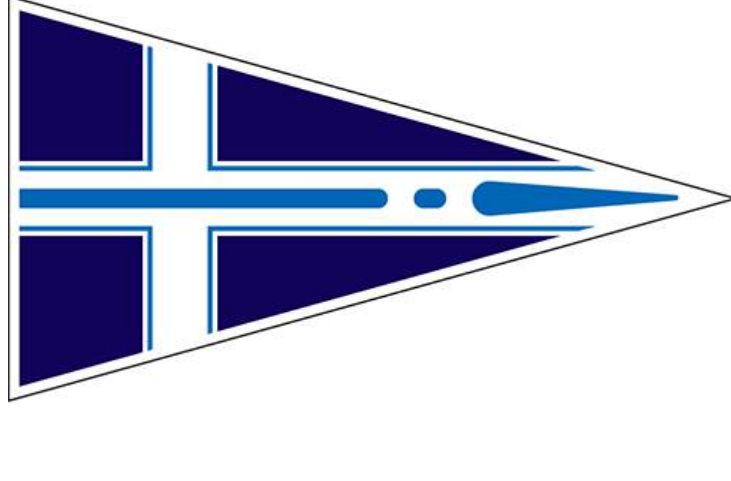




News From the Cockpit No. 438/2026

Countdown: 189 Days

Something is beginning to take shape... Stay tuned.

Bram van Olphen, our Man in Asia

we are happy to introduce Bram, from now on our liaison for the S&S Swan Owners in Asia.

My name is Bram van Olphen, a Dutch citizen who has called Hong Kong home for the past twenty years. I have sailed for as long as I can remember, my earliest memories are of weekends spent cruising the family boat in the Netherlands. In later years, I restored our **S&S Swan 47/028 Zeeduivel** together with my father and brothers, took part in sailing regattas and embarked on sailing adventures that ranged from the North Sea all the way down to the Bay of Biscay.

Upon arriving in Hong Kong, I wasted no time in buying a sailboat and have been racing in the Dragon class at the iconic Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club ever since. A few years ago, I took on the responsibility for our family's cherished Swan 47, which I have been sailing since the age of twelve. After shipping her out to Hong Kong, we have continued to race her locally and to explore these beautiful waters together with family and friends.

As a proud member of the S&S Swan Association, I am delighted to act as a liaison for fellow S&S Swan owners based in Asia. With the exciting developments involving Nautor's Swan, such as the inaugural Swan Asian Regatta held in 2025 at Riviera Zushi Marina in Japan and the recent partnership between Nautor's Swan and the Rolex China Sea Race, Asia's only blue water classic, there are now more compelling racing options than ever for our community.

Whether you are planning a cruise through our waters, considering participation in one of the Nautor's Swan regattas, or simply looking to connect with like-minded Swan enthusiasts in this part of the world, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Fair winds,

Bram van Olphen



Bram at the helm of S&S Swan 47/028 Zeeduivel

Rod Stephens 100 Problem Areas

last month, we published an extract from *You Are First: The Story of Olin and Rod Stephens of Sparkman & Stephens*, 1978, including an interview in which the author, Francis S. Kinney, spoke with Rod Stephens about a concern that was already emerging at the time: the gradual decline in boatbuilding quality.

Nearly fifty years later, his words feel not only relevant, but prophetic.

This month, we would like to bring renewed attention, for those who truly care about well-built sailing yachts, to Rod Stephens' well-known "*100 problem areas*."

These were not merely notes or guidelines, but a disciplined way of thinking. Over decades of design, construction, and offshore experience, Rod Stephens, widely renowned as one of the finest and most experienced sailors of XX Century, identified the 100 critical points where boats most often fail, deteriorate, or reveal weaknesses in design and workmanship.

For him, these 100 points became a *mantra*.

Every detail mattered. Every junction, every fastening, every interface between materials was approached with one fundamental question: *what could go wrong here, over time, at sea?*

We invite you to read the attached document.

Custodians of S&S Swan yachts will recognize, with a certain satisfaction, that their boats were built in accordance with these principles, as were all yachts built under the direct supervision of Rod Stephens himself.

A boat that complies with these points can be considered strong, reliable, and safe.

But what of a boat that doesn't?

