

# Classic Boat™

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OCTOBER 2005



## Colour of Summer

At play in the Solent

**Trafalgar dispatch  
boat HMS Pickle**

**Nearly lost... Blue  
Saluki's resurrection**

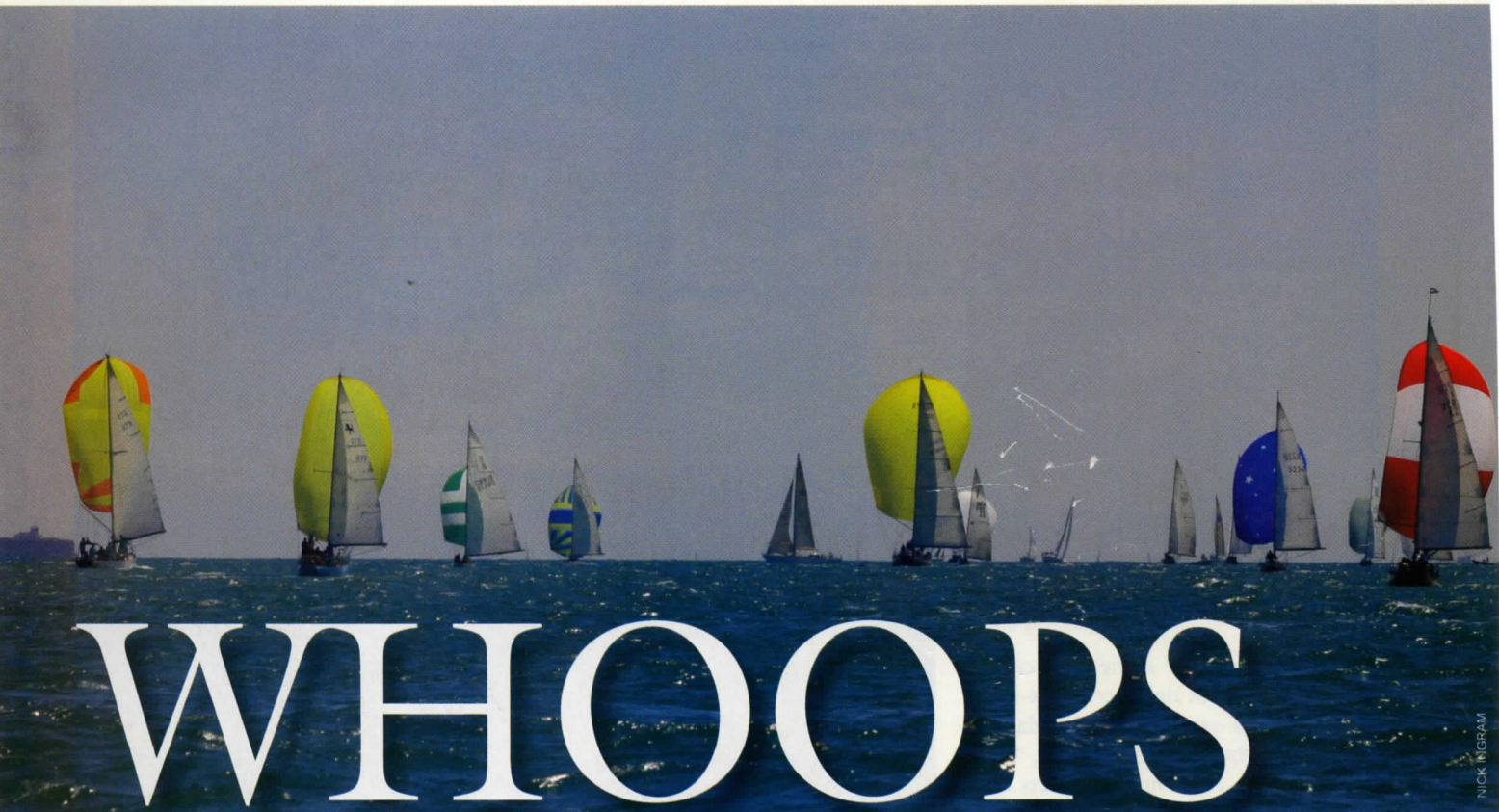
**Swedish Yacht Club  
celebrates 175th**

