sportsmanship and chivalry. These two facets would remain this driver's most important traits throughout his career - determination and sportsmanship. He abandoned this competition, in fact, in order to rescue another competitor's boat, which was about to sink after being damaged, using his large 55' Super Versilia "Cohete" with its onboard radar.

He drove 18 boats, 16 of which he owned, and eight different makes: Picchiotti, Navaltecnica, Delta, Magnum, Bertram, Cary, Cigarette and Abbate, between 1962 and 1975, 7 consecutive years during which he was involved on every continent with races on the world championship calendar. There have been champions in the history of Offshore who had as many wins on every sea in the world, but none of them did so with the persistence, commitment and determination of driver Vincenzo Balestrieri.

WHITE TORNADO – THE 1970 RACING YEAR

**HENNESSY GRAND PRIX - July 15th – Pt. Pleasant (USA) – 171.3 n.m. – World Championship – 1st Magoon (Andrea)
47.1 knots – 2nd Klein (Whiplash) – 3rd Rautbord (Fino) – 4th Balestrieri - Stuteville (White Tornado) 37.3 knots**



This is the only race that saw the *White Tornado* in the water, driven by Balestrieri this time, who put his # 4 on the boat. Part of the lead group during the initial stages of the race, Balestrieri was later forced to slow down because of a trim, while a number of other boats were disqualified from the race because one of the checkpoints failed to record their passage. Magoon won with his Cary 32' with 4 outboards, a class II OP which was nearly identical to that of second-place Klein.



THE RECOVERY AND RESTORATION OF THE BOAT

HOW IT WAS FOUND BY CADILLAC McDANIEL IN 2011



Hidden among the vegetation...

the previous owners had widened the

distance between the stern drives.





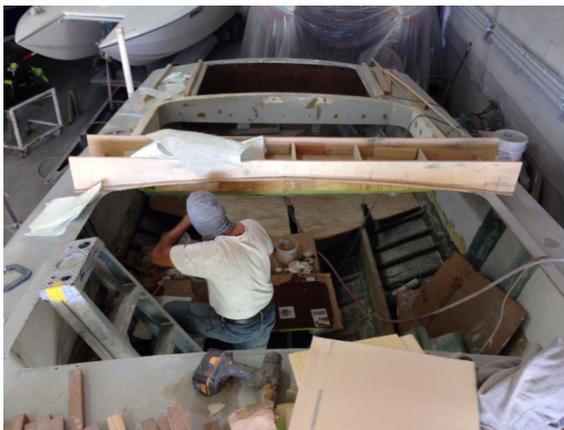
The rusty engine blocks positioned next to each other instead of staggered, the usual racing configuration.



The cockpit, almost completely destroyed, and a view inside of the bow.



Michael Peters bought the boat from Cadillac McDaniel and replaced the rotten crossbeams and the backboard on his evenings and weekends. The current owner purchased the boat and brought it to Guardado Marine in Opa Locka.



