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# THE RACE TO

"Figaro" Wins Swedish Race From "Carina," "Anitra" and Other Topnotchers

By ALFRED F. LOOMIS



Wm. T. Snaith's 47-foot yawl "Figaro," overall and Class B winner of the race to Sweden. She topped a 17-boat fleet

Marstrand, Sweden

IVE YEARS AGO, in celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Royal Swedish YC, there was a trans-Atlantic race from Newport to Sweden in which seven yachts took part. This year the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Gothenburg Royal YC and the concurrence of the biennial Bermuda Race laid the scene for another race to Sweden, and it proved to be the largest, fastest, and finest trans-Atlantic race ever. From a start at noon June 30 off St. Davids Head, Bermuda, to a finish off the Skaw Lightvessel in the Skagerrak, the big yawl Escapade, owned by Baldwin M. Baldwin of Los Angeles, covered the course (3370 miles by great circle, but rated for 3500 miles) in 19 days, 1 hour, 32 minutes and 5 seconds. While Escapade's time was 96 minutes greater than Vamarie's in the comparable race to Norway in 1935, the sailed distance of this race was more than 200 miles greater.

In quality, as well as in quantity, the race excelled. Here were 17 yachts of four nations—two Swedish, two German,

three British and ten American—which had participated in the preceding Bermuda Race. Three of them—Clayton Ewing's yawl Dyna, Thomas J. Watson, Jr.'s yawl Palawan, and Henry B. duPont's sloop Cyane—had won in their respective classes. Belmore, the Royal Naval Sailing Assn.'s 36' sloop, sailed by Commander Erroll Bruce, had placed second in the fleet to Finisterre in the Bermuda Race. She had placed third in the 1958 race under another skipper. Dick Nye's Carina—winner of the previous Swedish Race as well as the Spanish Race of 1957 and the Fastnet Races of those years—had just finished second and placed third in Class B.

Nor did this complete the array of talent. Among the competitors were Sven Hansen's Swedish yawl Anitra, which had won the 1959 Fastnet; Bobby Lowein's sloop Danegeld, which had won in her class in the Fastnet and experienced a phenomenally successful season in Channel racing; and last but not least Bill Snaith's Figaro, which surprised everybody but her owner and crew by winning the Swedish race. Figaro had first missed top honors in 1956 when by 14 minutes she lost a Bermuda Race to Finisterre. She had trailed Carina across the Atlantic to Santander in 1957 and had similarly been a "stout contender" in the succeeding Fastnet. Now, finally, she came into her own.

There was one major casualty, early in the race. Approaching midnight of July 2, the Honorable Max Aitken's sloop Drumbeat was ambling along at about eight knots with Gerald Potter, her sailing master, on the point of setting a larger spinnaker, when a swaged backstay fitting pulled out. The man at the helm, with typical British understatement, said, "Oh, the mast's gone." And it was, broken off 12 feet above the deck and toppled over the port bow. "After a bit of work with hacksaw and the big cutters"—to quote from a letter from Potter to Dick Nye—"we managed to clear the mast, which was bumping alongside a bit, and awaited the dawn, which was not far away."

The decision having been made to sail with spinnaker pole rigged as a jury mast to Newfoundland, a Norwegian