**The Brixham trawler  
and all her kids**

**Learning radar**



**Building our perfect tender: series begins**



# WHOOOPS and bangs



*Drumbeat was the largest boat in the Cruiser class*

Was it the learning curve as this still-young club got serious about its racing, or just the full moon? The BCYC's fourth annual regatta was certainly lively as high winds caused unpredictable 'tactics'

Words by *Paul Janes*. Photos by *Paul Janes* and *Nick Ingram*



The crew of *A Day at the Races*, the 1966 Peter Nicholson bermudan sloop, enjoyed... well, a day at the races

This summer saw the most dramatic and best attended – to date – of the British Classic Yacht Club’s annual regattas. Traditionally a round-the-Isle-of-Wight race, it was changed to a long Solent course due to high winds – conditions were boisterous with a 15-knot NW wind gusting to over 30 knots. The fleet, which included competitors from Ireland, Belgium and the East and West Coasts of the UK, sustained damage including broken masts, leaking garboards, bent rudders and some less serious breakages. Classic yachts they may be, but they are raced hard.

During that Wednesday’s first race, *Cereste*, a 39ft 6in (12.1m) Robert Clark Mystery design, suffered a bad collision. Owner Jonathan Dyke, who also organises the Suffolk Yacht Harbour Classic Regatta, explained: “It was caused by a misjudgement. We were approaching the Lymington race mark close-hauled with the spinnaker ready to fly, when we were hit so hard by another yacht her bow went across to the other side of our cockpit. It was lucky no one was hurt.” Though delayed, they managed to sort out the mess, round the



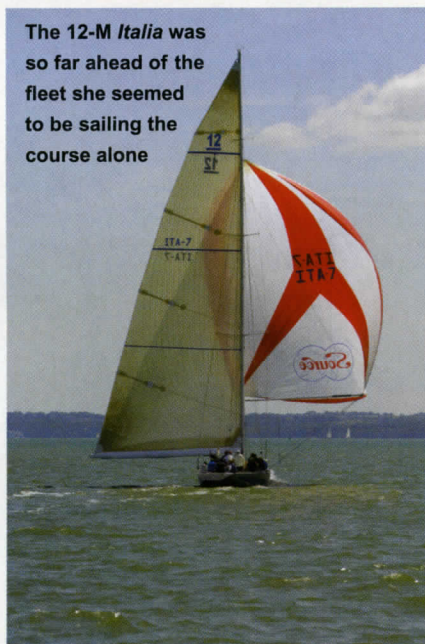
*Cetewayo*, beautifully restored by current owner David Murrin, shows off her eye-catching red sails



mark and hoist the spinnaker. They closed the finishing line clocking 9.5 knots with Jonathan at the wheel, “assessing the damage as the crew threw off bits of damaged boat”. The impact squashed the toerail, tore the guardrails, bent the pushpit and pulpit, and buckled the wheel where the steering pedestal was hit. Back in Cowes, they worked through the night to have the boat back in racing condition the next morning. “Some competitors thought we were finished for the week,” Jonathan mused. *Cereste* went on to be overall winner of the regatta.

The week-long regatta and rally had an overall entry of 37 boats of which 26 had final placings. It was the largest fleet to attend the event, and a respectable growth compared to the 10 participants of the first regatta in 2002. The Racing class this year included a wide range of Metre boats – the

**The 12-M *Italia* was so far ahead of the fleet she seemed to be sailing the course alone**



PAUL JAMES

12-M *Italia*, a 30-SqM, three 8-Ms, eight 6-Ms and a 5-M. The Cruiser Racer and Cruiser classes had another 21 boats, the smallest *Rella*, a C&N dayboat, and the largest *Drumbeat*, at 58ft (17.6m).

Crews' experience was equally diverse. While one crew was pleased just to complete their first race, others went flat out. Although there were no formal protests, race officer Ian Lallow and the race committee were praised for managing such a varied fleet. Six races were held in conditions from strong winds to light airs. There were many moments to savour: *Cetewayo* thundering along in the lead during Wednesday's Solent race in 35 knots of wind, flying her asymmetric spinnaker ahead of the Metre boats; *Italia*, so far ahead in one race she seemed to be sailing the course alone, or the crew of *John Dory*, performing an exuberant Mexican wave.



