

C L A S S I C
F A S T
F E R R I E S

6
SEPTEMBER 2003



FERRIES, FERRIES, FERRIES

ITALY PHOTO SPECIAL

HYDROFOIL HEAVEN'S WAITING ROOM

PAGE TWELVE

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:

WWW.CLASSICFASTFERRIES.COM EDITOR/PUBLISHER: **TIM TIMOLEON** . ALL ARTICLES, ARTWORK & DESIGNS BY THE EDITOR, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED ■ SUBMITTALS OF MANUSCRIPTS AND PHOTOS, OLD AND NEW, AND RELEVANT NEWS ITEMS ARE ENCOURAGED! ■ EMAIL TO: **CFF @ EMAIL.DK**

COPYRIGHT 2000/2003 CLASSIC FAST FERRIES

COVER PHOTO : ACTIVITY ON THE QUAY IN LAMPEDUSA LAST MONTH. IN PORT ARE USTICA LINES' NEWLY DELIVERED FOILMASTER HYDROFOIL *ETTORE M* AND RHS 160F *CRIS M*. MORE ON PAGE 9 [DANIELE ALLETTO PHOTO]

newz



H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh unveils the plaque inside Hovertravel's new terminal building at Ryde, Isle of Wight during the opening ceremony on August 3rd

[HOVERTRAVEL photo]

Royal inauguration of new Hovertravel terminal

Hovertravel, the company that inaugurated the first year-round scheduled hovercraft service in the world thirty-eight years ago, in August 1965, using an SR.N6 hovercraft, celebrated the completion of its new terminal at Ryde, Isle of Wight, with an official opening on August 3rd by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh.

Hovertravel provides the fastest ferry connection between the Isle of Wight and the mainland, with departures every 15-30 minutes throughout the day. The

company's new terminal will serve over 750,000 passengers annually as they make the 10-minute trip between Ryde and Southsea (Portsmouth). Nearly 20 million passengers have used the service since 1965.

The Ryde-Southsea route is one of but a few scheduled ferry services in the world that is operated by fully amphibious hovercraft.

Hovertravel has also led the world in manufacturing initiatives; the company

We apologize for the late appearance of this issue of CLASSIC FAST FERRIES



Two British Hovercraft Corporation AP.1-88/100 hovercraft pose on the pad in front of the new Hovertravel terminal building at Ryde, Isle of Wight [HOVERTRAVEL photo]

has developed and is currently building the first of a new class of larger, quieter and faster hovercraft, which will enter service in 2004.

Internationally, Hovertravel's manufacturing activities continue to meet the fast-growing demand for amphibious vessels for use in oil exploration and in

locations that are beyond the capabilities of ships or wheeled vehicles, due to shallow water, ice, floating debris, etc. Hovertravel's manufacturing and charter division, Hoverwork, has been building hovercraft for over 20 years, in conjunction with G.K.N./Westland. In 1999, the company launched a

programme to replace the original air-cooled propulsion engines with more powerful water-cooled diesels. The result has been an increase in service speed of 10 knots, to 45 knots.

Exports take in countries as far a field as Cuba, Canada, Kazakhstan and Sierra Leone.

The company has remained in the same ownership since inception.

ALL-OVER ADVERTISING has been seen on buses, trams and taxis, etc. in cities around the world for years, but so far scarcely on fast ferries. Two catamarans belonging to Greek operator Hellas Flying Dolphins were recently repainted in Vodafone colors; one of them, Kværner Fjellstrand FlyingCat 40m *Flyingcat 1*, is seen here alongside at Piraeus in June. Vodafone is a mobile telecommunications network company. [MATTHEW DAVIES photo]





MARTIN GRIMM photo

Ready for shipment from the Austal Ships yard in Henderson, Western Australia is Auto Express 66m catamaran *Bocayna Express*. Ordered last year by Lineas Fred. Olsen S.A., the vessel is to enter service in the Canary Islands between Fuerteventura and Lanzarote. *Bocayna Express* can carry 450 passengers and 69 cars or a mix of cars and trucks/coaches at a service speed of 31 knots and will replace one of the company's conventional ferries on the route.

Earlier this summer Austal and Fred. Olsen announced the order of what is believed to be the world's largest all-aluminum high-speed multihull vessel, the Auto Express 126 trimaran. Scheduled for delivery in the second half of 2004, the new cargo/vehicle/passenger vessel will have an overall length of 126.7m, beam of 30m and service speed in excess of 40 knots. Capacity will be for 1,350 passengers and 340 cars plus a substantial number of trucks.

