

# HIGH & DRY



**WE HAVE SAID IT BEFORE** and we will say it again. The two best ways to really appreciate the uniqueness and beauty of a hydrofoil are seeing it operating in full flight – and out of the water, on dry land. In the latter case, preferably as a newbuilding or undergoing maintenance.

Neither of which was the case when these photos were taken on a stretch of beach in Messina in June 1992.

Built by Cantiere Navale Leopoldo Rodriguez, PT.50 *Freccia delle Isole* and PT.20 *Freccia del Vesuvio* entered service with Aliscafi SNAV in 1966. Both vessels remained on the Aliscafi SNAV roster at the time of the photos but had been laid up for some time.

In addition to being operated on SNAV's route network in Sicily, *Freccia delle Isole* was used on an international service between Catania and Siracusa in Sicily and Valetta in Malta in 1966. A seasonal service, one round trip was being operated on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays from July to October.

*Freccia del Vesuvio* likewise spent most of its life in Sicily, including on the short route across the Straits of Messina to Reggio di Calabria on mainland Italy. However, in spring 1972 it was shipped to the United Kingdom for a service on the River Thames, along with PT.20 *Freccia di Reggio*. Marketed as the Thames Arrow Express, the service was inaugurated in May, linking Tower Pier in central London and Greenwich. This service lasted for a little under seven months, being terminated in early December 1972.

Also see *CLASSIC FAST FERRIES* #6, September 2003. **cff**

*PT.20 Freccia del Vesuvio (above) and PT.50 Freccia delle Isole laid up in Messina in 1992*  
/TIM TIMOLEON photo, both