#### RACE TO SWEDEN SUMMARIES

KACE TO SWEDI	EN SUM	MAKIE	3
CLASS			
Yacht & Owner or Master	Elapsed Time D H M S	Corrected Time D H M S	Fleet Pos.
ONDINE, S. A. Long BARLOVENTO, P. S. duPont 3d GERMANIA V, Hans V. Howaldt HAMBURG VI, Dr. Kurt Fischer DYNA, Clayton Ewing ESCAPADE, Baldwin M. Baldwin	20:00:14:57 19:10:55:00 20:04:10:45 20:08:48:49 20:03:25:00 19:01:32:05	18:01:04:02 18:06:02:40 18:11:45:10 18:12:39:19 18:14:49:20 19:01:32:05	8 9 11 13
DRUMBEAT, Hon. Max Aitken CLASS	Dismasted Jul	ly 2nd	
FIGARO, William T. Snaith WINDROSE, Jakob Isbrandtsen ANITRA, Sven Hansen CARINA, Richard S. Nye CYANE, Henry B. duPont PALAWAN, Thos. J. Watson, Jr.	20:06:27:18 20:18:40:45 20:06:58:22 20:01:53:25 21:01:29:53 20:11:13:13	16:20:20:28 16:23:20:55 17:00:27:22 17:08:20:00 17:10:35:28 17:13:02:08	2 3 4
CLASS	C		
BELMORE, Cdr. Erroll Bruce, R.N. DELIGHT, Britton Brothers CASELLA II, Yngve Casell DANEGELD, R. T. Lowein	24:03:24:38 24:09:29:26 24:06:47:50 25:13:47:45	18:12:01:43 18:23:32:36 19:02:49:10 19:17:13:45	



Winner of Class A was S. A. Long's "Ondine," a 56-foot yawl which had been launched just in time for this year's Bermuda Race

Morris Rosenfeld Photos



Top honors in Class C went to the British entry, Cdr. Erroll Bruce's 36-foot sloop, "Belmore," second in Class E in the Bermuda Race

First to finish the 3370 mile race was the California entry, "Escapade," owned by Baldwin M. Baldwin. This well-known 72-foot yawl covered the course in 19 days, 1 hour, 32 minutes and 5 seconds

Bermuda News Bureau

cargo boat was happily sighted on July 3 and she transmitted a message to the Honorable Max in London asking him to dispatch a spare mast to St. John's. In Marstrand there was a rumor that Max lashed the mast to the underbody of a jet plane for prompt delivery. This was not true. Drumbeat, with limited sail area and not too much gas, reached St. John's without further incident July 9; the mast arrived the following week and the week after that she sailed for England.

The race began in southwesterly weather of a mildness to please the 170-odd participants who had been enjoying Bermuda's hospitality for a week, and so continued for seven or eight days. All the starters but *Dyna* and *Drumbeat* laid a great circle course for Point Able, an imaginary mark in Lat. 43°N., Lo. 45°W., south of the most southerly icebergs. *Dyna*, studying the met reports as they were received on the radio and hoping to avoid the Azorean high, slanted sharply northeast until she was roughly 150 miles north of the shortest course to Point Able. She found the wind she was looking for and after a week of fine sailing had made good, noon to noon, 1312 miles. But she had derived only 48 miles benefit from the Gulf Stream and at noon of the seventh day was nearly 200 miles astern of *Escapade*, the fleet leader.

During this first week Escapade had had two marvelous 24-hour-day's runs—of 256 and 246 miles—and was really going to town. Since participation in the 1959 Honolulu Race, in which she had not done well, her battery banks had been shifted from beneath the cockpit to beneath the transoms in the main cabin and, in the opinion of Ray George, her assistant navigator, this transfer of heavy weights was chiefly responsible for putting new life in her. Day by day she increased her lead on Pete duPont's ketch Barlovento, her closest rival, until at the end of the second week she was more than 200 miles ahead. The head winds came, followed by calm, and off North Ronaldsay, the other mark of the course and the most northerly of the Orkney Islands, Escapade led by only 20 miles. But she picked up again in the 440-odd miles from North Ronaldsay across the North Sea to the Skaw, and crossed the line nearly nine hours ahead of the ketch.

In Marstrand, Sweden, where all the competing yachts assembled, I was told that the race was really three races in one. Study of the position reports show that it was many more races than that. First it was a race meteorologically divided into three divisions—the light to moderate southwesterlies of the first week; the stronger northwesterlies and (Continued on page 146)



#### THE RACE TO SWEDEN

(Continued from page 62)

variables of the second week, and finally the southeasterly, northeasterly and northerly gales, followed by calms of the final week.

