

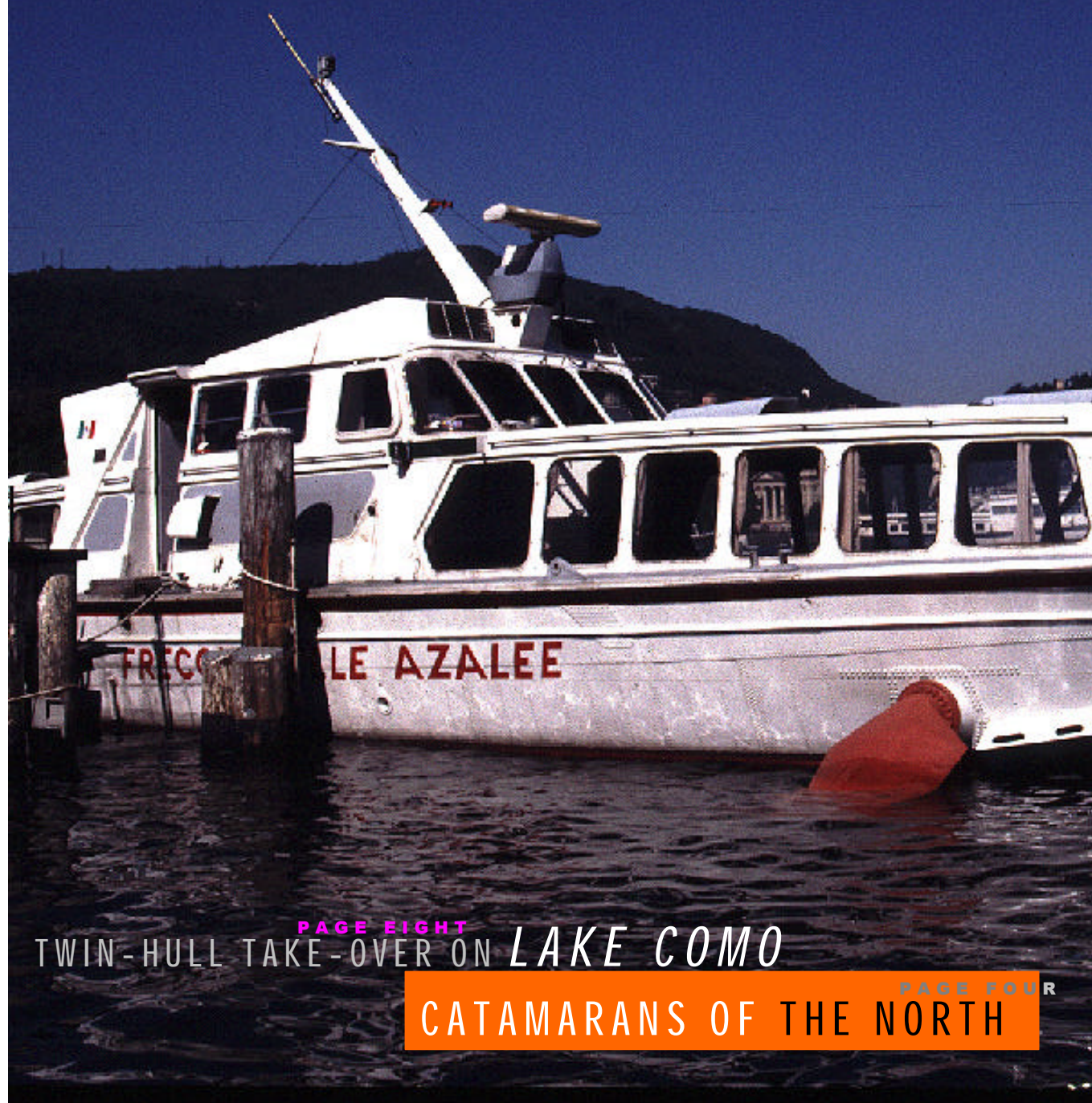
C L A S S I C

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F A S T

JUNE 2003

F E R R I E S



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TWIN-HULL TAKE-OVER ON *LAKE COMO*