New faces in the Balearics

Two fast ferries that have seen little or no service since their completion in 2000 and 2001 have recently been introduced between the Spanish mainland and the Balearic Islands by Balearia Eurolineas Maritimes and Trasmediterránea.

The Balearia vessel, *Al-Sabini*, is a TMV 114 Aquastrada monohull originally delivered to another Spanish operator, Naviera Armas, as *Volcan de Tauro* by Rodriquez Cantieri Navali's Pietra Ligure yard. Carrying 800 passengers on two decks and 200 cars or 186 cars and three buses on three decks, the 40-knot monohull entered service with Balearia on its Dénia–Ibiza–Palma de Mallorca route in April.

Balearia also operates another Rodriquez Aquastrada, the slightly larger TMV 115 *Federico García Lorca*, delivered to the company two years

ago, between Algeciras and Tanger, Morocco.

The Trasmediterránea vessel, *Milenium Dos*, is an Incat Tasmania Evolution 10B wavepiercing catamaran built ahead of order and launched at the Incat yard at Hobart in February 2001, where it had been laid up until the contract was announced earlier this year. The 98m wavepiercer left Hobart, under its own power, for Barcelona at the beginning of May where it arrived a little under a month later.

Entering service on June 20th, the vessel operates alternatively from Barcelona and Valencia to Ibiza and Palma together with Incat Evolution 10 96m *Milenium*, delivered to Trasmediterránea in 2000, thus

replacing one of the company's Bazán Mestral monohulls.

Milenium Dos offers a total of 909 seats distributed in three passenger areas on one deck and can carry 267 cars or fewer cars plus 12 or 24 trucks or buses.

BELOW: Seen at Palma de Mallorca on July 17th are, from left, Balearia Rodriquez TMV 114 Aquastrada monohull *Al-Sabini* and Trasmediterránea Incat Tasmania Evolution 10 and Evolution 10B wavepiercing catamarans *Milenium* and *Milenium Dos*

[LARS HELGE ISDAHL photo]



ITALI **AL DENTE**

ITALY... THIS IS FAST FERRY TERRITORY! A FACT THAT THERE IS NO GETTING AWAY FROM AND A SONG CERTAINLY NOT UNSUNG IN PAST ISSUES OF THIS JOURNAL. HOWEVER, SINCE AN UNUSUAL GREAT AMOUNT OF IMAGES OF ITALIAN FAST FERRIES HAS BEEN CONTRIBUTED BY READERS OF LATE, WE FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE (AND RUDE) NOT TO SHARE SOME OF THESE WITH THE REST OF THE READERSHIP IN A PHOTO-SPECIAL WHERE THE PICTURES GET TO DO MOST OF THE TALKING. THUS, THE NEXT TWELVE PAGES ARE A TRIBUTE TO THE FAST FERRIES OF ITALY, PAST AND PRESENT - AND THE PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO CAPTURED THESE ON FILM AND MEMORY CARDS. BUON APPETITO.

MATS FINNSEN photo

RIGHT: There are quite a few monohulls operating in the Gulf of Naples, the newest of which being TMV 50 *Vesuvio Jet* delivered by Rodriguez to Navigazione Libera del Golfo in June this year...
[LEONARDO LELLA photo]



BELOW: ... whereas the 47m Monostab *Isola di San Pietro*, also a Rodriguez design, was launched eleven years ago. This entered service with Saremar in Sardinia in 1993, but in this picture is seen in Napoli earlier this summer
[PIETER INIJN photo]



Alilauro was a pioneer in fast ferry operation in Italy and an early taker-on of Russian-built (USSR) Kometa and Kolkhida hydrofoils. The company still has a pair of Kometas on the active roster, but primarily utilizes the faster and more modern Kolkhidas of which it has seven. *Aligiulia* is seen here approaching Sorrento in July
[LARS HELGE ISDAHL photo]



Rodriquez RHS 160F *Alnilam* is one of two operated by Caremar in the Bay of Naples. The rest of the Caremar hydrofoils have been transferred to associate company Siremar in Sicily [PIETER INPIJN photo]



BELOW : Italy's original fast ferry operator Aliscafi SNAV last added a hydrofoil to its fleet as long ago as in 1992 (since withdrawn). Instead, in more recent years the company has acquired a significant number of catamarans on the second hand market. One of these is SNAV *Aries*, a Marinteknik Singapore 36CPV originally delivered to Channel Islands operator Condor in 1988. After having spent a few years in Canada, mostly in lay-up, the catamaran was purchased by SNAV three years ago

