

TEST UMUPRO JARDIN



Umupro jardin

THE HERITAGE OF OFFSHORE RACING

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHILIPPE ÉCHELLE

WINNER OF THE TRANSAT '84 WITH YVON FAUCONNIER, THIS SPLENDID TRIMARAN WAS IN A STATE OF ABANDON AT LE GAPEAU SHIPYARD NEAR HYÈRES WHEN A MAN-AND-WIFE TEAM OF AFICIONADOS DECIDED TO TAKE HER FUTURE IN HAND: THE OLD GLORY WOULD SAIL AGAIN, SOON AND IN ALL WEATHER, IN KEEPING WITH HER DESTINY. FIVE YEARS AND 8,000 HOURS LATER, REBEL WAS BACK IN THE WATER ON THE ÉTANG DE THAU. TODAY SHE IS A "COLLECTOR'S BOAT" SAILING IN ALL SEASONS WITH CREWS FORMED FOR A FEW DAYS OR WEEKS. THEY COME TO EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC AND SOMETIMES FRANTIC THRILLS SHE OFFERS, THOSE OF A GENERATION OF MULTIHULLS THAT PRECEDED THE OPEN GIANTS (FLEURY MICHON, JET SERVICE, CHARLES HEIDSIECK, ROYALE, ETC.) AND FORMULA 60S.



A magical silhouette, a glorious past, devoted "adoptive parents"...
This is a very lucky tri!

JO'S TOY

In 1994 on the shores of the Étang de Thau, at Balaruc-les-Bains, more precisely at La Méridienne shipyard. The designer and builder of wooden multihulls, Denis Kergomard has on his drawing board a sketch for a splendid 14-meter prao. And where is Denis's office? In a Parisian double-decker bus from the 1950s. The mess is only on the surface; what is real are the method and inspiration. The site's genuinely maritime atmosphere enhances the rounded shapes of the wooden construction: a sort of upside-down shell containing a house and workshop. A dozen multihulls of all sizes await the master's care or counsel. The hangar has just released Gégé, an open West-system catamaran 15 meters long, intended for accommodating teenagers, today, after having completed her ninth Atlantic crossing.

It is in this atmosphere that Georges Salvetat discovered the first sketches of the 2.4-ton "Stradivarius" designed for him by Denis Kergomard: it would be Jo's Toy, since no racing multihull was available. The search had lasted several weeks in vain: too costly, too old, too damaged; only the former UMUPRO JARDIN could have corresponded to Georges's rehabilitation project, but no agreement could be found on the price. So it would be a prao! A few days before construction was to begin on Jo's Toy, a phone call from Henri Chemineau who had been racing since 1989 on UMUPRO JARDIN under the name TOULON VAR-LIBRAIRIE CHARLEMAGNE, changed history; the transaction was made at the price our two-man team wanted.

FROM EXMOUTH CHALLENGE TO REBEL

UMUPRO JARDIN was designed by Philip Morrison and built in 1981 for Richard Tolken. A shipyard of young preparers assisted by Philip Morrison and Peter Rowsell met to complete the construction of this 50-foot racing trimaran made of strip planking in less than a year. Launched under the name EXMOUTH CHALLENGE in 1982 and skippered by Mark Gatehouse, the trimaran was under the spotlight from 1983 to 1988 under the name UMUPRO JARDIN. Yvon Fauconnier led her to victory in June 1984 in the Ostar race, as well as the

Quebec-Saint Malo, Tour of England and Tour of Europe. This promising career faltered in La Route du Rhum, when the boat ended nineteenth with her crossbeam broken, repaired and broken again: this aftbeam had trouble handling the increased power needed to contain the arrival of more recent craft. Moreover, the aft position of the backstays alone inflicted a treatment shared with the forebeam from the previous rigging. These problems were the symptoms of severe fatigue. With her back broken, this fine racing machine was hauled out of the water on the banks of the Gapeau river in Hyères, where she stayed over a year. The brambles and the spray attacked the floats and mast, while vandals began their customary work on the fittings.

THE RENASCENCE OF A MYTH

Georges Salvetat and Agnès Maras wanted to tame a thoroughbred; that was their objective, their purpose in life. Their experience in water sports was already considerable, but the devil with all those staid multihulls. What they wanted was to restore life to UMUPRO JARDIN to enjoy her without moderation. Georges acted as nurse to provide emergency care and later Agnès the schoolteacher would attempt to inculcate a few rudiments of proper behavior to this wild boat. She was successful. For the time being, the trimaran had to be rebuilt from A to Z and the pair set down to work under the supervision of Denis Kergomard, a specialist in wood and multihulls. The philosophy at L'atelier de la Méridienne was perfectly in keeping with this salvage operation; technical know-how and architectural inspiration were necessary to accomplish such rehabilitation.

