

DESIGNER'S VOICE

An inside look at our world of yacht design.

In-Port Support During the Volvo Ocean Race

By Russell Bowler, President

The VO70s are sophisticated machines requiring much attention. With two large hydraulic rams to actuate the canting keel, two canards with associated lifting devices, generators, pumps, control systems and manifolds, water makers, ballast tank, winches and sail handling equipment etc, there is plenty that requires service as well as repair work. Members of the shore crew community that traveled with the fleet were kept busy in all ports tending their boats and preparing for in-port races and leg starts.

At FYD, we spent time at the ports assisting the shore crews and sailing teams with their boat preparation and downloading the experience from the sailors in this new breed of ocean greyhounds. Operating these boats calls on a wide range of expertise. It became apparent that the need to have these experts involved with

the boats at concept and design stage would be a huge benefit to the ongoing operation of the boats. Contracts with builders should extend through to some level of attendance throughout the race and the initial installation of machinery, keels and tanks should be done with consideration to ongoing maintenance. During our sessions with the shore teams we have accumulated a wealth of knowledge and made a number of contacts that will be useful for our future design work on VO70s and other high performance canting keel boats.

We recognize the need to extend our services to include more assistance during race preparation and during the race. The VO70 has lifted the bar for designers, builders, sailors and shore crew alike and we are ready to meet the challenges of this exciting class.



Russ Bowler in the trenches.