

6

November 2004

CLASSIC *FAST* FERRIES



Balearic Islands update

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Canary Islands Jetfoils withdrawn

An era came to a close in mid-September when the last two Jetfoil hydrofoils in service with a European operator were withdrawn and put on the market.

Built in Japan by Kawasaki Heavy Industries under license to Boeing Marine Systems in the USA, the Jetfoil 929–117s, *Princesa Dacil* and *Princesa Teguisse*, had been operated by Spanish operator Trasmediterránea in the Canary Islands since 1990 and 1991. For the past four years however the passenger-only service offered by Trasmediterránea in the shape of the Jetfoils had lived on borrowed time as it faced increasing competition from large fast vehicle ferries introduced by Naviera Armas and Fred. Olsen.

But Jetfoils had been in the Canary Islands for considerably longer than this. A leased vessel of the first generation 929–100 Jetfoil appeared in the area already in 1980 as the BMS demonstrator *Flying Princess*, completed by the Boeing Renton, WA yard in 1976, was transferred south from a London–Oostende service and introduced by Trasmediterránea as *Princesa Voladora*. This maintained the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to Santa Cruz de Tenerife route until the arrival, the following year, of the company's own pair of

Block II BMS 929–115 Jetfoils *Princesa Guayarmia* and *Princesa Guacimara*. With the introduction of the KHI craft the 929–115s were sold to Far East Hydrofoil in Hong Kong.

Between 1988 and 2000 Trasmediterránea and an associate company also operated six surface-piercing hydrofoils in Gran Canaria and on other routes in Spain, including the Balearic Islands and across the Straits of Gibraltar; one Ordzhonikidze Kolkhida and five Rodríguez RHS 160F hydrofoils, one of which leased from Aliscafi–SNAV.

The current Trasmediterránea fast ferry fleet comprises three Incat Tasmania wavepiercing catamarans; one 96m, one Evolution 10 and one Evolution 10B, as well as a pair of Bazán Mestral monohulls, both of which are also available for purchase.

From 1977 to 2004 a total of 11 commercial Jetfoils operated regular services in Europe. The last to disappear before Trasmediterránea decided to withdraw theirs were two 929–115s operated across the English Channel between Belgium and the UK for sixteen years 1981–1997. All active Jetfoils now are operating on domestic routes in Japan, between Korea and Japan and Hong Kong and Macau. ■

KHI Jetfoil 929–117 *Princesa Teguisse*, seen here in Las Palmas earlier this year, had been operated by Trasmediterránea in the Canary Islands for thirteen years when it was withdrawn in September /ODDGEIR REFIK photo

& D E V E L O P M E N T S



CLASSIC FAST FERRIES

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NEWS AND ARTICLES ABOUT CIVIL HYDROFOILS, HOVERCRAFT & CATAMARANS ■ EDITOR/ PUBLISHER : **TIM TIMOLEON** ■ ALL ARTICLES, LAYOUT & ARTWORK PRODUCTION, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED : **TIM TIMOLEON** ■ PUBLISHED IN PDF FORMAT ■

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COVER PHOTO : CATAMARANS IDLING IN IBIZA EARLIER THIS YEAR, JIELLSTRAND 38.8m FORMENTERA JET AND WESTAMARAN 95 RÁPIDO DE MENORCA / DAVE LOYDALL photo

The last remaining SR.N4 Mk 2 hovercraft Swift was scrapped in England during four weeks in September–October /WARWICK JACOBS photo



SR.N4 Mk2 *Swift* swept away

One of the hovercraft classics, SR.N4 Mark 2 *Swift*, has been scrapped by the Hovercraft Museum in England. It was broken up over four weeks during September–October.

Completed by British Hovercraft Corporation in 1968, *Swift* entered service with Hoverlloyd across the Straits of Dover between Ramsgate and Calais, France in April 1969. The original capacity was for 254 passengers and 30 cars, the car deck being down the central area with full-width stern doors and a bow ramp for convenient drive-on/drive-off, and with

four passengers saloons, two inner and two outer, on either side.

To meet with the increasing interest in the service and future demand, from September 1972 to January 1973 *Swift* was back at the BHC to be upgraded from Mk 1 to Mk 2 standard. This meant deleting the two inner passengers cabins in order to provide more car space and the extension outboard of the superstructure to compensate for this and to add another 28 seats, thus increasing total capacity to 282 passengers and 37 vehicles.

Eight years later, in October 1981, the

two companies having operated large hovercraft and competed about the high-speed market between the UK and France since the late 60s, British Rail/Seaspeed and Hoverlloyd, joined forces and became Hoverspeed. *Swift* operated with Hoverspeed on the Dover–Calais and Dover–Boulogne routes for the next ten years and made its last revenue crossing on September 29, 1991. During its 22-year career with Hoverlloyd and Hoverspeed *Swift* carried out more than 30,000 single cross-Channel journeys.

