

# TOLE London/Cal

The start of the London Calais London race is always a thrilling spectacle. The quiet of an early Sunday morning in London is suddenly shattered by the roar of powerboat engines opening to full throttle whilst blazing a trail of foaming white water under Tower Bridge. This year, the race was considerably louder than usual, due to the presence of not just one, but two Mr. Pobjoys. Derek was driving his Class I Uno Mint Jewellery, whilst his younger brother Adrian took the wheel of Pobjoy Mint, a Class II diesel boat.

This was the first year that the entry had been opened to other classes besides Class III, and although there were only an extra eight boats prepared to brave the debris of the Thames, and the rigours of a channel crossing, their presence was much appreciated by the sponsor, organizers and spectators alike. The eight included four cruiser class entrants, only three of which were starters, one Class I boat and three Class II. Unfortunately, Cossack, driven by Ray McEnhill and Noel Edmonds suffered damage whilst in transit to the race venue and was a non-starter.

It seems to be becoming a tradition of this race that several unfortunate competitors must land on a mud bank during the first leg down the Thames to Ramsgate. This year, three boats volunteered to uphold the tradition, Pobjoy Mint, Skean Dhu and Aquaglide. All of them were stranded for approximately forty minutes before they could find ample water to float them off, but sadly, Lady Arran was forced to retire due to mechanical problems resulting from the incident.

First into Ramsgate was the Class I Uno Mint Jewellery. Tim Powell of the Limit Up Team, had stepped in to fill a last minute gap on throttles for Derek Pobjoy, thus giving the boat a very competent crew indeed with John Frost navigating. Ian Birnie in Miss Avia Watches was next into harbour closely followed by Peter Bloomfield in Pobjoy Mint Two, and Barry Drinkwater in a brand new Phantom 26 called Bentleys Oyster Bar. Navigating in this new rig was Mike Mantle, who more than once observed that racing with Betty Cook was never like this! Not only was this the first race for Barry Drinkwater in Bentleys Oyster Bar, it was her maiden voyage, and indeed, final fittings were completed only the day before. The team were delighted to have reached Ramsgate and set off confidently on the Cross Channel Leg.

Cruiser racing ended at Ramsgate, with David Graham-Smith coming in first, followed by Colin Stewart in the Picton Mardi Gras. Both had enjoyed the race enormously, and were keen to do it again in 1981. It is so sad that the cruiser class

is not better supported, as those who do make the effort have assured me that it brings a whole new dimension to owning a boat. They may not have the glamour of the pure racing breed, but they certainly have just as much fun!

Retirements at the Ramsgate stage were Lady Arran and Steve Pile in the IIBB boat Hydrophobia, leaving twelve boats to make the crossing to Calais and back. Only one boat did not return from this stage, and Gary and Mike Toleman cannot be accused of lacking in style over their choice of retirement procedure! One large wave had dislodged Gary's visor, and as Mike bent over to try and help him retrieve it, neither noticed an even larger wall of water bearing down on them. The boat was totally swamped as it went through the wave, and continuing to race was out of the

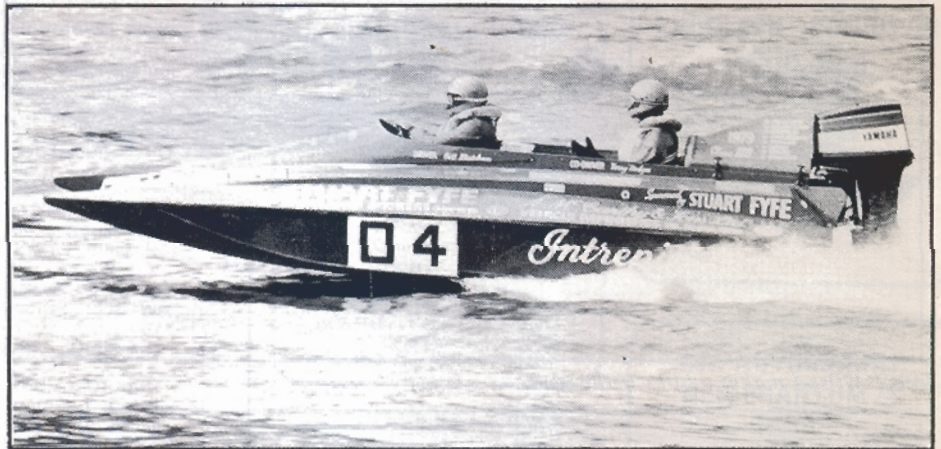
The London-Calais-London race is always one of many competitors refuse to enter on the grounds of limits of their endurance. Ironically, those who do that reason — they enjoy the challenge of a gruelling completing the



Uno Mint Jewellery took Class I honours.



London's Peace is shattered as the



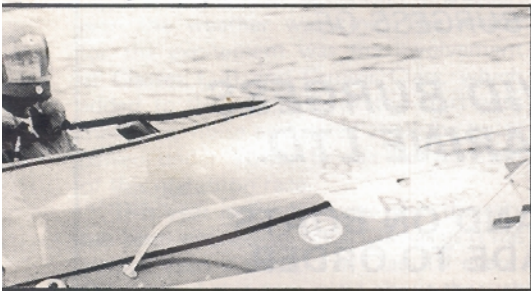
Bill Matcham and Terry Hedges in Intrepid.

