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Rosenkavalier

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FRAGRANT HARBOUR

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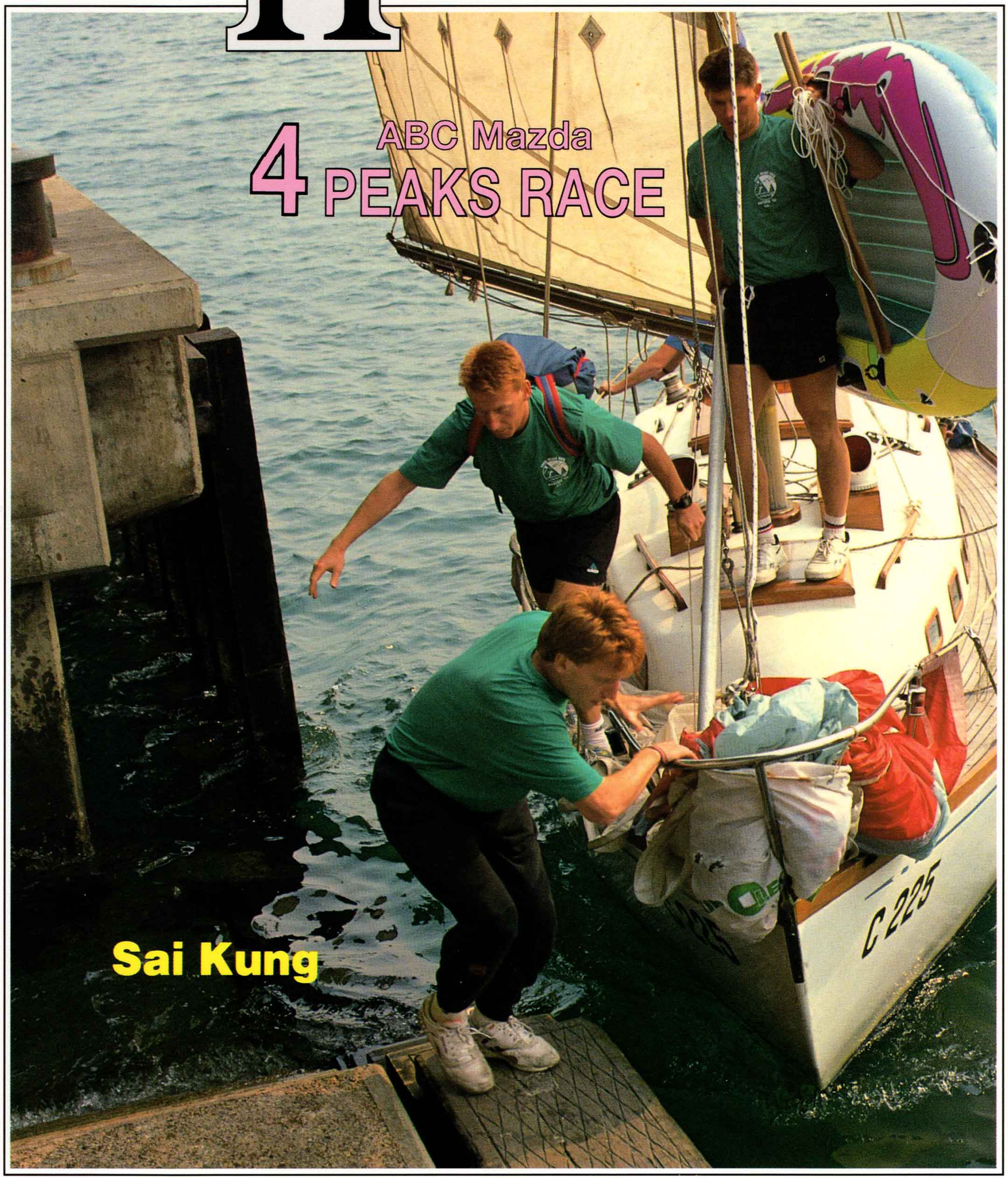

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RACING

ABC Mazda 4 PEAKS RACE 1992

With 15 entries and 15 starters, this year's 4 Peaks Race was a tight, well run event taken seriously by all. Only one boat never made the finish – a marked improvement over last year's six. The race started at 1100 off Shek O on the 25th of January, having been brought forward a few weeks in the hope of better conditions. To all intents and purposes, this adjustment worked for the better and there was enough wind for all boats to sail across the line. Last year, with the race held over the 9th and 10th of February, *Skerryvore*, after waiting half an hour for a puff, eventually resorted to power to get into the race!