MORE ►►



Swift parked at the Daedalus site at Lee-on-Solent in May 2000, still sporting the Hoverspeed livery it had when withdrawn in 1991. The original Hoverlloyd paint scheme was reapplied to the craft two years ago /MARTIN GRIMM photo

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In 1994 the SR.N4 was donated by Hoverspeed to the Hovercraft Museum and taken to the Daedalus site at Lee-on-Solent. At the time of the donation the craft had had its propulsion system disconnected and was hovered on two engines and towed from Dover, where it had been laid up since its withdrawal from service in 1991, to its final destination. With the remaining two engines subsequently also being removed by Hoverspeed for use as spares for the company's pair of SR.N4 Mk 3 Super 4

hovercraft, *Swift* had been stored and used as a static display outdoors since its arrival at Lee. Only two years ago the hovercraft was repainted in its original Hoverlloyd color scheme.

The decision by the Hovercraft Museum Trust to scrap *Swift* was made in the light of the fact that it had to reduce on expenditure for maintaining and upgrading the craft and that the Museum is likely to take ownership of at least one of the Super 4s still owned by Hoverspeed. The two SR.N4 Mk 3s, *The Princess Anne* and *The Princess Margaret*, both of which made their last scheduled crossings on the

Dover–Calais route on October 1, 2000 and have been laid up at Lee-on-Solent since December that year, are complete and in a far better state of repair than *Swift*, which had never been fully overhauled and rebuilt like the Mk 3s.

The control cabin of *Swift* has been saved by the Museum as have seats and trim, which are typical 1970s style, and will be on display to visitors.

Swift was the last existing Mark 2 hovercraft of four, the other three having been withdrawn in 1983 and 1991 and scrapped in 1983, 1993 and 1998. ■

... and an SR.N6 returns to the UK

SR.N6 Mk 6
Beasac III returned
to the UK earlier
this month. At right
the hovercraft has
just arrived at Dover
in the afternoon on
November 1, and
below it is seen
departing Dover for
Lee-on-Solent the
next morning
/MIKE FRANCIS
photo, both



Less than a fortnight after the last SR.N4 Mk 2 Mountbatten Class *Swift* had left British soil and gone to hovercraft heaven one of the last operational SR.N6 Winchester Class craft arrived back in England after many years abroad.

Launched as an SR.N6 Mk 1, the craft

entered service with Hoverlloyd on the first international hovercraft service across the English Channel in April 1966 as *Sure*.

It was rebuilt into a Mk 6 in 1973 and used as a demonstrator by BHC for many years. In 1989 it was purchased by Eurosense-Belfotop in Belgium having

been converted by Hoverwork and Air Vehicles for use on a hydrographic survey in the Zeebrugge area.

The twin-prop craft, *Beasac III*, which is now privately owned, departed Zeebrugge under its own power at 1000 on November 1, arriving at Dover, via Dunkirk, in the afternoon. Spending the night here, the refuelled vessel left Dover with a crew of four the next morning at 1100 for Lee-on-Solent where it arrived at 1530.

The Channel crossing was in 3m seas, an imposing top speed of 48 knots was achieved by the nearly 40-year old hovercraft off Hastings on November 2.

The Hovercraft Museum intends to keep the Mk 6 in an operational state, allowing demonstration runs to be given at future Open Days and the annual Hovershow at the Museum at Lee. It is also possible the craft will be displayed at next year's Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford, at which the Museum has already been invited to present a collection of craft and other historical items in celebration of 40 years of the hovercraft in commercial service. ■



FlyingCat 46 catamarans soon to be delivered to TFDS



Artist's impression of the Fjellstrand FlyingCat 46 catamarans ordered by TFDS /FJELLSTRAND photo



... and the real thing at Omastrand earlier this month / KIM ANDRE EIKENES photo

Nearing completion at the Fjellstrand yard at Omastrand on November 7 was one of two FlyingCat 46 catamarans ordered by Norwegian operator Troms Fylkes D/S.

The contract for the order, valued at approximately NOK 150 million Fjellstrand reports, was announced in January and the vessels are due for delivery at the end of this year and the beginning of next. The catamarans, which are identical, will have 350 seats and a service speed of 36.5 knots. They will feature forward view from both passenger

decks and deck-to-ceiling windows in a conference room/business class lounge aft on the upper deck, a cafeteria and a children's play area. Length overall is 45.2m and beam 11.5m and the vessels will be powered by four diesel engines and waterjets, the specifics of which are yet to be revealed.

