

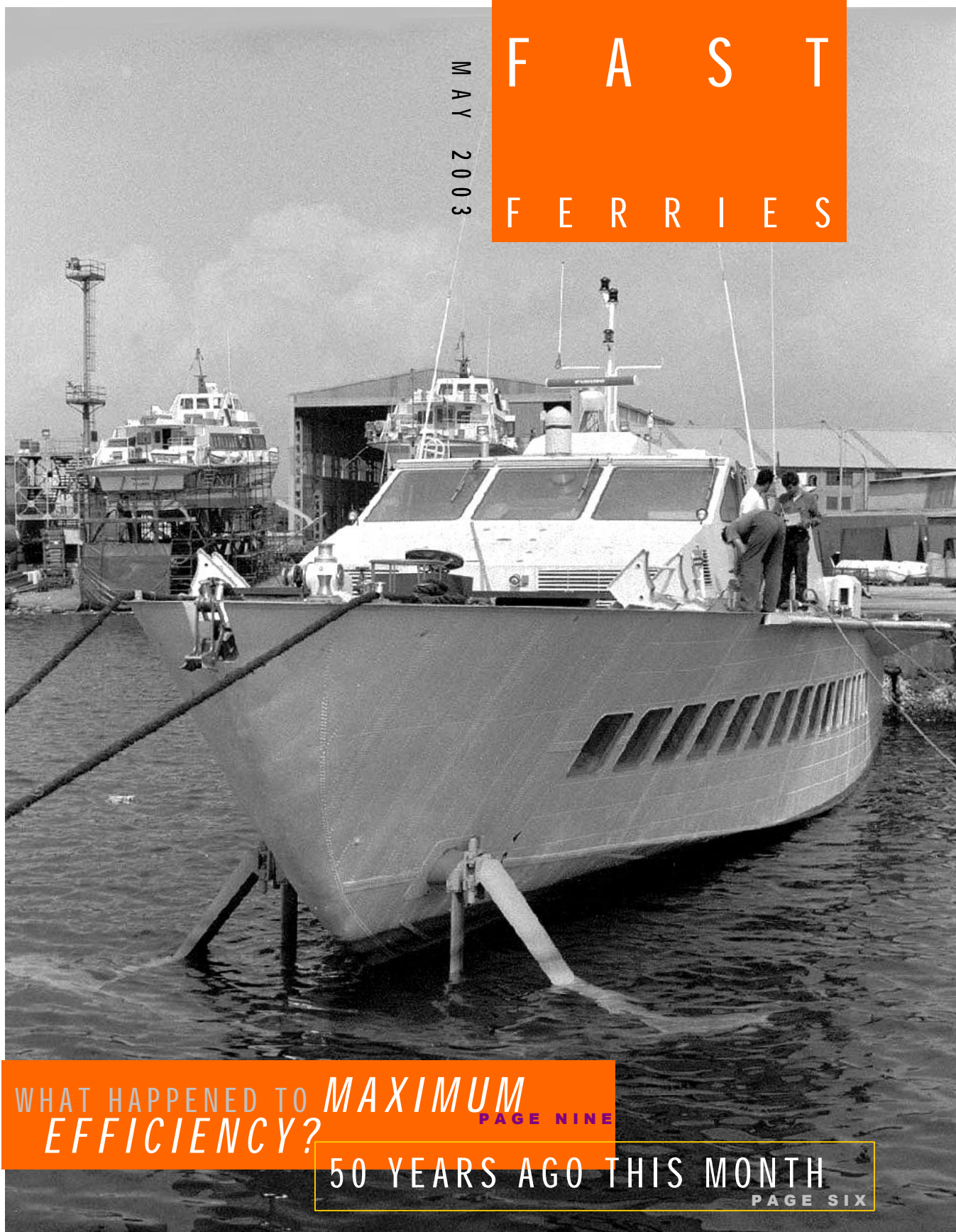
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WHAT HAPPENED TO *MAXIMUM*
EFFICIENCY? PAGE NINE

50 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH
PAGE SIX

THE ONLY PERIODICAL ABOUT THE HEYDAY OF PASSENGER HYDROFOILS, HOVERCRAFT & CATAMARANS – AS WELL AS RELEVANT NEWS ■ ISSUED IN PDF FORMAT. PLEASE CHECK OUR SITE ON THE WEB FOR NEXT ISSUE DETAILS:

