

The 1969 Daily Express Offshore Powerboat Race was run in the calmest conditions yet at an average speed of nearly 58 knots which shattered the previous record set up by 'Surfury' in 1967 by a staggering 11 knots. A soft ride for men and hulls, but machinery was subjected to the tearing stress of maximum revs from start to finish. Yachts and Yachting's team reports from Cowes.

**A**MERICAN Don Aronow, firm favourite for the 1969 World Powerboat Championship, drove 'The Cigarette' to an overwhelming victory in the Daily Express International Offshore Powerboat Race which started from the Squadron line off Cowes, Isle of Wight at 10.00am on Saturday, August 31st. In quite extraordinary mill pond conditions Aronow averaged a breathless 57.75 knots round the 205-mile course which led the fleet of fifty-three starters from Cowes to Southsea before heading westward through the Solent for Torquay and the tour round Tor Bay before streaking back to Cowes.

Second boat back to Cowes was Italian Francesco Cosentino's 'White Tornado' powered, as is 'The Cigarette', by twin Mercruiser 1,000hp outdrives provided with special lower units of exceptionally small frontal area. Cosentino followed Aronow home by twelve minutes.

John Kennerly, who for most of the recent Round Britain Powerboat Race, gave Timo Makinen in 'Avenger Too' such a good run for his money, drove 'Maltese Magnum' into third place, trailing Cosentino by forty-two minutes. The first and third boats were designed by Don Aronow.

The 1969 Cowes-Torquay-Cowes race was a record event in every way: the biggest entry list ever—75 boats were listed; the longest course yet. At 205 miles it was seven miles longer than the 1968 event. There was a record number of finishers as well as a record speed some 11 knots faster than that put up by 'Surfury' in 1967. There was also a record number of non-starters this year. Of the original entry of 75 boats, 22 failed to come under starters orders.

Perhaps the most disappointed man in Cowes when the starting gun was fired was Ian Toll. He it was who in 1968 purchased the wreck (when its exact location and condition were unknown) of 'Magnum Tornado', the boat that took Vincenzo Balestrieri to the top of the World Championship, and sank in Lyme Bay when in second place in the 1968 race. Ian Toll made an offer for what was left of the boat, salvaged it to find it in surprisingly good condition after its immersion, and prepared it as a powerful contender for honours in the 1969 event. But this has not been Ian Toll's year in the

early months of his preparations he fell whilst working on the boat, broke an ankle and was still hobbling around in plaster when the Royal Southern's World Championship event was staged in June. So 'Magnum Tornado' could not be raced against her sisters 'Red Tornado' and 'White Tornado'. And then, just before the Daily Express race, whilst undergoing final trials, one of her engines blew up. A most disappointing end to a season of hard preparation.

Others had their troubles, 'Surfury' seized a gear box on trials on the Friday before the race but the Gardner background organisation was able to cope and a complete new engine unit was installed—scutineering was completed on Saturday morning and 'Surfury' made the start, Keith Horseman was less fortunate and could not race because he had no engines for his cat 'Western Credit'.

'Polly Perkins' was another not to make the start. She was reported to have been launched two days prior to the race and promptly sank because someone had failed to connect up the exhausts and water flowed in through two six inch holes in the transom.

Charles Currey had a disturbing experience a couple of days before the race when doing a power trial in 'Maid Fast'. He was standing with one foot resting on the engine casing when a tyre fouled a propeller. The boat lurched over until the gunwale was nearly level with the water and Charles was flung into the air and clear of the boat. He suffered no injury and was hauled back inboard after he had surfaced. The damage to the boat, and to Charles, was surprisingly slight—one shaft was bent slightly and had to be replaced. The opportunity was taken to fit 1½in diameter shafts in place of 1¼in which had been considered too light.

'Avenger Too', winner of the Round Britain race earlier this year, blew her middle engine when working up on the Friday. Another engine was fitted and trials completed that evening. A worried Pascoe Watson was to be seen less than an hour before the race was due to start on Saturday for although two licenced drivers had been at the briefing the previous evening, there was some doubt as to whether Timo Makinen would be allowed to drive as he had not attended the briefing, having arrived overnight. The problem was resolved satisfactorily and Makinen drove the boat.

