

CLASSIC DRIVER



2010 British Classic Yacht Club Panerai Cowes Regatta

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Substitute 'Royal Yacht Squadron' for 'British Racing Drivers' Club' and you'll have an idea of the level on which these classic yachts, real 'wooden boats', operate.

The famous club in **Cowes**, just a short trip from **Southampton** off the British South Coast, hosted the prize-giving for this year's **British Classic Yacht Club** (BCYC) regatta. This year, for the first time, luxury watchmaker **Panerai** had included the British event in its **Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge** series.

As a headline sponsor since 2005, **Panerai**, with its long tradition of nautical timekeeping, has put its name to some of the world's leading classic yacht regattas including the **Régates Royales, Cannes**,

the **Opera House Cup, Nantucket** and the **Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta**. The class winners of each heat receive a **Panerai Regatta 1/8th Second Titanio 47mm Chronograph** (below).



At **Cowes**, the overall (and class winner) was the **1957 fractional Bermudan sloop, *Cetewayo***. The boat's owner, **British Classic Yacht Club** Commodore **David Murrin**, was therefore presented with two watches, one of which was immediately donated to his favourite charity, the **Special Boat Service Association**.

I was invited to join the action on the **Solent** this July. The weather was fair, and members of the press were able to enjoy a ringside seat aboard an original **Dunkirk** 'little ship', the ***Bounty*** motor-cruiser.





The rules - which can be mastered quite quickly (by an **Oxbridge Don** or a **chess Grandmaster**) - need not trouble the **Classic Driver** reader. What matters most is the ethereal sight of these stately yachts creaming through the grey waters of the **Solent**, spinnakers billowing and sterns as elegant as any **Maserati 250F's** standing proud of a bubbling wake.

More than 500 yachts compete in the **Panerai Classic Yacht Regattas** worldwide, split into classes for '**Vintage**' (built before 1950), '**Classic**' (constructed between 1950 and 1975) and '**Spirit of Tradition**', for authentic replicas of old designs launched after 1975. '**Large Boats**' - those with hulls more than 30 metres long - make up a separate class if enough are present.



The **Cowes** event saw some of the big yachts, such as the wonderful 125ft **Mariquita** (above), as well as smaller, Northern European entries including three '**Windfall**' class boats taken as prizes of war by the British from the **Luftwaffe** after WW2.



All yachts are given a 'rating' which results in a '**Handicap Per Mile**' (HPM), thus equalising differing performances.

But, before you reach for your slide-rule, trust me: you do not need to master the intricacies of the rules to appreciate **Classic Yacht Racing**. If you fancy a break from things automotive, do try to catch one of the remaining rounds of the **Panerai Classic Yacht Challenge**:

CORINTHIAN CLASSIC YACHT REGATTA

August 6th - 8th, 2010

Marblehead, MA (USA)

OPERA HOUSE CUP

August 12th - 15th, 2010

Nantucket, MA (USA)

COPA DEL REY

August 25th - 29th, 2010

Mahon, Minorca (Spain)

MUSEUM OF YACHTING CLASSIC YACHT REGATTA

September 3rd - 5th, 2010

Newport, RI (USA)

VELE D'EPOCA DI IMPERIA

September 8th - 12th, 2010

Imperia (Italy)

RÉGATES ROYALES

September 20th - 25th, 2010

Cannes (France)

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