At sea, sooner or later, the answer will emerge...

[Download the document](#)

New Fairleads for S&S Swan 43/014

straight from the mould: a new set of aluminium fairleads for **S&S Swan 43**, engineered and produced by Dan James, Owner of **43/059 Mouse**, now installed on **S&S Swan 43/014, Eleanor**.



Engineered by Dan James (**S&S Swan 43/059 Mouse**) on the original Rod Stephens design (*Type Plan D4*)

S&S Swan. The Most Elegant Way to Go Skiing

combining sailing, mountains, and ski touring might sound like something that requires therapy, but in the Tyrrhenian there are moments when (with a bit of madness and a heavy dose of motivation) it can actually be done.

Over Easter, we gave it a try... of course with our **S&S Swan 41/025 Lithian!**

Even though time was short, the season's snowfall and the sight of snow-covered mountains just beyond our sea were simply too tempting.

Friday, April 2nd, 6:00 AM: we cast off from Punta Ala with Corsica in our sights. Thanks to a fresh north/northeast breeze, we were already in Bastia by early afternoon. We rented a car and got our gear ready for the next day.

Saturday morning, 5:30 AM: a rather surreal scene. We unloaded skis and backpacks directly from the boat onto the dock. An incredible feeling (*and luckily, no one saw us!*). From Bastia's marina, we drove toward Lozzi, a small village at the foot of the southern side of the Monte Cinto massif.

Once we reached our destination at about 1,000 meters (3,300 feet), we parked the car and immediately realized that reality was very different from what I had imagined. My optimism had been... excessive.

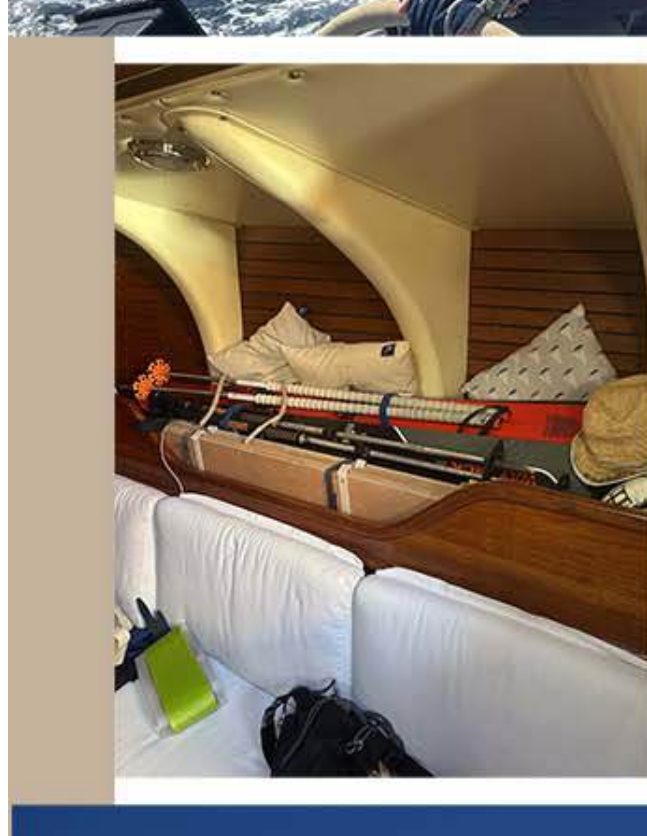
Snow? Nowhere to be seen. Practically a mirage.

Giving up was not an option. We strapped skis and boots to our packs and started hiking in sneakers along an endless dirt road. After two hours of walking, the final twist: we reached the snow and found... jeeps. Yes, other ski tourers, less "purist" (*or simply smarter*), had driven up comfortably in off-road vehicles.

At that point, my partner in both life and adventure had a slight psychological breakdown... To be fair, I do have a habit of not asking too many questions when planning these trips!

Anyway, we finally put skins on our skis, switched into boots, and continued climbing on snow. Given the limited time, we scaled back our goal and aimed for a peak around 2,000 meters (6,500 feet), right in front of us.

Once at the top, after taking in the incredible views, we dropped in on excellent Corsican snow! The only downside, the usual one with ski touring, is that the descent is always far too short compared to that endless climb... but mission accomplished, and the crew was absolutely thrilled!