PAGE FOUR

CATAMARANS OF THE NORTH

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** : ONE OF TWO PT.20s OPERATED ON ITALY'S LAGO DI COMO, *FRECCIA DELLE AZALEE* WAS IN SERVICE FOR NEARLY THIRTY-FIVE YEARS. ARTICLE STARTS ON PAGE 8 [TIM TIMOLEON PHOTO]

newz



Kværner Fjellstrand Flying Cat 35m *Salten* arrived in France from northern Norway at the beginning of April and is seen here on the new slipway trolley at Cherbourg during the Easter holiday

JACQUES LEGANGNEUX photo

## OVDS sells Flying Cat 35m catamaran . . .

A Kværner Fjellstrand Flying Cat 35m catamaran, *Salten*, delivered to Ofotens og Vesteraalens D/S only in June 1997 has been sold off by the Norwegian operator to the regional French Government on the Cherbourg peninsula, Conseil Général de la Manche. The vessel was acquired already last December but did not arrive in France until April.

The Conseil is not to operate the vessel itself but has appointed a newly formed company, Société de Navigation de Normandie, to do so. SNN is a subsidiary of Connex, a large bus and train company with activities around Europe, including in

Normandy and the Channel Island of Jersey.

Renamed *Victor Hugo* the 199-seat vessel is expected to enter service in mid-July linking the towns of Portbail, Carteret and Diélette in Normandy and Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney and Sark in the Channel Islands.

Most recently French operators Emeraude Lines and Alizés Côtes des Îles jointly operated a seasonal service between Carteret and Jersey, the largest of the Channel Islands, using a Marinteknik Verkstads 41m catamaran, *Normandie Express*,

MORE ON PAGE THIRTEEN ►►



The pair of Austal Ships/Image Marine 41.3m catamarans for Norwegian operator OVDS at Henderson, Western Australia last month. They were shipped to Europe on May 17<sup>th</sup> and are expected to enter service at the end of this month [MARTIN GRIMM photo]

## ... and takes delivery of two Image Marine 41m vessels

Disposing of the Flying Cat 35m by OVDS was part of the plan as the company will be introducing a pair of 41.3m catamarans built in Australia later this month.

The order for the new vessels, *Salten* and *Steigtind*, was placed with Austal Ships in May last year and they have been built by Austal subsidiary Image Marine at Henderson, Western Australia. The catamarans were loaded onto the SAL heavy lift ship *Gloria* at

Fremantle and shipped to Europe on May 17<sup>th</sup> – incidentally, along with the monohull for Ustica Lines in Italy, *Gianluca M*, built by WaveMaster, which we reported on last month.

The catamarans are of a mixed-traffic type, not uncommon in Norway, designed to carry 214 passengers and up to 30 Euro pallets of refrigerated cargo under some-times rather rough sea conditions.

The vessels are earmarked for

OVDS's Nordlandsekspressen service out of Bodø, where they will also be officially named on June 24th.

OVDS has been operating fast ferries in north Norway since 1985 and is part of the renowned Hurtigruten (Norwegian Coastal Voyages) ferry/cruise ship-type service between Kirkenes in the extreme north-east, on the Russian border, and Bergen in the south.

**READ ALSO :** ARTICLE ON PAGE 4

**BELOW :** *Steigtind* being lifted onto the German cargo ship *Gloria* at Fremantle, Western Australia on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Already in place are sister vessel *Salten* (at right) and WaveMaster International 37.6m monohull *Gianluca M* for Ustica Lines (aft, partly hidden) [MARTIN GRIMM photo]





**ABOVE:** Lindstøl Skips & Båtbyggeri 33m catamaran *Hansestar* continues on the Hamburg–Stadersand route [TIM TIMOLEON photo]

## New ownership for Elbe City Jet

German shipping company Schiffs- und Reederei Altes Land, established in 1979, has sold off its subsidiary company Elbe City Jet and its sole remaining catamaran *Hansestar* to one of the vessel's captains, Klaus Suhr, as SAL wishes to concentrate on its seagoing cargo business.

The new owner will continue operating the catamaran on the 65-minute Stadersand–central Hamburg route four times a day in each

direction between 08:45 and 18:30 until October 26<sup>th</sup> when the high season ends.

