

NOVEMBER 2002 ■ 7

HYDROFOILS ■ HOVERCRAFT ■ CATAMARANS

classic fast ferries

Italian
Jumbos

Gulf of Naples
SR.N6s

From UK to Thailand
by hydrofoil



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RHS 70s travel 8,500 nautical miles under their own power

Above: *The two RHS 70s shortly before departure from Southampton in September, having been prepared for their three month cruise halfway round the world to Thailand (MIKAEL ERIKSSON)*

The pair of former Red Funnel RHS 70 hydrofoils *Shearwater 5* and *Shearwater 6* which left Southampton, U.K. for Thailand at the beginning of September are slowly but steadily getting closer to their destination. Unusually for a small design such as the RHS 70, the two hydrofoils are making the entire trip, some 8,500 nautical miles, under their own power.

The idea, the new owner, Kon-Tiki Diving, reports, is to use the craft to transfer tourists from Kaho Lak in mainland Thailand to the Similan Islands, lying approximately 35 nautical off shore in the Andaman Sea, and as a fast dive boat to reach some of the better dive sites within a day.

One of the main concerns for the transit between the continents, which has to be the longest ever voyage for a hydrofoil not traveling as deck cargo, was the only 600 liter fuel capacity of the RHS 70.

This was increased to 6,000 liters by temporarily removing a number of seats to make room for twenty-four 200-liter diesel drums and thirty 20-liter plastic jerry cans. As a result, the hydrofoils run at hullborne speed, normally around 7-9 knots, for big parts of the journey, and only get foilborne when the fuel is down to some 3,500 liters, and of course weather permitting.

MORE PAGE 6 ▶▶

Below: *A pantry with hot plates and a refrigerator/deep freezer, etc. has been installed behind the bridge on both craft (MIKAEL ERIKSSON)*



cover: SNAV RHS 200 *Superjumbo* (right) and W95 catamaran *Martini Bianco* in Napoli Mergellina in September 1987. Rodriguez's largest hydrofoil design, the RHS 200 is still to be found in the area (TIM TIMOLEON)



Sole KF Flying Cat 40m Wide Body catamaran introduced in the West Indies

A vessel with an interesting background entered service in the Caribbean in September.

Originally completed by Norwegian fast ferry builder Kværner Fjellstrand as its prototype FoilCat foil assisted catamaran in 1991, it was converted to a Flying Cat 40m Wide Body catamaran – also the only built and so designated because of its almost 2m larger breadth as compared to the standard Flying Cat 40m – in 1995.

As built the twin deck vessel featured fully submerged foils; a

Above: *Kværner Fjellstrand Flying Cat 40m Wide Body catamaran Calypso I entered service with Mermaid Fast Ferries in the US Virgin Islands in September. It is seen here coming into Galloway Bay harbor, St. Croix (DAVID ELLIOT)*

large T-foil forward on each hull and a full width foil aft. Cruising at 45-50 knots under normal operating conditions, the FoilCat would fly some 0.6m above the sea. Power was supplied by a pair of General Electric LM500 gas turbines, each driving a Kamewa S80 waterjet. The intakes for the waterjets were incorporated in the struts of the aft foil.

The prototype never entered revenue service. However, the project bore fruit some time later as an order for two smaller 35m FoilCats were placed by Hong Kong operator Far East Hydrofoil towards the end of 1993. These were delivered in May 1995.

Simultaneously the foils on the prototype were removed and while keeping its original waterjets, the vessel was refitted with MTU 16V 396 TE74L diesels as well as

Kværner's Motion Dampening System.

Laid out for 374 passengers the catamaran was acquired by Black Sea Shipping and, named *Evrídika*, put into service on an international route in the Black Sea linking Varna, Bulgaria and Istanbul, Turkey in October of that year.

It has since operated under charter to companies in Portugal, the Balearics and Malta before returning to Norway.

Last year a Norwegian company, Nordic Express, announced it was to lease *Evrídika* for an inter-Scandinavia route in the Skagerrak between Arendal on Norway's south-east coast and Strömstad, Sweden. These plans fell through however.