First, the hulls were completely sanded and all the paint and coating removed, then major surgery was undertaken: outside check-up was not enough. Everything had to be open: the three decks were removed, the central hull made of strip planking was okay and would be kept almost entirely, but extended by 2.70 m! The plywood epoxy-glass floats required a large-scale overhaul, the crossbeams were redone as well as their connections with the floats; the inboard motor was removed and a 27-HP Yanmar diesel outboard was installed on the former vault, a casing made into the extended transom. A double cabin repla-

fax from

Yvon Fauconnier directly from La Paz on board Darwin Sound

"I'm delighted to know that UMUPRO is back at sea after a rather sad period and you chose it in your list of articles on old racing craft.

Phil Morisson will be pleased to have some news. It is interesting to note she was his first multi.

In early October 1982 EXMOUTH CHALLENGE became UMUPRO JARDIN for La Route du Rhum; She was also my first multi.

A fast convoy with a two-man crew to La Trinité, two weeks left to prepare the boat and make sails before sailing up to St-Malo. Test of the new spinnaker 2 days before departure. That was our only training before the race.

So I gradually became aware of the boats extraordinary capacity. At the beginning of the race, I lost a lot of time because of a battery problem before reaching Cap Finistère. After that, I remained in a middle position but without losing ground. I still had the map of the arrival in the islands.

I knew the French Antilles very well after 6 years of chartering on VENDREDI 13 All the boats in front of me were reaching Martinique from the South and I was further South. The tradewind became stronger and shifted N-E 24 hours before arrival; I moved up two ranks.

At the passage of the buoy of Fort-de-France early in the morning, I could see the two other boats ahead of me. I then decided on a strategy to sail up to Guadeloupe avoiding the wind shadow of Dominica: I would sail close-hauled in the Dominica Channel, even if I had to tack and sail windward of Dominica. Having sailed past this island I still had to reach through Les Saintes. A good squall came at that time to cross Les Saintes Channel. For me, this was one of the best moments in the race.

I then distinguished Malino and Poupon's boats windward of Basse-Terre with no wind and upwind. At nightfall, I managed to skirt the buoy of Basse-Terre in front of them. There still remained the end of the course downwind towards Pointe-à-Pitre, the boat's point of sailing. I had made it: I had gained four ranks in 24 hours, and I had the boat in hand, ready for what was coming...



The former Umupro Jardin entering the shipyard...

Yvon FAUCONNIER

Yvon Fauconnier, a gifted racer, is also a famous chartering skipper. After having led in the VENDREDI 13 saga in the Caribbean, Yvon set off to explore the world as part of the Pacific 2000 program. He greeted his guests on board a 22-meter maxi designed by Van de Stadt with modern comfort, from the Sea of Cortés to Vanuatu via the Marquesas.

Information: Fauconnier Sailing: 49 rue de Suresnes – F-92380 Garches (France)
- Tel.: +33 (0)1 47 95 47 61 - www.fauconnier-darwinsound.com



Two double berths equipped with curtains for privacy... These features are beautiful, light and perfectly in keeping with this racer!



The same, renamed Rebel, after 8,000 hours of work

ced the inboard.

The turning point in the reconstruction came when the hemispheric net was added to the former doghouse that provided most of the "comfort" on the boat. It was in fact a dark moist lazarette that encouraged skippers to "sleep" lying down in the cockpit! Denis Kergomard had been thinking about this net for some time; he was waiting for the owner to be ready to accept it. This volume is a masterstroke; built of vacuum plywood sandwich, it has a decisive structural role. The net picks up the efforts of the aftbeam and its "bionic" design houses a remarkable number of top-quality features unsuspected from the outside. UMUPRO dreamed of this net; Denis Kergomard made it. Behind the net and above the double berth is the living area and the lines, in the middle of this vast area is a large "home-made" exterior steering wheel, in front there are two small cockpits, the whole made entirely safe by sturdy guardrails and stanchions.

The 22-m planished mast with 3 sets of spreaders and stiffened by diamonds, was put back in place. What luck! It was virtually new!

Custom, Custom, I tell you: the boat was launched with its priming but without a final paint job. The aim was to proceed with testing and

check the fully redesigned deck layout. The paint could wait a little longer.

A DAY ON BOARD REBEL

It was on a splendid day in January that I met REBEL, which I had last seen as UMUPRO in 1995 on a visit to the shipyard. She was splendid: the boat was almost new, with a very high level of preparation and reliability.

Agnès and Jo moved to be near the boat's anchorage in Marseillan (Hérault, France); a small canal flowing into a mini yachting harbor, the lovely setting for this fabulous toy. "You understand that it's more practical for the upkeep. We just cross the alley and when she calls we're there right away." That says it all. For such a boat, you have to go all the way in every way. From the garden, we can observe the trimaran gently swaying until the breeze rises. 11 hours, sacks on board, a light west wind blows at 10 knots off the coast of Sète, but it should strengthen.