*Hansestar*, a 33m 322-seat catamaran built in Norway by Lindstøl Skips & Båtbyggeri, entered service with Elbe City Jet on the much longer route between Hamburg and Cuxhaven at the mouth of the river Elbe in 1997. Two years later it took over from a pair of smaller 200-seat Lindstøl 27.5m catamarans delivered

in 1996, *Hanseblitz* and *Hansepfel*, the Hamburg–Lühe–Stade commuter route.

Earlier this year the company's other catamaran, *Hanseblitz II*, a 21m design built also in Norway by Holen Mekaniske Verksted and originally delivered as *Ibis III* to Nigeria in 1995, was sold in Croatia.

## *Halunder Jet* arrives in Hamburg

The new Fjellstrand FlyingCat 52 for FRS, Förde Reederei Seetouristik, which we reported on in our April issue, was officially named *Halunder Jet* in a ceremony in Hamburg on May 9<sup>th</sup> – the Port's 814<sup>th</sup> birthday.

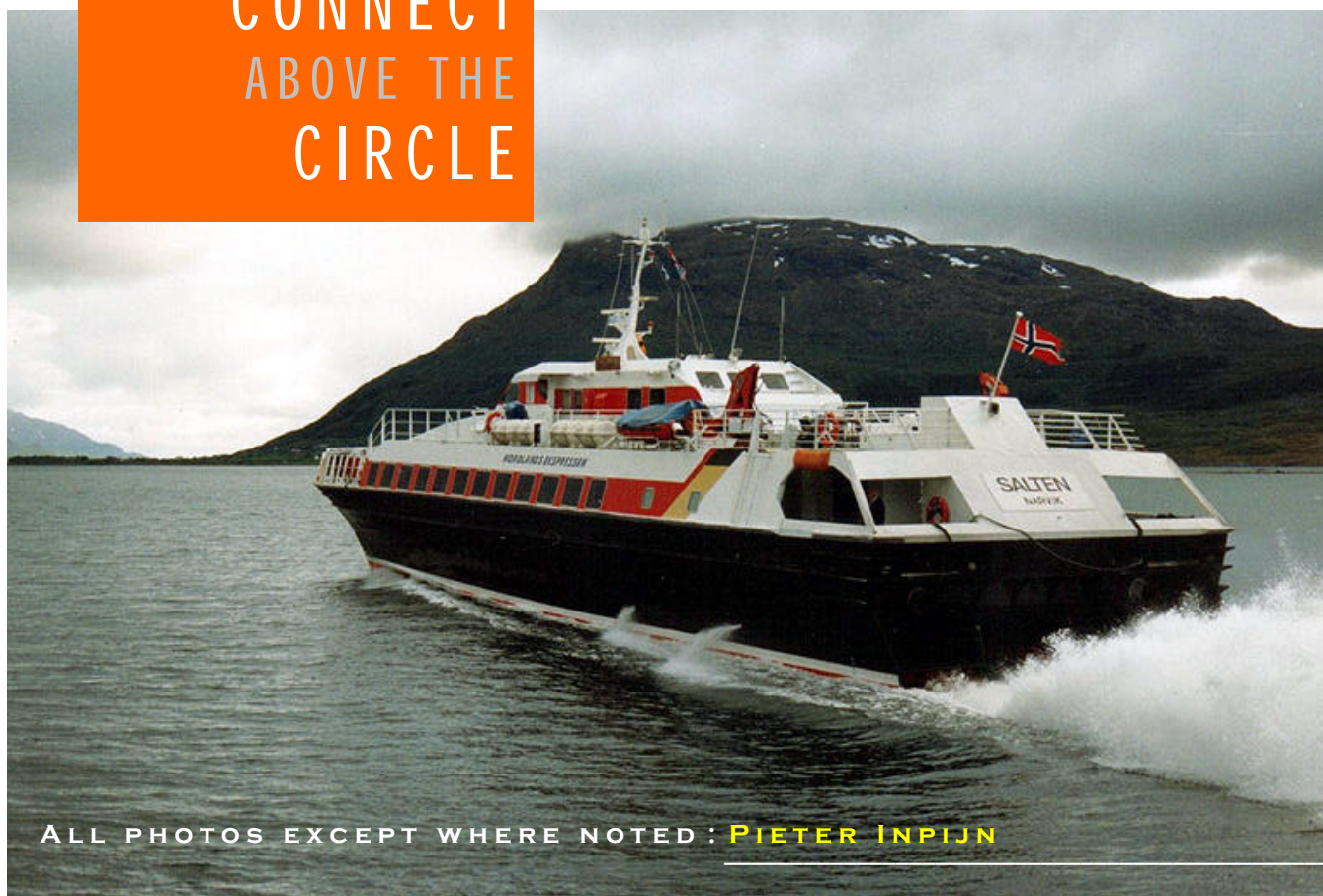
The 52m 579-passenger catamaran has since entered service between central Hamburg and the island of Helgoland replacing two Kvaerner Fjellstrand Flying Cat 40m catamarans on the route, one of which operated by FRS and the other by Speedways.