**JOHN DORY**

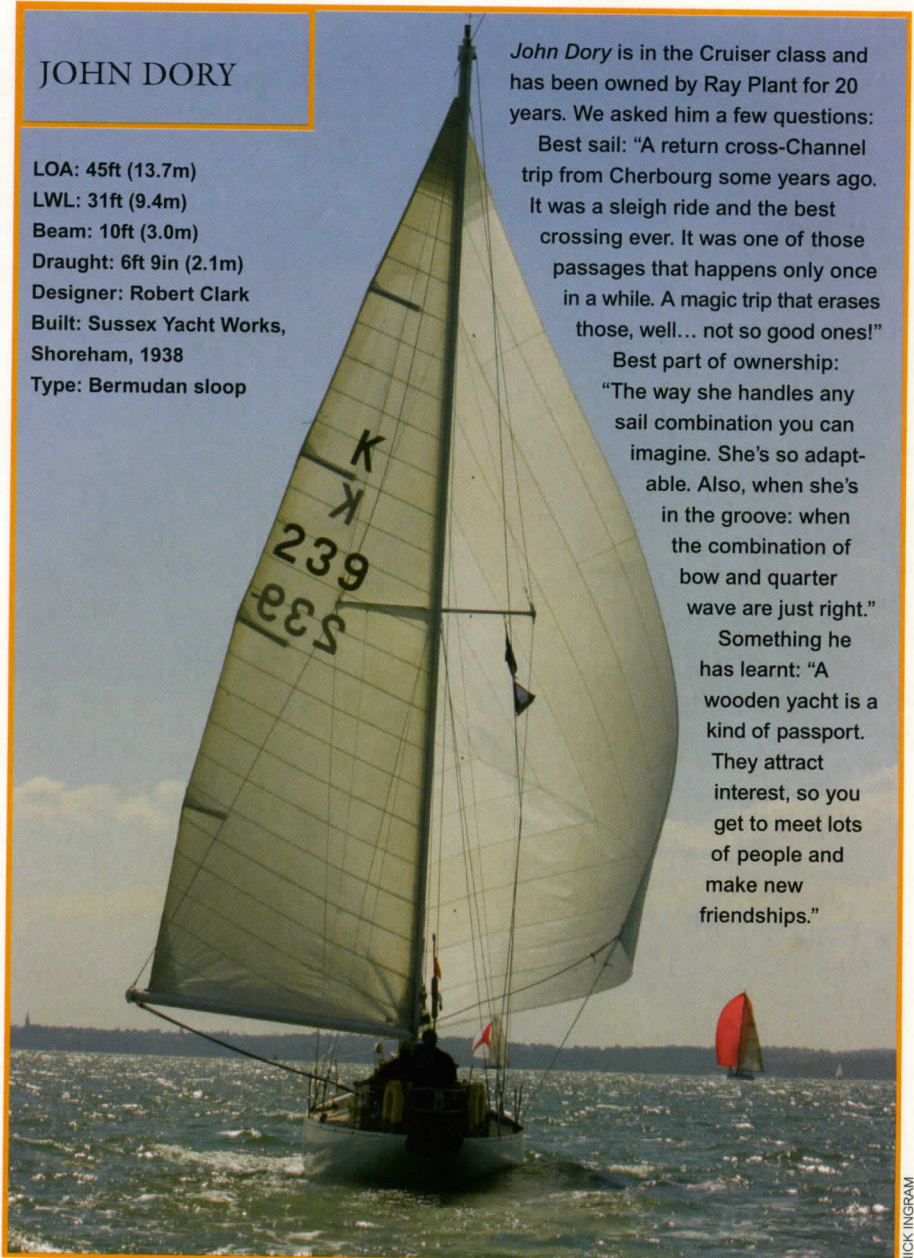
LOA: 45ft (13.7m)  
 LWL: 31ft (9.4m)  
 Beam: 10ft (3.0m)  
 Draught: 6ft 9in (2.1m)  
 Designer: Robert Clark  
 Built: Sussex Yacht Works,  
 Shoreham, 1938  
 Type: Bermudan sloop

*John Dory* is in the Cruiser class and has been owned by Ray Plant for 20 years. We asked him a few questions:

**Best sail:** "A return cross-Channel trip from Cherbourg some years ago. It was a sleigh ride and the best crossing ever. It was one of those passages that happens only once in a while. A magic trip that erases those, well... not so good ones!"