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COVER PHOTO : THE SOLE RODRIQUEZ MEC 1 (MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY CRAFT) BUILT BEING PREPARED FOR SERVICE AT THE SHIPYARD IN MESSINA IN JUNE 1992. TURN TO PAGE 9 FOR MORE [TIM TIMOLEON PHOTO]

newz



Fast Flying Ferries' passenger number one millionth receives a special welcome aboard *Voskhod 604* by captains Cor Blok (right) and Theo Bakker in Amsterdam on April 10th. On the far left is FFF Unit Manager Peter Eijer

CONNEXION FAST FLYING FERRIES photo

Fast Flying Ferries carries 1,000.000th passenger

by Theo Bakker

Last month saw a landmark in the history of Dutch operator Connexion Fast Flying Ferries. On April 10th the company, which operates three new 79-seat Voskhod-2M hydrofoils built by the Morye Feodosiya Shipbuilding in the Ukraine between Velsen-Zuid and central Amsterdam, carried its one millionth revenue passenger. The young lady who bought the historic ticket from the ticket booth in Amsterdam, Paulien van Leeuwen, received an extra welcome in the shape of flowers and a free monthly pass to the hydrofoil by ticket clerk

Henny Ravensteijn and FFF Unit Manager Peter Eijer as well as the captains Theo Bakker and Cor Blok.

Later in the month, on April 28th, the company celebrated its fifth anniversary on the route, on which occasion the three Voskhods, which had carried the yard numbers as temporary names since their delivery in May, August and October last year, were expected to have been finally given proper names by the Netherlands' Prins Willem Alexander.

MORE ON PAGE FOURTEEN ►►



WaveMaster completes monohull for Ustica Lines

Correcting some of the info given in our April issue, the newbuild for Italian operator Ustica Lines then under construction in Australia is a monohull and not a catamaran. Not counting the company's eight hydrofoils, which will increase to nine later this month with the arrival of a fourth Foilmaster, this is Ustica Lines' first monohull.

The new vessel has been built by WaveMaster International in Henderson, Western Australia. To all appearance it is of the yard's 37.6m design and very similar to six units delivered to Singapore in 2001/02. As this issue closed for press vessel specifications had yet to reach us.

The monohull has been named

Gianluca M. This name was previously carried by one of the operator's Kværner Fjellstrand FlyingCat 40m catamarans which was transferred to the Canary Islands and renamed last year. *Gianluca M* will be operated on a new international route this summer linking Trapani in north-west Sicily and Hammamet, Tunisia.



TOP + LEFT:
WaveMaster International 37.6m monohull *Gianluca M* for Italy's Ustica Lines at the Fremantle Boat Lifters premises early last month [MARTIN GRIMM photo, both]

Norwegian Westamaran 86 emigrates

Exactly 30 years after it was delivered, Norway's last Westamaran 86 catamaran in scheduled service, *Kongsbussen*, was sold off by Partrederiet Kystekspresen last month. The sale followed closely to the disposal in March of another Kystekspresen catamaran, Fjellstrand 38.8m *Ternen*, reported on in our April issue.

The W86 had been on the market for about a year and has been acquired by a Swedish shipping company based in Stockholm, Gustav Myrsten. This company currently owns another former Norwegian fast ferry which is being used on a seasonal service between Nynäshamn on mainland Sweden and the Baltic islands of Gotska Sandön and Gotland. However, the vessel, a Fjellstrand 26m monohull originally delivered to Simon Møkster, Norway in 1981, *Gotska Sandön*, is no longer being operated as a fast ferry.

Gustav Myrsten has previously been involved in the fast ferry scene, including across the Gulf of Finland between Helsinki and Tallinn and on Sweden's west coast, but as this issue closed for press it had not been confirmed for what route or task the W86 is intended.

Kongsbussen was delivered by Westermoen Hydrofoil to Fosen Trafikklag, Trondheim in April 1973. In 1994 the catamaran was transferred to a newly established company, Partrederiet Kystekspresen, jointly owned by Fosen and Møre og Romsdal Fylkesbåtar, based at Molde and more recently trading as fjord 1.

For a history on *Kongsbussen*, see article in the June 2002 *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES*.



ABOVE: Westamaran 86 *Kongsbussen* alongside at Trondheim in April last year . . .