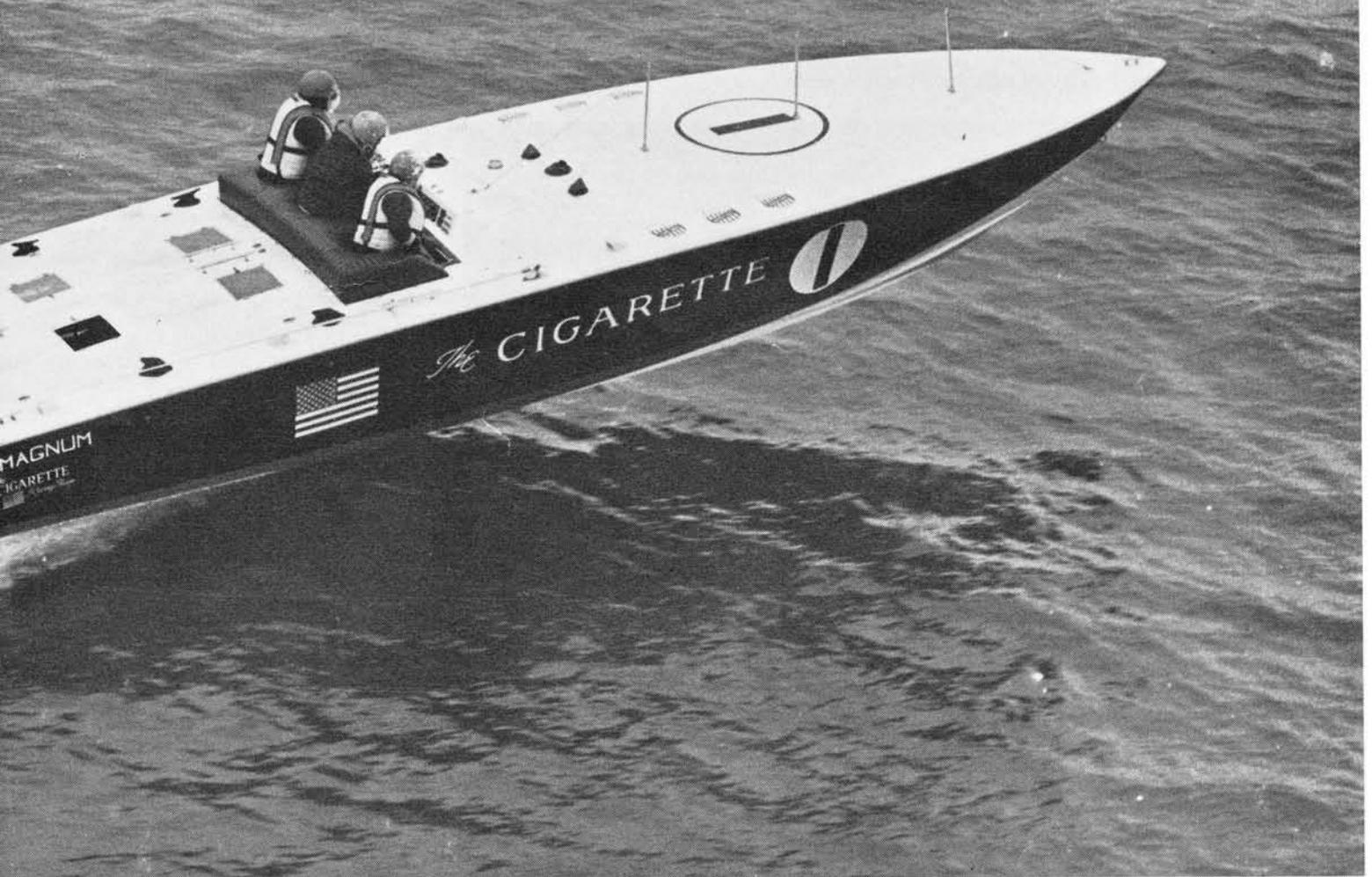
A few boats suffered minor damage on Friday. 'Thunderstreak' had her



rubbing strake and pulpit slightly damaged when a vast trimaran shell, which had just been launched by Sousters, bounced off the jetty. 'Maltese Magnum Twin' luckily suffered no damage when she was left moored to the Island Sailing Club pontoon during the briefing and took the ground at the bottom of the tide. Less fortunate was John Frost's 'Fiducia'. Although the crew were told that there was insufficient water they took no heed of the advice and slightly damaged the propellers.

Although there was a record number of finishers in the 1969 race, big disappointments were in store for some of those who did cross the starting line. A Force 4-5 north easterly wind was forecast with a slight-to-moderate sea, but on the day nearly the entire race was run in absolutely flat conditions. Sir Max Aitken's very definite statement that the race would be run in any wind strength unless there was a gale warning, did not have to be put to the test.

# RESS EXPRESS



## The Start

The start was as impressive as it always is, though this year it lacked that added lustre of a little sunshine to make the spray from 53 highly-powered craft even more photogenic. From the mass of boats 'Avenger Too' leapt away, with 'The Cigarette', 'Red Tornado' and 'White Tornado' in close company. 'Miss Enfield', the new and relatively untried aluminium boat designed and driven by Don Shead, was surprisingly far to the back of the starters, but quite evidently didn't intend to stay there for long as she came surging up through the disturbed water to the head of the field. There had been uncertainty as to who would, in fact, be driving 'Miss Enfield' in this race: if conditions were to be really flat, then Tommy Sopwith was to drive her; if they were rough he would drive his new Souter/Shead 'T.2'. With a forecast for a Force 4, neither rough nor smooth, the decision must have been a difficult one to make, but in fact Don Shead and John Irving took 'Miss En-

field', and Tommy Sopwith and Charles de Selincourt drove 'T.2'.