MORE PAGE 18



Leonardo Lella, a pilot and consultant in aero-maritime matters, and a pro-
hovercrafter, has talked to some of the persons
who were part of the first-ever commercial
SR.N6 operation in Italy in the 60s,
including one of the captains, Mr. Pandolfi,
who also provided the unique never before
published photos appearing with this article

Hovering across the Bay of Naples



For all the obvious reasons, fast ferries, not surprisingly in the form of hydrofoils, came early to the Golfo di Napoli.

But it was not until eight years after the first PT.50 had appeared in the area that a scheduled passenger service using hovercraft was introduced between Napoli and the picturesque islands of Capri and Ischia.

A Napoli based company, Aeronave S.p.A., had been formed to operate two 40-seat SR.N6, or Winchester Class, hovercraft built by British Hovercraft Corporation at its Itchen, Southampton plant. The first of

these, No. 018 in the production line, was shipped to Italy from the U.K in April 1967 and entered revenue service in the Gulf of Naples on July 1st. A second (# 028) followed in August.

The craft would operate every day of the week until mid-October, at an average crossing completing the 18 nautical miles to either Capri or Ischia in approximately 25 minutes, as compared to 40 mins. by hydrofoil and 80 mins. by conventional ferry. According to Mr. Pandolfi, at occasions when conditions got too bad for the hydrofoils to operate, the SR.N6s



Opposite: The first of Aeronave's SR.N6s at Napoli's Diaz rotunda. Standing in the top hatched door giving access to the craft is capt. Pandolfi

Left+Below: The hovercraft on arrival in the Canary Islands in 1968, following their operation in the Gulf of Naples

Bottom: Capt. Pandolfi on the small gangway of SR.N6 018 at the pad in Napoli
(ALL PHOTOS COLLECTION OF CAPT. PANDOLFI)

would continue doing so, albeit at reduced speed. And probably at reduced comfort to passengers (and crew) as well, although no severe seasickness was ever noted.

Four pilots were hired by Aeronave for the service. These received one month of training at hovercraft handling at BHC in England prior to the service start-up in the Gulf. In Italy, like elsewhere where this mode of transportation was introduced in the early days, there was some doubt as to whether the hovercraft was to be considered an airplane or a ship. Incidentally, this, whether intentional or not, was reflected by the company name; Aero(Air)nave(ship). At the time the operating licence for commercial hovercraft in Italy was granted by the aeronautics authorities.



Mechanical reliability of the two Italian craft was good. Some engine trouble associated with sea water penetration and hydraulic failure due to cable leaks were experienced, as was normal skirt wear. There was however some dissatisfaction among locals, particularly in the islands, with the noise level generated by the crafts' engine and propeller and also the spray they produced.

Passenger response, too, was good. Still, the service did not survive. The relatively small size, only 14.7m in length, and capacity, 40 passengers, of the craft being part of the reason. For comparison, the smallest hydrofoil in service in Italy, the PT.20 in its standard version, had an overall length of 20.7m and carried some 70 passengers.

After the second season of operation, June to October 1968, both SR.N6s were chartered back to BHC

and taken to the Canary Islands for demonstrations.

While at the time the Gulf of Naples service may not have been declared dead it was not resumed the following year.



MORE OVERLEAF

Hovering across the Bay of Naples

Aeronave's first craft, SR.N6 018, ended its active days less than two years later – and only three-and-a-half years after it had been launched – following an accident in south-west Africa. After leases to Hovertravel and Hoverwork in the U.K., the other unit, SR.N6 028, was written off and subsequently scrapped in 1975.