[PIETER INPIJN photo]



. . . and in Stockholm same time this year [ANDERS AHLERUP photo]

Catamaran to re-enter service in western Canada

A new catamaran service in British Columbia, Canada is expected to get underway sometime next month. Operated by HarbourLynx, a privately owned company based in Nanaimo, and linking Nanaimo on Vancouver Island and downtown Vancouver, the former Philippine Kværner Fjellstrand Singapore Flying Cat 40m catamaran was initially to have been introduced on the route in the first quarter of

this year. However, the inauguration has had to be pushed forward to around midsummer due mainly to the refurbishing of the vessel which has proved more extensive and thus taking longer than first anticipated. It was decided to have this work carried out by a shipyard in Victoria, Vancouver Island rather than in the Philippines.

Prior to being acquired by Har-

bourLynx/NanaimoHarbour Link Corporation last year, the catamaran had been laid up sitting in the water in the Philippines for nearly two years which had caused some damage to the hulls. Another major work has been that of the vessel's engines which were sent to Detroit Diesel in Kamloops for a complete overhaul. Also being done are upgrading of safety features to comply with



ABOVE: HarbourLynx's KF Singapore Flying Cat 40m catamaran arrived in Canada from the Philippines in January [HARBOUR LYNX photo]

Canadian Coast Guard regulation, new carpeting and seat covers as well as a full new paint job.

During the main season, mid-May to mid-October, four round trips a day by the yet to be renamed vessel are being timetabled between 06:45 and 21:30. During the rest of the year three round

trips will be operated Monday–Thursday and Sunday/Holiday, four on Friday and two on Saturday. Scheduled trip time for the 37 nautical mile route is 75 minutes.

Originally delivered in 1997 to Negros Navigation, the 300-seat catamaran, *Angel of Freedom*, left Cebu, the Philippines on December 28th 2002 on board a heavy

lift ship and arrived in British Columbia on January 16th.

MORE ON PAGE FIFTEEN ►►



SUPRAMAR AG photo

Turn to find out what this is ...

It is exactly fifty years ago this month that the road for today's plethora of fast ferries started to get paved

On 15th May 1953 the Swiss-Italian lake of Lago Maggiore saw the birth of a new age in passenger transportation on water – the fast ferry. On that day a small 30-seat hydrofoil of the Supramar PT.10 type, *Freccia d'Oro*, commenced a regular passenger service between Locarno, Switzerland and Stresa, Italy.

Incidentally, Lago Maggiore was also the place where forty-seven years earlier, in 1906, Enrico Forlanini, an Italian airship designer, experimented with a small hydrofoil boat having a displacement of 1.65t and submerged foils (the Supramar PT.10 was of the surface-piercing V type) and which was powered by a 75hp engine. But the time was not yet mature for this novel type of craft and it would take almost half a century from the beginning of developing the hydrofoil technology until its commercial break-through. The long period of realization was to a great extent due to the non-availability of suitable propulsion engines.

The PT.10 was the first commercial product of the newly formed Swiss company Supramar AG, which, under the leadership of Baron Hanns von Schertel, had gathered the experts in hydrofoil technology and development from post-war Germany in Switzerland. The hydrofoil was built by a small shipyard at Lake Lucerne, very near to the Supramar headquarters, at Hergiswil. It had a length of 14.2m, displacement of approximately 10t and was built from wood, with high-tensile steel foils. It was powered by a Daimler Benz type MB 507 D diesel engine delivering 800hp. At the time this was the only light-weight engine available which suited the requirements for propelling a hydrofoil. The vessel's maximum speed was well above 40 knots.

For two summer seasons, i.e. in 1953 and 1954, *Freccia d'Oro* was operated daily under the managements of Navigazione Lago Maggiore and a local railway company. NLM's first own hydrofoil, a