From the starting line the competitors hurtled  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles westwards down the Solent to the first turning mark, the West Lepe buoy, where they turned towards the Island and the Gurnard Ledge buoy, thence eastwards back past Cowes en route for Southsea. These first two turns, so soon after the start, called for sharp reactions and restrained behaviour from the leaders, still very closely bunched together, and the water around the Royal Yacht Squadron line at Cowes was still turbulent from the start when 'Miss Enfield' streaked eastwards for Southsea at about 56 mph, with 'Red Tornado' and 'The Cigarette' close behind. 'White Tornado', 'T.2', 'Surfury' and the South African catamaran 'Meteor III' were not far astern. It needed a sharp eye to count the number of boats to pass Cowes in this first procession, but already there was one casualty: 'H.T.S.', one of the seven Souter-built and Shead-designed boats in the race, lost

an injector right on the start line. In fact a repair could have been effected leaving sufficient time for her still to race, but not realising there were the necessary spare parts aboard, she retired, her crew organised replacement parts from the mainland for the next day's race, and were very disgruntled to discover, when they started repairs, that they had had all they needed on board all along. 'H.T.S.' has not been lucky so far; all the Souter/Shead boats are highly competitive, and 'H.T.S.' clocked up some very good times on the Round Britain race, including winning the foggy Inverness to Dundee leg, before she was forced to retire with engine failure, and it is a great pity that she did not get going in the Express event.

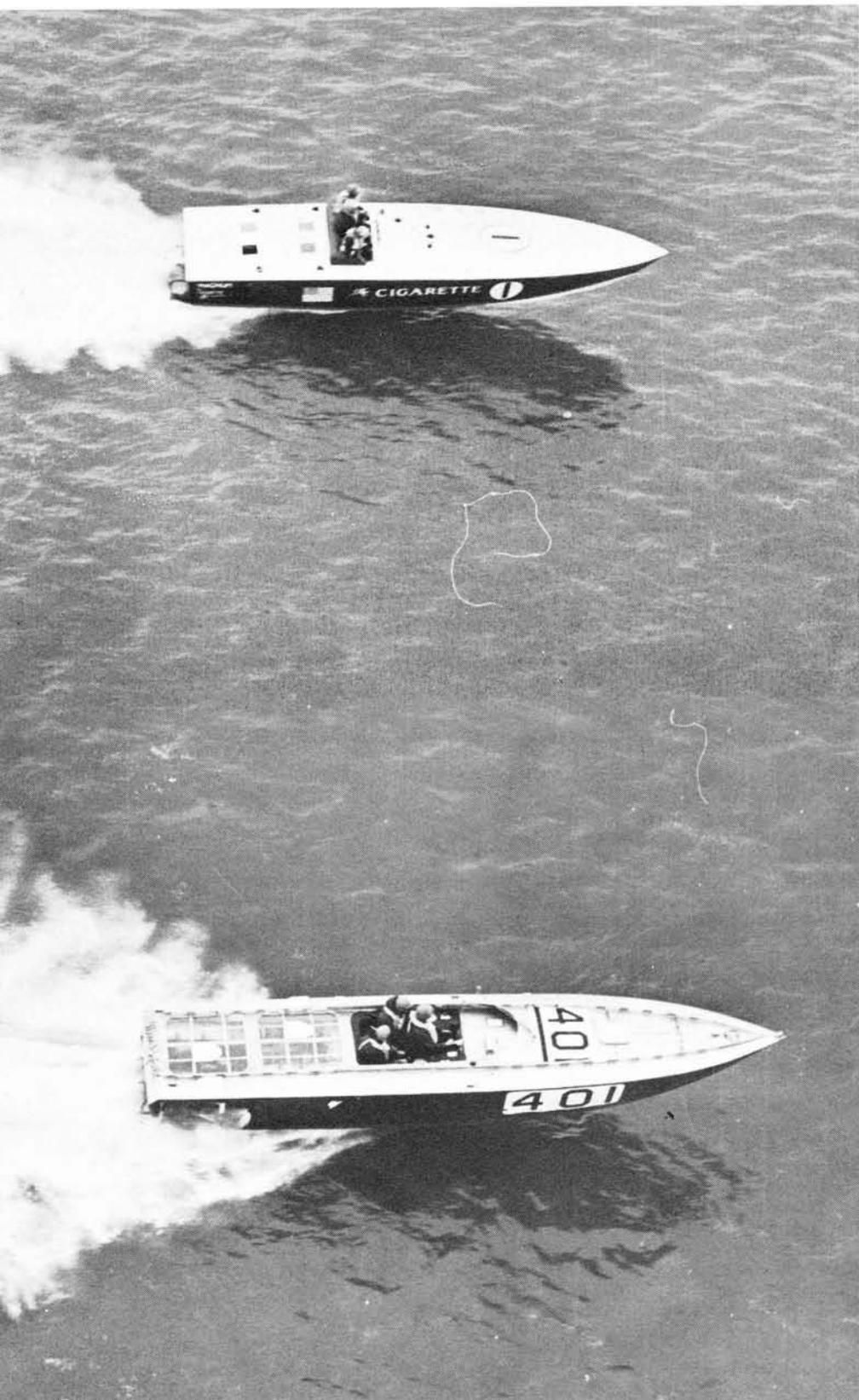
At the Southsea turning mark the competitors had covered  $15\frac{1}{2}$  miles—enough distance for some sort of pattern to have emerged and for a pace to be set. And 'Miss Enfield' was set-