One daily round trip is being operated until October 26<sup>th</sup>, leaving Hamburg at 09:00 and returning from Helgoland at 16:30. Journey time is 3 hours 40 minutes.



FÖRDE REEDEREI SEETOURLSTIK photo

# CATAMARANS CONNECT ABOVE THE CIRCLE



ALL PHOTOS EXCEPT WHERE NOTED : **PIETER INPIJN**

**ABOVE:** Ofotens og Vesteraalens D/S Westamaran 3700SC *Salten* at Nesna just north of Sandnessjøen in June 1993

While the pair of Austal/Image Marine 41m catamarans soon to be delivered to Ofotens og Vesteraalens D/S (see page 3) are new, the service for which they have been ordered, Nordlandsekspressen, is not.

Originally marketed as the Lofotekspressen, the service was introduced in 1988 as a joint operation between OVDS and Saltens D/S – hitherto competing companies in the area – linking Bodø and Narvik and Svolvær in Lofoten, with several intermediate stops en route.

The previous year an order for two Westamaran catamarans of a new design had been placed with Westamarin in Mandal in southern Norway by the two operators, although at the time Ofotens D/S and Vesteraalens D/S were two separate companies that did not merge until later that same year. Norway's pioneer fast ferry builder, Westamarin itself had become in Swedish

hands in 1986 when the yard was acquired by the Swede Ship group. As a result, since Westamarin was tied up with finishing a pair of surface effect ships for another operator, the basic structures of the catamarans were built in Sweden by one of the other Swede Ship yards, Oskarshamns Varv, and then towed to Mandal for completion.

... and **BELOW:** sister vessel *Ofoten* as delivered in 1988 [WESTAMARIN photo]



Much as with the current Australian catamarans for OVDS, the twin-deck 37m Westamarans, designated W 3700SC and named *Ofoten* and *Salten*, were of a combined passenger/cargo design developed especially for the route, which lies north of the Arctic Circle and includes many off-lying communities. Both craft were fitted out for 186 passengers in a main saloon and two smaller lounge areas and had a 65 cubic metre cargo hold aft on main deck. Two cranes were provided for the loading/unloading through a hatch in the upper deck.

Stowed on weather deck were eight self-inflatable life rafts plus a pick-up boat and in addition a lifejacket was stowed under each passenger seat.

On board facilities included a kiosk serving hot and cold drinks and snacks, a television/VCR system, four washrooms and two luggage compartments. A crew rest room with couch seating around a table, lockers and a toilet was located behind the wheelhouse. The operating crew consisted in the captain, chief engineer, chief officer and a deckhand.

The two vessels were delivered in May 1988. A third all-passenger version, W 3700S, was also delivered that same month to a Swedish operator.

While identical in other respects, initially *Ofoten* and *Salten* sported different paint schemes, the former being mainly white on the superstructure with red and yellow trim lines, and the latter also having a white superstructure but with broad red lines down the sides around the windows on both decks.