Restoring the boat at Guardado Marine, Opa Locka



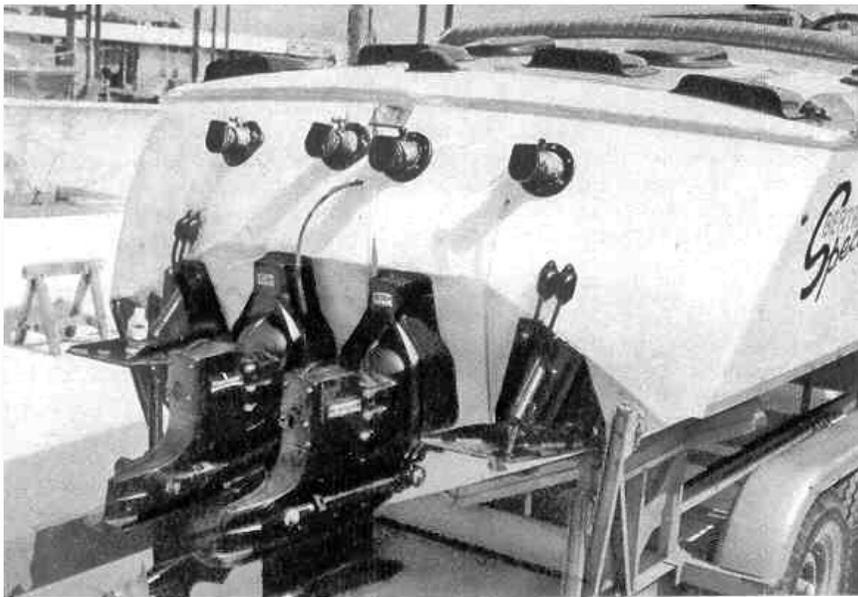


Chris Dilling reproducing the original graphics



The Guardado Marine crew

The fitting out begins at TNT



1969

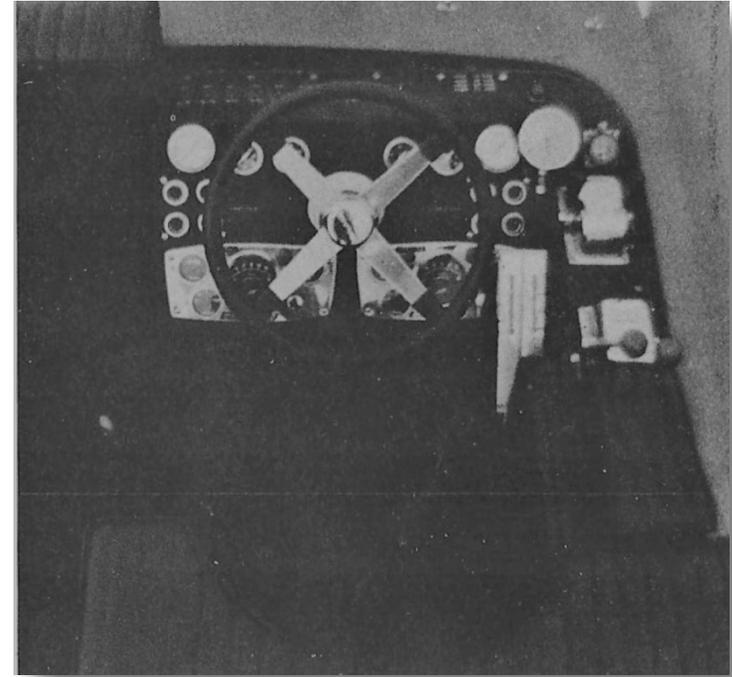
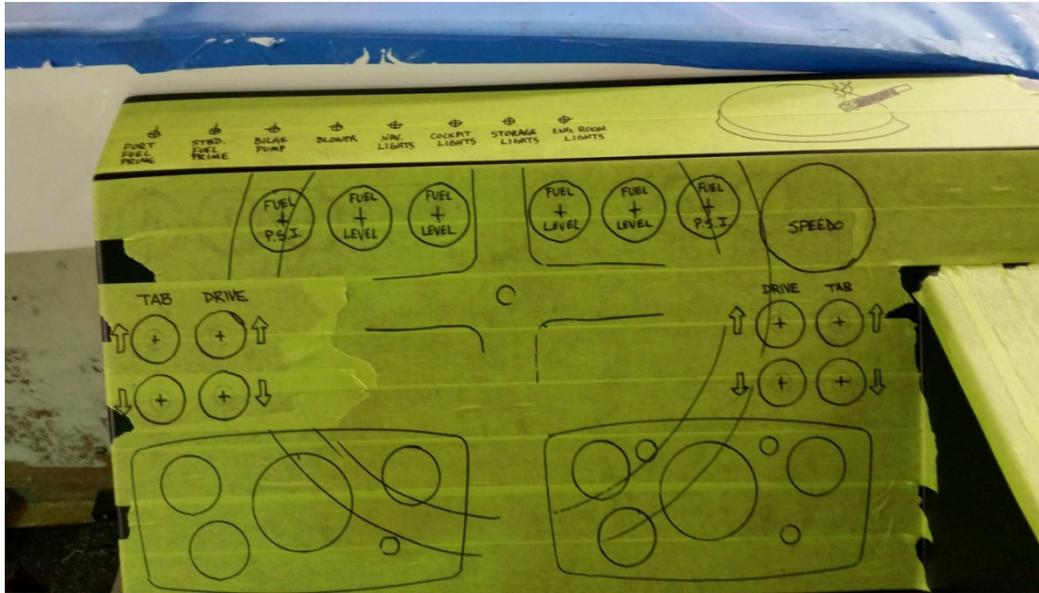


2015



The navigation system is removable

Rebuilding the original console



Finding or building the original pieces



The original Heuer "Montecarlo" chronometer...

