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Editorial

How lucky am I? Some of you have probably heard that I was fortunate enough to be invited to the America's Cup recently.

The travel agency Fert & Cie, one of the sponsors for the Alinghi team, asked if the Helvetia would like to do a piece about the Swiss campaign.

Naturally I was most interested in the idea and by the end of the conversation I had been invited up to Auckland personally to take a look for myself.

Never one to look a gift horse in the mouth, last month I went on my merry way to the big smoke.

Fert & Cie's Stefan de Senger took me to the Alinghi base and even organised a place on one of the support yachts that follow the racing.

The yacht I was on followed the race yacht out of the viaduct and to the race area, where we waited until the action began.

What an experience, the smell of the ocean, the salty spray, wind in your hair, and then we waited...and waited.



Larry Ellison's incredible yacht that comes out to watch the racing as well.

The race we watched that day was Alinghi's last of the first round of the Louis Vuitton Cup. Maybe some of you remember that this was when the Swiss were racing Victory and the Swedes delayed the race start - which is allowed - by about forty-five minutes.

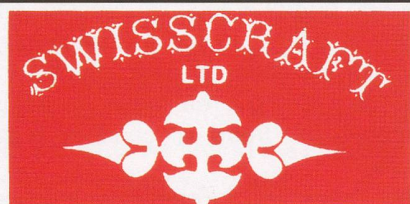
Not that it was a chore. Most of the time I was wandering around the boat wondering where I could get a good - and steady - photo of the many yachts from.

I didn't actually realise how difficult it would be to keep the horizon straight when taking

a photo while bouncing up and down on a moving boat. It wasn't exactly the calmest of days either, a bit on the choppy side. But I managed to capture a bit of the action and had a really good day out on the water and met some very interesting people as well.

Mr de Senger's aim is to get a bit more support out on the water for the Alinghi boat and is offering discounts to Swissies.

Remembering all the controversy Russell Coutts and Brad Butterworth created when they joined the Swiss team, it is interesting



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Both big and small were out on the water to watch the action. The little boat's name was 'Frog'.



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Alinghi leading the Swedish team during the race.

Editorial

note that of the 31-strong sailing team, only eight are New Zealanders. Considering we are such a strong sailing nation I would have expected a few more. Eight of the team are Swiss and it seems kind of amusing that just as many come from a land without oceans as do from a country made up of islands.

Granted, it is the team that is backing the Alinghi challenge and Switzerland does have many great lakes to sail on, but am I sure you can appreciate the funny side.

The rest of the team is made up of two Americans, two Canadians, three French, one South African, two Australians, one Italian, one German, one from Denmark, and two from the Netherlands.

It would be interesting to know the nationalities of the other sailing teams.

Another thing I was wondering about was the Alinghi name. According to the team's press pack, "Alinghi first appeared ten years ago, on Ernesto Bertarelli's (president of the Alinghi team and big backer) racing boats".

"We chose passion red to express our thirst to win, and anthracite grey to symbolise high technology. As for "Alinghi", it is an imaginary name which has brought me luck," said Mr Bertarelli.

Obviously the name must be working because the Alinghi Challenge has been doing very well...although today I did see a psychic on television, who thought some of the crew would be coming down with the 'flu. Let's keep our fingers crossed that she got Alinghi confused with the American challengers. Imagine how exciting it would be for us Swiss-New Zealanders if it was Alinghi challenging Team New Zealand for the America's Cup.

Who would you be supporting?



Being towed to the base after the race against the Victory Challenge.



The waterfront side of the Alinghi base in Central Auckland.



Changing sails during the race.

LIFE

*Life is like a yo-yo
Swinging to and fro.
Sometimes it's on an upswing,
Sometimes it's on a low.*

*Life is like a bouncing ball
Bouncing up and down.
Sometimes you are smiling,
Sometimes there's a frown.*

*It can be all joyful,
Or it can be sad.
It can make you happy,
Or it can make you feel so bad.*

*Sorrow causes heartaches,
Sadness and mourning too.
Days are dark and dreary.
Weeks are so long for you.*

*Life also can be joyful,
Filled with hope and cheer.
Sometimes you're so happy,
And you have naught to fear!*

*Maybe it's because of joy,
Or maybe it is sorrow.
But let your life show forth
The sunshine of tomorrow!*