THE COMMERCIAL HYDROFOIL HITS THE BIG

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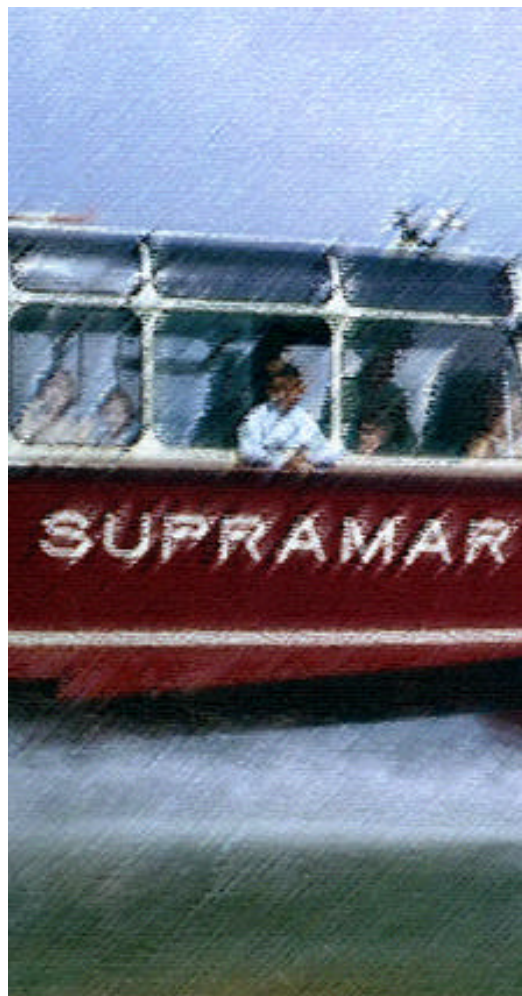
A DATE WORTH TO REMEMBER

BY HARRY TREVISANI
SUPRAMAR AG

Supramar PT.20 built by the Rodriquez shipyard in Italy, did not enter service until ten years later though, in 1964. However, by that time another PT.20 had already been in service on Lake Garda for six years.

As can be imagined, there were a lot of teething troubles with the novel craft and Supramar technicians had some exciting night jobs to execute in order to secure the uninterrupted service by *Freccia d'Oro* the following day. Tourists were attracted by the fast and smooth – although a bit noisy – ride, during which they could inhale the beauty of Lake Maggiore through the panoramic windows of the glass-top passenger cabin.

At season's end in 1954 the hydrofoil was brought back to Lake Lucerne where it would serve as a test and demonstration craft for Supramar for a number of years. Following this the