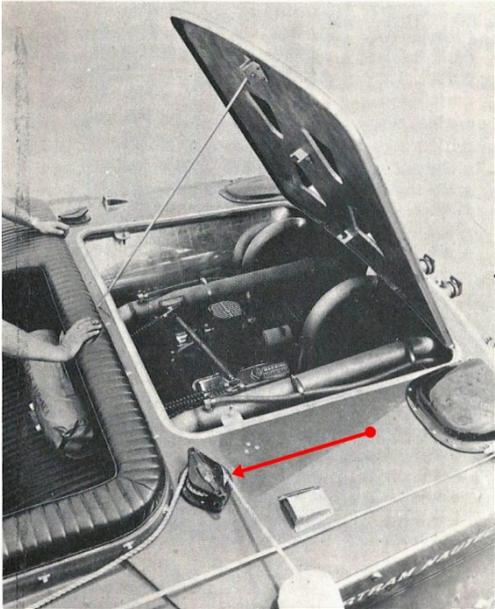


..., the original MerCruiser instrument panel...

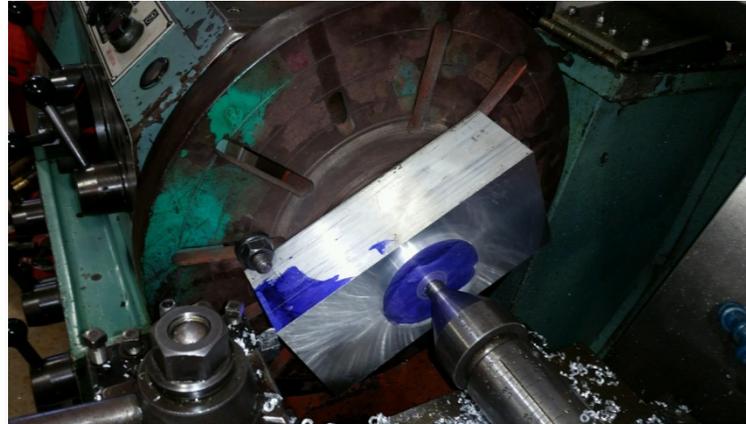
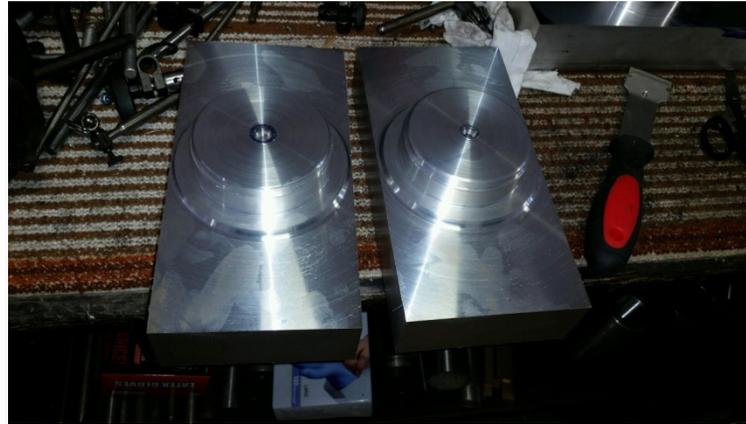


... and the air intakes...





