



WHOOOPER



Sail No: GBR363R

Launch Date: 1939

Type: Laurent Giles One-Off Sloop

Owner: Giovanni & Christine Belgrano

Designer:	<i>Laurent Giles</i>	Builder:	<i>Woodnutts, IW</i>
Construction:	<i>Pitch pine of oak frames</i>	Sail Plan:	<i>Bermudan</i>
LOA/LWL:	<i>11.9m / 9.4m</i>	Beam:	<i>3.1m</i>
Draft:	<i>1.7m</i>	Displacement:	<i>7.3 Tonnes</i>

History

Built as a shallow-draft yacht, WHOOPER was mostly cruised, but her natural reaching and downwind speed exceeded expectations. Anecdotes from Peter Bruce recall crossings back from the Channel Islands in the 1960's, at average speeds over 10 knots! Her unusual hull shape and rig proportions were well ahead of her time, and in conditions that suit her, she has achieved great racing results, most notably winning the Round The Island Gold Roman Bowl in 2004, Cowes Week in 2004, 2014 and 2017, and the overall Panerai British Classic Week in 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2019.

WHOOOPER has undergone continuous maintenance and upgrades for looks, longevity, and ease of sailing. Her previous owner rescued her from Ireland in the 1980's in a derelict state and refitted her at Attrill's as a safe cruiser. Giovanni bought her 20+ years ago in need of attention, replacing rusting iron floors with timber, the iron keel to lead, increased the centreboard and rudder area to reduce leeway, and replaced the furling genoa with non-overlapping jibs, on a clean spruce mast - the last one built by Spencer's by the fully traditional method (no epoxy). Recently the galley and aft bridge-deck was re-built to the original layout, restoring the originally intended open layout. She is currently equipped with the latest technology sails and set-up to race competitively at the top of modern fleets, but she also used for weekend cruising, thanks to hot-water and heating. All these refits have been done by the Attrill's in St Helens Isle of Wight, their father was foreman when she was built next-door (Woodnutts).