The SR.N6 was the follow-up to the smaller SR.N5 Warden Class hovercraft, the first of which appeared in 1964. A total of fifty-five SR.N6s in different versions for both commercial and non-commercial use were launched between 1965 and 1982. ■

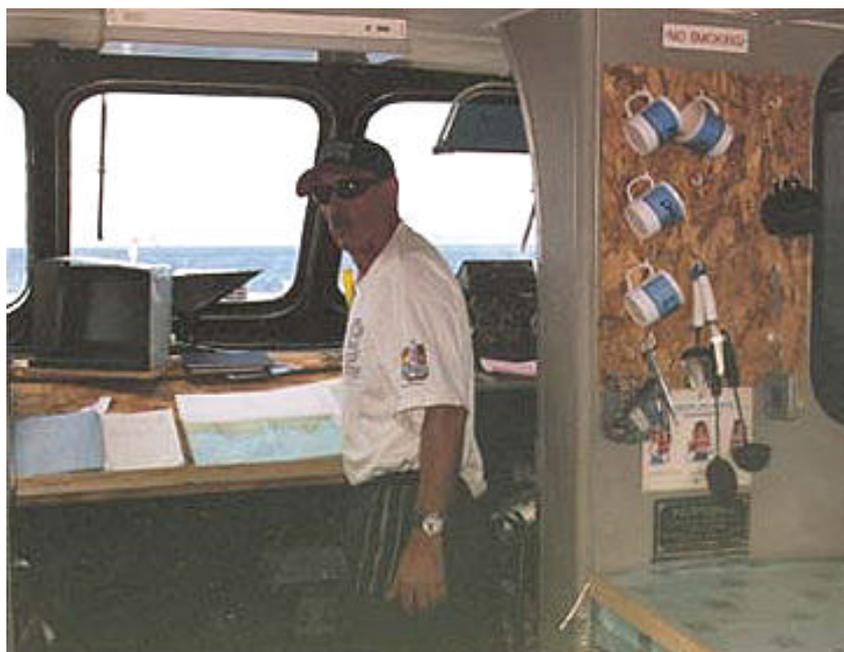
SR.N6
BRITISH HOVERCRAFT CORP.

LENGHT OVERALL 14.7m
BEAM 7m
CABIN:
length 6.6m
breadth 2.3m
PASSENGERS 38/40
WEIGHT 10 grt
PROPULSION 1 x Rolls-Royce Marine Gnome gas turbine, driving a 12-blade centrifugal lift fan and 4-blade propeller
MAX SPEED, normal conditions 52 knots



RHS 70s travel . . .

(cont'd from page 2)



A particularly interesting flight, says Jonas Stiernström, in charge of the vessels while en route, was foiling in the Suez Canal at 35 knots, the local pilot holding on very tight to his seat!

Each hydrofoil is manned by a crew of four, the members of which originate from as diverse places as Australia, Canada, Denmark, Great Britain and Sweden.

At the time of this issue being published, the vessels should have now reached India after having

completed the 1,050 nautical mile crossing of the Arab Sea from Salalah, Oman to Bombay. From here the journey continues south along India's west coast to Sri Lanka, dead east to Indonesia and finally Thailand.

Since the hydrofoils left the Solent on September 8th the route and stop-overs have been as follows: Poole, England; Viviero in northern Spain; Lisbon; Gibraltar; Tunisia; Malta; Crete; Port Said at the mouth of the Suez Canal, Egypt; the Suez; Sharem el Sheikh at the southern tip of the Sinai peninsula;

MORE PAGE 17 



Top: A large chart board has been installed on the bridge on Shearwater 6. In addition, each hydrofoil has a laptop connected to a GPS with electronic charts (MIKAEL ERIKSSON)

Left: One of the crew is slipping into a frogman's outfit and preparing himself to dive under Shearwater 6 to remove a berthing buoy which got entangled in the vessel's propeller during mooring at low tide at Poole (MIKAEL ERIKSSON)

THE ITALIAN JUMBOS



CONTINUING
OUR REVIEWS
IN *classic
fast ferries*
OF SOME OF
THE WORLD'S
LARGEST
COMMERCIAL
SEA-GOING
HYDROFOILS,
THE TURN HAS
COME TO THE
RODRIGUEZ
CANTIERE
NAVALE
RHS 200.
THE DESIGNS
FEATURED IN
PAST ISSUES
WERE THE
FEODOSIYA
SHIPBUILDING
CYCLONE
(*January
2001 CFF*) AND
SUPRAMAR /
WESTERMOEN
HYDROFOIL
PT.150 (*April
2002 CFF*)