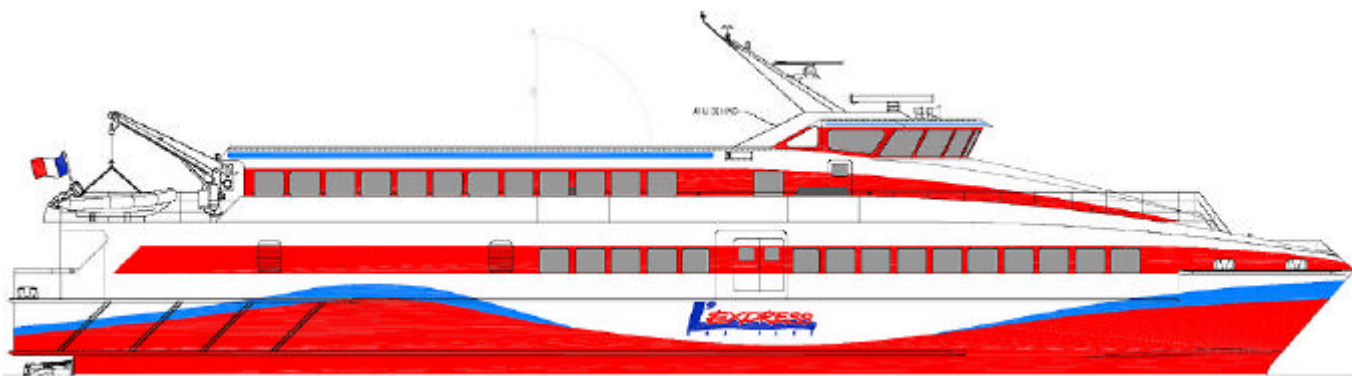
The new FlyingCat 46s will enter service on TFDS's Tromsø–Finnsnes–Harstad route in northern Norway, currently with an annual traffic of 200,000 passengers, replacing a Kværner Fjellstrand FlyingCat

40m, *Fjordkongen*, and Båtservice SeaLord 38 catamaran, *Fjorddronningen*, delivered in 1994 and 1995, cutting travel time by 20 minutes to 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Also in the Fjellstrand order book at the moment are two FlyingCat 46s for Compagnie Yeu in western France and a FlyingCat 40m for SPM Express in Saint Pierre & Miquelon, off the south coast of Newfoundland, Canada. Correcting the info given in our October issue, the reported contract value for the latter order is €6.5 million. ■

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Austal to build two 45m catamarans for Guadeloupe operator

A contract for two 45m catamarans to be delivered in October 2005 was signed late last month between Australian fast ferry builder Austal and L'Express des Iles, based in Pointe-à-Pitre in Guadeloupe.

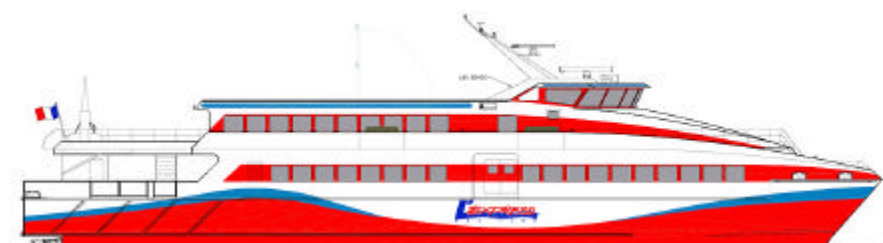
One of the catamarans will be a passenger-only vessel with 446 seats and the other a passenger/car fast ferry carrying 360 passengers and 10 cars. Both will be fitted with four MTU 16V 396 TE74L diesels and Kamewa 63 SII waterjets and have a full load service speed of 38 knots.

Austal's Managing Director Mr Bob McKinnon said the company was extremely proud of the track record of securing repeat business, Austal reports. "While there are numerous instances of operators turning to us after initially operating fast ferries built by other shipyards, the reverse situation is virtually unheard of. This reflects the extremely high level of satisfaction with both the vessels we build and the service we provide our customer", McKinnon said. And he continued by saying, "While we are successfully growing our defence-related business, we have sufficient production capacity to continue to meet the demand generated by the commercial vessel sector. The fact that we have signed sizeable contracts for three fast ferries within the last month is indicative of our ongoing competitiveness in this key market".

The other new contract referred to is for an Auto Express 67 catamaran for Virtu Ferries in Malta, the order of which was made official at the end of September. This vessel will carry 600 passengers and 65 cars or 35 cars + 10 TIR trucks or coaches and is due for delivery next May and will operate year-round between Malta and Sicily.

Established in 1987 trading as Antilles Trans Express and initially operating a Marinteknik Verkstads catamaran built in Sweden in 1984, the current fast ferry

fleet of L'Express des Iles comprises four catamarans. Two of these were delivered by Austal in 1998, a 40m passenger-only catamaran, *Opale Express*, and an Auto Express 48, *Jade Express*, able to carry 10 cars and 329 passengers. The two others were built by Marinteknik Shipbuilders in Singapore in 1995-96, the 395-seat 42m catamaran *Turquoise Express* and 445-seat 45m *Rubis Express*. The company operates both domestic and international routes out of Guadeloupe to the other islands in the Lesser Antilles. ■



TOP + ABOVE: The two Austal 45m catamarans ordered by L'Express des Iles in Guadeloupe, due for delivery in October next year. The differences on the superstructure reflect the fact that one of the catamarans will carry 10 cars in addition to its 360-passenger capacity, while the other is a passenger-only vessel fitted out with 446 seats