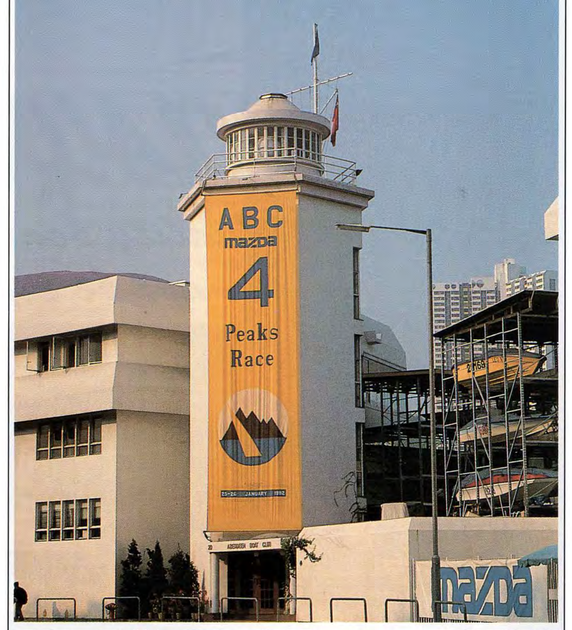
This year there were 11 boats in Division A and four in Division B. During the race, five transferred to the B division leaving six finishers in Division A.

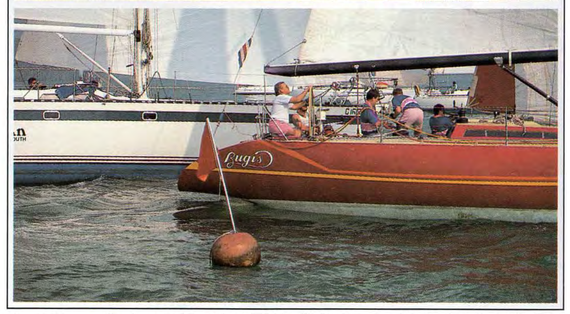
The fleet set off from the start on port tack, headed for Tathong Point. After an hour or so the wind faded and some of the slower boats were finding it difficult making headway against the swells. Many started their engines and proceeded to Steep Island where there was a little more breeze and less swell. With spinnakers raised, *Makaira, Rooibok, Kotuku* and a few others were looking good going into Port Shelter just after lunch. The "purists", way back and just passing Fat Tong Mun, were beginning to move a little quicker with a southerly filling in.

Although late for the start, the first boat to drop a runner on the Sai Kung public pier was *Makaira*, followed shortly by *Kotuku* and *Kojiki*. *Skerryvore* put a runner on to the public pier next to the police base. Within an hour the rest of the fleet had arrived and rowed their runners ashore.

Leaving Port Shelter, winds were very light and it was a painful crawl to the East Ninepins in the late afternoon. Many felt that the race would be a repeat of 1991.

Saturday's conditions certainly favoured the lighter boats like Division A winner *Sex Drive*, a Contention 30 owned by Willy Roberts and Wendy Watson. Said Mr Roberts: "We lost a bit of time coming down Ma On Shan and left Sai Kung with only *Delphian* behind us. Then a light northerly came in and we spinnaker reached to the East Ninepins, gybed, dropped the





The clubhouse (top), start (above) and *Xiabu Xiabu 5* in about to land a runner (below)

Makaira's **runner heads off for Ma On Shan (left). Winner of Division A *Sex Drive* preparing to land crew (right)**

spinnaker and reached on starboard down to Waglan. Then followed a burst from the east and it was the starboard pole all the way to Lantau. Our big gain was the overnight sail," he added. *Sex Drive* will be entering the China Sea Race in April and, says Mr Roberts, the 4 Peaks was a good way of preparing the crew.

The leading boats reached Lantau in the small hours of Sunday morning, most landing their runners at Cheung Sha beach. When the runners returned the sun was up and there was a good 15 knots of wind blowing. From there it was a run down to Lamma Island and Mt Stenhouse and then across to Repulse Bay for Violet Hill and the finish off Round Island. "This year was the best we've had," said John Blay, skipper of *Windseeker*. "It's marvellous how the guys stay up those mountains all night. I'll certainly be doing it again next year." Commenting on the race and the evolution of its rules, Mr Blay said: "I would like to see some way in which the running could have more effect on a boat's position."