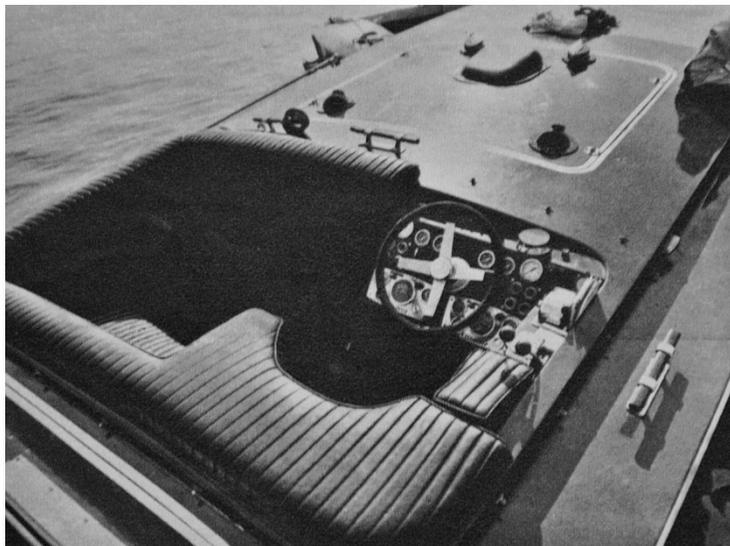
... the fuel tank intakes and related caps ...



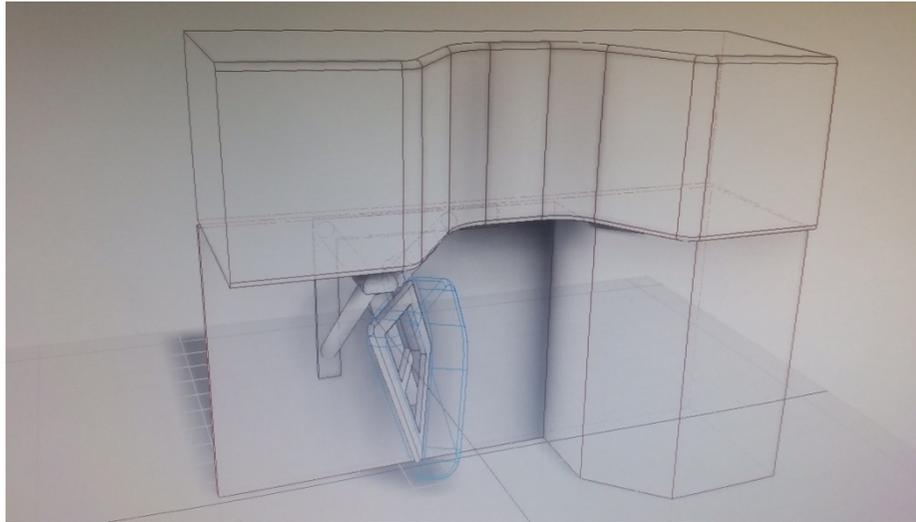
Parts manufactured by TNT



From the details of the WT's twin boat, the "Red Tornado", the wheel, console, levers and backrests.



The original cushions were recreated by Miami Prestige Interiors, Hialeah, FL



THE DAY OF THE LAUNCH





The Guardado Marine crews and TnT with Michael Peters, John Tomlinson (center) and Sammy James (rear left).

10-28-2016 11:31 am, the launch!







A cheery crew, from left: Michael Peters (famous boat designer), John Cadillac McDaniel (yacht broker), John Tomlinson (famous t-man) and Sammy James (one of the best offshore t-men ever and builder of those racing Bertram 31's).

Morgan, one of Richard "Dick" Bertram's children, stands by while the White Tornado's engines are fired up.