BELOW: The Auto Express 67 ordered by Virtu Ferries in Malta in September. Able to carry 600 passengers and 65 cars, this is expected to enter service between Malta and Sicily next May /All three profile drawings: AUSTAL





Foreign catamarans in foreign places

ENZO ANNUARIO photo

As reported in our last issue, Hellas Flying Dolphins has purchased the pair of Kværner Fjellstrand FlyingCat 40m catamarans *Hanse Jet* and *Hanse Jet II* previously operated by Ferrys Rápidos del Sur across the Straits of Gibraltar and Förde Reederei Seetouristik in Germany. Renamed *Flyingcat 5* and *Flyingcat 6*, the catamarans left southern Spain and northern Germany respectively for Greece under their own power.

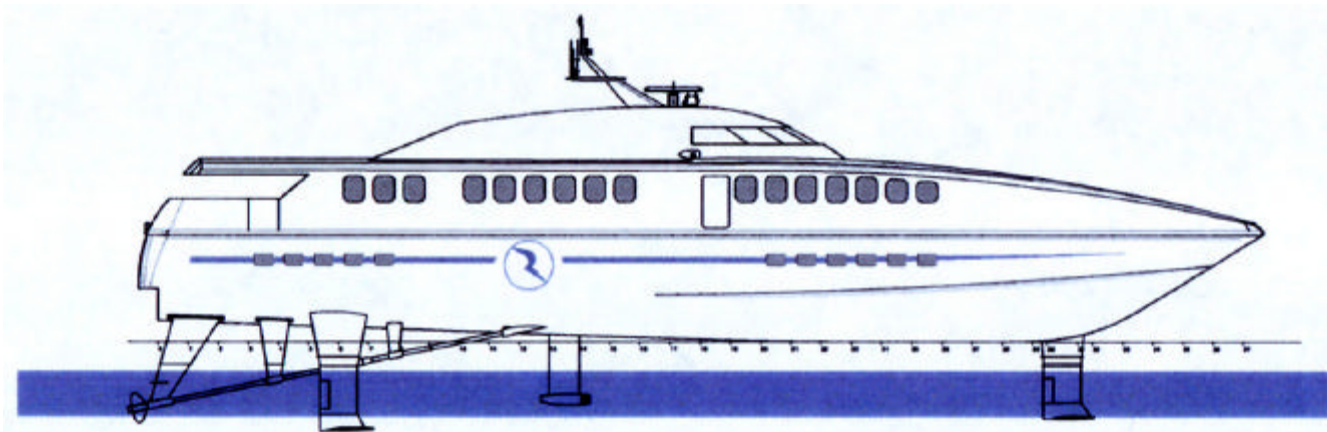
In the above picture *Flyingcat 5* is seen at Messina on November 3. The vessel called at the Orange

City for provisions and refuelling on its positioning trip from Tarifa to Piraeus where it should have arrived by the time this issue is published.

Flyingcat 6 departed Cuxhaven already on October 12 and was captured three days later pausing in Den Helder, the Netherlands (*below*). The two vessels are expected to be introduced by HFD early next year linking the mainland port of Volos and the islands of Skiathos, Skopelos and Alonnisos in the North Sporades. ■



PIETER INPIJN photo



Fully submerged hydrofoils being developed and built by Rodriquez

Rodriquez has revealed details about its new fully submerged hydrofoil concept, nicknamed Alirivoluzionario.

Over the last two years Rodriquez has headed a research program developing a new and efficient hydrofoil design with fully submerged foils. Financed by Ministero della Ricerca, the Italian Ministry of Research, the project includes research into and the design and construction of two full-scale prototypes, each with a different propulsion system.

In charge of the design of the innovative craft has been Ing. Alcide Sculati, Managing Director of Rodriquez Engineering, which is the research and development centre of the Rodriquez Group. Focus has been set on developing a new hydrofoil with a fully submerged foil system in order to reduce sensitivity towards adverse sea states, thus improving ride quality, at the same time increasing the vessel's overall efficiency. Up till now Rodriquez of course has successfully been building surface piercing hydrofoils of various size and shape in Messina since 1956. Currently in production is the 31.2m, 38-knot 240-passenger Foilmaster, five of which have been delivered since 1994. One more will enter service with Siremar in the next few weeks, and another seven are under construction and on order, with Ustica Lines having taken options on an additional four vessels.

Each of the twin-deck fully submerged prototypes, the construction of which commenced earlier this year, will have a length overall of 37m and be powered by a pair of MTU 16V 4000 M70 diesels and carry 280 passengers. A maximum speed of 50 knots is expected to be achieved.

One of the vessels will be fitted with traditional shafts connected to fixed pitch propellers and the other with special dual-propeller Z-drives with carbon fibre shafts, developed by Rodriquez Marine System.

