

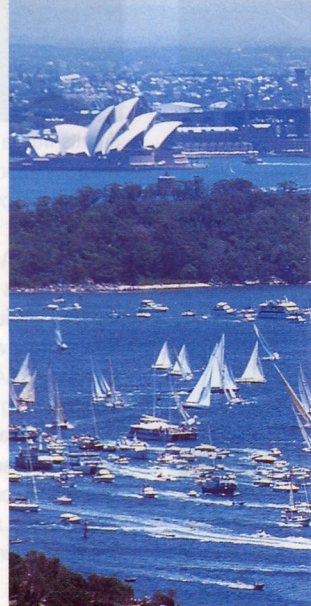
# With Wind In His Sails



A passion for boats and Sydney Harbour has fired a profitable business venture for expatriate Englishman James Bunn.



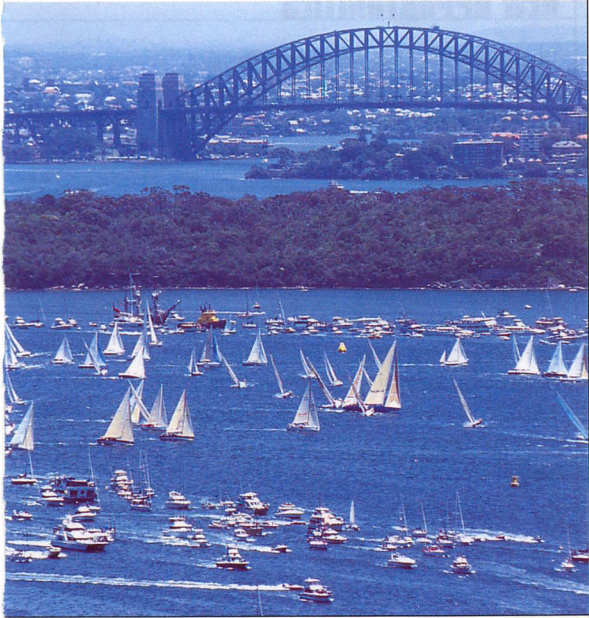
By Amanda Lulham  
Pictures by Dely Carr/Sportshoot



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them being a class born and bred on Sydney Harbour as well as the history and tradition associated with this ultra-fast sailing machine. For him, nothing beats watching them from the water, except, perhaps, watching them on television in a hotel room on the other side of the world.

For Bunn's business distributes a wide range of Australian sport, including the 18-footers, to television companies around the world.

TPL Sports was set up in 1994 by Bunn, and has been able to secure a host of successful properties, including the Australian Touring Car championships, The Milo Cup (netball), the swimming world cup, the Shell Advanced Superbike Series, the Commonwealth Bank Cycle Classic, the Australian Rally championships, the Sydney to Hobart yacht race, the Sydney Marathon and the Inside Sport and Total Sport programs.

The core business of the company is the export of Australian shows worldwide. TPL Sports acquires a catalogue of some 300 hours of new shows each year that are broadcast in the UK, USA, South Africa, New Zealand, Thailand, Scandinavia, Germany, Canada and throughout Europe, Asia the Middle East and Latin America. "Australia is very in fashion overseas," said Bunn, who moved to Australia from his home in England in 1988 with a Bachelor of Science degree.

"People seem attracted to the outdoor lifestyle and the Australian people and this is all exhibited in a lot of sports."

TPL Sports specialises in selling sports outside the mainstream.

"Sports like rugby and cricket sell well for high prices in a small number of markets and then there are the sports like the 18-footers. No country would see sailing at the top of its shopping list but it still has wide appeal so the fee is smaller and we sell a lot of it," Bunn said.

"I think the backdrop of Australia sells the programs well. Imagine someone in a dark bedsit in Europe in winter watching a sunny beach and triathletes. It's escapism coupled

with the excitement of sport."

So entranced was Bunn with Australia on a tourist visit in the late 1980s that he decided to move to Sydney permanently and eventually took out Australian citizenship.

He became a senior executive of Broadcast Australia, managing the rights activities for the Australian Football League both domestically and overseas.

He was subsequently involved in the establishment of the Australis Media/Galaxy service which was initially a division of Broadcast. His key programming role included facilitating the TCI/Australis Media joint venture agreement. This led to Australia's first Pay TV broadcast channel, the 24 hour Premier Sports Network, which later became known as the FOX Sports Channel.

So successful has Bunn's own company been he is currently expanding his Australian office as well as setting up an office in London in the second quarter of 1999.

"Sydney will remain our head office but now we will also have an office where our market is," he said.

"We do some domestic work but our biggest market is the UK, then the USA, Germany, France, New Zealand and Thailand.

"We are now getting involved in the production and funding of programs and are also looking at our own channels to provide shows for."

One of TPL Sports' most recent ventures is to distribute the television coverage of the Australian Yachting Federation's 49er skiff series around the world.

Bunn has signed a five-year agreement to distribute the series featuring the new high performance skiff class which will make its debut at the 2000 Olympic Games.

Designed by former 18-footer skiff sailor Julian Bethwaite, the 49er is the first Australian design to be accepted onto the Olympic sailing program with Australian currently boasting the reigning world champion in Chris Nicholson.

"With the Sydney Olympics next year, and the debut of the Australian designed 49er, the focus is very much on the Southern Hemisphere.

"We are very much looking forward to securing the broadcasters to expose this series to the world."

TPL is also producing pre-Olympic programming for a variety of broadcasters world wide and holds global TV rights to a range of international sports events associated with the 2000 Games.

While his new office in London will require Bunn to travel constantly, he estimates three out of every four weeks, there's no doubt that come summer time he will again find the time to go back out on the harbour to watch his beloved 18-footers.

On any given summer's day James Bunn can often be found, tie loosened and suit jacket slung casually over his shoulder, on Sydney Harbour watching his company logo flying across the waves.

As he watches the 18-footer skiff, sponsored by his company TPL Sports, negotiate the wind shifts on the harbour - and sometimes even come to grief in the tricky conditions and capsize - he jokes good naturedly he should have the logo painted on the bottom of the hull.

But when his crew comes to shore, Bunn is always there to greet them, to mull over the day's racing and join them in the bar for a drink or two. Bunn loves 18-foot skiffs and the men and women who sail them. He likes the idea of