[LARS HELGE ISDAHL photo]

BELOW : Marinteknik Verkstads 41MPV *Ischia Jet* is one of six monohulls of various designs built by the Marinteknik yards in Sweden, Singapore and the U.K. in service with Nav. Libera del Golfo. It was originally delivered to a Swedish operator in 1989 and introduced by NLG in 1994 [LARS HELGE ISDAHL photo]





ABOVE: The sole Incat Tasmania 86m wavepiercing catamaran in the SNAV fleet, *Sicilia Jet*, delivered in 1997, is being operated between Napoli/Sorrento and Palermo this summer, a journey taking in the region of 4 hours 30 minutes
[LARS HELGE ISDAHL photo]

BELOW:

Toremar operates a single hydrofoil, RHS 160F *Fabricia*, out of Piombino in Tuscany (Toscana) to the island of Elba. Delivered to the company in 1987, replacing a smaller RHS 140 carrying the same name, the hydrofoil's original red and white paint scheme was recently changed into dark blue/white
[PIETER INPIJN photo]

Salina is one of two RHS 150F hydrofoils delivered by Rodriguez to SNAV in 1990. Here it is taking off in the Bay of Naples at the end of June 2003
[PIETER INPIJN photo]





Linosa Lampedusa

PHOTOS EXCEPT
WHERE NOTED BY

**daniele
alietto**

An operator of quite a calibre on today's fast ferry scene is Ustica Lines which headquarters in Trapani in north-western Sicily. From its inception ten years ago, the company has grown from zero vessels in 1993 to fourteen in 2003.

The first hydrofoil, a leased former Australian Rodriquez RHS 160F that had been imported back to Italy in 1992, *Fast Blu*, was operated in the summer of 1994 on a long route linking Trapani and Napoli as well as on an international route between Trapani and Kelibia, Tunisia.

The present Ustica Lines fleet comprises nine Rodriquez hydrofoils of four different types built between 1972 and 2003, four Kværner Fjellstrand FlyingCat 40m catamarans built in 1996-97 and a single WaveMaster International 38m monohull delivered earlier this year. Two of the catamarans are being operated in the Canary Islands between La Gomera and Tenerife by an affiliated company,

Garajonay Exprés. All other routes this year are concentrated in and around Sicily, except the original one to/from Napoli, including the Egadi, Eolie and Pelagie Islands as well as the island of Pantelleria.



RHS 160F *Cris M* captured in the Sicily Channel during a crossing from Linosa to Lampedusa last month. The vessel is one of two acquired from Spanish operator Trasmediterránea three years ago . . .

BOTTOM. . . and *Fiametta M* is the other. Unusually, these were not built in Messina but by a Rodriguez-associate in Malta, Seaspeed. *Fiametta M* was delivered in 1989 as *Marrajo* and *Cris M* was originally named *Tintorera* and entered service with Trasmediterránea the following year



One of the first routes operated by Ustica Lines was that between the islands of Linosa and Lampedusa, both of which belong to the Pelagie group of islands situated between Sicily and North Africa. The islands lie some 170 km and 200 km off Agrigento in Sicily respectively. Linosa, the smallest of the two, is only 5.5 square km in size with 11 km of coastline and has some 400 residents. There are three non-active volcanoes on the island, the largest of which being Monte Vulcano. The port is on the island's south side.

At 20 square km Lampedusa takes a little longer to explore; it extends about seven kilometres from east to west and three kilometres from north to south. Geologically speaking it is part of the African continent. The port of Lampedusa is situated in the south-east corner of the island.

Both islands have dramatic coastlines, and summers are warm to hot, but often quite windy, and winters mild.

Initially the company's sole RHS 140 hydrofoil, *Spargi*, was used on the route. Also a former Australian vessel, this originally entered service in 1973 between central Sydney and Manly as *Curl Curl*. It served on Sydney harbor for eighteen years, was shipped back to Italy in 1992 and acquired by Ustica Lines in 1995.

In addition to the inter-island service, last year Ustica Lines introduced a link between the Pelagie Islands and Porto Empédocle (Agrigento) in Sicily using its then brand new 240-seat Foilmaster hydrofoil *Natalie M*. This was replaced this summer by Foilmaster *Ettore M*, which the company took delivery of in June 2003.