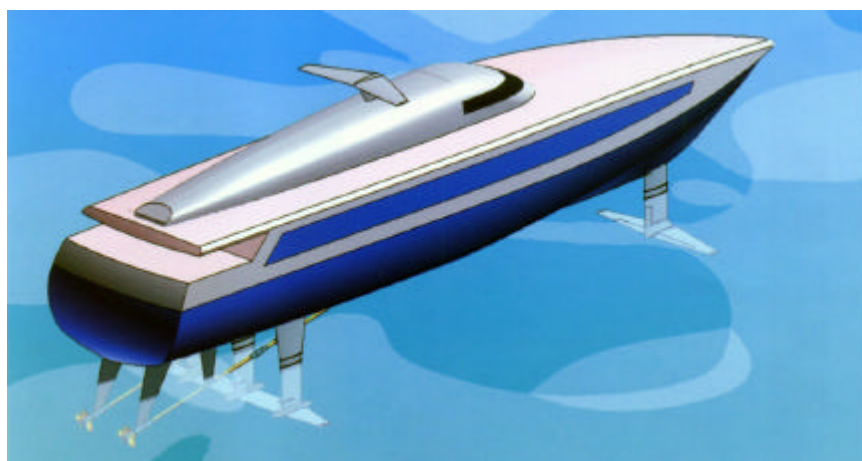
The craft will have an electronic control system for the foil surfaces which incorporates the stabilization and directional control equipment, and a great deal of attention is being paid to the shapes and dimensions of the hull appendages and propulsion system. Stability will be ensured by trailing flaps placed on the foils which in turn will be electronically controlled. The system will have sufficient redundancy to provide maximum safety and allow the hydrofoil to remain foilborne even in the event of the mechanical failure of a single component.

In order to optimize the propulsion system over the vessels' complete operating range, including in hullborne and

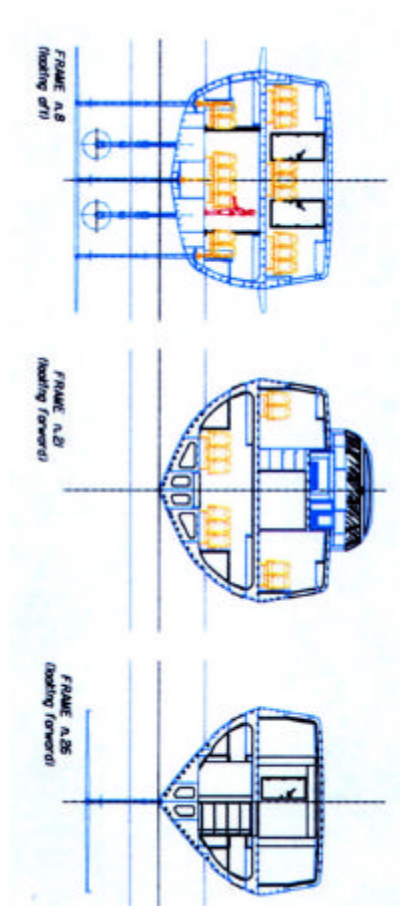
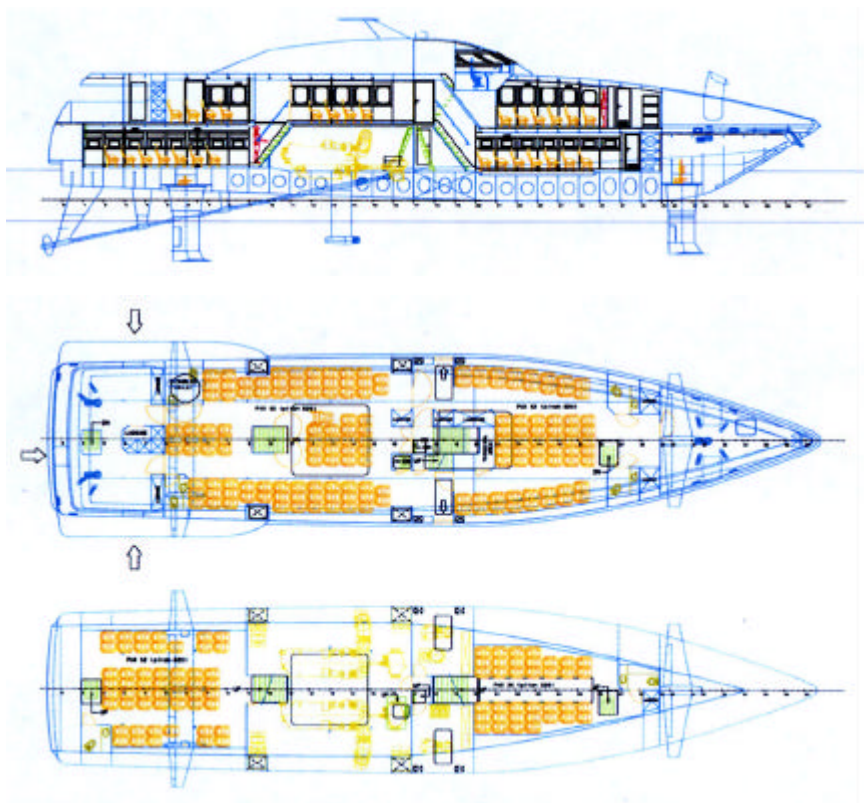
foilborne modes and during take-off, the gearboxes will be two-speed units. First gear will allow for the vessel to reach the speed required for take-off when the hull comes free of the water whilst not overloading the engines. Second gear will allow the engine power and vessel speed to be ideally matched while cruising at high speed.