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Don Aronow's 'The Cigarette' (1) slips up alongside Don Shead's aluminium 'Miss Enfield' (401) as they hurtle westwards at speeds approaching 70 mph. Daily Express photo



ting a very fast pace indeed—66 mph; but she was not alone, for 'Red Tornado' was right behind her. 'The Cigarette' was still lying third, at 63 mph, in company with 'White Tornado' and 'Surfury'. Then came 'Maltese Magnum Twin', doing 61 mph, and the next boat to pass Southsea was 'Melodrama', with the Swedish 'Tam O'Shanter' behind her followed by the cat 'Volare II'. Two highly-favoured boats had, in the short run from Cowes, dropped out of the first ten placings: 'T.2' never did pass the Southsea check point; she has a mass of vulnerable metalwork reaching far behind her transom and in the dash from the start her rudder was damaged. So, with only 15 miles of the race covered, the 1968 winner, Tommy Sopwith, was out of the running. Also out was the South African catamaran 'Meteor III'. Powered by two Holman and Moody Fords, 'Meteor' is reputed to travel very quickly indeed—far more quickly than the pace of the race to Southsea. But her driver Ken Stephens was robbed of his chance to lead the way to Torquay when he lost a prop on the way to Southsea. There was still a catamaran in the race, however, and a lot of hopes were pinned on her. 'Volare II', the only British catamaran racing offshore, has had a fantastic season: by comparison with the South African cat's 900 hp, 'Volare' has only two 115 hp GT outboards, but they have taken her to third place behind the 'Red' and 'White Tornados' in one World Championship race, put her driver James Beard into fifth place in the Class I and II World Championship table, and also given him fourth place in the British Class III Championship table. Now she was lying ninth, and travelling at 53 mph, and with the departure of 'Meteor III' attention focused on her afresh.

An immediate obstacle on 'Volare's' course was the Swedish boat 'Tam O'Shanter'. On the run back from Southsea to pass Cowes for the last time before the long run west to Torquay 'Volare' overtook 'Tam O'Shanter' to move up to seventh position. In the meantime yet another favoured boat had fallen by the wayside. Having kept pace with 'Miss Enfield', 'Red Tornado' stopped suddenly with a broken outdrive. 'The Cigarette' moved up into second place, and 'White Tornado' now lay third, 'Surfury' fourth, 'Maltese Magnum Twin' fifth, 'Melodrama' sixth and 'Volare II' seventh.

### Early Retirements

With only 24 miles of the 205-mile course covered three of the most favoured boats, 'T.2', 'Red Tornado' and 'Meteor III', were already out of the running. What on earth would happen when the field reached the first stretch of open water beyond the Needles? Well, 'Volare II' didn't get that far. Between Cowes and Yarmouth one of her engine covers came off, breaking a plug in the process. As there was not a spare on board that ended her bid

for more World Championship points in this race.

What no-one knew at this stage, of course, was that there would only be a total of twelve retirements in the race, and by Yarmouth six were already out, for Alan Burnard in 'Sea Fox', after making a very good start and being the first diesel powered boat back past Cowes, was forced to retire after blowing a piston before reaching Southsea.

Yarmouth to Anvil Point was a relatively uneventful stage, but for one exception. From Cowes to the Hurst narrows Aronow in 'The Cigarette' kept close tabs on Don Shead's 'Miss Enfield' while the American observed the running trim of the aluminium boat and 'White Tornado'. Just off Hurst, however, Aronow opened the taps a little and slid 'The Cigarette' into the lead and away. The race average speed of the leaders had now dropped a little and 'The Cigarette' settled to a steady 63 mph. In the Solent she had been running at 66 mph.

'White Tornado' was third at Anvil Point, and 'Surfury' fourth. The picture at Portland, however, showed a dramatic change, for two of Britain's best chances of winning the 1969 Daily Express race were never to reach Portland. So often in this race the boat that leads the way westwards, setting a pace that kills her most potent rivals, eventually finds that that same killing pace is her own undoing. 'Miss Enfield' was no exception; she had a variety of problems — a lack of pressure in the fuel system, and a fuel blockage, then finally the power steering failed and driver Don Shead was forced to retire. 'Surfury's' retirement from the race was perhaps an even greater blow. One

sometimes tends to forget that this boat was taking part in her fifth Daily Express race: way back in 1965, when she first appeared, she finished third overall; in 1967 her drivers Charles and Jimmy Gardner won the race in her at 46 knots and last year she took second place behind Tommy Sopwith's 'Telstar'. As offshore powerboats seem generally to have a very short competitive life, her placing of fourth overall at Anvil Point this year, at an average speed of 58mph, is even more of an achievement than it at first appears. In 'Surfury' during the race first a fan belt broke, and then a water pump failed. The resulting rather drastic overheating eventually caused an exhaust manifold to blow and 'Surfury's' bid for British honours in the 1969 race was over.

#### Leaders Open Up

Into the Gardner brothers' place stepped John Kennerly and Jim Roddick in 'Maltese Magnum Twin', to be placed third at Portland behind 'The Cigarette' and 'White Tornado'. But by now a big gap had opened up between the two leading boats and the rest of the field, for whilst 'Magnum Twin' was averaging 56½mph, 'The Cigarette' had pushed the pace up yet again, and was now averaging 66mph, with 'White Tornado' pressing hard on her heels at 65mph. But nobody now could stop Don Aronow in 'The Cigarette' winning this race: the 66mph pace that he set at Portland was maintained throughout the rest of the race, and 'White Tornado' just had to be content with following in 'The Cigarette's' wake — or perhaps one should say that they couldn't see 'The Cigarette' for smoke. Anyway the major dramas were over —

'The Cigarette' took the lead at Anvil Point and kept it all the way to the finish at Cowes and the record-breaking win in 3hrs 33mins, with 'White Tornado' twelve minutes behind in second place. The most awkward moments experienced by the crew of 'The Cigarette' were when they were flying flat out back across Christchurch Bay and unable to sight the North Head buoy. Where the buoy should have been, all that could be seen was a motor cruiser. Just when the crew were getting really desperate, they realised that the boat was actually tied up to the turning mark!