**Best part of ownership:** "The way she handles any sail combination you can imagine. She's so adaptable. Also, when she's in the groove: when the combination of bow and quarter wave are just right."

Something he has learnt: "A wooden yacht is a kind of passport. They attract interest, so you get to meet lots of people and make new friendships."



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The social programme included informal rallies on the Solent, a concert attended by 260 people at the Royal Corinthian YC in Cowes, and the prize-giving dinner which included the presentation of new trophies.

In charge of the racing, Vice-Commodore and founder member David Murrin said that new clubs start with a keen membership who have great fun racing but soon become serious. It's then the whoops and bangs happen and competitors need to be reminded of the rules for everyone's safety. But, he added more lightly, this year he was inclined to put unusual race behaviour down to a full moon during regatta week.

Although the fleet started from one line this year, not all boats conform to a single measurement rule. David is keen for the whole fleet to have IRC rating certificates, to give a clearer indication of crafts' racing performance. He believes



*Charm of Rhu*, the 1963 Archie MacMillan 8-Metre cruiser racer

NICK INGRAM

"there's no such thing as a bit of fun on the water" as everyone becomes competitive however seldom they race.

Others think there should be two fleets: one for those serious racers and another for the less experienced. Discussion among members is alive and well, which is encouraging for the club's founders who hope, eventually, to provide the best racing in the world for classic yachts. At present, only the BCYC and the Suffolk YHC Yacht Regatta provide racing for these craft in the UK. Although other regattas exist in Europe, David says they don't have such good racing or even as clear a handicap system as the BCYC advocates.

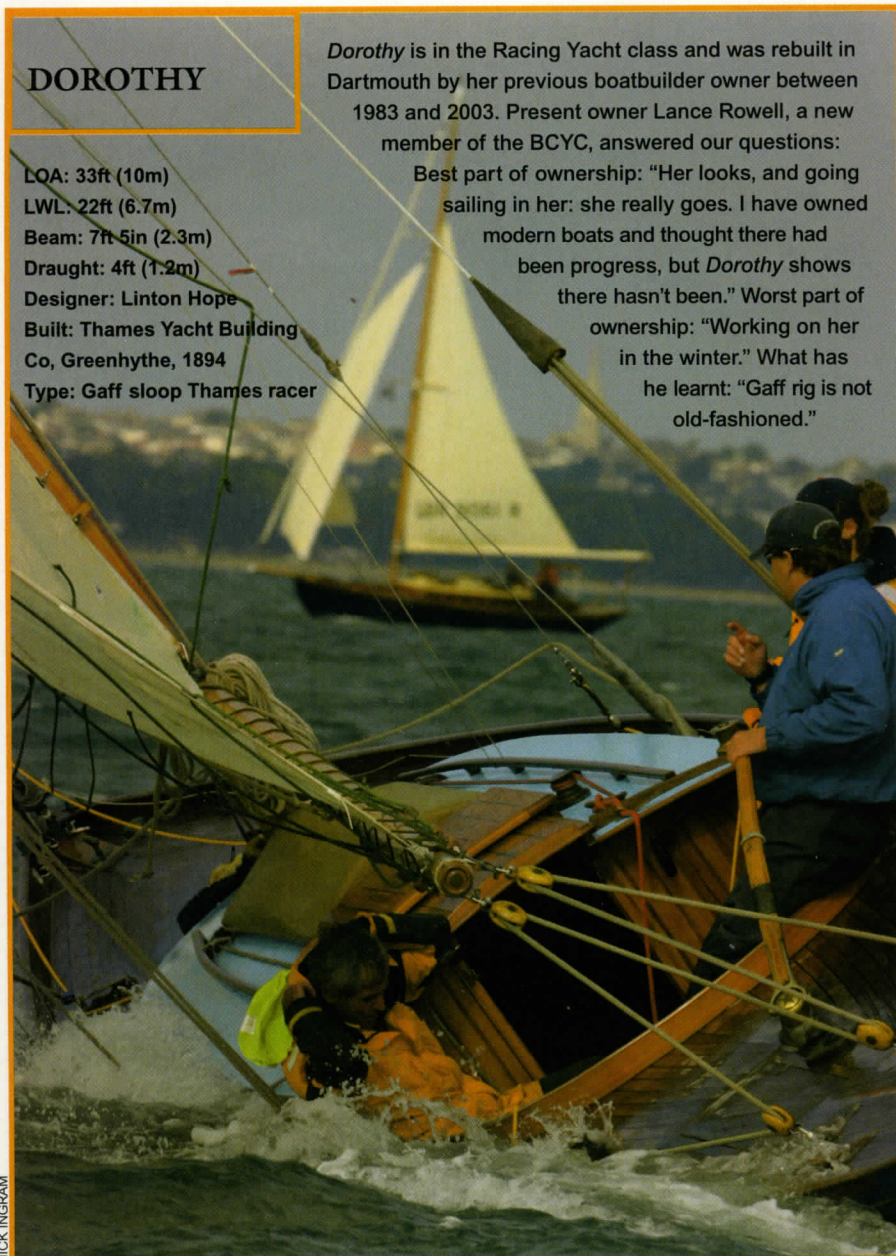
Earlier this year the club formed East and West Coast divisions, and hopes to expand regionally throughout the UK and possibly further afield. "It will help people meet up from different areas and add to the pleasure