The fully-submerged hydrofoil design now presented is ideal for medium distances, Rodriquez reports. Also, thanks to the very low wash generated it is perfect for environmentally sensitive waters and/or inshore routes near coastal cities of a certain size where an alternative to congested road or rail transportation would be needed.

This is not the first time Rodriquez develops – and builds – a hydrofoil that is different from the rest which the yard has become known for. In 1991 the Messina works launched the Maximum Efficiency Craft, MEC, and although featuring surface piercing foils, this was an interesting and unique design in many ways. A later version with fully submerged foils was planned but never eventuated. More about this can be read in the May and October 2003 *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES*. ■



ABOVE + RIGHT:
Profile drawing and impression of the Rodriquez 37m fully submerged hydrofoil, now under construction
/ RODRIQUEZ CANTIERI NAVALI



General arrangement and profile view of the Rodriguez 37m fully submerged hydrofoil
/RODRIQUEZ CANTIERI NAVALI photo, both



The new Foilmaster hydrofoil for Siremar, Antio, the second to enter service with the operator, was ready to go into the water for the first time in Messina on November 9 / ANTONIO DONATO photo

*As long as there's a **SUN** and a moon*

BALEARIC ISLANDS REVISITED



DAVE LOYDALL photo

Tourism came to the Balearic Islands before fast ferries did. Since some fifteen years however fast ferries have come and gone in the area; in fact, some that came still did not leave, and these days visitors and fast ferries are dependable on one another to a great extent. However, while the tourist industry would probably survive without the fast ferries, the reverse is more unlikely. Indeed, fast ferries have become part of everyday life to many residents also and so would not altogether disappear, but without the tourists the number of vessels operating within the archipelago as well as to/from mainland Spain undoubtedly would drop.

Since our last report well over two years ago, the Balearic Islands of Ibiza and Formentera are where they used to be – as are most of the catamarans featured then. But there has been some changes, and this time we also take a look at some of the development in the two other major islands in the Balearics, Mallorca and Menorca, in recent years.

It is interesting to note that all eight of the passenger-only catamarans currently in the area were built in Norway by Westermoen Hydrofoil/Westamarin and Fjellstrand and originally entered service with other operators outside the Balearics between 1974 and 1987.

IBIZA – FORMENTERA

Baleària, which was formed in 1998 by a group of executives, captains and officers of Flebasa Lines, continues to operate its pair of formerly Norwegian and Italian Westamarin 95 catamarans *Rápido de* *Formentera* and *Rápido de Menorca* between Ibiza and La Savina in Formentera. Since some time the 11-nautical mile route is operated jointly with Trasmapi which has four catamarans, however not in service simultaneously, W95s *Ibiza Jet* and *Tagomago Jet*, acquired in Denmark in 1993, and Fjellstrand 38.8m catamarans *Eivissa Jet* and *Formentera Jet* previously operated by Isnasa across the Straits of Gibraltar. During the summer months this year the two companies timetabled as many as 30 departures on the 25–30-



Rápido de Menorca is one of two W95 catamarans owned by Baleària / DAVE LOYDALL photo

minute crossing between 0730 and 2030. This dropped to ten round trips from October 1 from which date two vessels were scheduled to maintain the service, *Rápido de Formentera* and *Formentera Jet*. Craft are rotated however subject to maintenance and annual overhaul.

In addition to the fast ferries, which are marketed as Linea Jet, Trasmapi and Baleària also operate medium-speed vessels, marketed as Linea Express, and a conventional ferry taking 35 and 60 minutes on the route respectively.

PAGE 10: A passenger/vehicle fast ferry was operated between Ibiza and Formentera by Baleària for the first time during the peak season this year. Marinteknik Shipbuilders 63m catamaran *Nixe* is seen off Espalmador on September 22. . .

BELOW: . . . and Westamarin 95 *Rápido de Formentera* alongside at La Savina, Formentera / DAVE LOYDALL photo, both



New in Ibiza and Formentera this season however was a Marinteknik 63m passenger/vehicle fast catamaran, *Nixe*. Delivered by Marinteknik Shipbuilders in Singapore earlier in the summer, the 606-passenger 70-car catamaran was introduced by Baleària in August linking the mainland port of Dénia and Ibiza and Formentera. Journey times for Dénia–Ibiza is 2 hours and Ibiza–Formentera 30 minutes. While a year-round service, the vehicle fast ferry does not operate the Ibiza–Formentera leg during the winter

months.