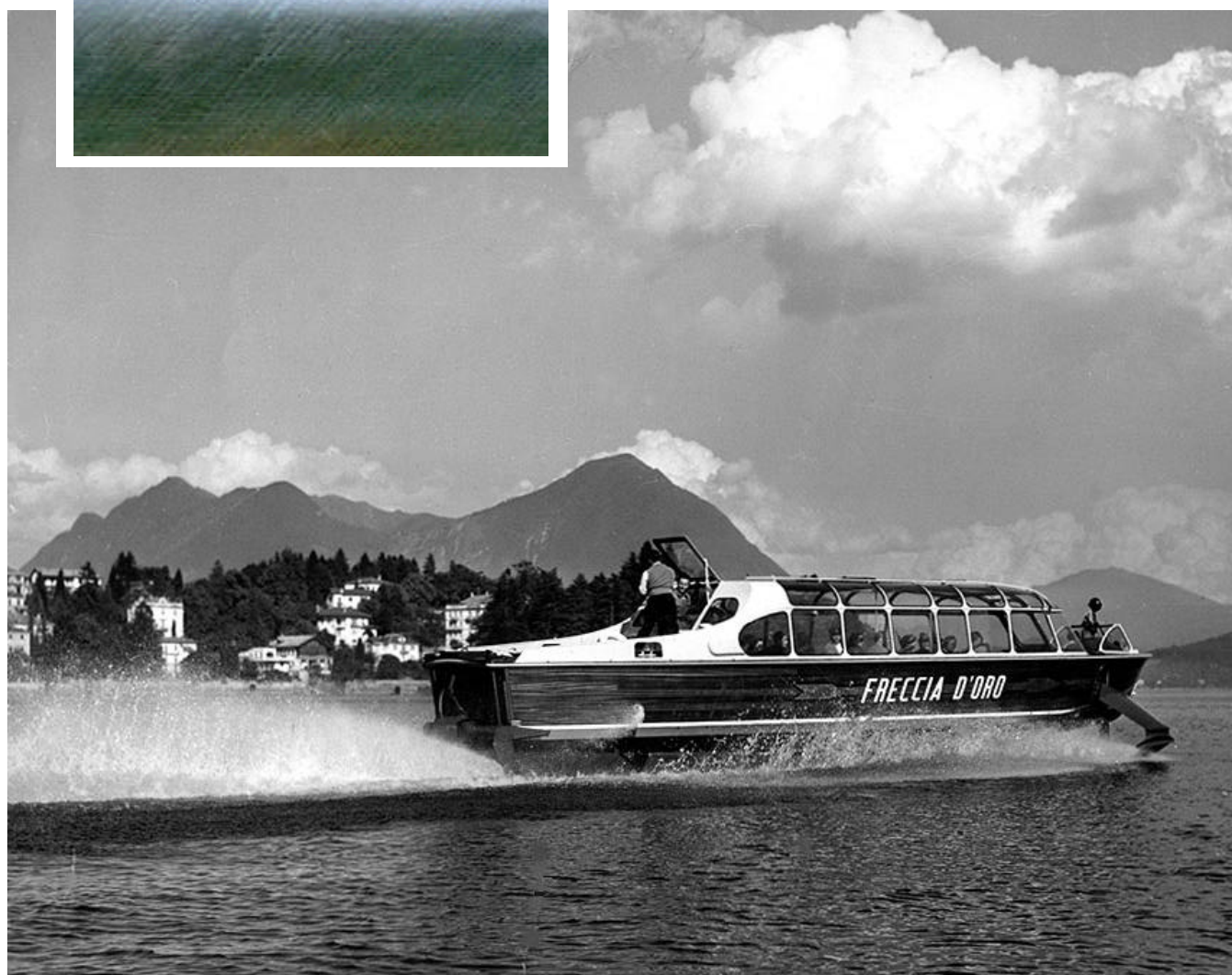


foils were removed and the vessel used as a traditional displacement craft by a hotel on the Lake for its guests. Nothing remains of the first PT.10 today though; it was scrapped in the late 60s.

Shortly after the inauguration of *Freccia d'Oro* on Lake Maggiore, Carlo Rodriguez visited the service and was fascinated by what he saw. Being an ahead-looking engineer and businessman, he started the construction, at his own risk, of the first PT.20 hydrofoil at the Messina workshop under license to and with the technical know-how of Supramar AG. A Supramar engineer was hired to supervise construction. The prototype PT.20, *Freccia del Sole*, was launched in 1956.

It would be a few more years before the ice was finally broken for the commercial hydrofoil and, as they say, the rest is history. But the Supramar PT.10 *Freccia d'Oro* was no doubt a starting point and May 1953 a date worth to remember. ■

A detailed story on the Lago Maggiore hydrofoil operation past and present appeared in the May/June 2001 *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES*



WHAT HAPPENED TO MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY?

ALL PHOTOS IN ARTICLE
EXCEPT WHERE NOTED:
RODRIGUEZ CANTIERI NAVALI

An interesting hydrofoil that does not look like any of the others from Rodriguez Cantieri Navali, particularly at a closer look, is the Maximum Efficiency Craft, MEC 1.

Launched in 1991, the big difference between this and the well-known PT and RHS craft is that the design does not have the traditional shafting between a centrally positioned power plant and the propellers at the aft foil. Instead it uses hydrostatic transmission technology. A pair of rear mounted MWM TBD 604B V8 diesels power a Rexroth Hydromarine propulsion system made up of hydraulic pumps and motors, fitted at the base of the central struts of the aft foil, each of which directly drives a tractor propeller on the leading edge. Resulting from this untraditional rear-most location of the main engines is that, contrary to all other Rodriguez hydrofoils on which the bow foil carries most of the craft's weight while underway, around 65 per cent of the MEC 1 is supported by the aft foil, the rest by the bow foil. Also, interiorwise this offers the advantage of one big uninterrupted passenger saloon on lower deck rather than the two smaller ones each side of the engine room on previous vessels.



ABOVE: Looking somewhat worn and missing a few important parts, the sole Rodriguez MEC 1, *MEC Ustica*, is seen here in Napoli on March 20th 2003. Note design and size of the bow foil
[LEONARDO LELLA photo]

LEFT: Then the future for the untraditional hydrofoil design looked much brighter when this photo was taken eleven years ago during trials off Messina in 1992



There is one big undivided downstairs saloon on the MEC 1 rather than two smaller ones – one advantage of the main engines being located aft on the MEC 1 rather than amidships as on all other Rodriguez hydrofoil designs



The bridge on the MEC 1

Both foils have hydraulically controlled trailing edge flaps that are connected to a seakeeping augmentation controller developed by Rodriguez Electronics. Incorporated into the vertical struts of the rear foil are trailing edge rudders.

