

## NEWS FROM THE COCKPIT



**37...41...47...76...**

and then...

from Gavin Howe, Owner of **S&S Swan 76/004** Tigris:

*My first sailing on S&S boats was in the late 70's in a **She 36** and (the ahead of it's time planing keelboat) the American **Tartan 10**.*

***I remember thinking then that a perfect cruiser racer would be larger than the She 36, designed by Olin Stephens and built by Nautor Swan.***

*In 1985 I saw a 1970 built Swan 37 for sale that was Irish owned. I timidly went on the smart Swan stand at the London Boat Show and found John Irving who was the UK Swan importer. John kindly gave me an hour of his time as he talked through the **bullet proof construction of the Swan 37** (it had had a bad survey). Reassured, I went ahead and bought it with confidence and I haven't looked back.*

*In 1990 I saw a Swan 41 advertised privately in Yachting World magazine. It was Norwegian owned and a real step up inside with a big aft cabin. With 3 daughters growing up we raced in Swan and local events like the Round the Island Race many times, but our main use was cruising and the flat Swan deck forward allowed us to cruise with both an Optimist and Peanut children's rowing dinghy on deck.*

*This boat didn't disappoint and after 14 years including a Caribbean season, we were keen to have a bit more space, larger tanks and a bigger saloon and started looking at Swan 47's. We bought **Black Tie** in Newport RI which was owned by the owners of Jamestown Boatyard. On deck she had everything (including 26 sails) but needed some TLC inside so I got Jamestown (PS a "selected shipyard" in S&S Swan) to use their Swan skills and materials to do some renovation inside. She was the popular centre board version also called the **New York Yacht Club 48**.*

*We did the usual combination of Swan regattas in the Mediterranean and in Northern Europe and in 2006 we came 5th in a big class at the Rolex Swan Cup with all the other 47's astern. The boat immediately ahead of us was the Swan 65 sloop, Monsoon and we later considered buying her. It didn't work out, and in 2011 the **Swan 76** deck saloon (with a centreboard) came back on the market after the US syndicate who bought her to do the World ARC wanted to sell at the end of the successful project. I flew to the US and drove up to Portland, Maine. Although she had several areas that needed some work, she had been well looked after and after a short negotiation I became a fleet owner again, this time with **124 feet of S&S Nautor Swans**. It was back to Jamestown Boatyard for work on this boat with a team which I knew and trusted and they laid a mooring for her right outside the boatyard office.*

*Although not slow, and based on Kialoa 111 the maxi champion, she is heavy and with all her cupboards filled is even heavier so we don't sail well to the rating. For fun racing and comfortable cruising she is great, and Nicki and I have much enjoyed sailing with family and friends liking the soft and comfortable ride and the large volume that 63 tonnes loaded gives us.*

*After 7 years in the Med, Tigris is in the UK we are now planning to do some Baltic cruising once the Covid travel restrictions ease for flying to and from the boat.*

*A great thing is that all our previous Sparkman & Stephens Swans have found good next owners with the 37 actively racing in the Solent as **Mojitabel**, the 41 and the 47 were both at the same Classic Swan rendezvous in Elba and it's good to see them both being improved with continued investment from their owners.*

*We have really enjoyed several of S&S Swan Association classic Swan Rendezvous while in the Med and our eldest daughter met her now husband at one in Elba when Ash was sailing aboard the appropriately named **S&S Swan 65 Joie de Vivre** and which was moored next to us.*

*So what next, as we now own the biggest S&S Swan (centreboard and deck saloon) and the last design by Olin for Nautor Swan it's hard to see. My wife Nicki says that you need a foot of length for every year of your age, so at 76 feet I still have some way to go with this boat...*

*g.h.*

**Gavin is a S&S Swan addict (...!...), and in 2021 he was appointed Chairman of [S&S Association](https://www.sparkmanstephens.org), which is the UK based Association of our Friends, dealing with all S&S designed boats, as beautiful, strong and perfect sailing machine as our beloved S&S Swan are!**

[sparkmanstephens.org](https://www.sparkmanstephens.org)

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