Significantly different to previous Westamaran designs, which had featured asymmetrical hulls and traditional propulsion with very few exceptions, were the

**MAIN PICTURE:** W 3700SC catamarans *Salten II* and *Ofoten II* alongside at Bodø in March last year and  
**INSET:** a side-view of *Ofoten II*





**ABOVE:** A nice view of the original *Salten* under dramatic skies in northern Norway ten years ago

symmetrical hulls and waterjet propulsion on the W 3700SCs/W 3700S. The service speed too was higher; in excess of 38 knots carrying a full load and 42 knots with a fifty percent payload. A pair of MTU 16V 396 TB84 diesels powered two Kamewa 63 waterjets.

In 1989 the Lofotekspressen marketing name was changed into Nordlandsekspressen. The two companies OVDS and Saltens D/S, each owning 50% of the service, eventually merged in 1991.

In 1997 the Westamarans were renamed *Ofofen II* and *Salten II* as OVDS took delivery of two 199-seat Kvaerner Fjellstrand Flying Cat 35m catamarans which were given the names of the original craft. Incidentally, one of these, Flying Cat 35m *Salten*, is the one sold in France toward the end of last year (and which is reported on in the newz section on page 2 of this issue).

The two W 3700SCs have since been withdrawn and are currently laid up.

The present-day Nordlandsekspressen service consists of the original Bodø–Svolvær–Narvik route and another traveling south from Bodø to Sandnessjøen. The Svolvær–Narvik leg was discontinued in January this year and replaced by a conventional ferry and connecting bus service at the Narvik end following financial cut-backs by the local authorities, but was reintroduced on June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Journey times are between 3 hours and 3 hours 30 minutes for Bodø–Svolvær and between 5 and just under 6 hours for Bodø–Sandnessjøen depending on the number of calls made en route. One service a day in each direction is being operated, except on the Lofoten run from/to Bodø which does not operate on Saturday. ■

**BELOW:** OVDS fast ferry line-up at Bodø in September 2001; *Ofofen II*, Harding Verft 28.7m catamaran *Skogøy* and *Salten II*.





LAGO DI COMO:

*Are twin hulls better than one?*

## HYDROFOILS GIVE WAY TO CATAMARANS

*This is the third and concluding part in a series about the history of fast ferry operation on the three major Lakes in northern Italy. The articles on Lago Maggiore and Lago di Garda appeared in the May/June 2001 and January 2003 CLASSIC FAST FERRIES.*

ALL PHOTOS EXCEPT WHERE NOTED:  
TIM TIMOLEON

Since the background to introducing and operating hydrofoils and the further fleet developments on Lake Como are shared with Lakes Maggiore and Garda to a great extent and were covered in the previous two articles, they will not be repeated here.

It is worth noting however that it would be six years from the first Supramar PT.20 had entered service on Lake Garda, in 1958, until Lake Como got its first such in 1964. Like the one before it, as well as all subsequent hydrofoils on all three Lakes, *Freccia del Lario* was built in Messina by Cantiere Navale Leopoldo Rodriguez.

The hydrofoil had been ordered by the Ministero dei Trasporti, Italy's Ministry of Transport, which through the administrative body of Gestione Navigazione Laghi and a local affiliated company on each Lake is responsible for the operation. Thus, *Freccia del Lario* entered service with Navigazione sul Lago di Como, more recently shortened to NaviComo, joining a fleet of traditional vessels of various shape and vintage.

The passenger ship service on the Lake dates back to 1826 when a paddle steamer, *Lario*, was introduced by Società Lombarda.

A second PT.20, *Freccia delle Azalee*, was delivered to Lake Como in 1967.

Being a two-armed lake, originally the hydrofoil service operated only along the western stretch and right to the top of the lake, between Como in the south and Colico in the north, a distance of about 46 kilometers, but was later extended to include also a line between Bellagio and Lecco situated in the south corner of the east basin.

The pair of PT.20s were joined in 1974 by an RHS 70, *Freccia delle Betulle*, with another, *Freccia delle Gardenie*, following two years later. The lakes of Garda and Maggiore likewise received their first RHS 70s in 1974 from Rodriquez – or Navaltecnica as the yard was known for some time in the 70s.