Mark Leese, skipper of *Xiabu Xiabu 5*, believes the 4 Peaks is won on the water. "It is very much a sailing race. Practically, I can't see how you give more to the runners. One thing I feel might be considered next year is perhaps some penalty for one person staying on board and not running." Despite the hardships and tiredness, Mr Leese feels that the same stalwarts will be back again next year: "It's a great race."

The race once again had its lighter moments. Crews were seen heaving on oars when dropping their runners ashore (see photo).

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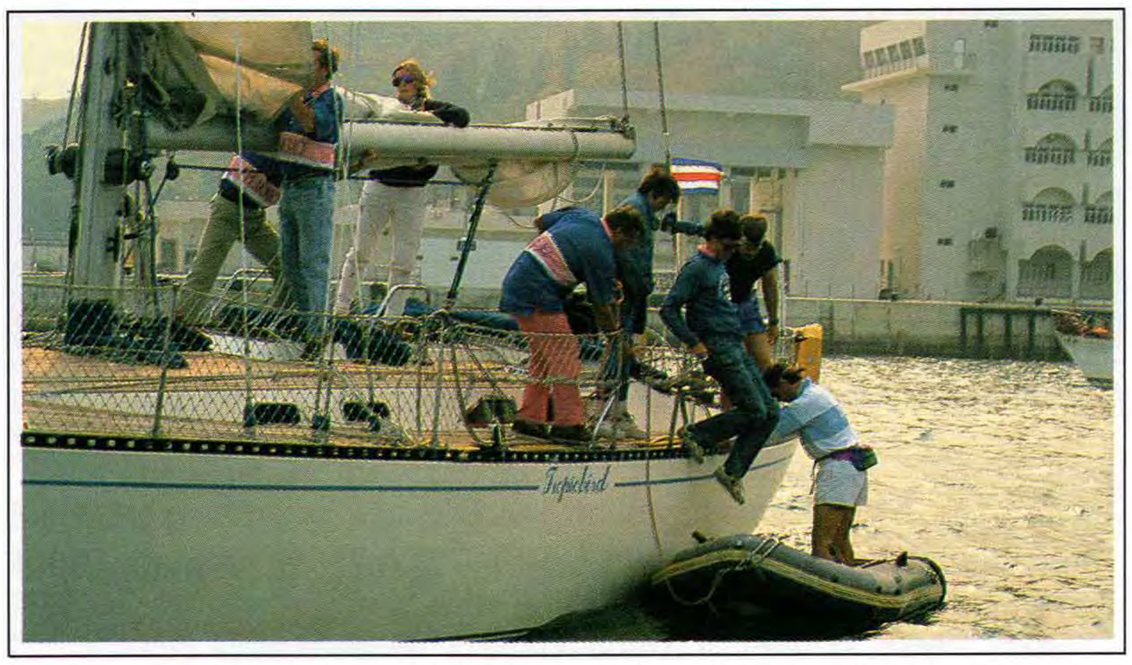
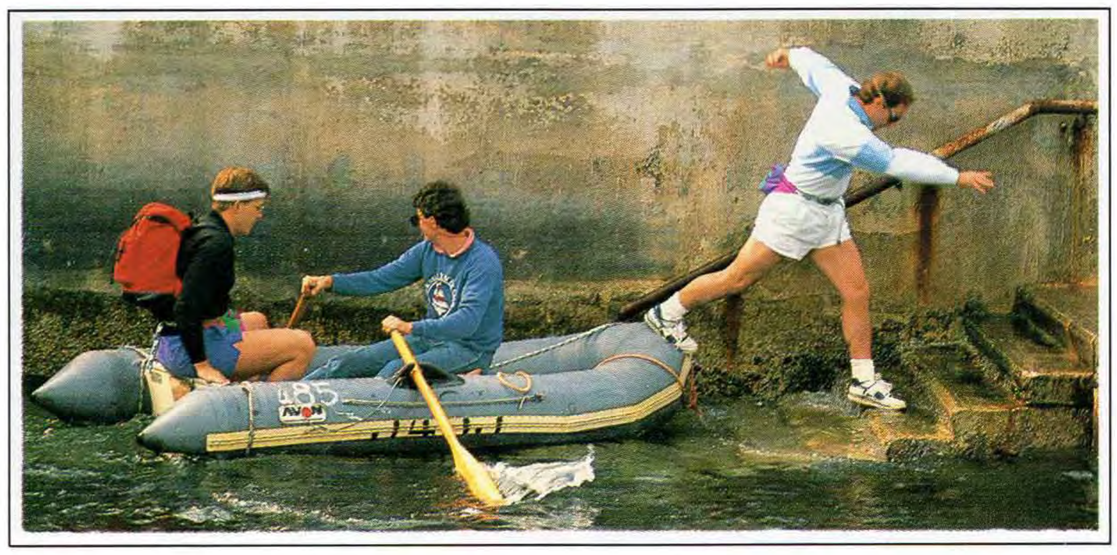
Windseeker **resorting to the oars (left). Henry Thornton lands *Delirium Tremens'* runners (right)**





