



60 YEARS AND MILLIONS OF MILES LATER

IF YOU THOUGHT building hydrofoils was a thing of the past, you have to think again.

In the January 2015 *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES* we wrote "When the 165-ton Supramar PT.150 appeared in 1968 it was the largest commercial seagoing hydrofoil in the world. Almost forty-seven years later it still is, in terms of displacement."

But we now have a runner-up. Nearing completion at the HSC Shipyard, a division of Ustica Lines, at Trapani in Sicily is the prototype 155-ton, 38m Admiral 350 hydrofoil, *Gianni M.* Previously referred to as HF 02 and Super Admiral, the design was first announced in 2013. Since, the shipyard has built two of the smaller 32m Admiral 250 (HF 01) type, *Carlo Morace* and *Ammari*, launched in February 2014 and June 2015. It seems Admiral 250 and Admiral 350 are the marketing names for what continues to be internally known as the HF 01 and HF 02 designations.

While the Admiral 250 bears a strong resemblance to the Rodriguez Foilmaster, the Admiral 350 cannot be said to look like the PT.150, for obvious reasons. In addition to present-day styling and technology, the design features a different foil and propulsion arrangement, including compared to that of the Admiral 250, or any of the hydrofoils currently operating in Italy. As far as the propulsion goes this was implemented on the second of two experimental hydrofoils built by Rodriguez some years back. This project appears to be at a standstill, however, and it is uncertain when and if it will be resumed (*CFF 47, December 2012*).

Top : Side view of the Admiral 350, the prototype of which is now nearing completion in Sicily / HSC SHIPYARD photo

Below : The second of the smaller Admiral 250, *Ammari*, entered service with Ustica Lines last summer / MAURIZIO GADDA photo



Power is supplied by a pair of 2,300kW engines positioned midships expected to offer a cruising speed of 37 knots and maximum speed of 38 knots. The range is 600 nautical miles.

Passenger accommodation is on three levels. Adjacent to the wheelhouse is a saloon seating 40, the main deck forward and aft saloons seat 80 and 68 passengers, respectively, and on lower deck the forward and aft saloons seat 82 and 76 passengers. There are four toilets on main deck and one in each saloon on lower deck. Two double doors port and starboard on main deck secure easy and effective access and disembarkation.

The corresponding numbers on the Admiral 250 in its standard configuration are 20+46+65+59+65. However, passenger capacity on the first vessel built, *Carlo Morace*, is 230 as this lacks the saloon on flight deck.

It has yet to be confirmed when *Gianni M* will be launched and where on Ustica Lines' extensive route network the

vessel will enter service once the trials programme has been completed. It is probably safe to assume that it will be on a long route, either an existing or a new yet to be announced.

PIONEER

It is quite remarkable that still after sixty years hydrofoils are being designed and constructed in Italy, although not by the same company. The first PT.20 hydrofoil, developed by Supramar in Switzerland, *Freccia del Sole*, was of course built by Rodriquez and entered service across the Straits of Messina in 1956. It served for twenty-nine years before being withdrawn and laid up in 1985. Plans to preserve the vessel and possibly put it on display in Messina were never carried out and the hydrofoil was sadly scrapped sometime in the mid-1990s. **cff**

Below : 2016 marks an impressive 60 years of hydrofoil building in Italy. First out was PT.20 Freccia del Sole launched by the Rodriquez shipyard in Messina in 1956. Seen here on a test or promotional run, one of the gentlemen greets the photographer by raising his hat. We wish to reciprocate by doing likewise.
/ RODRIQUEZ CANTIERE NAVALE photo



The first Admiral 250, Carlo Morace, was launched two years ago
/ MAURIZIO GADDA photo



HSC Shipyard has released the first image of the new Admiral 350 hydrofoil, *Gianni M*.

The work force at the Sicilian shipyard is currently busy with putting the finishing touch to the imposing, sleek vessel.

The largest hydrofoil to be built in Italy to date, it will be the flagship of Ustica Lines' fast ferry fleet, which comprises twelve hydrofoils (plus *Gianni M*), six catamarans and six monohulls /HSC SHIPYARD photo



THE FLAGSHIP