

# KELSALL CATAMARANS

## Dick Newick and a bit of History

By Derek Kelsall, 2009

Today we had the great pleasure of a visit from old friend and foe in the person of US designer Dick Newick. Friend in that we have shared clients, platforms, coffee table discussions and a common interest in the same races and in the modern development of the multihull concept for forty years. Foe in that when we look through my library of books on the great races, particularly the OSTAR (single handed Atlantic) and the Round Britain, as designers, I have not counted, but would guess it is about honours even. Friendly rivalry is probably a better term. These we can today call the early days and the great days of the development of the modern multihull.

The boats have developed almost beyond recognition, particularly in performance. As with all sports which become popular, money has been the source of many changes, not all of which are for the better.

To put that into context, my own entry in the solo Atlantic (45 years ago) cost me two years earnings in the Sahara desert and I had a serious chance of winning. A serious entry today will cost a million dollars. My winning entry in the first Round Britain cost 3,500 pounds sterling. My OSTAR entry was the first non-ballasted entry and my Round Britain win was the first time a multihull had won a major open offshore race.

Sponsors money made it impossible for private owners to compete. The nature of the races changed, although I am happy to relate that these two races do still attract the private owners in considerable numbers – and perhaps even more so in this years event as I hear that sponsorship is less easy to come by.

As a reminder of the situation at that time, a report in the Observer Sunday Newspaper sponsoring the race, told that my entry, the first trimaran would 'straddle two waves and break up'.

Lots of memories and names came back to us in our discussions. The debates at the time compared monos, catamarans, trimarans and proas and even ballasted catamarans. For a designer, this was working with a clean sheet of paper and every idea one can imagine was there to be analysed and put to the test.

Dick has a new Val 32 trimaran design. Examining the lines: with some minor changes above the WLs, this design could be KSS built. It would save a lot of build time. The design is well proven. Contact either Dick or myself if this could be of interest to you.

An interesting co-incidence. Dick brought out a recent picture of his famous Proa design Cheers, with which Tom Follet came third in OSTAR 1968. Now in the S. of France. Immediately astern of Cheers I recognised a Kelsall Suncat 40, I built some 20+ years ago.



Dick Newick's Boat *Cheers* with Derek's *Suncat 40* astern

## Lady Jane 3 - update on her way around the World

Kelsall Suncat 40 Lady Jane 3, was built in UK by Jim and Jane Horner. She is on her last lap on her way around the World. Still to pass through the Mediterranean and back to UK around Spain and across the Bay of Biscay. Currently working her way up the Red Sea towards Suez. Jim sailed single handed from Malaysia to Iretrea (S. end of Red Sea), and good to report that he passed Somalia without incident. Guess the hi-jackers are going for bigger fish these days. No trouble but close encounters with warships & freighters asking if he was OK, near Somalia. 3,800 miles in 28 days.