Bugis **(top),** ***Tropicbird*** **(above) and aerobic moves (right)**

Aberdeen Boat Club
ABC Mazda 4 PEAKS RACE

Results – DIVISION A

Pos.	Yacht	Sail no.	PYS no.	Class	Finish time	Elapsed time	Corrected time	Class pos.
1	Sex Drive	K911	99	II	14:48:41	27:48:41	28:01:54	1
2	Windseeker	C1198	95	II	14:28:50	27:28:50	28:36:40	2
3	Bugis	KH797	87	I	13:46:02	26:46:02	29:52:13	1
4	Delirium Tremens	KH6985	88	I	14:22:08	27:22:08	30:16:58	2
5	Xiabu Xiabu 5	KH1683	83	I	13:49:57	26:49:57	31:05:58	3
6	Gale Force	KH676	87	I	17:20:37	30:20:37	33:58:52	4
	X-Calibur	KH999	87	I	tfd			
	Tropicbird	5485	92	II	tfd			
	Delphian	C1616	93	II	tfd			
	Rooibok	C226	99	II	tfd			
	White Dragon V	C737	107	II	tfd			

Results – DIVISION B

Pos.	Yacht	Sail no.	PYS no.	"K"	Finish time	Elapsed time	Motoring time	Corrected time
1	Skerryvore	C791	110	2.5	15:01:17	28:01:17	03:32:00	31:32:59
2	Makaira	C1206	106	1.8	12:13:05	25:13:05	04:33:00	33:29:44
3	Delphian*	C1616	93	3.0	11:09:40	24:09:40	03:43:00	33:52:01
4	Tropicbird*	5485	93	2.8	15:22:20	28:22:20	02:28:00	34:23:09
5	X-Calibur*	KH999	87	2.4	09:00:00	22:00:00	03:51:00	34:38:06
6	White Dragon V*	C737	107	2.0	15:35:31	28:35:31	04:41:00	35:11:41
7	Kotuku	C225	125	1.8	21:34:32	34:34:32	05:30:00	36:25:08
8	Kojiki	4865	110	1.8	14:03:35	27:03:35	07:00:00	52:27:58
	Rooibok*	C226	99	2.0	dnf			

* transferred from Division A

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And a runner from *Delphian*, it is said, was first dropped in the wrong bay, blew out a running shoe and then fell over on his way down the mountain. When he got up he found himself looking straight into the eyes of a four-foot snake. It didn't take him long to get back to his dinghy.

On the stone pier at Repulse Bay, TV crews were on hand to film the runners returning to their boats. One of *Skerryvore's* crew was spotted by a cameraman and the next thing he launched into a detailed account of the race for the evening news. He hadn't noticed, however, that *Skerryvore's* runner, coming back from Violet Hill, was approaching rather quickly, anxious to get into the dinghy, out to the boat and on to the finish. Choice words from out on the water stopped short the interview. Happy to report, though, *Skerryvore* took the honours in Division B.

The logistics and organisation behind the 4 Peaks Race is enormous and praise should be heaped on those behind the scenes. Thanks also to *Avant Garde* for being the committee boat and to the OMC for the loan of a safety boat.

Back in the ABC clubhouse, FH overheard one runner's views: "It is the sense of achievement not the enjoyment – that's what they all go out for every year."