In fact, the MEC 1 could have been even more different from the rest in the Rodriguez family of hydrofoils, which all feature surface-piercing foils of the V or W type, had the initial plans of replacing the original canard configured surface piercing foil system with a fully submerged one as part of the experiments materialized.

With a length overall of 25m and maximum passenger capacity of just under 150, the twin-deck MEC 1 is a medium-size hydrofoil for short and medium range routes. At the time of its appearance the only other hydrofoil models

officially in the Sicilian yard's product catalog were the 31.2m 210-seat RHS 160F, which would be replaced in 1994 by the Foilmaster and which basically is an updated and restyled version of the former, and the 35.8m 254-passenger RHS 200, however, none of which had been delivered since 1984.

In a commuter configuration the MEC 1 would have 110 seats in a main saloon on lower deck, at the rear of which are also the vessel's two toilets, and 36 seats in an upper saloon behind the wheelhouse, which is not raised on this design. In the less cramped standard version for 110 passengers there would be 90 and 20 seats respectively, allowing for luggage areas to be fitted. The vessel is air conditioned throughout.

The test program started in early 1992 in the

Straits of Messina and continued over the next few months. The summer was spent preparing the vessel for service with Aliscafi-SNAV across the Straits between Reggio di Calabria on mainland Italy and Messina, and included the fitting out of the passenger areas and a complete exterior paint job.

Incidentally, still in 1992 SNAV had six of the considerably smaller PT.20 hydrofoils of late 50s to mid-60s vintage on its roster which it used on the classic Messina-Reggio commuter route and elsewhere in Sicily.

Fitted out for 120 passengers the vessel entered service in October as *MEC Ustica*. Having previously been an anonymous all-white, or un-painted if you wish, the hydrofoil now sported an extremely well thought-out and very becoming paint scheme of bright red, black and white making it one of the best-ever looking hydrofoils since the early days. Red is considered a 'fast' color (remember Ferrari?) and so this was a fortunate choice and should be used more often on hydrofoils and other fast ferries. Unfortunately, while indeed experimenting with various color schemes including different shades of green, red and even beige (however not on the same vessel!), SNAV did not adopt this new and attractive design as a standard for its fleet. Although, in fairness, the first Foilmaster which was originally to have been delivered to SNAV

just made it to receive a very similar paint job to that of *MEC Ustica* – before the contract was altered and the vessel went to Siremar instead and was repainted in the house colors of this company. In more recent years the SNAV fleet of hydrofoils and catamarans has been painted a less exciting dark blue and white which does nothing to enhance the usually nice lines of the hydrofoils (or camouflage those parts that may not be) or to honor the designers at Rodriguez who developed them.

The nice exterior was followed-up on the inside where red and white dominated. Seats in the main saloon were arranged in three rows rather than two down the sides with a central aisle, as on the standard versions, giving the cabin a more airy feel.



LEFT: The nice exterior is followed up on the inside where red and white dominate. Compare this view with the one on opposite page (p. 10) of the raw, unfurnished main saloon

BELOW: The vessel entered service with Aliscafi-SNAV across the Straits of Messina in October 1992 as *MEC Ustica*. Red is considered a 'fast' color and should be used more often on hydrofoils and other fast ferries!





Fresh out of the paint shop the MEC 1 is being prepared for service with Aliscafi-SNAV in the Rodriguez shipyard in September 1992

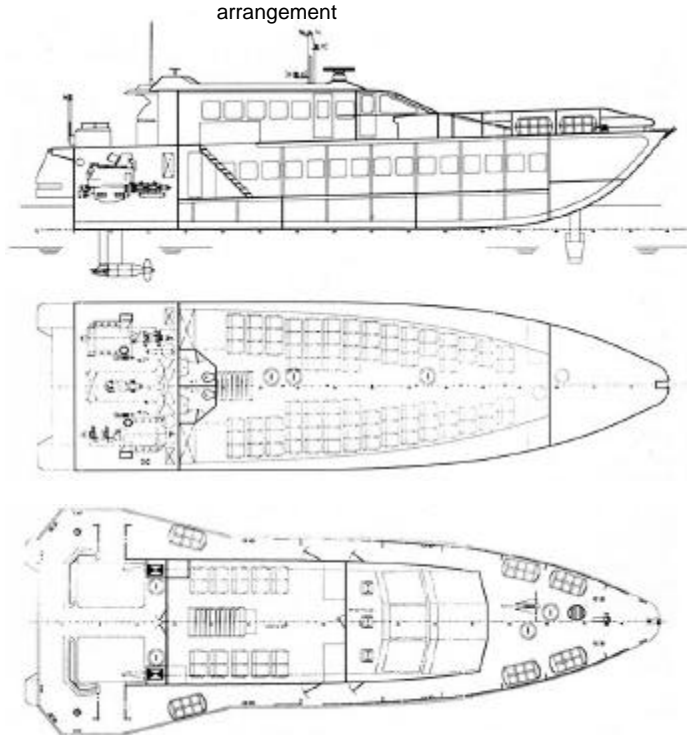
But the Maximum Efficiency Craft project got puffed somewhere along the line and a planned larger MEC 3 design featuring a fully submerged foil system never got off the runway. *MEC Ustica* appears to have been idling for far more hours than it has been operating during the eleven plus years that have passed since the trials commenced in January 1992. While no longer included on SNAV's fleet list of active craft, the obviously non-standard vessel is still owned by