Every year the Express race is, in fact, two races in one: the race battled out between the leading ten or twelve really fast open boats, and a second race, run at a slower speed, but just as bitter a fight, between the leading cabin class boats. On this occasion, however, the event was split into three because even the boats that could usually be considered as hares could not hold a candle to 'The Cigarette' and the hard chasing 'White Tornado'.

'The Cigarette' and 'White Tornado' were uncatchable, but behind them another race developed for third place. 'Maltese Magnum Twin' was third at Portland, but close behind her was 'Melodrama', the Souter built boat powered by triple Mercury 375 outboards, and driven by John Galliford and Mike Campbell. If either of these two faltered, five other boats were closely bunched together just astern to step into the gap: 'U.F.O.', 'Tam O'Shanter', the Round Britain winning 'Avenger Too', the other Gardner boat 'Delta', and the winner of the 1968 race

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Francesco Cosentino in 'White Tornado' hounded 'The Cigarette' for almost the entire race, but at the finish the flying American had built up a lead of more than twelve minutes. Daily Express photo



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'Telstar', now owned and driven by Maurice Hardy. Never, at any point from Portland onwards, was it certain who would take third place. 'Maltese Magnum Twin' had to stop while oil was put in the engine, and at Torquay 'Melodrama' was third. She was still in third place when the field passed Portland going east, and 'Maltese Magnum' in fourth place had 'U.F.O.' pressing hard on her heels. In the 1968 race 'Melodrama', having done extremely well up to Portland, limped home at a reduced speed on only two of her three outboards to take sixth place; her fate was the same in the 1969 event — again she limped back under reduced power, and by the time Yarmouth was reached 'Maltese Magnum' had overtaken her to take third place. Between Yarmouth and the finish at Cowes 'Telstar' also passed 'Melodrama' to finish fourth, but 'Melodrama' still managed to improve on her 1968 placing, and finished fifth.

At Torquay 'U.F.O.', driven by Tim Powell and Norman Barclay was fifth overall, only a minute behind 'Maltese Magnum Twin' and pressing hard to overtake her. At Portland the positions were the same, but the pace was really hotting up. Just after Portland, 'Maltese Magnum' stopped to feed oil to the engines, and 'U.F.O.' went streaking by, with 'Avenger Too' and 'Telstar' not far behind. But at ten minutes past two, with only fifty miles to cover to reach the finish line in fifth place, or fourth place if 'Maltese Magnum' stopped often enough, disaster struck 'U.F.O.' when a drive shaft shattered, and it took her dispirited drivers a long, slow three hours to cover that last fifty miles back to the finish and relegated them to 27th overall.

The run from Torquay was a good one for 'Telstar'. She averaged 50mph over the course and finished fourth overall. It was not such a good run for 'Avenger Too', which had been averaging 52mph at times. Sixth to round the mark boat at Torquay, they had to watch both 'Telstar' and 'Tam O'Shanter' pass them on the run back to Cowes, as they lost an engine near Portland. Torquay was also unlucky for Ricky Gardner in 'Delta', who ran out of oil and had to go into Torquay to buy some for his hungry engine; a pity — this boat seems fated as far as this race is concerned; so often it goes well in the early stages, setting the pace for the main Gardner boat 'Surfury' and then gracefully retiring from the scene. On some occasions, as this year, 'Delta' is still going strong after 'Surfury' has been forced to retire, but



The 28ft 10in, South African cat, 'Meteor III' attracted considerable attention and is reported to have put up very high speeds in rough conditions. She was lying 7th but dropped out before reaching Southsea. Daily Express photo

always something puts her out of the final honours.

The first diesel boat to cross the finishing line at Cowes was Sir Max Aitken's 'Gypsy Girl', which took eighth place overall at an average speed of 44mph. Only seconds separated her from the other big diesel entry 'Gee', driven by the Hon. Edward Greenall in ninth place, and that was how it had been right throughout the race: the two boats had kept in convoy from Southsea onwards, never more than a few waves apart, but always with 'Gypsy Girl' in the lead. For the last twenty-five minutes, however, 'Gypsy Girl's' crew had everything crossed for they were having oil problems in one gearbox and they calculated that they might just make the finish with a little luck. Their luck held with a matter of only seconds in hand.

Sandwiched between the second and third races lay two boats whose fortunes varied round the course. 'Lucy', owned and driven by South African K.Rontgen, suffered fuel troubles all the

way round the course, she got as high up the fleet as tenth past Portland Bill on the way out but dropped to sixteenth at Torquay and finished 20th. 'Screwdriver', driven by her owner Robin Bateman of the Gloster Hotel at Cowes and with Paddy McKiernan navigator, varied between thirteenth and nineteenth but finished at Cowes in fifteenth place — the same that she held at Southsea. 'Screwdriver' started the race fitted with a large size in formed Perspex wind shields which almost covered the crew. On her return to Cowes, however, all that was left was a few jagged edges for she had passed too far offshore returning past Portland Bill and had bumped through the Race which threw Paddy McKiernan through the screen and shattered it.