The third fast ferry operator in the area, Mediterranea Pitiusa, likewise continues to operate its W95 catamaran *Aigües de Formentera* on the Ibiza–Formentera route. Last year a medium-speed monohull, *Menorca Express*, built in France and previously in service between Menorca and Mallorca with Cape Balear was added. Since October 15, four daily round trips are operated by the monohull as the W95, purchased from a French operator in 2000, is currently in drydock for engine overhaul.

BELOW + BOTTOM: Half of Trasmapi's immaculately kept catamaran fleet in Formentera in June, former Danish Westamarian 95 Tagomago Jet from 1977 and Fjellstrand 38.8m Eivissa Jet, originally delivered to a Caribbean operator in 1986 / DAVE LOYDALL photo, both





CAPE BALEAR

Further north-east, another former Norwegian Westamran 95 is operating between Menorca and Mallorca with Cape Balear. The company was formed in 1996 and initially operated a leased 22.5m foil assisted catamaran, *Menorca Jet*, on tourist excursions. Better known as *Sea Shuttle 1*, the vessel had been launched by MK International in South Africa two years earlier.

In September 1998 Cape Balear was granted a license to operate a regular

passenger service between Ciutadella, Menorca and Cala Ratjada, Mallorca and in November that year introduced *Menorca Express*, the 23.7m medium-speed monohull now in service with Pitiusa.

The following year the company chartered a FlyingCat 40m catamaran from French operator SMN, *Locmaria*, for a planned long route linking Menorca and Barcelona. This fell through as a permit was not given by the authorities and instead the catamaran was put into service on the 1-hour Ciutadella–

TOP + BOTTOM

Mediterranea Pitiusa operates a medium-speed monohull, Menorca Express, and W95 catamaran, Aigües de Formentera, on the Formentera–Ibiza route / DAVE LOYDALL photo, both



Cala Ratjada route replacing *Menorca Express* which had suffered an engine failure. The monohull was back on the route in early 2001 and the FlyingCat returned to France.

A craft of a rather unusual design entered service with the company in 2001. A semi-wavepiercing catamaran, it had been launched the previous year by Iris Catamarans in La Rochelle, France.

The first of the type built, the twin-deck Iris 6.2 is made up of four identical passenger cabin modules and a wheelhouse mounted on a standard basic structure including two slender hulls. It has a length overall of 42.8m, beam of 10.6m and is powered by a pair of MTU 16V 4000 M70 diesels and Lips LJ 76DL waterjets. The full load service speed is 36 knots. The leased

346-seat vessel, *Iris Jet*, was operated by Cape Balear for 18 months after which it was returned to the builder. Since October 2003 it has been chartered to a Turkish company and operating between Cyprus and Turkey.

From May last year Cape Balear leased one of Trasmapi's former Danish Westamarian 95s, *Ibiza Jet*. Then in November 2003 another W95, *Rápido del Puerto*, was transferred from southern Spain to the Ciutadella–Cala Ratjada route. Originally delivered to Norwegian operator Troms Fylkes D/S as *Tromsprinsen* in 1981, the catamaran was acquired four years ago by Maresur and put into service on the short 20-minute crossing of the Bay of Cádiz between El Puerto de Santa María and Cádiz. Eight round trips were



W95 *Rápido del Puerto* was transferred from southern Spain to the Balearics and the Ciutadella–Cala Ratjada route in November last year / CAPE BALEAR photo



Trasmapi's Westamarian 95 *Ibiza Jet* was leased to Cape Balear in 2003 / JAIME PONS photo





initially operated on Monday–Friday but passenger numbers were disappointing however and it was decided to reposition the 200-seat vessel to the Balearics.

Four services are operated by *Rápido del Puerto* on Monday, Wednesday and Friday–Sunday, leaving Ciutadella at 0730 and 1830 and Cala Ratjada at 0900 and 2000. Scheduled journey time is one hour.

Baleària is also present on the Mallorca–Menorca run but is using the port of Alcúdia in Mallorca rather than Cala Ratjada. Currently working the route is Rodríguez TMV 84 Aquastrada passenger/vehicle fast monohull *Ramon Llull*, delivered to the company last year. Trip time here is one hour also.

MAINLAND SERVICES

In addition to, or extending beyond if you

wish, the inter-island services, Baleària as well as formerly state-owned operator Trasmediterrànea operate fast ferries and conventional tonnage between Barcelona, Valencia and Dénia on mainland Spain and the Balearics.

For twelve months during 2001–02 another company, Naviera Universal Española, a subsidiary of the Hong Kong Parkview Group, traded between Barcelona, Alcúdia and Ciutadella.