the company.

For the past two years at least *MEC Ustica* has been sitting in a maintenance yard in Napoli. Then earlier this year the rather worn looking hydrofoil was moved to Napoli's commercial harbor where it is currently anchored across from Molo Beverello, the landing point for all the conventional and a lot of the fast ferries operating to and from Capri, Ischia, Sorrento and other points in the Bay of Naples. ■

RIGHT : Close-up of the rear foil/shaftless design on MEC 1, and

BELOW : MEC 1 profile and general arrangement



The other Westamarans



TERJE MOEN photo

Although the Kystekspresen W86 catamaran *Kongsbussen* was the last to operate a timetabled, albeit not very strenuous, service in Norway before being sold in Sweden last month (see page 4), there are still a couple of Westamarans left in the country. Two of these were alongside at Bergen at the end of April, Westamaran 86s *Starcruise* and *Miljødronningen*.

Starcruise (photo above) was originally delivered by Westamarin in September 1975 to Øygarden & Sotra Rutelag as *Øygard* for operation in the Bergen area. In 1986 it was acquired by Hardanger Sunnhordlandske D/S, also in Bergen, and renamed *Teisten* as this name had become available with the withdrawal from service of the company's PT.50 hydrofoil. The catamaran was disposed of by HSD in June 1995 and extensively refurbished during the following spring, including having large forward facing panoramic windows fitted, and renamed *Starcruise*. It is being used as a charter vessel and on tourist excursions on

the Geiranger, Hardanger and Sogne fiords during the summer months.

Miljødronningen (below) was originally named *Fjorddronningen*. Delivered in January 1976 this entered service in northern Norway with Troms Fylkes D/S. It was renamed *Fjorddronningen II* nine years later with the arrival of a new

Fjorddronningen to TFDS and sold in 1996 to an environmental organization, Norsk Miljøvernforbund, which was to use it as an exhibition vessel along the coastline. The project appears to have come to a stand-still however. All fixtures in the passenger saloon has been removed.

TERJE MOEN photo



However, the Prince had to cancel the engagement and as this issue closed for press Connexxion FFF was finding a new date for the naming ceremony.

Following successful trials on August 26th 1997 with a Meteor hydrofoil, Fast Flying Ferries commenced operation between Pontplein in Velsen, near IJmuiden, and Amsterdam Central station on April 27th 1998. This was the first such waterborne commuter service in the Netherlands. The time in between was used to extensively rebuild three used Voskhod-2s, likewise acquired in the Ukraine, at the Metz shipyard at Urk on the IJsselmeer. These had previously served on the Black Sea but had been laid up in Odessa for a number of years.

The hydrofoils entered service with FFF as *Annemarie*, *Kusnirov* and *Prins Johan Friso*, however, two of them were

later renamed.

By the end of 2001 the hydrofoils had proved themselves and become very successful. Averaging 700 passengers a day – a figure which continued to grow throughout 2002 – this was well above what was required to break even and it was decided to have the original Voskhod-2s replaced by three new ones of the Voskhod-2M type, the unfinished hulls of which were already sitting in the Morye shipyard. This was a perfect opportunity for Fast Flying Ferries to have the vessels custom-built to a great extent, and thus the type is also being referred to as the Voskhod-2M-FFF.

The 2M is a seagoing variant of the Voskhod-2 with a heavier hull and larger foils (which are also better corrosion resistant) resulting in better stability and thus a smoother ride.

