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News & Notes

Aussie Restores Ill-Fated Nordhavn Motorsailer

Courtesy of Stephen Martyn

Stephen Martyn, retired Australian builder, stands in front of hull number 5 of the Nordhavn line of 56-foot motorsailers.

A "crazy" Australian is launching a new Nordhavn 56 Motorsailer after rescuing her from a Southern California scrap heap. Stephen Martyn, a builder by profession and a "sailor by desire," bought hull number 5 after she was dropped from a ship, sunk, and declared a total loss for insurance.

The saga began in July 2009, when the vessel was being unloaded from the deck of a freighter to be delivered to her new owners.

According to the Nordhavn's builder, the 56 was being lifted from the ship to the water in a conventional "two-crane pick" using the ship's cranes, but operated by San Diego-based longshoremen. As the operators began their synchronized swing over the water, the operator at the bow inexplicably continued lifting. When the angle of yacht and cradle reached about 45 degrees, the vessel fell off, crashed onto steel-beams protruding from the ship's deck, and plunged into the water—a fall of more than 40 feet.

The 90,000-lb. boat hit the water upside down. She came up again and righted herself, windshield, port lights, and superstructure intact, only to sink as water poured into her punctured hull. Soon after, salvors raised her from the bottom and towed her to a nearby boatyard, where she was hauled and eventually taken to an inland salvage yard. The bilges were filled with diesel fuel to "pickle" the engine. Originally valued at $1.8 million, the broken boat was offered for sale with a reserve price of $125,000.

(In an interesting side note, even though Pacific Asian Enterprises, builder of the Nordhavn line, was not legally responsible for the accident, it helped out the original buyers of hull number 5 by, in effect, providing a loaner—the same boat with a different configuration. Meanwhile PAE began work on an exact duplicate of hull number 5 at its Taiwan factory. The owners have taken delivery of N56 v2, and the loaner is up for sale.)

Martyn says the damaged 56 was first purchased by a European, who then sold it to him in February 2012. He admits the project turned out to be a little more than he bargained for.

"The eventuality has been complete replacement of all wiring, electrical components, mechanical components, fittings and electronics, removal of repairs commenced by others, engagement of engineer as to structural repair, and nine months full-time of a talented, enthusiastic repair crew," Martyn says.

"There is still finishing to be done,

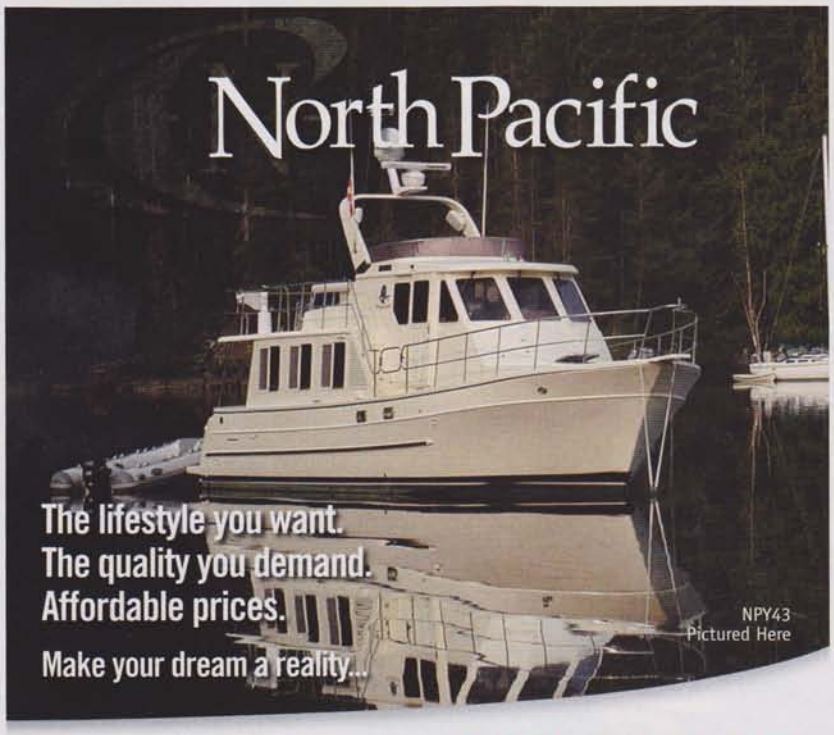
but she is basically ready to go back in the water, one year into an original two-year schedule. The only 'win' in the whole project was the timber work. The long storage in apparently favorable conditions have left the original timber work restorable without major removal, a testament to Nordhavn quality as much as anything else, I think."

Martyn's plan was to launch the boat in February and spend some time in the San Diego area for commissioning, including installation of a new sailing rig, which had not been included in the purchase. After that he says he will cruise south, transit the Panama Canal, and explore the Caribbean before setting course for Europe.

Martyn declines to say how much the project has cost him so far, but he's willing to hint. "All the experts told me I was a crazy Australian, and that it would take me two years and a million dollars to get where I wanted to be. What I can say is that it has taken about half that."

What's Martyn calling his new vessel? "I have registered her in the British Virgin Islands, official name is *Adworld*, but thinking about renaming her *Crikey Dan* with reference to Dan Streech, tagged with the Steve Irwin's Australian exclamation," he says, referring to PAE's president, Streech not Irwin.—Peter Swanson

(Stand by for an in-depth look at Stephen Martyn's remarkable restoration efforts in a future issue.)



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37-FOOT WEEKENDER FROM BACK COVE

Back Cove Yachts of Rockland, Maine, is introducing two new models that advance the Back Cove's 21st-century interpretation of a classic Jonesport lobsterboat. Coming this summer is the Downeast 37, followed by the Back Cove 41 in early 2014. These announcements came as the company was celebrating the construction of its 500th boat since it began building in 2003.

"This is an opportunity for us to take all our thoughts and ideas about what makes day boats such great platforms and grow those ideas to a scale which allows the proportions to be elegant and balanced," says Kevin Burns, vice president of design and product development, referring to the 37.

The Downeast 37 shares its hull design with the Back Cove 37, the difference being the designers have opened up the cockpit, thus integrating exterior and interior spaces. Accommodations down below are simple and elegant—a compact galley and queen berth and a head with a separate shower. Seeing the renderings, one can easily imagine entertaining guests for an afternoon on the water or a couple taking weekend trips on the Penobscot.

The Downeast 37 is powered by a single Cummins 480 diesel. According to Back Cove, that gives the boat a cruise speed of 20 knots and a top speed of 25. It carries 300 gallons of fuel and 120 gallons of water. She draws 43 inches, good for gunkholing. Base price is $425,000. Visit www.backcoveyachts.com.—Peter Swanson