



A happy Don Shead at the wheel of *Avenger Too* shortly after winning the Needles Trophy. *Avenger Too* was designed by Don and is an enlarged version of his *Avenger 21* series.

Burnard in *Sea Fox* must think that this is his lucky venue, after a duel with *Oh Oh Sex* and *Miss Smirnoff*. (The latter's crew had worked through the night to replace a cracked piston.) *Sea Fox* was being headed by Brian Wright and Peter Hennessy in *Miss Smirnoff* when Brian managed to miss the three-cable wide finishing line and put *Miss Smirnoff* between a gap of 30 yards south of the buoy. Although he realised this immediately and tried to correct his error, *Sea Fox* sneaked through to cross the line five seconds ahead of Bernard Jelley in *Oh Oh Sex*. Last year, in the same race, at the same buoy, the same error happened with the same two boats. 1968 *Oh Oh Sex* is now 1969 *Miss Smirnoff*. Alan Burnard was seen gratefully buying the crew a conciliatory drink!

The Ford/Fairey group were next home with *Fordspeed*, John Freeman, ahead of *Ford Power*, Derek Morris and *Ford Sport*, Peter Twiss being separated from *Sea Spray*, Lady Violet Aitken, and *Maid Fast*, G. Marsh.

Steve Macey in *Spirit of Ecstasy* showed that his twin Rolls-

Royce/Hagg went round quite easily and collected the RMYC Members Trophy and the over-1,000 c.c. diesel prize.

Other finishers were *Sabre Dance*, J. A. Rowe, *Firecracker*, J. Renouf, *Graziella*, Paul Best and *Needlenose*, Charles Currey. *Fiducia*, J. Frost, was disqualified.

R. Hilton's new *HTS* from the Shead/Souter stable was dogged by troubles with her two marinised Leyland engines, one in particular having crankcase compression problems. Ian Toll, who has finally got *Magnum Tornado* ready for racing after her ducking in last year's Cowes race, heard very "expensive" noises in the engine compartment and decided against racing.

If the next race at Poole on July 27 is as well organised, the RMYC deserve a very good turnout, as the course is quite interesting (although it may be overshadowed by the start of the *Daily Telegraph*/BP Race). This race is a National Class III event and is being sponsored by Champion Plugs. Details and entry forms from Mrs. M. C. Hardie, Yachting Sec., RMYC, Poole, and not from the two usual clubs. D.L. □

## NEEDLES TROPHY

### Results

1st overall, *Avenger Too*, Don Shead, av. speed 47.95 knots.  
2nd overall, *Sea Fox*, Alan Burnard, av. speed 36.96 knots (plus Foden prize for diesel under 1,000cc, Sieger prize for Class II, Perkins trophy).  
3rd Overall, *Oh Oh Sex*, Bernard Jelley, av. speed 36.96 knots.  
Team prize: Ford entry.  
Sieger prize for Class I: *Ford Speed*, J. Freeman.

# First of the season

Simon Crow-Beaumont reports

## The Solent Trophy kicks off the year's batch of predicted log events

WHAT IS THE MATTER with predicted log competitions? Are they not events in the same way that a circuit race is an event, or a cruise is an event or a passenger race is an event? Do they not promote activity afloat, and do they not provide exercise, in safety, for navigation-shy boat owners? Are they not all open events? The answers are patently in the affirmative; why then are predicted logs acknowledged only parochially and then seemingly shunned? How-

*Samantha IV* hands in her winning log, with only a 3.96 per cent error.



ever, before a diagnosis is attempted, first a look back to June 28 when the Royal Southern Yacht Club held the BP Solent Trophy.

Following a 9am briefing from Bill Thornback, the Royal Southern's sailing secretary, at the club's Hamble HQ the 14 entrants handed in their predictions (log sheets filled in with their starting time and predicted time at each buoy on the 31-mile course, based on their boats' cruising speed and the given finishing time of 4pm).

Each entrant's neutral observer ensured that logs, clocks (and watches) were blanked off or handed in. The neutral observers weren't required to be tight-lipped strangers, they could just as well have been tight-lipped friends. The entire concept of predicted logging presumes honesty and integrity among competitors. After all the competitions are exercises in navigation and the time spent before the event working out tidal rates, boat drift and so on, is time uselessly wasted if the competitor's faith in himself and his boat is such that on the course he must co-ordinate throttle with clock.

The course was the same as last year with the boats starting at Calshot then bearing west down the Solent to W. Bramble, W. Lepe and Lymington Spit then back and down Spithead to Prince Consort and N. Sturbridge and thence to the finishing line at Hill Head buoy.

Shortly after the briefing the committee boat *Sheldrake* made her way out of the Hamble to hover off Calshot pillar buoy. The weather was glorious and *Sheldrake* was just one boat of a small armada heading for the Solent. There was very little wind though and dinghies and engine-less sailing cruisers were barely making any way, their sails languid in the sun.

### Startling roar

First to round the big black buoy was Ivor Creek (he's an ex-speedway ace) in his attractive little motor sailer *Pink Djin*. All on the committee boat looked at the time sheet he'd handed in. He'd estimated rounding the pillar at 11.20 (commencing Hook Buoy and bearing 60°m) but it looked as though he was going to be late. All eyes on *Pink Djin*'s bow wave. It stayed the same size and the boat rounded the buoy 3min 12sec late, quite an error at this stage in the game. Time errors were quite common at Calshot, even among the more experienced hands. Clive Windsor-Richards (one-time Vauxhall driver at Brooklands) was 23sec early in his cruiser *Missive II* and Frank Allen, last

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