BIG IS BEAUTIFUL

Compared to today's fast ferries which tend to get only bigger and faster with each new design, the RHS 200 may no longer look that impressive or turn heads. But there was a time when it was being considered a jumbo. And, contrary to many a fast ferry which has appeared since, it still is beautiful. This picture shows Superjumbo in its early days sitting in the Rodriquez yard in Messina
(LORENZO BONASERA)

S RHS 200



The first RHS 200, *Superjumbo*, was delivered to Aliscafi SNAV, the associate operating company of Rodriquez, in 1981 – five years before the Cyclone and thirteen years after the first PT.150 entered service. Two more PT.150s followed from the Norwegian builder in 1970 whereas only the one Cyclone has been completed to date.

Visually the exterior appearance of the nearly 36m in length 130-ton RHS 200 is very similar to the smaller standard-version Rodriquez RHS 160F but in reality is not an upgraded version of the latter as this did not appear until 1985. Rather the RHS 200 was a continuation of the significantly smaller 50-ton 100-passenger RHS 110 and 65-ton 125-passenger RHS 140 designs, which were built by the yard in 1971/72 and from 1971 to 1977 respectively. The larger 85-ton 160-passenger RHS 160 type was not added to the Rodriquez portfolio, at least not officially, until after the RHS

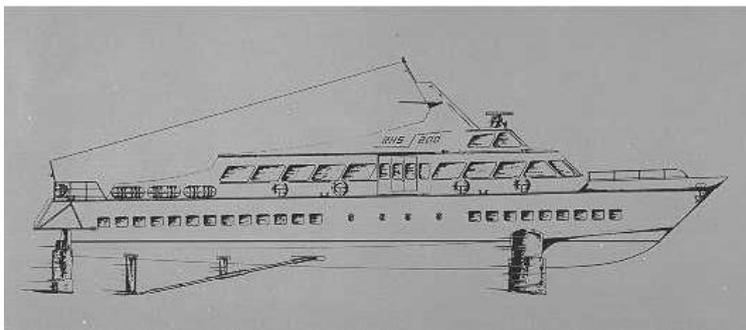
200 was announced but did indeed appear in the real world seven years before the latter. In its original version the RHS 160 was in production between 1974 and 1980.

Planning for an RHS 200 started much earlier than the delivery date of the prototype would suggest though. When announced in 1970, the stylish design would have a length overall of 35.3m, a deck beam of 6.8m, a displacement of 100 tons and carry up to 190 passengers in three main saloons plus a lounge area on two decks at 40 knots. As the 70s went on the structure grew somewhat in size and passenger capacity was increased to 262 in a commuter configuration, less in the standard version, mainly by extending the superstructure to allow for more passengers to be seated on main deck – which a majority seems to prefer. However, the design's original excellent exterior lines and nice proportions did not suffer from these modifications.

A patrol version, designated M600, sharing the main particulars of the commercial RHS 200 but of course differing in the rest was also developed and presented in the late 70s, at which time the yard was known as Cantiere Navaltecnica (it would later re-adopt the Rodriguez name). This would have a payload capacity of 40 tons and feature a helicopter landing platform aft.

THE LOYAL WORKHORSE

When the actual prototype RHS 200 emerged in 1981 it had an overall length of 35.8m, a fully loaded displacement of 130 tons and was fitted out with 254 aircraft-style seats in very attractive surroundings in four saloons, 120 of which in the main, or Belvedere, deck cabins. In a commuter variant the vessel would accommodate up to 400 passengers; a number which was later reduced to 310. No such version was ever ordered though, and to date only a second RHS 200 was built. The raised wheelhouse was designed for a crew of three consisting of captain, chief engineer and first mate.



