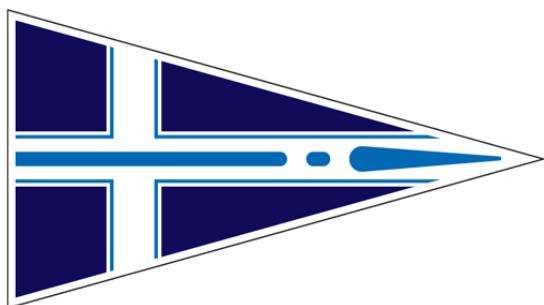




**SPARKMAN & STEPHENS
SWAN ASSOCIATION**

News From the Cockpit No. 409/2024

S&S Swan 47/013 Vera in Antarctica
2019



Michael and Britta, who are sailing around the world onboard their S&S Swan Vera, shot this beautiful pic from their dinghy!

Happy New Year!

Happy New Year to all S&S Swan owners and friends all over the world!

2023 was a fabulous year for our Association.

We organized the 10th S&S Swan Rendez-vous which was a success without any precedent, 44 S&S Swan gathered to participate, hosted by the Circolo della Vela Marciana Marina, our Mediterranean base, to pay a tribute to Lars Ström, to whom the event was dedicated.

It has been an honor to organize the Rendez-vous, for the tenth time in more than 20 years, and to see so many S&S Swan all together, and many members of

the Association who joined us too, from all corners of the world, to sail onboard their S&S Swan or another member's Swan, and to share the same deep passion.

We had another jolly event in Milan, in December 13th, our traditional "*Sailors' Christmas Party*": thanks to all members who joined us from many countries; S&S Swan have the power of creating fabulous, and lifetime, friendships!

We are now in 2024, the 24th birthday of our Association, and while already thinking ahead about 2025 celebrations and the 11th Rendez-vous (save the date: *Marciana Marina*, 17 - 22 June 2025), we are organizing the first "*S&S Swan Rally*", in Capriaia Island, 21-22-23 June 2024 (if you have not been in Capriaia before, please think about

joining us, you will find not less than 23 S&S Swan *<already subscribed>* an untouched and magic island with crystal waters, cosy restaurants and charming inhabitants, and above all, a lot of S&S Swan!).

All that said, I wish you a fabulous new year, and I thank you all for your friendship, support and commitment!

matteo

The origin of S&S Swan Arrow

There is some confusion on the recessed cove arrow, which has been Sparkman&Stephens "signature" since 1929, and slightly modified until early 80's.

When S&S and Nautor's Swan became partner, to create the best production boats ever designed and built, the S&S distinctive "signature" was of course adopted on all the 824 Swan built on their design.

The partnership between S&S and Nautor arrived to an end, but the Sparkman&Stephens "signature" remained with Nautor, and was used even on later, and even by other designers, Swan.

Rod and Olin Stephens never complained about this embezzlement, their generosity and elegance was unique.

It is very important to note that until a few years ago it was carved in the mould, not painted in the hull, and, extremely important, the back of the arrow had the exact inclination of the Swan stern it was on*.

** characteristics nearly dismissed nowadays*



The Atlantic circuit of S&S Swan 43/028

Hyperion of Turku

It was 15 July 1969 when S&S Swan 43/010 *Tikka* paraded at the start of the eighteenth Syracuse-Malta regatta. John Ripard at the helm greeted us and soon his white sails disappeared over the horizon. This image remained indelible in my mind as a young boy, I never imagined I would one day be able to sail a boat like that and even cross the Atlantic. After having sailed with my family for a long time in the Mediterranean, the coveted goal of retirement has made me entertain the idea of more extensive sailing in the Atlantic. I wondered if *Hyperion of Turku* was the right boat for such an undertaking. I would have to overload it with water and fuel reserves and above all improve her balance on downwind sailing, which was lacking in boats of that time. To this end I put into practice what I had read in an article in the 1970s about an Atlantic crossing aboard a *Freya 45*, a Sparkman&Stephens design #1930, very similar to the *Swan 43*. Twin foresails were set up with double poles and hoisted on two stays fixed on the deck some close to mast feet -

up with double poles and hoisted on two stays fixed on the deck very close to mast root, a system later used by Malingri on the *Moana*. This sail configuration allowed us, for a good part of the crossing, to do without the mainsail and achieve complete self-steering with the Aries windward rig. Even if a bit leaning back, the boat sailed safely despite the long ocean wave occasionally letting water in through the cockpit drains.

