

Ainslie aiming to end 173 years of hurt

INEOS Britannia qualified for the final of the America's Cup, the first time in 60 years that a British yacht has done so, and they are set to square-up to Emirates Team New Zealand in a series of races starting this weekend.

The British crew are fresh from victory in the Louis Vuitton Cup and Sir Ben Ainslie's British team are race-hardened after an intense seven weeks of competition against four other teams.

The series ended with a 7-4 victory over Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli and confidence is naturally high for the series. The first team to win seven races takes the Auld Mug and, if Britain win, it will end 173 years of America's Cup hurt as it is the one sporting trophy that Britain has never won despite 22 challenges.

The Kiwis defend the world's oldest sporting trophy, with a history dating back to 1851 when the New York Yacht Club won a race around the Isle of Wight after an invitation from the Royal Yacht Squadron to take on their fleet.

Wheatley says the book title comes from a phrase first coined in 1851 as the yacht America sailed down the Solent after racing, and beating, leading yachts in the British fleet around the Isle of Wight.

Ainslie acknowledges that his men are underdogs, but the Olympic gold medal winner said: "Emirates Team New Zealand are the All Blacks of sailing, but we are ready for the challenge."

Magnus Wheatley has covered the event for several decades and his in-depth knowledge has been brought together in a book just launched and entitled, *There is No Second*, which is now available from Seahorse Publishers.

It is wonderfully-well researched and takes the reader back to the early years of the America's Cup. The blurb says it is "essential reading" for those seeking to drill down and really understand how the race came to represent the pinnacle of international yacht racing.

The Louis Vuitton 37th America's Cup match starts on Saturday, October 12 at 13.00 (BST) and British viewers can follow the action live on the Sail-World.com and YachtsandYachting.com homepages.

COVER STORY: The book by Magnus Wheatley which is now available from Seahorse Publishers

An interesting aside. Muc-Off, the world leader in bicycle care and performance, has a partnership with the Ineos Britannia sailing team.

Muc-Off has now extended its high-performance drivetrain optimisation expertise to the high seas.

The collaboration aims to leverage Muc-Off's pioneering technologies, including their chain optimisation process, originally developed for road racing, to enhance the performance of the Britannia team's Cyclors, the athletes who pedal stationary bikes to generate hydraulic power for the boat's hydrofoils and sails.