Early profile impression of the RHS 200 (CANTIERE NAVALTECNICA)

main photo: Both RHS 200s have had a number of different paint schemes applied to them over the years. While the red may look refreshing on Superjumbo, the dark all-blue hull does not (TIM TIMOLEON)

inset: The main deck bow saloon on Superjumbo



RHS 200



opposite + below: *Aliscafi Scandinavia/CittiShips operated the second RHS 200 built, San Cristobal II, in Denmark from June 1991 to February 1993. The center strut of the W bow foil is clearly visible in the opposite picture (MIKKEL ELLING, both)*
small picture: *The bridge on the RHS 200 (RODRIQUEZ CANTIERE NAVALE)*



Like all Rodriquez hydrofoils, the RHS 200 is of the surface-piercing type, however, with a W-foil forward rather than the V-shaped used for the earlier designs (prior to the RHS 160). An advantage of the W bow foil is its relatively shallow draft requirement in relation to the vessel's overall size. Hydraulically operated flaps on the trailing edge of the bow foil assist take-off and adjust the flying height.

Motive power is supplied by two supercharged MTU 16V 652TB71 4-stroke diesels, each with a max output of 2,600hp at 1,460 rpm under normal operating conditions, driving two bronze-aluminum propellers, giving the vessel a service speed of 35-36 knots. In the early days gas turbine propulsion for this class was being considered.

Production time from start to finish for the RHS 200 is between 16 to 20 months. Chances for any more RHS 200s being built are slim however as the design is no longer being offered by Rodriquez but has been replaced by the 31m 225-seat Foilmaster hydrofoil, the fourth of which was delivered earlier this year. A projected Foilmaster Mk 2 seating 352 passengers which was indeed to be a restyled RHS 200 successor appears also to have been shelved.

The prototype, *Superjumbo*, has spent most if in fact not all of its life so far

in the Bay of Naples and Sicily. Designed with long range open-water routes in mind, originally it entered service on the 165 nautical mile route between Napoli and Palermo, also calling at the island of Ustica, offering a travel time of 5 hours. If this sounds a rather long time being spent on a hydrofoil, it should be compared to the overnight ferry or 11-13 hour train journey of the time.

This past summer *Superjumbo* was being operated on another long route, between Napoli and the Eolie Islands off Sicily's north-east coast. But for many years it was the first-choice vessel on the Napoli-Capri run. Its greater capacity as compared to that of the operator's PT.50s was particularly welcome during the peak season before the arrival of the RHS 160/RHS 160Fs in the Gulf and, more recently, SNAV's massive acquisition of catamarans.

AND THE TRAVELING IDLER

If *Superjumbo* has been true to its home country and highly utilized for the twenty-one years that has passed since its launch, the other RHS 200 has been more of a rolling stone. Still, this has not been used nearly as much, having spent far too many hours tied up alongside for long periods of time.



Delivered in 1984 as *Stretto di Messina* the vessel entered service with Aliscafi SNAV on the summer-only Napoli–Eolie Islands route. It was then transferred across the Atlantic to the Caribbean, renamed *San Cristobal* and put into service between Crown Bay in St. Thomas and San Juan in Puerto Rico. It would appear this was not an all together success story, and the vessel was returned to Italy and Rodriquez/SNAV.

During most of 1989–90 *San Cristobal* was chartered to Spanish state-owned operator Tramediterránea to work the lucrative 35-minutes cross-Straits of Gibraltar route between Algeciras and Ceuta in Spanish North Africa.

The following year the hydrofoil traveled north to operate in Denmark on a somewhat longer route, across the Kattegat between Århus and Kalundborg, with Aliscafi Scandinavia, a new Rodriquez subsidiary formed in early 1991.



Originally the service, marketed as Citti Ships, was planned to have been introduced in March 1991 using a newly delivered namesake RHS 160F, however, instead the RHS 200 was allocated to the route, which opened in June. For the Danish service the RHS 200, now renamed *San Cristobal II*, was extensively refurbished including reducing the number of seats by some 45 to a low density layout for 209 passengers – same capacity as that of the RHS 160F, but with more leg room thanks to the craft's larger overall size.



DENIA-IBIZA-PALMA



GERARDO FERRERO photo, both

During the 1994 tourist season the second and last RHS 200 built operated in the Spanish Mediterranean, linking the Balearic Islands of Mallorca and Ibiza and Denia on mainland Spain.