THE WHITE TORNADO POWERBOAT





BERTRAM NAUTEC N.
Special

WHITE TORNADO



89

WHITE TORNADO

MYCO



89



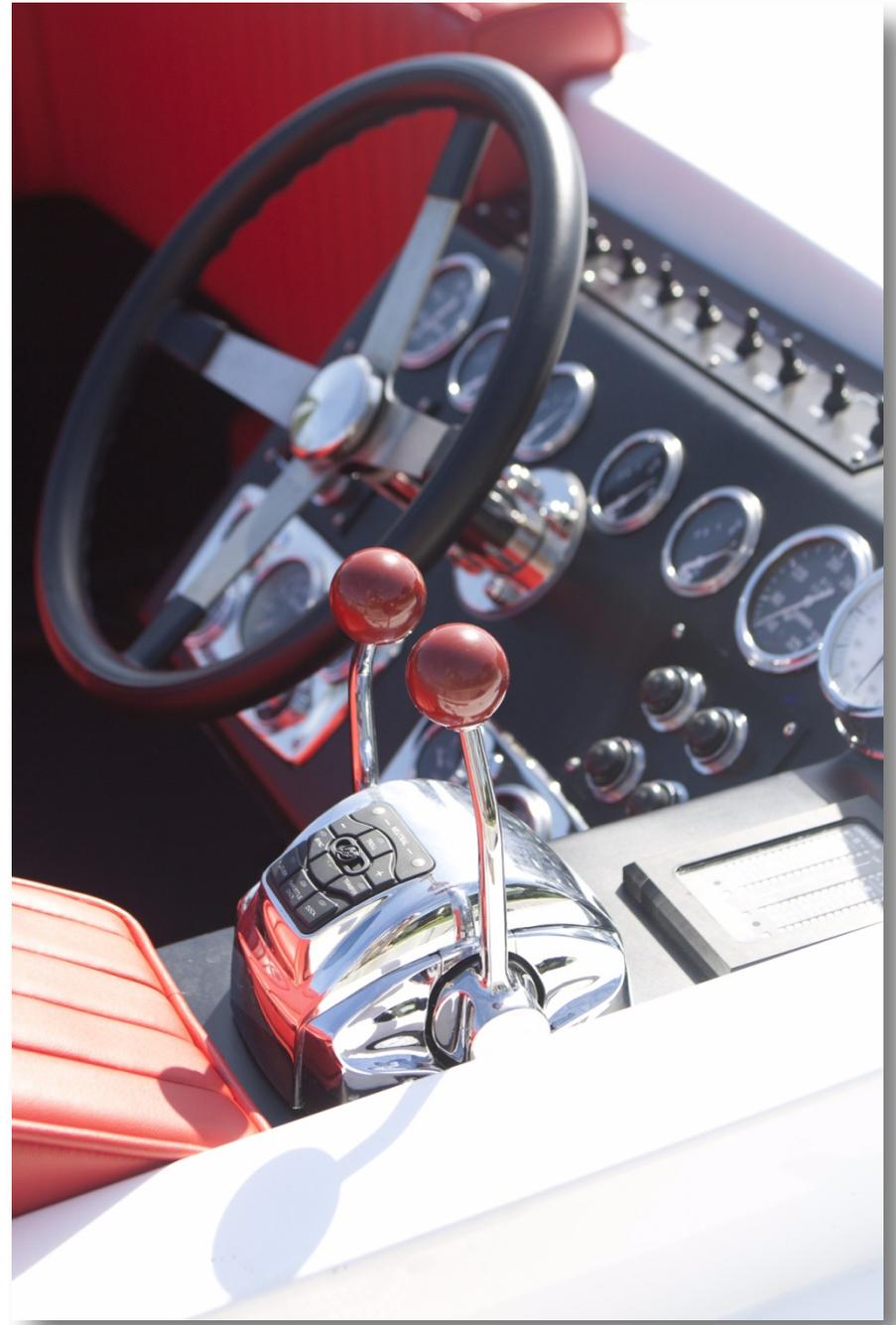
WHITE TORNADO

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Special















Memorabilia and more...



**Sammy James' original jacket, above,
and an RC model of the White Tornado**





White Tornado caps and polo shirts, and nautical articles about the boat



This Bertram 31', first built for offshore regatas in 1969, was one of many boats created for full-throttle offshore racing, but which were subsequently transformed into mundane fishing boats before eventually being destroyed or ending up in museums. This particular one was at last rediscovered, as fortune had it, and so began the laborious task of figuring out which one of these racing 31's it had been - once this riddle was solved, the challenging renovation process could finally begin. The boat was missing almost every part, in addition to being in terrible condition, and the changes it had undergone over the decades made it nearly impossible to recognize any of its characteristic features, a condition which was essential for the sake of a faithful reconstruction. Its new owner never gave up, however, and after extensive research he determined that the relic in his hands was one of the boats which had done battle on the open seas in 1969 and 1970, driven by two of the greatest Italian drivers in this sport's history, Francesco Cosentino and Vincenzo Balestrieri. This book is a photographic tribute to the White Tornado's background.