

#### Computer Graphics

Parallel with the development of on-board cameras, schwen lenses and the like, we have seen the development of some innovative computer graphics which not only position the boats on the course, but advise things like wind direction and speed, distance to the next mark, temperature of the water, swell, wave heights and variations in mark rounding times. One of the leaders in this field has been AFTER Srl of Italy, headed by Andrea Filacchioni who developed software for the Olivetti computer.

For the Fremantle to Bali race being held by the Fremantle Sailing Club, Overseas Telecommunications Commission developed some excellent graphic information for plotting the position of all the competitors in this ocean race.

#### Satellite Coverage

For ocean racing I believe the next step is satellite crosses live to the course. As an exercise, OTC have outlined all the satellite footprints for the Whitbread Round the World Race. This means that at any time, it would be possible to cross for an update of the situation at sea.

#### Additional Improvements

In Sardinia, our intrepid Cameraman, Ian Monaghan left his camera boat and positioned himself on a navigation buoy. I see no reason why the buoy cannot be designed to accommodate the Cameraman so that these pictures become a standard feature of yacht racing without fear of losing the Cameraman or his equipment.

#### Commentators

There is nothing quite so frustrating as a yachting coverage which is presented by a Commentator who does not have enough knowledge of the event, the personalities or the yachting techniques of the race.

As this is a new media sport, the Commentators need to be developed; firstly, the Link Man who understands what is required by the Network carrying the picture and the expert Commentator who understands the techniques and criteria previously mentioned. No limitations should be placed on country of origin as yachting is an international sport.

American Commentator Gary Jobson must be on of the best all rounders when it comes to yachting commentary. Apart from his knowledge, he also has a great sense of humour. In Britain there is Harold Cudmore and I am sure others approach his standard as that of New Zealand's Peter Montgomery. The message here is that the right yachting commentator guarantees that you are not going to be embarrassed by the audio side of your coverage. A good commentator can also guide the Director by outlining an impending manoeuvre on board the competing yachts.

#### Events That Attract Television Coverage

Apart from the normal public relation events, the sport of yachting must be able to exist as an event on its own, supported by all the technology, nuts and bolts facilities previously mentioned. This means that firstly the event needs to be well run under the right conditions - reasonable winds, certainly nothing less than eight knots.

Then we need to look to camera positioning, boats, helicopters and on board cameras, computer graphics that bring the armchair viewer up to date with the yachting manoeuvres and also the conditions under which the Skippers must make their tactical decisions. At the same time, education must be introduced into the programme.

Channel Nine undertook to produce a series called America's Cup Update which we circulated for twelve months prior to the event, explaining all the quirks and progress of challenging syndicates around the world.

The next step will be to design events specifically for media coverage, probably fleet racing, perhaps even a new class of boat, faster but still tactical, as tacking and covering duels adds excitement to the sport. The race should run no longer than 1.5 hours and include all the previously mentioned ingredients. Finally, Race Organisers should be very conscious to ensure that the competition area is going to produce a challenging event both for the yachts and the viewers.

#### Credits:

Qantas, Gus Slater & Bob Panno, STW Channel 9  
The Nine Network, TVW Channel 7, Perth,  
Schwen Technology, AFTER Srl, TV2,  
Royal Perth Yacht Club, Fremantle Sailing Club  
Yacht Club Costa Smeralda, USAL, OTC,  
Sony Corporation, Mag/Barb