

Particularly interesting was the use of the latest technology. Satnav eliminated the sextant, and the weatherfax generated clear isobaric weather maps from transmitting stations up to 6000 miles away. A desalinator provided generous supplies of fresh water.

Overall this excellent and well-written book does more than give a lucid and exciting account of one of the longest and most exacting of all yacht races. It also has details of how the jury rig was improvised and gives insights into the disparate personalities of what was clearly a closely knit and happy crew.

Building and campaigning such a boat is a huge and costly task. New Zealand is a small and poor country, with a total population about that of Greater Melbourne. The large list of 'commercial sponsors and the massive support of people from all over the country made it possible. Contemplating this allows us to see the magnitude of the accomplishment of Josko Grubic, who created and achieved with ANACONDA II, even after the boat itself nearly killed him during construction. Let us hope that he in his turn will give us an account of his own circumnavigating odysseys.

PETER LAST



Wednesday, 5th January 83, sometime late in the evening.... We relax in the convivial atmosphere of J O G Nationals Welcome Night and contemplate the fate of the Race favourite DESPERADO from Queensland. The cause of our deliberations had emerged from the Invitation Race that afternoon with a slight bend in the mast. Next morning our smiles fade, the stick, well sheaved is back in place. "The Desperates" as they became known have worked quickly and efficiently with the aid of local yachtsman John Stockton to ensure starting. We silently hope John has drilled a few extra holes in the mast but it stays put for the series. We move onto the race briefing which is short and to the point, the O D, a larger than life character, lays down the ground rules and tells us he will stand no nonsense - he must be joking, he won't be able to see all our sly tricks, or will he? Then the Manager of the Royal S A Yacht Squadron extols the virtues of the club; he points out that socks must be worn with shoes in the club bar. I smile, if he could smell the socks off our boat he would not keep emphasising that point. His exhortations are wasted on my crew who as usual are not listening, but they will help and then help some more with the bar profits. I wonder whether the showers will run cold after the first few boats have arrived (we can't be first in every race) and will the liquor supply last; we seem to be miles from the nearest pub. The showers do not, liquor does.

And so to race 1 which is 15 mile Olympic type course. We take our usual meander up and down the line and find to our horror that the biased Port Line we had become so used to during the winter and spring months has gone and there is even a boat standing by to alter the flag in case of wind shift - is nothing sacred! Nonplussed we had a bad start, winds about 15 knots dying to 8 knots and reviving for the final beat. DESPERADO is 1st, STUNNED MULLET (Sonata 8) 2nd, HIGH JUMP (J24) 3rd.