Marketing the service as Turbocat, a TriCat 53m twin-deck catamaran, *Universal Mk 1*, the second of the type built, was delivered by FBM Babcock Marine in the UK in July and introduced by Naviera Universal on August 23. The 446-seat 42-knot vessel had a length overall of 56.5m, beam of 13m and was powered by four MTU 16V 4000 M70s and four Kamewa

63 SII waterjets and fitted with the Maritime Dynamics T-foil ride control system. Scheduled journey time between the mainland and Mallorca was 3 hours.

However, services were subject to frequent cancellations, reportedly for mechanical reasons, and Turbocat closed down in early August 2002.

A catamaran with a rather different appearance, Iris Jet, operated between Mallorca and Menorca with Cape Balear in 2001–02
/ JAIME PONS photo

Also in 2001 Naviera Universal Española introduced an FBM Babcock TriCat 53m catamaran, Universal Mk 1, between mainland Spain and Mallorca/Menorca
/ JAIME PONS photo



*As long as
there's a **SUN**
and a moon*

Much earlier, in 1989, a company based in Valencia, Cats Line, took delivery of a pair of Kværner Fjellstrand 38.8m catamarans, *Leopardo* and *Eyra*. The 278-seat vessels were introduced on long routes between Vilanova, some 35 kilometers south of Barcelona, and Alcúdia and Ciutadella and from Javea south of Alicante to Formentera-Ibiza-Mallorca. They were later transferred to other routes in the Mediterranean before returning to Norway in 1993 and 1994 having been acquired by Fylkesbaatane i Sogn og Fjordane and Partrederiet Kystekspresen. The FSF vessel remains in Norway, whereas the other was sold in Croatia in March 2003. ■



DAVE LOYDALL photo

FAST PASSENGER CATAMARANS IN THE BALEARICS 2004 :

BALEÁRIA **RÁPIDO DE FORMENTERA** WESTAMARAN 95 | BUILT 1974
BALEÁRIA **RÁPIDO DE MENORCA** WESTAMARAN 95 | BUILT 1975
CAPE BALEAR **RÁPIDO DEL PUERTO** WESTAMARAN 95 | BUILT 1981
MEDITERRANEA PITIUSA **AIGÜES DE FORMENTERA** WESTAMARAN 95 | BUILT 1974
TRASMAPI **IBIZA JET** WESTAMARAN 95 | BUILT 1977
TRASMAPI **TAGOMAGO JET** WESTAMARAN 95 | BUILT 1977
TRASMAPI **EIVISSA JET** FJELLSTRAND 38.8M | BUILT 1986
TRASMAPI **FORMENTERA JET** FJELLSTRAND 38.8M | BUILT 1987

Russian variety in Greece



CONSTANTINE DIMARAS photo

As opposed to, for instance, the PT.50 hydrofoils built in Italy, Norway and Japan where hardly two craft looked exactly the same exteriorwise, the many Kometa hydrofoils designed and built in the former USSR are more difficult to tell apart. Some people probably would go as far as to say that if you have seen one Kometa you have seen them all.

But although the Kometas may structurally be (almost) identical, cosmetically they can be refreshingly different. And new paint schemes seem to be popping up all the time with Greek operators, both established such and new or associate companies.

For instance, last year Kiriacoulis Maritime Kometa *Samos Flying Dolphin IV* sported a mainly white with blue and red trim livery as seen in the photo above, taken in Kalymnos in June 2003, and in the view below taken at Piraeus only last month, the vessel appears in an equally attractive red/blue/white livery – assumingly an all-over

JONAS STRÖMBLAD photo

advertising. Also note the slightly different spelling of the craft's name, *Samos Flying Dolfin IV*.

Kiriacoulis Maritime, which headquarters in Alimos, Athens, has a fleet of eight hydrofoils which it operates in the Dodecanese and the Saronic Gulf.



SHOT OF THE MONTH



Prior to the vessels and operators mentioned in the Balearics survey on page 10–16, Fletamentos Baleares SA – Flebasa – introduced a Rodriguez RHS 140 hydrofoil, *Rápido de Ibiza*, between mainland Spain and San Antonio in western Ibiza in 1988 and later between Ibiza town and Formentera.

The hydrofoil was originally delivered to SRÖ in Sweden as *Viggen* in 1973 and put into service between Malmö, Sweden and Copenhagen, Denmark, a route jointly operated with its Danish counterpart DSØ since 1965. It made the positioning journey from Malmö to Spain under its own power in November 1987. With the subsequent acquisition of catamarans, *Rápido de Ibiza* was withdrawn and has been laid up in Mallorca for several years.

In addition, during the 1994 peak season Flebasa operated W95 *Rápido de Menorca* on the Ciutadella–Cala Ratjada route and *Rápido de Mallorca*, the second RHS 200 hydrofoil built, between Dénia and Mallorca/Ibiza.

*A B O V E : The former Swedish RHS 140 Viggen operating in Spain with Flebasa Expres as *Rápido de Ibiza* in 1988 ...*

/ GERARDO FERRERO photo

B E L O W : ...and in its heyday on the Malmö–Copenhagen route

/ OLAV MOEN photo