## DOROTHY

LQA: 33ft (10m)  
 LWL: 22ft (6.7m)  
 Beam: 7ft 5in (2.3m)  
 Draught: 4ft (1.2m)  
 Designer: Linton Hope  
 Built: Thames Yacht Building  
 Co, Greenhythe, 1894  
 Type: Gaff sloop Thames racer

*Dorothy* is in the Racing Yacht class and was rebuilt in Dartmouth by her previous boatbuilder owner between 1983 and 2003. Present owner Lance Rowell, a new member of the BCYC, answered our questions:

Best part of ownership: "Her looks, and going sailing in her: she really goes. I have owned modern boats and thought there had been progress, but *Dorothy* shows there hasn't been." Worst part of ownership: "Working on her in the winter." What has he learnt: "Gaff rig is not old-fashioned."



NICK INGRAM



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of owning and sailing these classics", explained Commodore and founder member Tim Blackman. The BCYC membership boasts 60 boats – remarkable for a new club considering more established clubs that strive to keep existing numbers. So what is the attraction? It's about the boats, Tim replies: "We aim to gather British-built or registered classic yachts because a large number of these have been lost from the UK during the last 50 years." They have either gone abroad – and those still sailing he hopes to attract to the club – or they have been destroyed or left to rot.


An example is *Cetewayo* (named after a king of the Zulu nation), which David Murrin found derelict 16 years ago and which is now beautifully restored. Tim notes that until the BCYC there was no single club in the UK focusing on these types of classic yachts – primarily offshore

bermudan racers, cruiser racers and cruiser yachts. BCYC membership applies only to yachts, and criteria include condition, style, design, history and size, which has to be over 8m (26ft 3in) LOD.