The third race within the race was fought out at a slightly slower speed amongst the cabin class boats, with Geoffrey Marsh's 'Maid Fast' leading them westwards past Cowes and John Freeman's 'Fordspeed' just astern. Trevor Howells led the Class II cabin



(above) Sir Max Aitken's 'Gypsy Girl' which fought all the way round the course with the Hon. Edward Greenall's 'Gee' before securing the prize for the first diesel engined finisher.



The support which carries the rudder in Tommy Sopwith's 'T.2'. It was rudder trouble which cause 'T.2' to retire early.



(above) Round Britain winner 'Avenger Too' with Timo Makinen and Pascoe Watson lost an engine but finished 7th. Daily Express photo (below) The scene on Souter's pontoon where scrutineering took place.

boats in his little 23 foot 'Seahunter', putting a healthy gap between himself and his closest rival Brian Wright driving the Coronet 'Miss Smirnoff'. Derek Smith in 'Viva Tridante' and Bernard Jelley in the second Coronet 'Oh Oh Sex' were never very far behind, but 'Seahunter' was going beautifully, at Yarmouth she was lying 20th, at Portland she had moved up to 16th place, she was 14th around the mark at Torquay and she finished eleventh overall, having covered the course at an average of 40mph. Considering that she crossed Lyme Bay with both her trim tabs broken she put up an excellent performance for so small a boat.

'Oh Oh Sex' was stopped for four or five minutes just after the start when a battery lead came adrift on the port engine, and later stopped for another four or five minutes when the same thing happened to the starboard engine, but once these minor troubles were rectified she surged past her com-

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panions and worked her way up the field to 14th position overall, ten minutes behind 'Seahunter'. Together the trio of 'Seahunter', 'Oh Oh Sex' and 'Miss Smirnoff' won the team award for the Offshore Powerboat Club, and 'Miss Smirnoff' also took the Production Economy prize and — the race officials' prize — the return of entry fee for the best presented entry.

One Class II boat that was not so lucky was Dick Read's 'Foamflyer'. This is a good little boat and it put up an excellent performance in the Round Britain race to finish tenth overall, despite repeated troubles with drive shafts. That trouble dogged her in the Daily Express race too; her crew repaired one drive shaft on the course, but by the time the job was done they decided that there just wasn't enough time left to make it worth while for them to continue and they retired just before Bournemouth. Another unfortunate was Paul Weychan in 'Seabear', the 30ft Rover-powered boat that he built himself.

Perhaps the saddest retirement of the whole race was that of Ken Cassir's 'Towmotor', which was the leading Class III boat at Torquay, rounding the mark in 12th place amidst all the heavy machinery, and ten places ahead of the Earl of Normanton, his nearest Class III rival in 'Black Panther'. Between Torquay and Portland 'Black Panther' speeded up and overtook four larger boats, and at Portland 'Towmotor' was 11th and 'Black Panther' 18th. Whether 'Black Panther' could, in fact, have closed the gap right up and overtaken 'Towmotor' we shall never know because at the Needles, with only a dozen or so miles to go to the finishing line, 'Towmotor' ran out of petrol. 'Black Panther' went sweetly on her way, overtaking still more of the larger boats on her way eastwards, and finished twelfth overall.

The only other battle that had to be decided was the one being waged amongst the diesel cabin boats from Faireys. Geoffrey Marsh in 'Maid Fast' led the way west, with the Ford boats in line astern behind him. At Yarmouth both 'Fordspeed' and 'Seaspray' had overtaken him. John Frost in 'Fiducia' had lost all his engine oil right at the start of the race and had to pump it back with the bilge pump, but that drama over he went very well; by Yarmouth he had overtaken Derek Morris in 'Fordpower' and was sandwiched between 'Fordpower' and 'Fordsport', driven by Peter Twiss. Ahead of Peter Twiss was 'Maid Fast', and ahead yet again was 'Seaspray'. But at Anvil

Point 'Seaspray' had dropped right back with overheating and fuel starvation and at Portland 'Fiducia' had overtaken 'Fordsport' to join 'Maid Fast' in the fight to overtake 'Fordspeed'. 'Fiducia' in fact passed 'Maid Fast', and finished 16th overall.

At the back of the fleet most of the tail enders kept up steady averages in the smooth going. 'Needlenose', held last place, creeping up from 49th at Southsea to 43rd past Portland Bill on the way home, but passed 'Foxye' before Yarmouth and 'Flower Power' on the final run to the line up the Solent. 'Miss Bovril I', David Bassett's Triune 25 which won the Concours d'Elegance Class II award, climbed steadily from 41st at Southsea to 33rd at Portland Bill on the way west. However, crossing Lyme Bay she lost an engine due to an air block in the fuel and, although the engine was restarted, was beset by fuel troubles all the way home. She finished 33rd.

