

CHAMPAGNE MUMM ADMIRAL'S HISTORY

1993

Excerpt from Champagne Mumm Admirals Cup by Timothy Jeffery

After twenty-three glorious years the sun set on the International Offshore Rule as the single currency for racing around the world. As a swan song, the 1993 Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup was keen, tight and incident-filled. Outsiders before the start, the Germans clinched victory seven races later by the narrowest ever margin: 0.25 points. It was a slimmer victory even than that of the French two years previously.

It was an appropriate reward for the Germans, winners of the series in 1973, 1983 and 1985, especially as Willi Illbruck, owner of Pinta, and Hans-Otto Schumann, on his twelfth Rubin, had supported the event for three decades. Schumann was part of the 1973 and 1985 winning teams, having started his run of twelve Admiral's Cups as far back as 1963. Illbruck was a member of the 1983 line-up, and for 1993 he built his smallest Pinta for a long time, a Jedel/Vrolijk One-Tonner which had already won the 1993 One Ton Cup in Cagliari, Sardinia, before coming to Cowes. Save for Australia's Syd Fischer and Peter Kurts, and Italy's Giorgio Carriero and Pasquale Landolfi, few other yachtsmen have put so much into the Admiral's Cup for so long.

The last IOR series it might have been, but it was brimfull of drama even before the climactic finish. Harry Cudmore sank Ireland's One-Tonner, which had been chartered from King Harald of Norway, and two more yachts were severely damaged.

The similarities with the 1991 Cup were uncanny. The Italians brought immaculately prepared boats, packed full of talented sailors who were housed and fed (by a chef flown in from Rome) in considerable style. They led the series from the second race onwards, building up considerable momentum, so that a much deserved prize seemed to be theirs until it all fell apart at the end.

The race programme was changed to replace the Third Inshore race, normally the long race, with two twelve-mile windward/leeward races. In the first, Giorgio Carriero's 50ft Mandrake was dicing with Bert Dolk's Pro-motion from the Netherlands. Crossing bows and dipping transoms with inches to spare is meat and drink to the crews of the 50-footers, but this time it went spectacularly wrong. Approaching the weather for the second time and just a hundred yards short of it, Mandrake approached a line of starboard tack traffic, apparently about to slot in behind Britain's Indulgence (Mike Peacock's old Juno V, which was bought by Graham Walker) and Pro-motion, but ahead of France's Corum Saphir.

Mandrake's helmsman, Francesco de Angelis, was perched high on the weather side, waiting for tactician Torben Grael to talk him through the crossing. Grael and Giorgio Carriero could see Pro-motion approaching; the two 50-foot yachts were closing at right angles at a combined speed of about 13 knots. In the time Grael had decided not to tack underneath Pro-motion but to cross her stern, the moment to avoid collision had gone. 'There was a collective black-out,' said Carriero.

The crash was ear shattering. Mandrake speared into Pro-motion, penetrating her starboard side deep enough to dislodge a primary winch. Bouwe Bekking, taking a break from Dennis Conner's Winston Whitbread campaign to steer Pro-motion, dislocated his thumb when it was jarred against the steering wheel, though, mercifully, there were no other injuries.

For a full five minutes the yachts were locked together like rutting stags. When they disengaged, it seemed one, or both, might sink. Pro-motion was holed to below the waterline, but stayed afloat, just, by dint of sailing heeled right over on starboard tack straight into Chichester Harbour. 'We bounced the boat over the sands and went aground three times, twisting the keel, just to get her into the boatyard at Hayling', said Bekking.

RESULTS

Country	Boat Name	Owner	Total (Overall Points)	Overall Total
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				(By Country)
Germany	Pinta	W Illbruck	63 50	
	Rubin XII	H A Schuemann	75 13	
	Container	U Schuetz	140 50	279 13
Australia	Ninja	P Kurts	31 00	
	Great News II	J Calvert-Jones	99 50	
	Ragamuffin	S Fischer	148 38	278 88
France	Corum Diamant	Corum Sailing	27 00	
	Corum Rubis	Corum Sailing	123 50	
	Corum Saphir	Corum Sailing	97 00	247 50
Italy	Brava Q8	P Landolfi	68 00	
	Larouge	G D Gennaro	107 38	
	Mandrake	G Carriero	67 50	242 88
Japan	Nippon	T Yamasaki	31 00	
	Swing	S Suzuki	107 50	
	Champosa	M Morita	103 50	242 00
Britain	GBE International	P Morton	40 00	
	Provezza Source	D Woods	108 25	
	Indulgence	G Walker	90 13	238 38
Ireland	Jameson 1	J Storey	02 00	
	Jameson 2	J Storey	128 00	
	Jameson 3	J Storey	63 00	193 00
Netherlands	Ace	M D Lange	33 50	
	Promotion VII	B Dolk	98 38	131 88

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