Other differences include smaller and fewer windows of real glass, with aluminum framing, as opposed to the plexiglass ones used on the Voskhod-2 and a bigger wheelhouse.

The hydrofoils are operated every day of the week. On Monday–Friday the first service departs VelsenZuid at 06:30 and the last connection is from Amsterdam, at pier 7 just behind the Central station, at 19:30. Between 06:30 and 10:00 and 15:30 and 19:30 a hydrofoil leaves every 30 minutes, during the rest of the day the frequency is hourly. On Saturday, Sunday and public holidays a 60-minute frequency applies all day between 09:30 (from Velsen) and 18:00 (from Amsterdam). Scheduled trip time is 25 minutes, with a five-minute turnaround, which is the fastest travel between the two points.



PIETER INPIJN photo

Another recent Connexxion FFF development was the sale at the end of March of the company's first hydrofoil, Meteor *Prins Willem Alexander*, to Hungarian operator Mahart PassNave Shipping.

The Meteor, which had been on the market for some time, was acquired in Latvia in 1995 and used on tourist trips

on the IJsselmeer in 1996–97 before the introduction in May 1998 of the Velsen–Amsterdam commuter route.

The yet to be shipped and renamed 120-seat hydrofoil will join Mahart's existing fleet of one Meteor, four Voskhod and four Polesye hydrofoils on the Danube and will mainly be used on the company's international route

between the Hungarian and Austrian capitals of Budapest and Vienna.

FFF's three original Voskhod-2s, *Annemarie*, *Archimedes* and *La Alta Rapido*, plus a 54-seat Polesye acquired by the company last year, *Meteor II*, have also been put up for sale following the introduction into service of the new Voskhod-2Ms.

Red Funnel introduces 39m catamaran



LEFT: NWBS 39m catamaran *Red Jet 4* being prepared for shipment from Tasmania to United Kingdom last month. It is expected to be lowered onto Southampton waters in early May
[NORTH WEST BAY SHIPS photo]

Red Funnel, the long time operator of conventional and fast ferries based at Southampton, U.K., will be taking delivery of its fourth high-speed catamaran later this month.

A pair of FBM Marine 31m catamarans, *Red Jet 1* and *Red Jet 2*, entered service on the company's cross-Solent route between Southampton and Cowes, Isle of Wight in 1991 and these were joined in 1998 by a larger restyled

33m design, *Red Jet 3*, also built by FBM. The arrival of this meant the final goodbye to the company's remaining pair of Rodriguez RHS 70 hydrofoils. Red Funnel had been operating hydrofoils alongside its traditional tonnage since 1969.

The new vessel, *Red Jet 4*, was designed and built by North West Bay Ships of Tasmania and is bigger still. It has a full length of 39m and passenger capacity of 275.

A low wash catamaran, it is currently on its way, as deck cargo, from Tasmania to England where it is expected to arrive at the beginning of this month. There will be inspection and demonstration run arrangements for guests held at the Red Funnel Southampton terminal on May 15th and 16th.

NWBS designs and builds a diverse range of aluminum craft, including catamarans, typically of 25–50m in length, trimarans and motor yachts. The company's main shipbuilding hall allows for the simultaneous construction of two multi-hull vessels to 70m length overall.

The new Red Funnel 39m catamaran *Red Jet 4* under construction at North West Bay Ships in Tasmania earlier this year

[NORTH WEST BAY SHIPS photo]



Western Canada ... (cont'd from page 5)

This is not the first time with Kværner Fjellstrand catamarans in the area. In 1991 the Norwegian shipyard, then part of the Kværner group, established an operating company, Kværner Fjellstrand Shipping, and transferred three Flying Cats to western Canada the following year. Two of these entered service in February 1992 with Royal Sealink Express between Vancouver and Victoria and the third some five months later with Nanaimo Express on the current Nanaimo–Vancouver route, operating a similar schedule to that of HarbourLynx of eight services a day. However, passenger response was disappointing and both routes were closed down in 1993.



While
we're
waiting for
Ettore M

... we can enjoy this nice shot taken only recently of the Foilmaster which was delivered by Rodriquez to Ustica Lines last year, *Natalie M.* The new one, *Ettore M.*, is expected to enter service with the steadily growing operator later this month, and will bring the number of Foilmasters to four and total numbers of hydrofoils owned by the company to nine.

RODRIQUEZ CANTIERI NAVALI photo