

**200,000 MILES: A LIFE OF ADVENTURE – Jimmy Cornell. Published in semi-hard covers by Cornell Sailing Ltd [[www.cornellsailing.com](http://www.cornellsailing.com)] at £29.95. 414 214mm x 149mm pages carrying over 500 colour photos. ISBN 978-0-9572-6268-3**

*200,000 Miles* is both a continuation and expansion of Jimmy's autobiography *A Passion for the Sea*, published some ten years ago, and a distillation of many years' practical experience in world cruising under sail. Largely based on anecdotes from Jimmy's wide-ranging experience, though not in chronological order, it is fun to read and possible to dip into as a guide to practically any aspect of long distance sailing. Thus advice ranges from pets to pests, monohulls versus multihulls, etc etc. He is, however, even-handed, and gives alternative views of each issue, explaining his opinions based on his enormous range of experience in his own boats over the 200,000 miles of the title. The book is substantial and thus not an easy bedtime read, but is very well produced. Almost every page carries a photograph or two, although many are not captioned, and there are a few chartlets in addition to those on the end-papers.

His advice begins with choice of boat design and material, and desirable fit-out parameters for reliability as well as crew safety and protection. For instance, he advises readers not to follow racing specifications, that spade rudders are best avoided, that gear should be oversize and reliable, to divide up sail area with a cutter rig etc. It is interesting that Jimmy originally put forward the ideal size of an ocean cruising boat as 40ft, in order to be easily handled by a couple, but went up to 43ft for *Aventura III* and then 45ft for *Aventura IV*, though she carried more crew for the Northwest Passage. He has also fallen in love with aluminium construction and centreboards, although these can involve higher costs.

In addition to his own circumnavigations, Jimmy's regular surveys from his own rallies – the 1986 ARC onwards – are illuminating and well-quoted, including comments on failures and damage situations. His primary philosophy for enjoyable sailing is to follow the trade winds as far as possible, and safety and reliability in offshore waters are stressed in good measure. He has caveats, however, such as – do not ignore a weather system in order to pinpoint an arrival date, as 'this can cause a headache'.

Jimmy provides a great breadth of advice besides passage-making, such as his admirably detailed coverage of laying-up. Although time on this is always well spent, after many lay-ups Jimmy seems to have got it down to a fine art and is able to leave his boat tucked up for an extended period after just two days of work! Certainly the reviewer can identify with his tips to avoid finding, on return, a boom packed tight with bird-nest material and a masthead wand bent and damaged by perching sea birds! Although not specifically stated, the maintenance and repair matters mentioned throughout the book do require a skipper to be able, practical and knowledgeable, so hopefully more independent of outside assistance.

To sum up, *200,000 Miles* is both an entertaining read and a good onboard reference, with a wealth of all-round advice and practical experience. Every page speaks of knowledge gained from his adventurous life on both land and

sea. Well recommended.

JLC