One round trip a day except Tuesday is being operated

PREVIOUS PAGE:

TOP: Delivered in June this year, *Ettore M* is the fourth Foilmaster hydrofoil to enter service with Ustica Lines. It is seen here taking on passengers in the small island of Linosa in July

BOTTOM: RHS 160 *Calarossa* was originally delivered to a Hong Kong operator in 1974 as *Lilau*. Having carried three more names and operated elsewhere in Italy, including being used as an anti-pollution vessel, the Caribbean and Spain, the hydrofoil was acquired by Ustica Lines in 1996 and put into service between Trapani and the Egadi Islands



RIGHT: Hydrofoil line-up at the Ustica Lines maintenance base at Trapani.

RHS 140 *Spargi* (foreground) was the first vessel to work the inter-island Lampedusa–Linosa route when it was introduced in 1995. The hydrofoil originally entered service, as *Curl Curl*, in Australia with Port Jackson & Manly Steam Ship Company on its Sydney–Manly route in 1973. It was replaced by catamarans in 1991, brought back to Italy the following year and acquired by Ustica Lines in 1995

[ANTONIO DONATO photo]



by *Ettore M* until October 31st, leaving Lampedusa at 07.30, Linosa at 08.45 and arriving in Porto Empédocle at 11.30. The return journey departs Sicily at 16.00, arrives in Linosa at 18.45 and Lampedusa at 20.00. The inter-island service continues to be operated as well with two round trips every day except Monday; from Lampedusa 09.30 and 17.30 and

from Linosa 10.45 and 18.45. Scheduled trip time Linosa–Lampedusa and v.v. is one hour.

First-choice vessel on the route this summer is *Cris M*, one of two former Spanish RHS 160F hydrofoils belonging to the company, with the other, *Fiammetta M*, guest appearing from time to time. ■



The two hydrofoils operating the Pelagie Islands–Sicily and Lampedusa–Linosa routes this year, Foilmaster *Ettore M* (left) and RHS 160F *Cris M*, in Lampedusa last month

THE SUN SETS ON THE PT.50



The last PT.50 hydrofoil appears to have done its job and been withdrawn from service in Italy.



The vessel, *Freccia Adriatica* (left), delivered by Rodriguez in 1969, was active with SNAV in the Gulf of Naples up to at least two years ago. However, it had also seen service in the English Channel as *Condor 2* long before this, being leased to Guernsey-based operator Condor in 1969/70 and again in 1981.

The first PT.50 was completed by Rodriguez in 1959 for an overseas customer and the last of the type was delivered, also overseas, in Australia, in 1970. During those eleven years a total of twenty-nine PT.50s were built by the familiar Sicilian shipyard.

PHOTOS BY
VINCENZO
ANNUARIO



In July this year *Freccia Adriatica* (above + below) was sitting on the beach in Messina together with two more SNAV PT.50s in the process of being scrapped, *Freccia di Sicilia* (opposite top + page 14, both) and *Sun Arrow*.

The former was originally delivered to Channel Islands operator Condor in 1964 as *Condor I* and operated between here and France for twelve years. It entered service with Aliscafi SNAV, then part of the Rodriguez shipyard, in 1977 as *Freccia di Sicilia*.





Sun Arrow (opposite top) was completed by Rodriquez in 1968 and originally shipped to the West Indies; hence its non-Italian name. Leased and later acquired by Golden Arrow Hydrofoil Company, the PT.50 entered service between Puerto Rico and St. Thomas and Tortola in the U.S. and British Virgin Islands respectively in January 1969.

The service came to a premature halt the following year when during a crossing from Puerto Rico to St. Thomas the vessel was run aground, resulting in foil misalignment. It was decided to ship *Sun Arrow* back to Messina for adjustment, but, to make matters worse, in the loading process in San Juan, Puerto Rico the hydrofoil was dropped from the crane, further damaging the vessel. The PT.50 was subsequently purchased back by Rodriquez and following repairs entered service with Aliscafi SNAV keeping its name.

A fire in the lower forward saloon, reportedly caused by a short circuit, put an end to the hydrofoil's career as it was moored in Messina harbor for the night some time ago. ■



A L L P H O T O S B Y V I N C E N Z O A N N U A R I O



Beached outside Messina in July this year :
PT.50s Freccia di Sicilia and Freccia
Adriatica (behind, left)



Everything has an **END** to it

Not just this issue of *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES*. But even more so the career of the PT.50 hydrofoil. The picture above offers a close-up study of the rear foil and strut arrangement on one of the last of the type, *Freccia di Sicilia*, sitting on the beach in Messina in July this year, having nothing much else to do than think back and wait . . .
More on page 12–15

VINCENZO ANNUARIO photo