'Foxye' undoubtedly had the most comfortable ride of the entire race; true she finished last of the 41 finishers, but she won the Index of Performance prize, the Best All-Rounder and the Concours d'Elegance in Class I, and she did it in style. By contrast the crew of 'Psychedelic Surfer' probably had the most uncomfortable ride: they averaged 29½mph in their much-travelled inflatable, despite stopping for half an hour in Lyme Bay with a fuel blockage, before which they had been averaging 31mph. They suffered another set back when their compass broke and spilt its alcoholic contents into the boat. This created something of a navigational problem which was solved by the fortuitous arrival on the scene of one of the 'Brave' FPBs which was able to offer some advice on which way to go. But there must be many more pleasant ways of spending eight hours than riding the waves in an inflatable, even if you do win a prize for the lowest powered entry at the end of the eight hours. With only 100hp pushing you along, compared with the 1,000hp propelling your fellow competitors, you need to win something to make it all worth while.

## JACK KNIGHTS COMMENTS

Don Aronow won for two main reasons: a full quota of the usual American preparation (helped by the experience of racing most of the world championship events this season) and because of his Kiekhaefer Mercruiser engine out-drive units.

There were only three other sets of these latest 482 cubic inch versions amongst the 76 entrants. Two sets were aboard the Italian Bertram boats 'White' and 'Red Tornado'. It does seem that these Bertrams are a knot or two down in ultimate speed on Aronow's own latest design, 'The Cigarette'. 'White Tornado' finished 12½ minutes down at second, whilst 'Red Tornado' was out before Spithead after a tiny spring had somehow fouled a drive shaft and broken it.

The only pair of these Kiekhaefer units in a British boat were aboard 'Miss Enfield'. But in all her brief life until the start of the race 'Miss Enfield' had only run for a total of four hours. On top of which she was a new yard's very first boat and the very first alloy welded boat from designer Don Shead.

She was too experimental to have a real hope of staying the 236 statute mile course, but she, too, proved her own speed and the speed of the Kiekhaefer units by leading the race for the first thirty miles or so. And of course on the day following, in the absence of 'Cigarette' and the two Tornados she took the Round the Island Race.

Outdrives are nothing new. What is new is that after years of research and hush hush testing at their secret Lake X test centre, Mercruiser have finally developed a unit strong enough to take the five hundred or so horses of the big bore, souped up Vee 8s, while

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(above) The 25ft 'Snoopy', designed by Don Shead and built by Woodnuts, has a single converted Ford car engine giving 400hp. She was driven by John Hobart and after a poor start climbed steadily through the fleet to finish 10th. During the race she lost a trim tab—Daily Express photo. (right) Designer Don Shead, on the left, talks to Italian Vincenzo Balestrieri whose fancied 'Red Tornado' was out of the race before Southsea. (opposite) The inflatable 'Psychedelic Surfer' driven by John Caulcutt. With two 50hp engines she took the prize for the lowest powered finisher—photo Daily Express.



#### PRIZE WINNERS

**The Cigarette**, Don Aronow, co-driver Norris House: Beaverbrook Challenge Trophy — £1,000 for the overall winner — £100 and the Leeds Trophy for being first past Torquay — Bahamas Trophy for Miami/Nassau prize — Cowes Town Cup and £250 visitor's prize.  
**White Tornado**, Francesco Cosentino, co-driver Mike Vandenburg: Butlin Trophy and £500 for second overall.  
**Maltese Magnum Twin**, John Kennerley, co-driver James Roddick: Lombard Bank Trophy and £100 for third overall.  
**Telstar**, Maruce Hardy, co-driver John Fleming: Jaeger Trophy and £150 for fourth overall — Motor Boat and Yachting award, £100 for the restricted Class II award.  
**Melodrama**, John Galliford, co-driver Michael Campbell: Grosvenor House Trophy and £100 for fifth overall — first outboard prize of the Johnson Trophy and £100.  
**Tam O'Shanter**, Count Sten Bielke, co-driver Lars Boghammer: Daily Express Award of £75 — Royal Motor Yacht Club Trophy for sixth overall.  
**Foxie, G. Edwards**, driver the Hon. Lt. Col. J.D. Slim: Perkins Trophy and £500 for the best all-rounder — Daily Express award of £100 — Needell Trophy for the index of performance — International Boat Show award for Concours d'Elegance Class I.  
**Fordspeed**, John Freeman, co-driver Richard Derry: The Ship and Boat Builders' National Federation Trophy and £500 for the all British prize —

Daily Express award of £250 — King George's Fund for Sailors Trophy for the restricted diesel prize.  
**Gypsy Girl**, Sir Max Aitken, co-driver John Coote: The Daily Express award of £250 and the Cowes Trophy for the unlimited diesel prize.  
**Miss Enfield**, J.Goulandris, driver Don Shead: The Gloster Hotel Trophy and £250 for the first boat back through Cowes from Southsea.  
**Fairey Huntress**, R.Sibley, driver Charles Currey: The Cutty Sark Trophy and £100 for the fuel economy prize.  
**Miss Bovril I**, driver David Bassett: The Ship and Boat Builders' National Federation award for Concours d'Elegance Class II.  
**Miss Smirnoff**, Peter Hennessy, driver Major Bryan Wright: The Daily Express award of £150 — Royal Torbay Yacht Club Trophy for the production economy prize — return of entry fee for the best presented entry.  
**Sea Hunter**, Trevor Howells: The Daily Express award of £150 — Royal Yacht Squadron Trophy for the production class prize.  
**Sea Hunter, Oh Oh Sex and Miss Smirnoff**: The Triplex Trophy and £100 for the team award — the Offshore Powerboat Club of Great Britain, Commodore John Chitty.  
**Psychedelic Surfer**, John Caulcutt, co-driver Graham Dillon: The Marine Engine Manufacturers Association Salver for the lowest powered finisher.  
**Gee**, Mrs. Molly Greenall: The Grosvenor House Award of £100 and a brooch for the ladies prize.