O/A Position	Boat Number	Boat Name	Driver	Co-Driver	Elapsed Time	Average Speed	Class Position
<b>Classes I &amp; II</b>							
1	02	Uno Pobjoy Mint	D. Pobjoy	J. Frost	3.26.45	56.29	1st Class I
2	202	Pobjoy Mint	A. Pobjoy	A. Foster	5.09.49	37.57	1st Class II
<b>Class III</b>							
1	06	Bentleys Oyster Bar	B. Drinkwater	M. Mantle	4.15.45	45.51	1st IIID
2	01	Aquaglide	R. Cook	J. Donohoo	4.46.36	40.61	2nd IIID
3	3	Panache Two	P. Ash	N. Murning	5.06.41	37.95	1st IIIC
4	55	Marshan Warrior	G. Stuart	N. Murray	5.25.53	35.71	2nd IIIC
5	606	Gus It	P. Sinclair	V. Luker	5.49.05	33.34	3rd IIID
6	04	Intrepid	W. Matcham	T. Hedges	5.59.07	32.41	1st IIIB
7	31	Pobjoy Mint Two	P. Bloomfield	J. Baker	6.34.49	29.48	4th IIID
<b>Cruiser Class</b>							
1	P4	Splash Down	D. Graham Smith	P. Warner	2.04.32	33.00	1st A
2	P35	Mardigras	C. Stewart	N. Bennett	2.29.32	27.48	1st Day

Overall results from the race.

# MAN ais/London

the most exciting events in the offshore calendar. at both the boat and crew are tested to the utmost regularly participate in the race, do so for exactly three stage race, and the sense of achievement that course brings.



question. Luckily for the twins, a helicopter was nearby, that had been followed the race, and although they could not rescue the boys themselves, they were able to alert R.A.F. Manston who air-lifted them to safety. Some people will obviously go to any lengths to achieve a spot on the Nine O' Clock News, which was the dubious honour afforded to these two. In reality, they were merely glad to be safely out of harms way, and were more worried about the boat which was immediately taken under tow by a German yacht.

Once again Derek Pobjoy was first into Ramsgate, followed by Miss Avia Watches and Bentley's Oyster Bar, now only seven minutes behind overall. Adrian Pobjoy and Alex Foster in the Class II diesel boat were taking things at a more leisurely pace now that they were without

competition. Peter Bloomfield and Jim Baker in the IIID Pobjoy Mint Two had suffered mechanical failure on one of their engines, as had Paul Sinclair and Vernon Luker in their exciting new Cougar Gus IT.

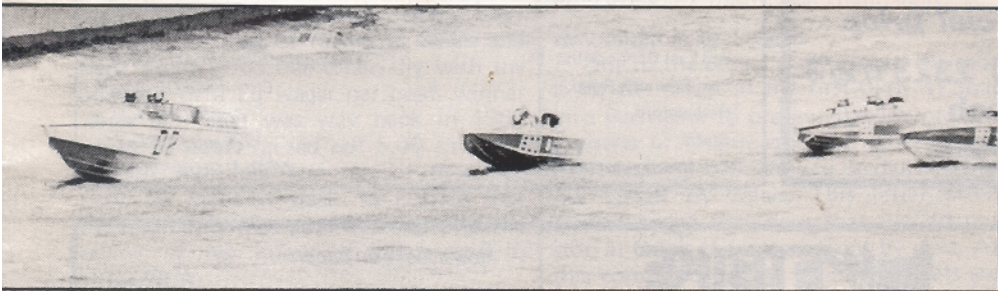
Bruce Nash in London and Manchester Assurance also had some problems, leaving Marshan Warrior and Panache to fight it out in C Class. Sole survivor of the B boats was Intrepid, driven by Bill Matcham and Terry Hedges. The boat is sponsored this year by Stewart Fife, a firm of insurance brokers, whose presence has benefitted the sport in more ways than one. Mike Slack, who represents Stewart Fife, just happens to be a boat enthusiast, and it didn't take him and U.K.O.B.A. long to get acquainted. Hence we now have a new patrol and marker boat in the shape of Mike's personal cruiser! It is a pleasure to welcome such a keen sponsor to the sport, and I'm sure that Stewart Fife will be well rewarded by two of the best liked and most experienced competitors in the business.

It is generally agreed that the racing does not really begin until the final dash back up the Thames to the finishing line. There may be a clear leader at the Ramsgate stage, but nothing is final until all the boats are back under Tower Bridge and the overall times are calculated.

This year, more than ever, such a situation occurred. Ian Birnie, in Miss Avia Watches had raced superbly all day, winning at each stage in Class III. He had seven minutes in hand, but, due to a battery fault caused by the channel crossing, broke down in Gravesend on the return run. Barry Drinkwater came in the clear winner of the race in Bentley's Oyster Bar, and although Robert Cook in Aquaglide beat him back to London, he was in fact thirty one minutes behind in overall time. The new boat had surprised every one, including her crew. Once again the race was won on survival, which is, after all the entire basis of the offshore sport.

Class IIIC was won by Peter Ash in Panache, although this result is still undecided due to a protest, whilst Class IIIB honours went to Bill Matcham and Terry Hedges in Intrepid. The Pobjoy team won both Class I and Class II, proving that the big rigs are quite capable of surviving the mysterious contents of the river Thames, and I hope, encouraging more of their kind to support this great race which is in serious danger of being disbanded due to low entries.

Ted Toleman was as ever cheerful of the race's outcome, despite his own team's dramatic withdrawal. He for one will be contending in Class I next year, and hopes that the race will survive to thrill competitors and spectators alike for many years to come.



boats roar across the start line.



Adrian Pobjoy had a short rest on a sandbank.



Barry Drinkwater, winner of The Challenge Trophy.