How did I do it?

The image of the J/105 making a port mark rounding is called an "Animated GIF" or "GIF89a" image. It's like a regular bitmapped image, except that there are many frames that are played one after another like a movie. In this case the file is only 12K bytes. By contrast, the J/105 photograph on the home page is 34K bytes.

There are 47 frames played at 6 frames per second and only the parts of the picture that change between frames are stored in the image. Once the Animated GIF is downloaded, the browser replays it without any further communication, so it requires minimum bandwidth. Netscape 2.0 or better and Internet Explorer 3.0 or better handle such images. The best place to find out more about Animated GIFs is Royal Frazier's GIF Animation on the WWW site.

The images were created with a program called FutureSpash Animator by FutureWave Software (now owned by Macromedia and called Flash. They are doing a lot of good work on minimizing the amount of data required for animation. Their software has just been chosen for use on Microsoft Network and Simpsons sites. I also used a Macintosh program called GIFBuilder to tweak the timing.

Yes, its pretty tedious to do the images (notice how the tiller moves on the rounding). But the reason I did this is because I would eventually like to do animations for the Yacht Racing Rules, the Appeals in particular. With the FutureWave software I think this is pretty doable. Stay tuned.

If you would like to rip off this image, be my guest. Just include a link to our home page (http://www.j105.org).