Federica and Matteo smiling after their sailing/skiing Easter holidays!

2026 Swan Heritage Reunion

Capraia Island, 19 . 20 . 21 June 2026

this June we are organizing a truly special event, the first of its kind, dedicated to all Classic Swans. By this we mean, of course, the Sparkman & Stephens Swans, followed by the second generation designed by Ron Holland, and finally the Swans designed by Germán Frers and built through the end of the 1990s.

This is not a regatta. It is simply an occasion to be together, owners and sailors united by a shared passion for the Classic Swan, regardless of the designer.

Our initiative has been warmly welcomed by Nautor, who has kindly granted its support. We also enjoy the full support of Capraia and its excellent marina facilities, which will host the event.

All owners are most welcome to join us. Those coming from afar, who may not have the opportunity to reach Capraia with their own Swan, are equally encouraged to attend and be part of the gathering.

We will meet on June 20 in Capraia, where we will celebrate our passion with a drink kindly offered by Nautor. On that same occasion, we will decide together the sailing program for the following day. Depending on the weather, this could be a sail around the beautiful island of Capraia or, if the wind allows, a passage to Corsica and back. Alternatively, should the wind fail us, we will simply sail together to one of Capraia's charming bays and enjoy a swim.

In the evening, a special dinner will be held in front of the boats, organized by Monika, owner of the renowned restaurant Pescianel, who together with her team will prepare an unforgettable dinner with local seafood.

If you are planning to join us, please do not hesitate to get in touch. This promises to be a truly memorable gathering for all those who love the most beautiful Swans ever built.

Below is the list of participating Swan

S&S Swan 36/010 Isabella
S&S Swan 38/090 Cutti *
S&S Swan 40/047 Star Swan **
S&S Swan 41/003 Diana ***
S&S Swan 41/004 Ciall II
S&S Swan 41/025 Lithian
S&S Swan 43/019 Manurau
S&S Swan 43/047 Kokkola
S&S Swan 44/014 Four Winds
S&S Swan 47/002 Hypatia
S&S Swan 47/014 Typon****
S&S Swan 47/016 Grampus
S&S Swan 47/039 Outrageous *****
S&S Swan 47/040 Sweet Mama
S&S Swan 47/041 Tortuga
S&S Swan 47/051 Djata
S&S Swan 47/056 Black Tie
S&S Swan 47/069 Vanessa
S&S Swan 57/006 Matchless
S&S Swan 57/037 Bianca di Navarra
S&S Swan 65/040 Une Joie de Vivre

RH Swan 39/029 Katia

SCBF Swan 46/019 Assidous
SCBF Swan 46/090 Twilight
SCBF Swan 51/010 Cartouche
SCBF Swan 51/012 Formosa
SCBF Swan 53/046 Galadriel
SCBF Swan 65/007 Lunz am Meer
SCBF Swan 77/010 Blue Itaca

*Owner is cycling to Capraia to join us from Milan

**Owner is flying to Capraia to join us from Portugal

***Owners are flying to Capraia to join us from Finland

****Owners are flying to Capraia to join us from San Francisco, USA

*****Owners are swimming to Capraia to join us from Rome

Provisional schedule:

Friday, 19 June 2026

Arrival, welcome cocktail

Saturday, 20 June 2026

Fleet sailing around the island, followed by dinner for all Owners and Crew

Sunday, 21 June 2026

Farewell day

If you are Owner of a Classic Swan and want to participate, please [contact us!](#)

22 June:

Following the Capraia gathering, we are pleased to highlight the **Argentario Sailing Week**, organized by the **Yacht Club Santo Stefano**, where a dedicated class will be reserved for all Classic Swans.

Owners sailing from Capraia to Porto Santo Stefano for the event may choose to turn the passage into a friendly, self-organized race.

Argentario Sailing Week, participants:

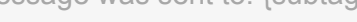
S&S Swan 37/051 Tikka III
S&S Swan 42/025 Lithian
S&S Swan 47/004 Dream
S&S Swan 47/016 Grampus
S&S Swan 57/006 Matchless

Newsletter Archive

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S&S Swan - The Original Swan



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