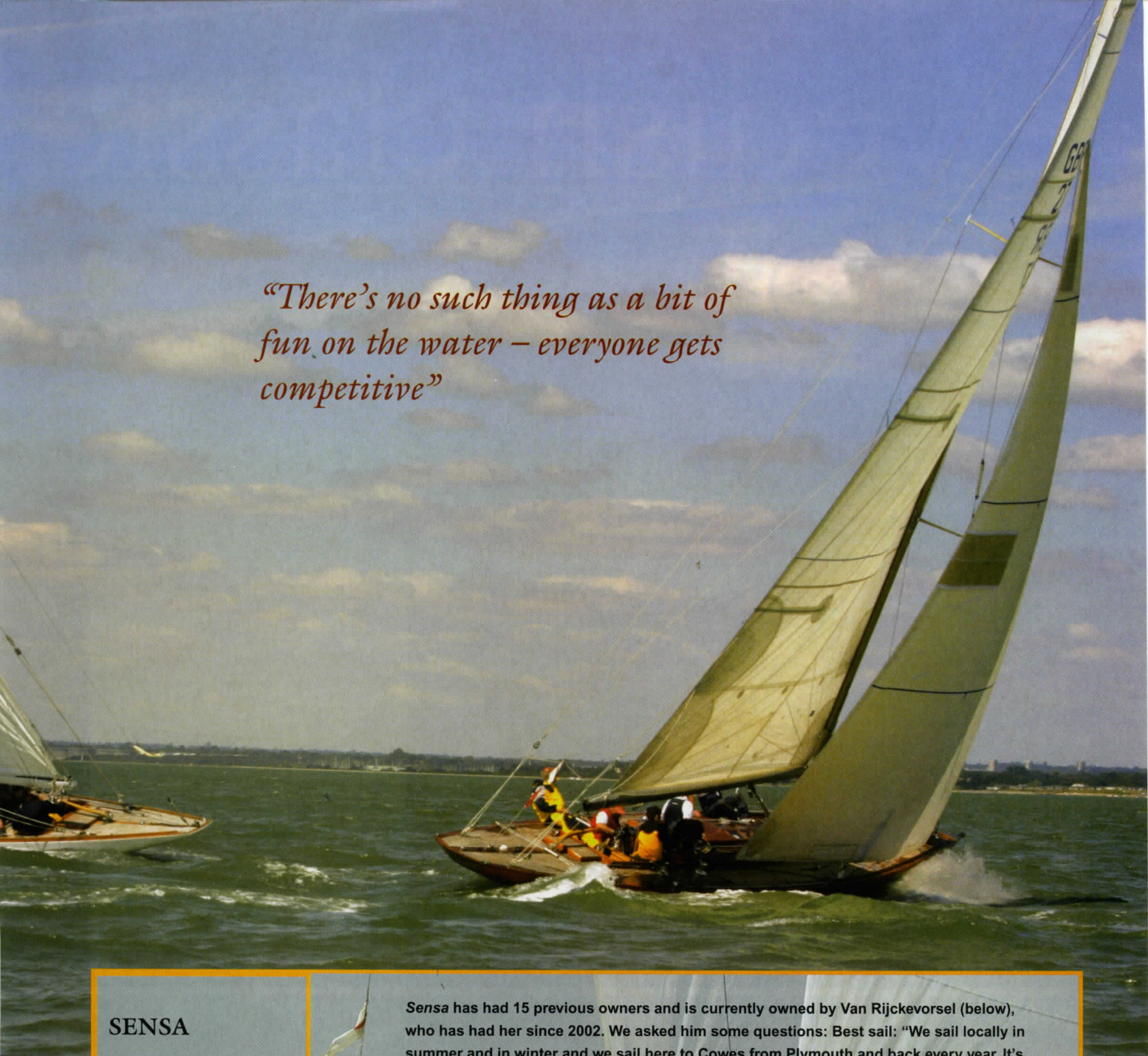
Owners who want to join present their yachts to a committee for ratification. The criteria may seem a little daunting, and possibly vague, to someone unsure of their craft's suitability, but Tim and David argue they are unable to have specific criteria if the club is to be as inclusive as possible of all types of classic yachts. Aware that the 8m requirement may exclude some notable yachts, Tim hopes to relax this rule once the club becomes more established. The basic tenet has been to encourage classic yachts in the UK and the range and types of yachts already in the membership attest to this. "We are based in Britain," Tim said, "but we want to encourage the continuing

existence of all classic yachts." The club welcomes classic yachts from any designer, built and owned in any country. If you are interested in joining, a chat with Tim or David is a good first step.

During the Annual Regatta there is also an open invitation for classic yachts to try the BCYC but you don't have to own one to join – associate membership is available for £25 which one associate member described as "jolly good value for money" because, he added, it allowed him to sail on everyone else's boats without the expense of maintaining one himself. The rule also gives owners a supply of willing crew.

A succinct observation about the BCYC came from a new member who was concerned the club might be "a bit too classy". Instead he found a bunch of friendly sailing enthusiasts keen to have a good time. Sounds about right. 