Gerardo Ferrero, who at the time was employed as captain with Flebasa Lines, was one of the first of the Spanish crews to get acquainted with and trained on the RHS 200 for the Balearics service. Ferrero, who used to work on a number of fast ferries running between the islands, has since established his own company, Mediterranea Pitiusa, operating a Westamaran 95 catamaran on the Formentera-Ibiza route which featured in the March 2002 *classic fast ferries*.

On June 1st 1994 Ferrero arrived in Algeciras where *Rápido de Mallorca*, as the vessel had been renamed by Flebasa, was moored at the time. The following three weeks were used to get the vessel prepared for the Balearics service and receive the necessary documents.

On June 24th *Rápido de Mallorca* left Algeciras on its approximately 325 nautical mile positioning trip to Denia where the vessel, including an overnight stop en route, arrived in the evening the following day. The vessel stayed here for another four days before proceeding to Palma de Mallorca.

Revenue service commenced on July 1st with a single crossing in each direction being operated every day of the week. With a total journey time of between 5 hours and 5 hours 30 minutes the hydrofoil would depart Palma at 0800, arriving in Ibiza at 1030, leave again at 1100 and arrive at Denia 1330. The reverse service left Denia at 1600 arriving at Palma de Mallorca at 2100, calling in at Ibiza 1830-1900. According to Ferrero the vessel behaved well and worked perfectly during all summer.

At season's end on September 30th *Rápido de Mallorca* was taken to Cartagena, further down mainland Spain's eastern shoreline, for dry docking and later returned to Algeciras. Following a year long lay-up here and in Gibraltar the vessel reentered service in mid-November 1995 with Flebasa's associate company Isnasa across the Straits of Gibraltar between Algeciras and Ceuta, Spanish North Africa making two round trips a day. It was withdrawn from the route in 1996, reportedly due to mechanical trouble, and has since little if any service since.



San Cristobal II was introduced at a time where the reliability of the Danish state-owned conventional ferry service on the Århus–Kalundborg route was in the gutter and CittiShips initially enjoyed good passenger loads. A second hydrofoil was even transferred from Italy to Denmark to join it the following month. But in mid-February 1993 Aliscafi Scandinavia decided to withdraw from the route as new competition had been introduced during the previous seven months and the market share for CittiShips was becoming too small with now four fast ferries operating in the Kattegat by three different companies.

In the spring of 1994 the hydrofoil returned to Spanish Mediterranean waters. Acquired by another Spanish company, Fletamentos Baleares SA, trading as Flebasa Lines, and renamed *Rápido de Mallorca* it entered service, first, on a long range route connecting the Balearic Islands of Mallorca and Ibiza with mainland Spain and later in the Straits of Gibraltar with Isnasa, an associate company of Flebasa. (*See separate story opposite.*)

Since its arrival in Spain more than eight years ago, the RHS 200 has been idling for more months than it has been up and running. Isnasa, or Isleña de Navegación SA to give the company's full name, went bankrupt in 1998 on which *Rápido de Mallorca* was laid up at Algeciras. Reportedly the vessel has remained unemployed ever since. It continues to be maintained however. ■



Rápido de Mallorca reversing from the berth at Centa to operate the 35-minute crossing to Algeciras in July 1996 ... (ANDERS AHLERUP)

RHS 200

LENGTH OVERALL 35.8m
WIDTH, hull 7.0m
across foils 14.5m
DRAFT, hullborne 4.5m
foilborne 2.0m
DISPLACEMENT, fully loaded 130 t
PROPULSION 2 x MTU 16V 652 TB71 diesels
SPEED, service 35 knots
max 37 knots
RANGE 200 nautical miles
PASSENGERS 200–262

... and being laid up at Algeciras in May 2001 following the closure of Isnasa in 1998, sporting its latest paint scheme (ANDERS AHLERUP)



In a world of constantly growing fast ferries,

Superjumbo

still makes an impressive sight. The prototype
RHS 200 continues to be operated in the Bay of
Naples and Sicily by SNAV
(TIM TIMOLEON)



Hovertravel sells first AP.1-88/100

Hovertravel's demonstrator AP.1-88/100 hovercraft *Idun Viking* has been purchased by F H Bertling to support its operation in the Caspian Sea. The craft was delivered under its own power by its previous owners to Oostend, Belgium on August 24th where it was loaded for shipment to the Caspian Sea. The trip from the Isle of Wight, where the hovercraft was stored, to Oostende took just under 6 hours.

