



PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCY TULLOCH

RAINBOW JH2

Two Men's Quest for Speed & Grace

LUCY TULLOCH

The original *Rainbow* was designed by the great yacht designer William Starling Burgess in 1934 for Harold Vanderbilt, who had already defended the America's Cup in 1930 with *Enterprise* and would do so later with *Ranger*.

Starling Burgess was not only a brilliant yacht designer but also a naval architect and an aviation pioneer. It was with these skills and deep knowledge that he designed *Rainbow*. His quest for speed and grace in yacht design came, therefore, from importantly more than one point of view.

With innovative rigging of metal rod shrouds and a riveted duralumin pear-shaped mast section, she raised some eyebrows but reassured as she went on to win many races, including the 1934 America's Cup.

Following a refit in dry dock in 1937, she was sold, but by 1941, like all the other US Js, *Rainbow* was scrapped. Her lead keel & bronze and steel hull went towards making bombs for the war.

The new *Rainbow* was commissioned in 2007. She was the fourth of the replica Js to be built (*Ranger*, *Hanuman* and *Lionheart* preceded her).



Rainbow thundering through the course with her "skirts hitched up".



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE MANLEY

Dykstra and Partners were appointed to design the new *Rainbow*, closely following the original plans, but in aluminium, with carbon spars and rigging and 3DL sails. They had the good fortune to work with the great Olin Stephens, who had worked so closely with Starling Burgess on Vanderbilt's mighty *Ranger* in 1937. Always famous for their long overhangs, this J was no different and her vital statistics continue to impress; an LOA of 40m and yet only 27m on the waterline (somewhat longer than her original). With a beam of a mere 6.4m (the same as her original), she displaces 169 tons (about 11 more than her original).

One strains to see the differences between the original *Rainbow* seen in photographs and the new *Rainbow* sailing out of Falmouth Harbour, with trade winds filling her sails and waves flying over her foredeck (and they do, a lot!). Her engine is one update, of course, and her high-tech winches, and a cockpit was included in the new design.

But beneath her classic exterior, *Rainbow* has some of the most cutting-edge technology seen on any Superyacht. Her innovative, hybrid power and propulsion system, not only saves space and optimises performance, but also supports the owner's strong belief in sustainability and uses significantly less fuel. The reverse cycle system allows her to charge silently underway losing only 0.8 knot and sail all day without running a generator. Genius.

Although she raced in cruising mode (guard rails, Spectra sails, no poles, different rating) Mark, her skipper says that the racing set-up is far less forgiving and not that much faster so he (and all on board) were happy.

Down below, her elegant, award-winning Art Deco interior is by deVosdeVries Design, who partnered with Dykstra to produce her graceful interior: Matching the timeless traditional style a J deserves, with a comfortable, air-conditioned environment, she can accommodate six guests and seven crew.

And the man who holds this superb crew and yacht all together, as cool as they come, is skipper Mark Stapley. After studying Aerospace Engineering, including, interestingly, the work of Starling Burgess, his first job was a 3½ year circumnavigation on *Velsheda* and with his father, a pilot in the RAF, he seems cut out for this job of speed and grace.



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ABOVE LEFT: Team spirit and joie de vivre reign on **Rainbow**
CENTRE: Essential communication (and joy) between Trimmer, Tactician and Helmsman/Skipper
BELOW: "Not dry enough for a picnic on the foredeck on a J underway"



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