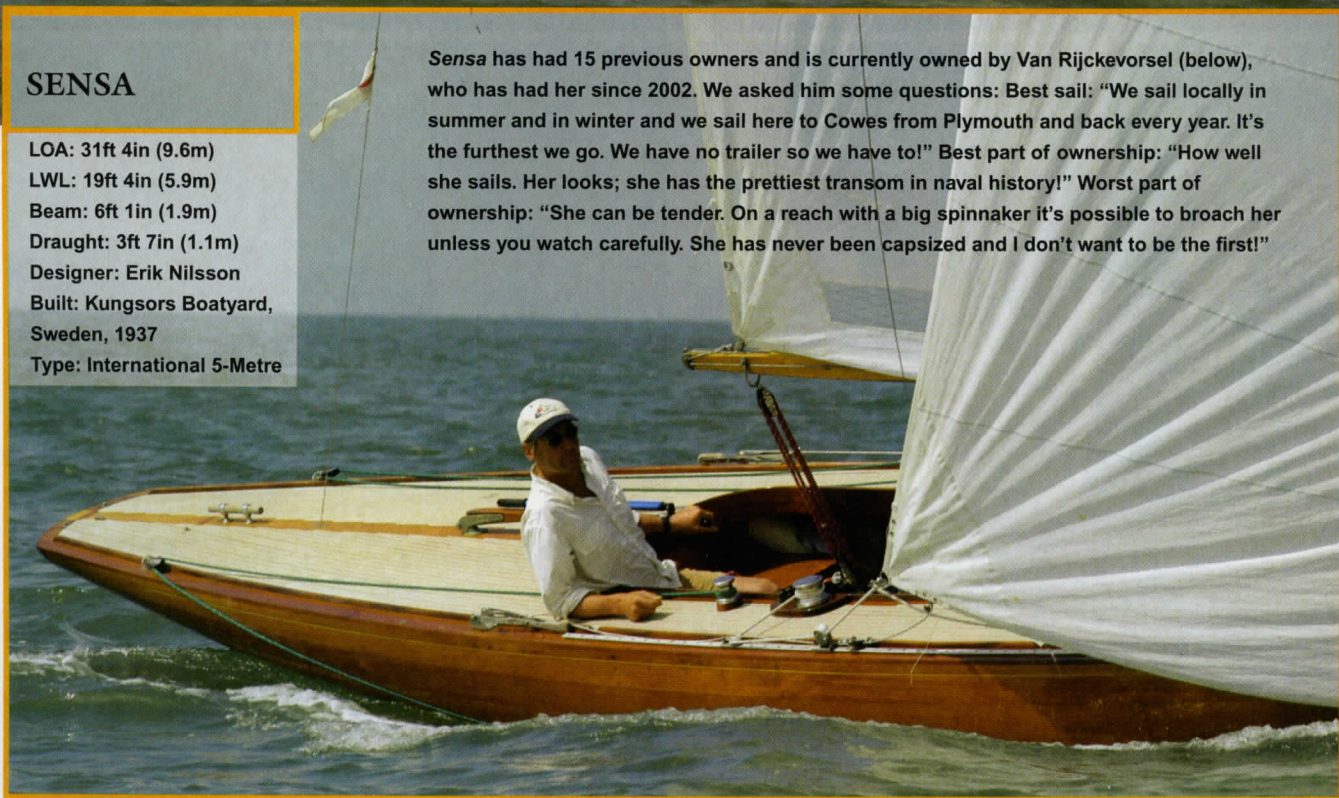
*"There's no such thing as a bit of fun on the water – everyone gets competitive"*



## SENSA

LOA: 31ft 4in (9.6m)  
LWL: 19ft 4in (5.9m)  
Beam: 6ft 1in (1.9m)  
Draught: 3ft 7in (1.1m)  
Designer: Erik Nilsson  
Built: Kungsors Boatyard,  
Sweden, 1937  
Type: International 5-Metre

*Sensa* has had 15 previous owners and is currently owned by Van Rijckevorsel (below), who has had her since 2002. We asked him some questions: Best sail: "We sail locally in summer and in winter and we sail here to Cowes from Plymouth and back every year. It's the furthest we go. We have no trailer so we have to!" Best part of ownership: "How well she sails. Her looks; she has the prettiest transom in naval history!" Worst part of ownership: "She can be tender. On a reach with a big spinnaker it's possible to broach her unless you watch carefully. She has never been capsized and I don't want to be the first!"



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