Completed in 1984, the craft was the first production AP.1-88/100 built by British Hovercraft Corporation (two AP.1-88/80s having been delivered prior to it) and originally was being used by BHC for demonstrations. It would be two years before the craft entered a scheduled passenger service however.

In April 1986 the 81-seat hovercraft was transferred to Canada's west coast, having been leased by HoverWest Ferry Services for operation between Victoria, Vancouver Island and Vancouver during Expo '86. Named *Expo Spirit* it operated here from May till September after which it returned to England.

A new lease contract, initially for a 1-year period, then was signed early in 1987 between BHC and a Norwegian company, Hovertransport, which introduced the craft in the Oslo fiord, including serving Oslo Fornebu Airport, in April. However, this, too, would prove a rather short-lived venture and the service was suspended some 6½ months later, in November 1987.

In September the following year the craft was acquired by Danish operator Dampskibsselskabet

Øresund which already operated the second and third production BHC AP.1-88/100s on the Copenhagen Airport–Malmö, Sweden route, introduced in 1984, on behalf of Scandinavian Airline System. Refurbished to SAS requirement and renamed *Idun Viking* it entered service towards the end of 1988.

All three AP.1-88s were laid up in 1994 having been superseded on the route by catamarans.

MORE ►►

Below: *Hovertravel sold the first BHC AP.1-88/100 built, Idun Viking, in August. In the evening of September 7th the hovercraft was spotted at Sebestedt, Germany traveling as deck cargo through the Kiel Canal heading for the Caspian Sea (TERJE MOEN)*



Idun Viking entered service with Hovertravel on the 4 nautical mile route between Ryde on the Isle of Wight and Southsea in 1998 (EDWARD BRIAN DAVIS)



They remained at the DSØ/SAS hovercraft maintenance base at Kastrup for another three years until sold in May 1997 to Hovertravel in the Isle of Wight.

Prior to entering service here in 1998 *Idun Viking* was rebuilt including being fitted out with 98 seats as opposed to the former SAS configuration of 81 Euro Class seats plus catering facilities.

Hovertravel is the world's oldest, and since October 2000 also UK's only, remaining commercial hovercraft operator, having introduced an SR.N6 across the Solent between Ryde, Isle of Wight and Southsea (Portsmouth) on England's south coast in 1965. The first two AP.1-88/80s entered service with Hovertravel in 1983.

The company currently has three operational AP.1-88s, one of which normally is standing by, working the only 4 nautical mile 9/10-minute trip up to 54 times a day. Annual ridership is in the region of 700,000.

Also carried on the deck of *Volzhskiy-8* in the Kiel Canal (Nord-Ostsee Kanal) in September (*photo below*) was another AP.1-88, *Manta*. Designated AP.1-88/300 this was built by NQEA Australia under license from BHC and delivered to Algoa in Angola in western Africa in October 1995. Designed to carry workers and apparatus to and from the Chevron Oil rigs in the Atlantic, *Manta* differs from the standard AP.1-88/100 in having a detachable

passenger cabin aft of the wheelhouse, seating 63, rather than it being part of the superstructure. Thus, when removed the area can be used as an open freight deck, transforming the AP.1-88/300 into a mixed cargo/passenger craft as there are 20 seats forward in a standard-craft bow cabin. In addition, either an hydraulic crane or a 7m swivel gangway incorporating an electromagnetic head for docking with offshore platforms can be fitted forward on the superstructure.

TERJE MOEN photo



RHS 70s travel . . .

(cont'd from page 6)

Port Sudan; the Hanish Islands off Eritrea and Yemen, Aden in south Yemen and Salalah, Oman.

Expected arrival at their final destination, Phuket, is at the end of this or early next month.