The next expansion in the hydrofoil fleet happened in 1981 as the first of two RHS 150SLs entered service. This, *Freccia delle Valli*, was of a much larger design capable of carrying 196 passengers, more than twice as many as on the previous craft. A new design developed especially for operation on the Lakes, it was derived from



**LEFT:**  
PT.20 *Freccia del Lario* was anchored in Como for several years before being scrapped in 1995

the RHS 140 and RHS 160 types. The second RHS 150SL, *Guglielmo Marconi*, joined in two years later. However, being of a restyled second generation SLs this looked significantly different and featured a raised wheelhouse and a bow saloon with forward facing view on main deck.

The last hydrofoil ordered for operation on Lago di Como entered service as long ago as in

1989. Designated RHS 150FL, this, *Volaire*, was also a Lake version of two existing designs combined into one, the RHS 150 and RHS 150F/RHS 150M.

For a more detailed description of the differences and similarities between *all* Rodriquez RHS 150 variants, please consult the July/August 2001 *CFF* and the previous Lake articles.



But there have been more hydrofoils on Lago di Como than these seven newbuilds suggest. Two were transferred from Lake Garda in 1982 and 1993, PT.20 *Freccia degli Ulivi* and RHS 70 *Freccia dei Gerani*, delivered in 1965 and 1977 respectively. The PT.20 never entered service with NaviComo however and eventually was scrapped in April 1994, whereas *Freccia dei Gerani* was observed in Como as recently as in April this year.

The only other of the smaller hydrofoils still active with NaviComo is RHS 70 *Freccia delle*

*Betulle* as the other RHS 70, *Freccia delle Gardenie*, retired in July last year. The original PT.20s *Freccia del Lario* and *Freccia delle Azalee* were withdrawn from service in 1985 and 2001. The former was scrapped in 1995 after having spent a considerable amount of time being anchored in Como and acting as an undisturbed statue for the local birds. *Freccia delle Azalee* is presently at NaviComo's shipyard in Dervio waiting for the scrappers to dig in, and *Freccia delle Gardenie* is moored in Como likewise bound for hydrofoil heaven.

**ABOVE:** RHS 70 *Freccia delle Betulle* on Lake Como in 1992, passing a canvas-like backdrop

**RIGHT:** The other RHS 70 ordered by Navigazione Lago di Como, *Freccia delle Gardenie*, entered service in 1976



NaviComo has no plans of preserving at least one of the RHS 70s.

The remaining pair of operational RHS 70s are also on their way out. Replacing these are Italian-built 28m 193-seat twin deck catamarans, constructed by Cantiere Navale di Pesaro. The first two for NaviComo, which is the last of the Lake operators to introduce catamarans, *Città di Como* and *Città di Lecco*, entered service last June. A third, *Tivano*, has since been added. Lake Garda also received one of the CNP designs last summer.

It was decided to have different propulsion systems fitted on the first two craft; both are equipped with 2 x MTU 16V 2000 M70 diesels but *Città di Como* has two LA.ME Marine Division Sea Rider surface propellers while *Città di Lecco* has Kamewa A56 waterjets. The service speed of the catamarans is 28 knots. This is five or six knots slower than that of the hydrofoils.

There has been some complaint from locals and reportedly also among NaviComo personell about the noise and wake produced by the catamarans. The noise level became an issue also with the introduction of the

RHS 150SLs, which "could be heard miles away". The solution to the problem then was the fitting of long exhaust pipes each side of the vessel from the amidships exhaust and down the sides to the stern.

