

NORTHERN BOAT SHOW LINKS WITH THREE LIVERPOOL FESTIVALS

THE NORTHERN Boat Show, held from 25 to 28 May 2018 at Liverpool's Salthouse Dock, coincides with the Mersey River Festival and Tall Ships Liverpool 2018 and includes sailing boats and motor boats such as the Jeanneau Merry Fisher 695 from Conwy Quays Marina, Beneteau Antares 8 and Flyer 7 from Maiden Marine; Chaparral and Robalo sports boats from Ideal Boat; Highfield RIBs from Liverpool Power Boats and a variety of other ways of getting on the water. New for 2018 will be a range of brokerage

boats from Bluepoint Marine www.northernboatshow.co.uk

There will also be exhibitors on the land including Whitehaven, Conwy Quays and Maiden Marine marinas to a multitude of leisure, clothing and accessory displays.

A huge fleet of tall ships is expected with an estimated one million spectators flocking to Liverpool's waterfront. The Festival is entirely free and visitors will also be able to visit the Northern Boat Show pontoons for free by registering for tickets. www.northernboatshow.co.uk

SONATA, THE ICONIC POCKET CRUISER RACER

DESIGNED by David Thomas in 1976 and built by Hunter Boats, the Sonata rapidly became a huge success. In 1977, a windy and rough Cowes Week saw the Sonatas fill, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 positions in the level rating system. The year ended with a panel of experts from the Sunday Times deciding that the Sonata was the best One Design Cruiser Racer of her size in the UK.

Numbers quickly passed the 300 mark by 1979 with 220 being sailed in the UK, and by 1982 over 400 boats had been sold. The Sonata attained 'national' stature from the RYA and provided the class with solid credentials for the future. The RYA chose the Sonata for their Youth Sail Training scheme, the same year.

Building ended in 1990 with 479 boats being produced by Hunter Boats, but although production of the National Sonata has finished, there is still an active class association with keen racing



and cruising fleets around the UK and abroad.

Almost from the start, David Thomas's initial conception of a pocket cruiser that could also race well, saw the direction of the Sonata Class veer towards competitive one design racing.

The development of the class has been strictly monitored, all as evidenced at the first of the 2018 Sonata Area Championships, the 'Inlands', held on Lake Windermere over the weekend of 10/11 March. A strong turn-out was expected with, in addition to the local Windermere fleet, owners from as far afield as the Clyde and the NE England coast competing against the current Sonata National Champion, Steve Goacher for the Inland Area Trophy.

The event was run by the Windermere Cruising Association and would have consisted of up to six short windward/leeward races per day, but the weather didn't cooperate, Steve's Eric the Boat didn't enjoy the damp and calm conditions and finished second behind Virtuoso. Both won three races.

Scotland will hold the Scottish Championships over the Bank Holiday weekend of 25/28 May on the Clyde, as part of the CCC Scottish Series at Tarbert, Loch Fyne.

707 INITIATIVE SUPPORTS AUTISM ON THE WATER

AS HAS been well recorded in *Yachting Life*, Murray Macdonald is developing an organisation to assist people with Autism get on the water, as he believes that it helps with some of the issues of confidence and communication. This great venture has seen Murray promoting the initiative as far away as the Royal Hong Kong YC, and closer to home in Edinburgh.

This year AOTW will be campaigning a 707 which he has



MURRAY (LEFT) AND 707 CLASS CHAIRMAN ANDY HUGHES.

renamed Autism On The Water that has been supported by the 707 Association and aided by a group of generous sponsors. Thanks must go to David Sturrock Yachting, The Foggy Pear Craft company and Pritchard Property who have kindly donated money to this venture. Additional support has also come from Riggerous and Mainsail Marine.

Last year Murray organised for an all autistic crew to sail at the Geckotech 707 Nationals on the Forth. The team coped well in a variety of conditions and were welcomed by the fleet as a strongly competitive boat.

Murray said, 'I am so honoured and privileged to be part of the 707 fleet. The class have been kind and generous to us ever since they approached me about campaigning for the nationals. I never thought this time a year later, I'd have my own boat to race for AOTW.'



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