The transfer to the Canary Islands took place in the summer of 2021 with a family crew via Sardinia, Ibiza, Alicante, Benalmadena and finally Ceuta. The decision to avoid Gibraltar was made to avoid the risk of killer whale attacks, which were not reported along the Moroccan coast of the Strait at that time. To this end, I had arranged two carbon rowing oars painted the color of the antifouling to be fixed, if necessary, with elastic bands to the Aries's structure to deceive the attackers. Reluctantly, we had to abandon the idea of a stopover in Madeira, due to the headwind, and headed straight for the Canary Islands. The sailing was very pleasant, conservatively with an Austrian boat of friends, with the wind at first on the leeward tack to starboard and later on the full stern to Isola Graziosa. The clear sky made it possible, during the night, to see the luminescence of the Moroccan cities of Rabatt, Casablanca and Agadir. After spending two days at anchor in Francesa Bay, we moved to the marina in Arrecife where there was a good atmosphere of preparation for the crossing. We continued along the coast of Lanzarote to the new marina of Rubicon, characterized by beautiful architecture, simple but striking in harmony with an extraordinary natural setting. From here, a cool trade wind literally flew us with foresail and reefing to Gran Canaria, where we stayed at the cape until first light. We left Hyperion of Turku in Las Palmas for about a month to await the departure of the A.R.C.+ . The departure from Las Palmas to the Cape Verde Islands was in windy day that quickly pushed the 74-boat fleet out of Gran Canaria's shadow cone. During the night the wind strengthened and with reduced sails and a formed wave *Hyperion of Turku* raced like never before! Over the next few days the weather gradually improved to Mediterranean conditions with under spi and starry skies. One morning we spotted a giant dinghy adrift, an episode that made us very sad, imagining the attempts of migrants to sail up the trade wind from Senegal to the Canary Islands. The arrival in Mindelo was, as expected, gusty as the wind channelled between Santo Antao and Sao Vicente, and in the wake of a beautiful *Hood 50* we entered the bay alert for unmarked wrecks. Between welcoming parties and organised outings, the five planned stopover days passed quickly. Having finally set off on the real crossing, in an atmosphere of celebration and excitement, we descended far down in latitude for a couple of days accompanied by light and inconstant winds in search of the trade wind. For a week or so we were pushed by the trade wind with the twin foresails, en route to the Caribbean, rolling due to the crosswave generated by low pressures further north. A myriad of flying fish and a carpet of sargassum animated the seascape of the crossing. After the first week, the wind changed direction slightly, from the north, and squalls appeared. Black clouds reached us from astern with gusts of wind and a brief torrential rain forced us to keep our hands firmly on the rudder wheel, trying to keep the stern in the wind, as Malingri advised in his book '*Moana*'. In the last few days of the crossing, with a constant wind at the yard, we lowered one foresail and continued only with the other, reducing speed slightly but in complete calm. The arrival in Grenada came after 16 days of sailing, during the night under a violent swell, but the A.R.C. organization

assisted us impeccably.

In the months that followed, we sailed the length and breadth of the Caribbean islands, braving Venezuelan pirates, the underwater volcano Kick'em Jenny, the coral reefs of the Tobago Cays and visited enchanting places such as the rainforest of Dominica, the depths of the Cousteau Park in Guadeloupe and swam among turtles in Baradal. We savoured the Creole culture and understood how man can be capable of doing good and bad things at the same time. In Antigua we boarded a German friend's 1968 *Allied Luders* 33 to participate in the Antigua Classic Week.

At the end of May 2023, we left the Caribbean for Bermuda, initially pushed by the trade wind and later forced by a disturbance to spend a night to hove to. The Bermuda archipelago is a labyrinth of canals and inlets overlooked by low-lying islands with tropical vegetation, golf courses and beautiful villas with landscape-friendly architecture. As soon as our base of operations in Syracuse forecast a window of steady westerly winds (Westerlies), we set sail again for the Azores. The first two nights spent becalmed and under the rain made us regret the paradise we had just left but soon the succession of repeated lows higher than us gave us favorable winds. The last low pressure located southeast of the Azores had us slowing down to three knots for 24 hours, enough time to let it pass and take advantage of its tail. Horta took us back 50 years with stories of sperm whale hunting, small food shops and calm. In the last stretch of the Atlantic, the Portuguese trade wind was the master, allowing us a good average before abandoning us in the Algarve. Here the starry sky was reflected on a sea teeming with phosphorescent fish. The Strait crossing this time was tackled by skirting the Spanish coast along the 20-metre bathymetric line all the way to Gibraltar to avoid the killer whales. As soon as we entered the Mediterranean we felt at home and after a few stops in the Balearics and Sardinia we finally returned to Syracuse.

Andrea Centaro





S&S Swan 43/028 Hyperion of Turku at the ARC

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