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being slim enough and hydronamically efficient enough to enable the propeller to work far more efficiently than if it were at the end of a circular shaft. On top of this, the new outdrive has instant, press button adjustment of drive angle, so that the prop can be made to work regardless of boat trim at the best drive angle (which presumably is parallel to the water surface).

The secret of the new outdrive, which cannot be thicker athwart than an inch, is that the power is split between three different shafts, each about half an inch diameter, which work one behind the other within the beautifully streamlined leg (one could more accurately call it a leg).

This unit is teamed to a much modified Chevrolet Scarab Vee Eight petrol engine, bored out to 482 cubic inches and normally aspirated. It doesn't turn out the same power as the similar, less bored out engines turbocharged by the Daytona Company, but it is presumably less highly stressed and therefore can be expected to be more reliable and anyway the propeller is able to get through more work and that is what matters.

And here comes the snag. These Mercruiser units are said to cost £8,000 a pair over here. And that is not all — Mr. Kiekhaefer, a very independent millionaire, is very choosy about his customers for these items. He will not sell them just to anybody. It seems likely that Tommy Sopwith's name as driver was necessary before a pair was supplied to 'Miss Enfield'. And there have been long strikes at the Kiekhaefer plant at Fond du Lac in Wisconsin which has further held up production.

These units are so highly esteemed in the USA that owners lacking them are losing interest in racing and entries for even the biggest races have dropped to around fifteen or sixteen.

Now surely is the time for a British manufacturer, presumably somebody in the gear business, to go one better even than Mr. Kiekhaefer and design a still stronger but just as streamlined outdrive unit. Perhaps there could be more than three shafts. Imagine an all British drive which could take the power of a pair of five hundred horse motors linked together (as 'Surfury' and 'Delta' and now 'Maltese Magnum Twin' have linked theirs). The idea is fanciful but surely not impossible.

It was a disappointing weekend for cat fanciers. Jim Beard's 'Volare II', with ten points from two previous world championship starts, was the leading British boat in the table — with only a couple of big standard OMC outboards. Then there was South Africa's official offshore champion, sponsored by Mobil. This was a 28ft cat (but with no bridge deck between the hulls) and with two big Holman and Moody, Rootes blown Fords powering her Mercruiser outdrives. Already quite a number of experts were saying that the future lay in two hulls rather than one.

But 'Volare' blew one of her own outboards before the start of the big race and then when lying well up, the borrowed replacement went. And 'Meteor', after a week of waiting for a replacement for her stripped outdrive, lost a prop blade soon after the start.

The next day, even before the start, 'Volare' was out. 'Meteor' finished but well below the speed she was whispered to be capable of.

Tommy Sopwith's 'T2' and 'Miss Enfield' are sister ships, 'T2' being cold moulded by Souter, 'Enfield' being of very light welded alloy by the new John Goulandris firm of Enfield Marine

at Wootton Creek. 'T2' has possibly worked out heavier than expected. With twin Daytonas linked to a single prop placed very far aft of the transom, she is said to be the heavy weather boat. After a cracking start Tommy Sopwith lost his rudder when lying fourth or fifth.

'Miss Enfield' led around the first thirty miles until first slowed then halted by fuel, steering and other troubles. But she was not running nearly as smoothly as 'The Cigarette' which, apart from 'Gee', was the smoothest running boat to be seen around. It is a great pity these two new British limit boats were so untested and completely unraced. Perhaps they will come into their own next year.

The promising challenge by Perkins to the outright speed of the successful Ford Sabre team boats, came to an early end when Alan Burnard's 'Sea Fox', heading the Ford procession by a discreet distance after the first short loops, was stopped with a burnt out piston. The still more racey looking Italian 'Ba-Rolodelta' with her two Perkins in a long narrow shell turned out to be slower than the Ford cruisers. But the loyal John Frost did Peterborough proud, bringing his privately owned 'Fiducia' in only ten minutes after the leading Ford boat of John Freeman and well ahead of the rest of the factory-backed team upon which so much money has been lavished. It will be interesting to see what plans Perkins have for stopping the rot next season. For years they had the restricted diesel prize, almost by right. Now they must fight back for it.

The Scrutineers must put a very low value on speed. Their choice for Best All Rounder was G. Edwards' 'Foxye', the Cox & Haswell design which was absolutely last to finish. Like the Fuel Economy winner, 'Fairey Huntress', she was Perkins powered, so perhaps they didn't come out of it too badly.

The Don Shead designed and driven 'Miss Enfield' was almost untried before the race. In the early stages she challenged 'The Cigarette' very strongly. Soon after passing Anvil Point she was forced to limp back to the Solent when her power steering failed. Daily Express photo



# POINT TO POINT

The Yachts and Yachting race progress chart shows the fortunes and misfortunes of the fifty-three entries which came to the line. Two hundred and six miles later forty-one boats recrossed the Squadron line. The intervening columns trace each boat's progress from point to point