CASINO D'ÉTRETAT's mainsail, sold for a token price, rose gently facing the wind to avoid the lazy-jack bundle and the 3 sets of backstays. With the genoa jib unfurled, she had set off beating upwind, heading SW, to avoid the fish farms to the East of Sète over a distance of

several miles. The long 4.50-m dinghy was lowered and the outboard raised using a winch, replaced by a foam stopper that perfectly seals off the casing: 8-9 knots with less than 10 true knots, was already pretty good, oldies but goldies! During the 25 nautical miles of this outing, the wind did not exceed 12 true knots and with a little attention, tacking to make the apparent wind rise and borne away at the right time, we always sailed between 8 and 10 knots. At the helm, I was aware of the boat's elegance. Like those famous actresses with their special way of walking, this boat advances with so perfect a movement in light weather that is actually magic. Yet her overhaul resulted in 600 extra kilos, but this weight was essential and properly centered, which means that only the medium air is a little low on board REBEL With the true medium air, when the breeze reached 15-18 true knots, the trimaran gently sailed at 13-14 knots and very soon put on the overdrive; 16-18 knots are her standard speed with Force 4-5 winds. At that time, this fine trimaran with her graceful silhouette becomes a bully: the somewhat rounded sections of her floats, tense for speed, beat all the waves. This is wonderful and somewhat exhausting. Jo and Agnès are completely adapted to the power of this machine they both adulate and respect. The maneuvers are perfectly executed, always in a specific order, otherwise there'll be trouble. Sometimes, when they are alone, they push the machine to her limits. As they did the other day when, with 45 knots of Tramontane wind, the staysail exploded and had to be discarded. A day for somewhat strange customers who wished to sail off the wind in high winds, Jo and Agnès really put in all their power. "More than 30 knots logged on a relatively flat sea, protected by the coast, the NW was raging that day and it was too much. The boat is not made for such speeds; she can reach them but everything vibrates and you're on the razor's edge; 20-25 knots is fine!" (Sic!)

I dropped the helm and got away from the show on deck for a quick snack REBEL style. I found Denis Kergomard and Jo inside. Agnès handed us small appetizing plates of smoked salmon, various salads and

tureens. Comfortably seated around the raised saloon we enjoyed an even stronger ambience than outside. Inside, you remain totally connected to operating the boat in a very cocoon-like atmosphere with perfect visibility and in all dimensions and, in case of need, you can quickly jump back to the running rigging area. I was served a cup of steaming hot coffee at the helm and jibed. The cups were cleaned and put away. Agnès prepared the gennaker; first you take it out of its banana bag in the portside trampoline, fasten it to the boom and... up it rises. Today there were six of us onboard, but with a small crew you have to "turn out the fruit-cake" and draw deep in your reserves. The 125 m2 of Mylar-Kevlar unfurled in slacking wind and this turbo sail enabled us just to maintain our speed when we were expecting some serious breakers, since a Tramontane wind was announced. "Come back, said Jo simply, you'll see it is fabulous in the breeze!" But, even at 10 knots, such a craft is sheer joy! Perfect light, 225 square meters of golden canvas over your head, the great wooden helm is directly connected by a gear box and a long connection bar to the rudder, itself adjusted to the millimeter in its special casing. Thus it can be reassembled in a second: no vibration and you're dashing on the water!

I was in raptures over REBEL and the team of craftsmen who saved her. This splendid trimaran is not luxury toy for a millionaire, it is a seaworthy boat for groups of sailors in search of the exceptional and certain to find it. With its successful design and magnificent project including the educational approach, the thrills of REBEL-UMUPRO JARDIN are not reserved exclusively for a few madmen. You can sail on board with a family or buddies and even with a handicap; the platform is designed for that!

MULTICOQUE ÉVASION - QUAI DE LA PLAISANCE - 34340 MARSEILLAN PLAGES (France)

Tel.: +33 (0)4.67.01.62.71 - +33 (0)6.14.23.36.10

CHARACTERISTICS of the *trimaran Rebel*

Concept: Prototype for a fast cruising vessel, derived from offshore racing

Length: Extended to 17.60 m (formerly 50 feet/15 m)

Beam: 12 meters

Draft: 0.80-3.50 m

Sail area:

- **Mainsail:** 100 m2

- **Genoa jib:** 90 m2

- **Staysails:** 40 m2 and 25 m2

- **Gennaker:** 125 m2

- **Asymmetric spinnaker:** 180 m2

Displacement: 5.5-6.5 metric tons

Berths: 3 double + 2 simple

Materials: Wood epoxy glass, Kevlar and Carbon reinforcement

Motor: 27-CV YANMAR diesel OB in a casing

Designer: Philip Morrison 1982

Record: 1st OSTAR 1984

1st QUEBEC-ST-MALO

1st TOUR OF ENGLAND

1st TOUR OF EUROPE



The winner of the 1984 transat is now a comfortable cruising boat...

skippers

1982: EXMOUTH CHALLENGE with Mark Gatehouse

1983-1988: UMUPRO JARDIN with Yvon Fauconnier

1989-1994: TOULON VAR-LIBRAIRIE CHARLEMAGNE with Henri Chemineau

1995-2000: Project for rehabilitation - reconstruction by Georges Salvétat and Agnès Maras under the supervision of Denis Kergomard, Atelier de la Méridienne in Balaruc-les-Bains.