Apart from having had their names and Red Funnel logos painted out and some of the seats removed to allow for the extra fuel to be carried as well as for sleeping quarters and cooking facilities to be installed, no major changes to the vessels have so far been made. They obviously will



Above: The gang assembled at the Red Funnel wharf at Southampton one hour prior to departure for Phuket in Thailand. A first unscheduled stop had to be made in nearby Poole, only a few miles further down England's south coast, due to a minor exhaust problem on Shearwater 5 (MIKAEL ERIKSSON)



Below: Shearwater 5 experiencing engine trouble in the Biscay off France. It was bad timing too... Occuring on September 11th, to the day one year after the attack on New York's World Trade Center, and taking twelve hours to fix, this had the French coast guard concerned which sent out a helicopter taking pictures of the alien hydrofoils and later also an aircraft. Following the repairs the hydrofoils were escorted out of French territory by a patrol vessel (MIKAEL ERIKSSON)

need a going over on arrival in Thailand before they enter service with Kon-Tiki, by which time they will also fly the Thai flag and have been renamed *Colona 7* and *Colona 8*.

Above: The bow saloon on Shearwater 6 being used as a crew dormitory. For the long open-sea stretch across the Arab Sea each vessel carried an extra 12 drums of fuel, 32 in all (MIKAEL ERIKSSON)



Calypso I arrived as deck cargo in the US Virgin Islands in April this year (MERMAID FAST FERRIES)



Sole KF Flying Cat 40m Wide Body catamaran . . .

(cont'd from page 3)

Instead the catamaran was acquired by Mermaid Fast Ferries based in St. Croix in the US Virgin Islands. The vessel arrived here as deck cargo on April 9th this year.

Renamed *Calypso I* its maiden voyage on the 35 nautical mile route between St. Croix and St. Thomas was carried out on September 2nd with the regular service commencing the following

day. Currently two round trips are being operated every day of the week, departing Gallows Bay, St. Croix at 0800 and 1700 and Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas at 1030 and 1930. The company expects to operate year-round and a service to San Juan, Puerto Rico may be added at a later date.

Calypso I offers a two-class service and carries a total of 356 passengers

270 on Ensign (main) deck and 86 on Admiral (upper) deck.

An adult round trip is \$50 and \$65 respectively; children aged 3-12 are \$40 in Ensign class. On board amenities include a bar service offering refreshments and light meals and various entertainment, including movies and the occasional live band.

Mermaid Fast Ferries is likely to



The third and last of the new Voskhod-2Ms for Dutch operator Connexxion Fast Flying Ferries, *Voskhod 604*, arriving at IJmuiden from the Ukraine on a rainy and windy October 26th. The hydrofoil is expected to join its mates on the Velsen-Amsterdam route at the end of this or early next month. (MARK VAN RIJZEN)

Right: The Kværner Fjellstrand prototype FoilCat foil assisted catamaran as built (KVÆRNER FJELLSTRAND)



Below: Calypso I being prepared for unloading in St. Croix in April. The vessel is equipped with Kværner Fjellstrand's Motion Dampening System, including a T-foil forward on each hull (MERMAID EAST FERRIES)



face competition next month when Virgin Islands Fast Ferry is expected to reintroduce an Incat/Gladding-Hearn 45m catamaran delivered in 2000 which the parent company Boston Harbor Cruises normally operates in the Massachusetts Bay between Boston and Provincetown on Cape Cod's northern tip. The catamaran, *Salacia*, first appeared on the St. Croix-St. Thomas route in April last year for a short trial service and returned for five months in November 2001.

There are also airborne services connecting the two islands, including a seaplane service using 17-seat Twin Otter aircraft.

Below: The catamaran was operated under charter on various routes in the Mediterranean, including in Spain's Balearic Islands, as *Evridika* prior to the acquisition earlier this year by Mermaid Fast Ferries (JAIME PONS)



**If winter
comes . . .**



... can spring be far behind? Flying Cat 40m Wide Body catamaran Evidika and one of its proud new owners, Chris Elliot of Mermaid Fast Ferries, at the Fellstrand yard in Omastrand, Norway. Both have since completely switched surroundings, from the snowy North to the sunny Caribbean. See full report starting on page 3 (MERMAID FAST FERRIES photo)