BRISTOL
Mischief launched
There was a good crowd at Bristol’s Underfalls yard in November for the launch of John Raymond-Barker’s pilot cutter, Mischief. Her bright yellow hull reflects the colour of the original, sailed by explorer-writer Bill Tilman from 1954 until she sank in the Arctic Ocean in 1968.

The original was built in Cardiff in 1906, and John’s reconstruction — not quite a replica as he and designer Ed Summett had to work from photos — matches her in dimensions (LOA 45ft, beam 13ft 6in, draught 7ft 6in (13.7 x 4.1 x 2.3m)).

Mischief will be heading to Scotland in the spring to work as a charter vessel with Tilman-inspired Mischief Expeditions (see p42).

John has already laid the keel of another 45ft pilot cutter, Morwenna, which is also destined for activity charter, this time in the Channel. Traditional Sailing plans to have her at the London Boat Show, 2009.

LITTLEHAMPTON
Hillyards not moving
Rumours that Hillyards is to leave its Littlehampton yard have been firmly quashed by MD, Simon Cullingford, great-nephew of founder David Hillyard. “There are no plans at this stage, and no developer has approached us,” he told CB. “If one did come along we would retain a presence.”

The firm is, however, following up its opening of a branch in Gosport with another in Chichester Harbour, at the Premier Marina, to open in the spring.

CAMPER AND NICHOLSON
Tender love
The Camper and Nicholson Gelyce-class motor launches, also known as the J-class tenders, are rightly regarded as among the most elegant motor launches ever built.

Long and thin, with small central cabins and open wells fore and aft, they were designed for the owners of large steam yachts as among the most elegant tenders, are rightly regarded also known as the J-class tenders.

The Camper and Nicholson Tender love At Underfalls at Wicormarine Tessa surfboat
This long, thin, at first sight gill-like craft is, in fact, an Australian surfboat, built in Belgium. Her builder Koen De Gezelle did so, he says, “simply because I love the lines.”

In Australia they row the oars and, if they can, make for the stern to increase the weight there, while the steersman, with a steering oar, does his best to guide the track.

Modern boats, says Koen, are glassfibre, but his Tessa is built the traditional way, using battalion-steam construction like the old whaleboats.

The system, by Dutch firm WillDo, uses four hydraulically powered high-pressure water jets, one at each ‘corner’ of the boat, each exerting the equivalent thrust to a 15hp outboard, but without the noise or water turbulence.

“The system hadn’t previously been fitted to a wooden hull,” explained Robin.

BELGIUM
Tessa surfboat
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