

1st High Point Yacht Fest – Gocek , Turkey. 18th to 25th October 2008 – Commodore's Report

As I write this report as the winner of the 1st High Point Yacht Fest, and rumour has it, commodore for 2009, I can still hardly believe my achievement and the wonderful holiday we all had. I guess I was very lucky with the good boat “Olympus” and the 2 year old Bavaria 42C performed perfectly, dispelling any preconception of caravans with sails. I was more than pleased with her performance and equipment, the boat check-in was a dream and we had no problems. I must say at this point, that the High Point organisation was notably very efficient, leaving nothing to chance and with no hidden surprises.

We sailed pretty much over the same ground as the ECC 2007, but it was a relief not to be in an over-crowded fleet in the relatively small Gocek bay area. This made the racing pleasurable and largely risk free (if you take heed of the navigator of course), with enough competition to challenge and enough water to be confident that your damage deposit will remain intact. Rabbit starts, once we got the gist, made for safer sailing too. Another beauty of smaller fleets is that you have more time so you can start earlier arrive later and can be more flexible in the starts and finishes.

It was not all racing, the courses were set with enough time to complete one or even two races per day and still have time for a spot of fishing (didn't catch any fish this time) and larking around in the beautiful bays of which there are so many there. The winds were adequate to good and the scenery just amazing, as we were not in a shoal of other vessels, we had plenty of time to be relaxed and appreciate it. The water was wonderful, and even though we had plenty of sunshine, it was warmer than the air at times. What a way to relax and prepare for the evening feast.

Eating out was well organised and inexpensive as earlier negotiations had obviously secured some very reasonable charges. It's the hidden charges like these that can drive up the costs on events like this, so we were pleased that all this had been considered in advance. We had super food, good wine and plenty of Rakki to make the evening mellow, combined with excellent company. It helps to have some insect repellent handy though, “Deit” was the vital ingredient to make for a more comfortable time ashore.

All credit is due to those all those who have made this venture happen. To Sasha for organising the event, negotiating the best deals and grinding the winches on Olympus, to Dave for his infectious humour, grunt and ballast ability, to Mandy for her most wonderful photography and to JHH for managing the event and intelligently setting the courses to the prevailing winds and making best use of the natural features to challenge the crews. May this High Point Yacht Fest success lift them on to realising their dreams.

I really must say a thank you to my crew for fidgeting with the bits that made her go and for your tolerance when you thought things were just about set right, but the skipper then changed his mind – again! I hope the experience was as much a pleasure for you as it was for me and I hope we can all sail again together one day.

Thanks to the other crews also, for letting me win and being such good sports and I promise that from now on I will not doubt my navigator – sorry Di.

All the best on the water, stay safe and happy sailing.

Martin – High Point Yacht Fest Commodore 2009!