

*The weather conditions were ideal for John Craxford in Romans Sabre who romped home first overall*



The Southern Speed Trophy by Julia Klonarides

# FORCE 6 IN SOLENT

A cold, dull windy morning greeted competitors who had travelled to the Hamble to contest the Cougar Marine Southern Speed Trophy on Saturday 26th June.

People sleepily wandered about as scrutineering proceeded, boats were launched and forecasts made as to the conditions further afield in the Solent. We did not have to wait until the race started to experience drama and excitement for right before our very eyes a long red, white and blue Class I hull could be seen being hauled back out of the water.

'I don't race without the owner, was the explanation from Harold 'Smitty' Smith, throttleman of the Peter Stuyvesant boat, which was now safely ensconced on her trailer — and that was final. He could have taken the boat out without Ted Toleman, but Smitty was adamant. Toleman himself was unfortunately unable to race owing to illness within his family, so the boat lay dormant.

## FRESH STRAWBERRIES!!

This move, though, rekindled hopes in Class I other quarters, namely the Hewitts entourage of Peter Hewitt, Chris Blight, Rosalind Wright and Philippa Niel-Mee and the BEF band (Gerv Brazier, Tony Howe and David Hagan) who suddenly saw a spot at the end of the rainbow.

Aquaglide (Robert Cook & Jo Donohoo), back again since her reappearance three races ago at Poole, decided after initially entering Class I and II to opt for the latter, thus renewing her longstanding battle with

Romans Sabre (John Craxford & Chris Kaye).

It was not long before the competitors headed off for the start line, and I went in search of a Press Boat. An abortive move indeed, and as the committee and spectator boats disappeared over the horizon, so did the rest of my afternoon's sport as a spectator. Even a radio for updated information was hard to come by.

Determined to find something more than 2lbs of strawberries from the afternoon, this was definitely a case of gleaning information after the race had actually happened. Fortunately in the case of Ian Birnie and Alan Baldwin this was simple enough as they were grinning from ear to ear. Their previous problems with broken props had happily been resolved and a good start helped Miss Avia Watches to victory from Fayanagin III, driven by the Toleman twins Mike and Gary.

Steve Pile and Andy Dunjay split the floor of Harvester Bread and that left the way open in Class III B for Fibretiger (Mike Kitcher and Debbie Jones).

Peter Bloomfield's bid to win the IIC championships over here in England gained another boost as he and navigator Neil Holmes steered Heynes for Toyota to victory in their class.

An ecstatic Hewitts team were beaming as they discovered they had won Class I, a first ever offshore victory for the girls in the team. Class II honours and first overall went to Romans Sabre, who had overcome their engine problems experienced at Great Yarmouth, giving them instead to Aquaglide, who returned with only one

engine functioning. Gerv and Hagan also had trouble and were forced to retire in B.E.F., the boat being used to qualify for world points.

## JOVIAL ATMOSPHERE

The cruiser entry, although smaller than normal, still had its fair share of incidents. David Graham-Smith, in Haze Twice As Fresh, was forced to retire only half a lap from home with oil pressure problems, leaving Disprin The Fast One and Colin Stewart and Norman Bennett to take the honours in Cruiser Class A.

Perhaps the best performance of all came from Day Cruiser The Cheetah, which is the smallest cruiser racing. Robert Hunt and Ian Tethridge are racing The Cheetah purely to promote the boat, an 18' Mayfair Marine Hull powered by a single 140 hp Mercruiser. They came 4th overall and won their class (DCA).

Another victory for the Rampage team, Spirit of Canada, who seem to be enjoying their winning streak, gave them the spoils in Cruiser Class B.

There was, as usual, a jovial atmosphere later in the day when at the Royal Southern Yacht Club prize giving Tim Powell received a momento for the best performance from someone who was a member of the club. Powell had braved the seas in the IID rig, Wadham Stringer, which nearly caught fire at one stage, and there was a loud cheer as sportsman Tim went up to collect his prize. The Cougar Southern Speed Trophy went to Ian Birnie and Alan Baldwin — about time these lads were up collecting prizes again!