Then it was a race by classes. After the first week, in which Classes A and B were intermingled, waterline length began to tell and at the end of the second week all but one (Hamburg VI) of Class A yachts were ahead of all of B. Class C in the meantime had dropped farther astern until even Wright Britton's Delight, a Maine-built yawl of the Finisterre type, which led her class for 17 days, was more than 200 miles behind the slowest B boat. But then a virulent low over the British Isles brought winds reported up to 50 miles and mixed things up again, the big boats beating to windward in heavy seas approaching and in the vicinity of the Hebrides, while the intermediate contestants piled up the miles in moderate reaching breezes until they also met the head winds. Classes A and B remained scrambled after entering the North Sea and encountering northerly gales followed by calm.

When I talked with Bill Snaith there was a happy smile on his face. Knowing of his long rivalry with Blunt White and that he had borrowed a spinnaker from White Mist, which was not a competitor in this race, I asked if there was anything needed to complete his happiness. He said yes, one thing. If on arriving in Marstrand he had encountered Blunt on the quay (strictly as a nonparticipant) his pleasure would have been unbounded.

Snaith told me of the structural improvements he has made in *Figaro* which he thinks contributed greatly to her victory. A centerboarder, she lacked power when sailing close-hauled in her preceding long race to Spain and also proved extremely difficult to hold on course when running. Deciding to add lead ballast to her keel, he drew up several underbody profiles, submitted the most promising to *Figaro's* designer, Olin Stephens, and got his blessing for one of them. (An interrupter of Bill's explanation said it was not exactly a blessing. Olin looked at the profiles and thereupon took a trip to Europe!)

Anyway, without interference with the centerboard slot, Figaro's ballast was increased from 8200 to 8700 pounds and her draft was deepened from 4'5" to 5'5". Contrary to reports I had heard, Figaro did not sail as a keel boat. Her centerboard was in use throughout the race. Another change consisted of shortening the upper spreaders three inches. In rough going this facilitated the use of a number two genoa, tacked higher than formerly on the forestay and out of reach of the sea.

These two improvements gave Figaro greater power on the wind and an easier helm off it. Two accessions to her crew may also have contributed to her ability to move through the water. One was Bobby Symonette, who had transferred from Finisterre. The other was Knud Reimers, Swedish naval architect. He had sailed aboard the original Ondine in the 1955 Fastnet when she placed second to Carina. He had also been aboard Anitra when she won the 1959 Fastnet. Knud told me that he signed on with Figaro in the hope that he could sit quietly in a corner exuding good luck—but that he had to work his passage.

Slightly smaller than Sven Hansen's Anitra, Figaro received 3 hours and 35 minutes in time allowance from the Swedish yacht. They raced virtually neck and neck, being in sight of one another more than half the time and winding up at the Skaw with only 31 minutes between them—Figaro on top. In a log summary provided me by Bob Erskine, Anitra's navigator, there is a note on July 19th, a day before the finish: "Figaro sighted 1030. Gloom."

But I dare say this gloom was no more poignant than that of Hank duPont and his able crew aboard Cyane. Except to say that Cyane sighted Windrose almost daily for nine days I can give no report of Cyane's relative performance throughout the race. Her navigator, my old friend Chick Larkin, is



Rosenfeld

"Figaro's" crew. Top, I. to r.—Wm. T. Snaith, skipper, R. H. Symonette, J. F. Reardon, Bruce Burgess, MacLead Snaith. Seated, I. to r.—M. K. Farnham, Knud Reimers, Stephen Matson

allergic to figures after arrival in port and never got around to giving me his daily positions. But it says here in my notebook that the fast aluminum sloop averaged 167 miles a day for the first 19 days and then took 12 hours to cover the last 18 miles to the lightship. To cap the climax, she was not sighted by anybody aboard the vessel as she crossed the line and it took her two hours to drift back and report her presence. This and not her actual crossing time became her official time of finish. The added two hours did not affect

Cyane's placing order.