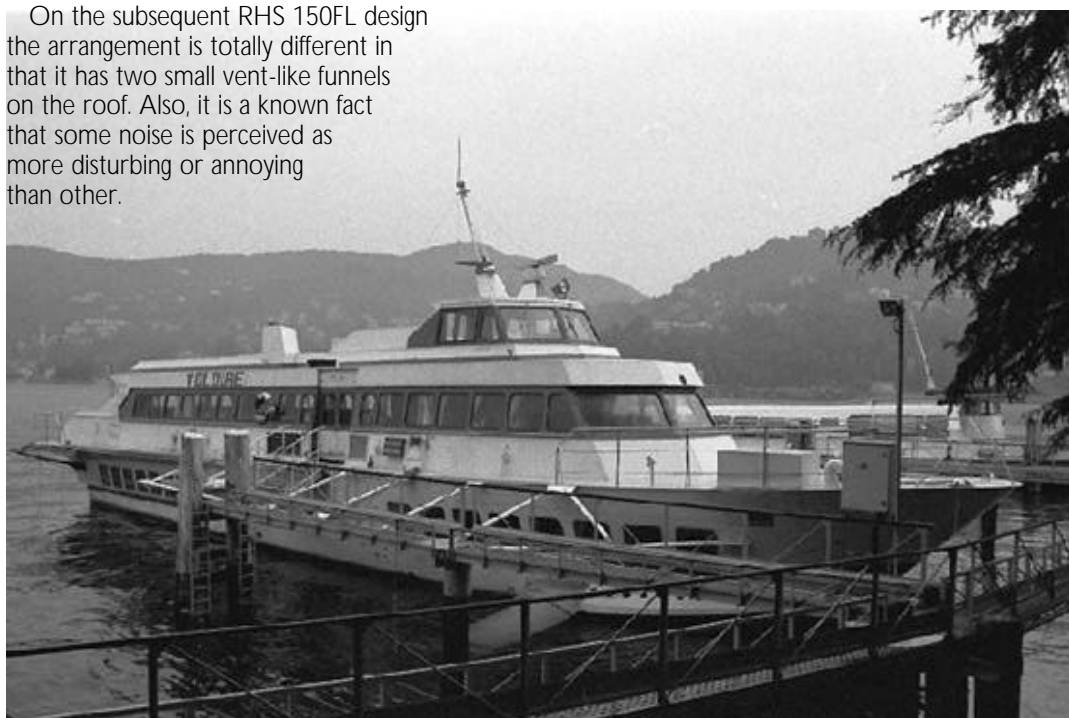
On the subsequent RHS 150FL design the arrangement is totally different in that it has two small vent-like funnels on the roof. Also, it is a known fact that some noise is perceived as more disturbing or annoying than other.



**ABOVE:** One of the CNP catamarans that is replacing the hydrofoils on Lake Como [CANTIERE NAVALE DI PESARO photo]



**ABOVE:** *Freccia delle Valli* is one of three identical RHS 150SLs having been introduced on the Lakes in northern Italy in the early 80s. Note extra-large windows and forward fenders



**LEFT:** RHS 150FL *Voloire* was the last hydrofoil ordered for operation on Lake Como. It entered service in 1989

This year's high season schedule, which runs from May 31<sup>st</sup> to October 5<sup>th</sup>, timetables up to nine departures on weekdays, less on Sunday and holidays, by hydrofoil or catamaran from either Como or Colico. Not all of these are through-services though and terminate at either Bellagio, Menaggio or Varenna with, in some cases, connecting north/southbound services. The Bellagio–Lecco route is served by fast ferry only on Sunday and holidays with one round trip, all other services in this portion of the Lake being operated by conventional vessels. In addition, the catamarans (but not hydrofoils) are offered for charter.

The hydrofoils on Lakes Como, Garda and Maggiore have been sentenced to death and give way to the catamarans. So far slowly. . . but surely. ■

**MAIN PICTURE:** *Guglielmo Marconi* was the second RHS 150SL to enter service on Lago di Como, in 1983, but does not look like the one before it [ANDERS AHLERUP photo]



**LEFT:** RHS 70 *Freccia dei Gerani* was transferred from NaviGarda to NaviComo ten years ago [ANTONIO SCRIMALI photo]

**THANK YOU TO** Andrea Pasqualini for supplying details on the current NaviComo fleet status

FRECCIA DEL LARIO PT.20 / 1964–1985 / SCRAPPED FRECCIA DELLE AZALEE PT.20 / 1967–2001 FRECCIA DEGLI ULIVI PT.20 / FROM LAGO DI GARDA / NEVER ENTERED SERVICE WITH NAVICOMO / SCRAPPED FRECCIA DELLE BETULLE RHS 70 / 1974–? FRECCIA DELLE GARDENIE RHS 70 / 1976–2002 FRECCIA DEI GERANI RHS 70 / 1993–? / FROM LAGO DI GARDA FRECCIA DELLE VALLI RHS 150SL / 1981–? GUGLIELMO MARCONI RHS 150SL / 1983–? VOLOIRE RHS 150FL / 1989–? CITTÀ DI COMO + CITTÀ DI LECCO + TIVANO CNP 28m CATAMARAN / 2002 –?