Of Ondine, the Class A winner, I have little to report. On encountering her owner, Huey Long, for the first time in Marstrand and asking him to comment on the race he said, "Cold, cold, cold," and let it go at that. A brand new yawl to Bill Tripp's design, dragged away from the builder's yard less than 48 hours before the start of the Bermuda Race, she sailed according to her owner's fondest expectations and carried away no sails or sailing gear. There was a report that her refrigerating machine packed up and that the crew suffered the hardship of eating steaks three times a day while they lasted, but I didn't get this from official sources. Alex Salm, a member of the crew, said that there was no sun, except, providentially, for sights throughout the passage—and to get ahead of my story a bit, Erroll Bruce had a similar report. Commanding and navigating Belmore, he had no sun sights for six days and no stars for nine days before sighting St. Kilda in the Hebrides. (Thank God for Consol, the European forerunner of Consolan.) So it may be said that it was not a fair weather race, although in the early part there were days of sunshine and warmth.

The race was sailed under the CCA rule and under the joint auspices of the Gothenburg Royal YC, the North American Station of the Royal Swedish YC and the Royal Bermudian YC—and the reception of the early finishers at Marstrand was nothing short of royal. Norway's royal yacht Norge was at anchor in the harbor so that King Olaf would be conveniently disposed for racing his various boats in the Jubilee Regatta, and she saluted Anitra and others with gunfire on their arrival. Marstrand, having normally a population of 1200, was packed to the rocky edges of the little island with 26,000 participants and spectators. Even when Belmore was towed into port at three o'clock in the morning five days after Escapade there were several hundred on the quay. No more hospitable reception by GKSS officers, members and friends could be imagined.

The two German yawls in the race, Germania V, owned by





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Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, and sailed by Hans V. Howaldt, and *Hamburg VI*, sailed by the veteran trans-Atlantic racer Dr. Kurt Fischer, both did well, finishing fifth and eighth in the fleet. Captain Howaldt had told me in Bermuda that he had read Sherman Hoyt's account in "Ocean Racing" of how the *Roland von Bremen* was sailed in the 1936 race from Bermuda to Cuxhaven and that he was determined not to duplicate any of the errors of that passage. That he and his navigator, Rudolph Koppenhagen, kept the yawl moving to the best of her ability is indicated by the fact that she placed third after *Barlovento* in Class A. *Hamburg* came just behind her in fourth place.

Of the two Śwedish yachts mention has been made of Anitra, which was dropped to third in Class B by Jakob Isbrandtsen's American yawl Windrose. The other Śwedish boat was Yngve Cassell's Casella II, which at 31.65' over all was the smallest in the fleet. Casella, placing third in Class C, gave a good if not spectacular performance, covering more ground than any of her class competitors until the eighth day, but thereafter dropping behind until well into the North Sea. There in home waters she overtook Delight

and crossed the line shortly after Belmore.

Next to *Drumbeat's* dismasting *Casella* suffered the most serious fleet casualty with the breaking of her boom on the second day of the race. It was blowing too hard for the spinnaker when the accident occurred, so twin headsails were set and *Casella* carried on for six hours with almost undiminished speed while members of the crew fished, reinforced and glued the spar—making it stronger than it had been when new.

Also in Class C there was another breakage which consumed some time and by cumulative effect may have cost Wright Britton's *Delight* first place in her class. *Delight*, as has been said, led the other small boats for the first 17 days. One reason was that on the day ending at noon of July 5th she piled up a run of 218 miles, compared with *Belmore's* 180 and *Danegeld's* 158 miles. There must have been plenty of Gulf Stream assistance in this outstanding run, but in preceding Bermuda Races yachts of similar size riding a

meander have not gone as far.

Delight carried away her spinnaker halyard block before reaching Point Able, blew a spinnaker, ran over it, and did herself no good. Breakages of other small parts occurred until the reserve supply was almost exhausted. In this situation, when it really began to blow on July 17 it seemed to Wright Britton the seamanlike thing to heave to for 12 hours. On the port tack she drifted southeast at 2 knots, giving Belmore the opportunity of advancing from a position 15 miles astern at noon of the 17th to one 20 miles ahead the following noon. That tied it, even though in the calm going toward the close the American yawl briefly regained her superiority. Delight had to be content with second place in Class C, for Belmore had crossed six hours ahead of her and had saved her time by nine and a half hours.