LAGO DI COMO FAST FERRIES 1964–2003



RODRIQUEZ CANTIERI NAVALI photo

## Rodriquez delivers TMV 50 to NLG

As this issue closed for press, Rodriquez Cantieri Navali announced that it had delivered a TMV 50 monohull, *Vesuvio Jet*, to Navigazione Libera del Golfo on June 4<sup>th</sup> and that the vessel would depart Messina and sail for the Bay of Naples within the next couple of days.

*Vesuvio Jet* will join NLG's fleet of six monohulls which are

operated on the company's route network out of Napoli to the islands of Capri and Ischia and other points in the Bay.

NLG introduced its first fast ferry, a Marinteknik 41m monohull built in the UK by Fairey Marinteknik, in 1988. The TMV 50 is the first Italian-built high-speed craft to enter service with the operator.

## OVDS sells...

(cont'd from page 2)

however, this was sold in French Polynesia earlier this year and has since been renamed *Moorea Express*.

The history of Emeraude Lines, its predecessors and Alizés Cdl appeared in the January 2003 *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES*.

The new company expects to

operate year-round. Condor, the pioneer fast ferry operator between the Channel Islands and France based in Guernsey, has expressed that SNN may face difficulties in doing so as bad weather is not uncommon in the area during the winter months and may lead to services having to be cancelled

The Conseil Général de la Manche has also acquired another Kværner Fjellstrand catamaran which will likewise be operated by SNN starting this summer. Of the larger Flying Cat 40m type, this, *Aremiti III*, was built by KF in Singapore and previously operated by Aremiti Pacific Cruises in French Polynesia between Papeete and Huahine. The catamaran arrived in Cherbourg from Tahiti toward the end of last month and, renamed *Marin Marie*, will be employed on another route, from Granville to Jersey.



**LEFT:** The former OVDS Flying Cat 35m catamaran, still carrying the name and colors of that operator, in Cherbourg in April. It is expected to enter service next month between various Normandy ports and the Channel Islands as *Victor Hugo* [JAQUES LEGANGNEUX photo]

**R**odriguez Cantieri Navali is not the only one in Sicily that can build top-notch fast ferries. Antonio Donato, whose 1:100 scale model of the Siremar Rodriguez Foilmaster hydrofoil *Tiziano* we presented in the April 2003 CFF 'scalebox', has sent us some further images of one of the other fast ferry models he has built so far.



## Sicilian monohull in 1:100

A monohull this time, it beautifully replicates the full-size Rodriguez TMV 50 *Tindari Jet*, delivered to Ferrovie dello Stato, along with sister vessel *Segesta Jet*, for its cross-Straits of Messina route in 1999. The prototype has a length overall of 50.46m, moulded breadth of 8.80m and carries 500 passengers in four saloons on three levels at a service speed of 28.5 knots.



scale  
**BOX**





ALL PHOTOS IN ARTICLE **antonio donato**

The model was built to a scale of 1:100 and, like all of Antonio's models, uses tooth picks as the main construction material. For the deck areas cardboard has been used and other materials include cores of electrical and TV antenna cables for railings and grate of air ducts, etc.

*Tindari Jet* took ten months to complete; December 1999 to September 2000. Contrary to the *Foilmaster* which was built full-time during his time off in summer and completed in just two months, the TMV 50 was built in the spare time available.

Currently under construction is a hydrofoil of the RHS 160 type which Antonio expects to finish by next fall.



BELOW: The full-size **Rodriquez TMV 50** *Tindari Jet* in Messina harbor





# HIGH & DRY

## GETTING READY FOR THE SEASON

Each year around this time, before the invasion of tourists, the hydrofoils operating in Sicily are being prepared for the high season. Like here, in the DEA Cantiere Navale in Messina two years ago. RHS 160 *Donatello* was delivered by Rodriguez to Siremar, Sicilia Regionale Marittima, in 1980. It is of the type that ship modeler Antonio Donato (see pages 14–15) is currently building in 1:100 scale.

PHOTOS BY: ANTONIO DONATO