This brings me to a more detailed narration of *Belmore's* adventures. Commanded by a British naval officer who had placed second with *Samuel Pepys* in the 1950 race from Bermuda to Plymouth, and with the same boat had won the corresponding race of the second year following, *Belmore* was driven to the limit of her ability. Since Erroll Bruce is a fellow craftsman and is going to write a book about this race and since I was able to catch him after a press conference at the GKSS with no interruptions, I find more information about *Belmore* in my notebook than I have of any other yacht.

Here it is:

"Wonderful reception by Swedes. Quay lined with people. Cases of beer coming aboard. Had 1000 miles of following winds of strengths from 15 to 25. Going very fast—first week 1200 miles. Best day July 4 under twin headsails—183 miles. Sighted no other yachts after first two days. Approaching Point Able met a strong westerly. At Point Able threw over a sealed bottle which almost hit another bottle undoubtedly dropped by another boat. On Sunday, July 16 when 100 miles short of Rockall (a lonely pinnacle

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SEE INTERESTING BOATING STORY ON PAGE 66



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about 250 miles off the Scottish coast) Harry Flatters and since it seemed suitable to the day, prayed for wind. Half an hour later a summer gale came in from the east southeast. On starboard tack under storm trysail and spitfire jib, with the frequency of the waves just right, and so made 184 miles to a DR position on the 17th. On the 18th and 19th for 40 hours in a north northeasterly sailed under spitfire with 10 rolls on the main. Sea not as high as in preceding blow. Gale dying by 0430 of the 19th when made landfall on St. Kilda's. Absolutely soaked below and gave some thought to taking it easy to save crew from exhaustion. Obviated that by doping Mike Tanner, the ablest youngster in the crew, with sleeping pills and so requiring him to sleep for eight hours. Stood his watch. Lovely drying days from there on in. Head wind approaching North Ronaldsay and tacked right up to Fair Island, half way to the Shetlands. Hardest Atlantic race in Erroll's experience."

That being one side of the coin, let's see what happened to *Danegeld*. As the yacht with the lowest rating it was only fitting (to a chronicler) that she should finish last, balancing the performance of *Escapade*, the scratch boat, in finishing first. (Incidentally, *Esky* gave away so much time to her competitors that she placed ahead of only *Casella* and

Danegeld.)

The other side of the coin (and my reason for having previously implied that the race for the King of Sweden's Cup was more than six races in one) is that Danegeld, beautifully sailed though she was, dropped behind a few miles every day and fell into a completely different weather pattern. Instead of being absolutely soaked below she sailed day after day at an average rate of 147 miles with no spray on deck and only occasionally a shower.

It must be appreciated that the attitude of skipper and crew of a yacht that doesn't get enough wind must be one of light-hearted indifference. With this in mind I mention that the outstanding incident of *Danegeld's* cruise to Sweden was the sighting, three days out of Bermuda, of a glowing object



Goteborgs-bild

A section of the harbor of Marstrand, Sweden, with the building of the Gothenburg YC (GKSS) at left

in the sky. It passed on a course of 138°, seemingly in the stratosphere, and was visible for five minutes. The current Pilot Chart makes mention of several reports of flying objects. Bobby Lowein, *Danegeld's* skipper, ventured the opinion that it was a U.S. Army rocket, but one of the members of his crew who is well up on science fiction told me confidentially that it was a flying saucer.

Considered in its general aspect, the race was unusual in that it was neither a big boat nor a little boat race. It was made to order for middle sized boats, which, in the rating order, constituted Class B. All of the B boats placed ahead of all the As, and of these Carina, Figaro and Anitra actually finished ahead of one or more of the As. On the other hand the first three A boats placed ahead of all Class C boats—and that's probably unexampled in the postwar history of ocean racing. Blue water sailing always has something new to offer for the delectation of the increasing hundreds of sailors who think there's no sport like it.