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ALMAGORES

SOUTHERN WIND'S NEW 31 METRE
102 DS SEES INNOVATIONS IN HULL SHAPE
AND ENHANCED VOLUME OVER THE YARD'S
SUCCESSFUL 100 SERIES

Three rings, bound together at the base: a mark etched everywhere aboard Southern Wind Shipyard's new 102 DS, *Almagores II*. Crew think this is part of a family crest, but with this yacht I already know it symbolises something more.

Portofino is one of the most beautiful towns in Liguria and a very choice port of call; I wander amidst tourists spilled over from cruise ships and wealthy Russians hell-bent on stimulating the local economy. *Almagores II* bobs gracefully at her moorings in the turquoise waters at the mouth of the narrow port. I climb aboard and see that symbol. Something stirs in my memory.

The owner of *Almagores II* competed extensively in the early 1980s under IOR rules with his previous *Almagores*, a Doug Peterson design and, in 1981, the first Italian yacht to win an Admiral's Cup. He transmitted his passion for the sport to his sons, then switched to motor yachts, before making the decision to go back to sail.

Southern Wind Shipyard (SWS) is based in Cape Town, but the company has strong ties to Italy. Willy Persico, the charismatic engineer who founded the company 21 years ago, is a Neapolitan who lives in Genoa where Pegaso, SWS's marketing arm is based. Following much recent thought concerning the direction of the market and the

gaps in current commercial offerings, Persico made the decision to take a risk and invest in new projects. A brave move given the economic climate.

After the success of the SW 100 RS series (30.2 metre), a semi-custom line that has seen 13 yachts built and launched since 2006, it might seem self-defeating to plan a new series that is barely 1.5 metres longer. But many things change in six years and Persico saw the opportunity to make big improvements in interior volumes with a more innovative hull shape. He went ahead and started building the first 102's carbon fibre and Kevlar sandwich hull on spec.

Both the SW 100 and the SW 102 are Nauta Yacht Design/Farr Yacht Design collaborations. Farr, the naval architect that will design the new high-performance VOR 65s, is particularly adept at adapting innovations from the grand prix racing circuit to the cruising environment. Nauta Yacht Design has been collaborating with Southern Wind for years on general arrangement plans and interiors.

With this background, it's only natural to compare the SW 102 to the 100. At first glance the easy sweep of the hull lines seems similar; the differences are less in the looks and more in the numbers. As Jim Schmicker, vice



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president and senior naval architect at Farr says, ‘The SW 102 in general is much more like Southern Wind’s current flagship, the SW 110 (33.6 metre) launched in late 2009, than the SW 100. The lines are much straighter both longitudinally and in section and the stem has much less slope. The stern is significantly wider and closer to the water with respect to transom immersion when the boat is both upright and heeled. Since the 100 was actually an extended 98 footer (29.8 metre), the 102, which is actually a bit over 103 feet (31.4 metres), is five feet (1.5 metres) longer in all the associated parameters and also in the general “feel”.’

The beam is carried almost unchanged from its maximum point amidships to the stern and this spaciousness, almost 20 per cent more than on the SW 100, is apparent on boarding. The beamy transom also makes for good downwind performance and easy cruising and has allowed for significantly larger volumes aft.

While Portofino will be this yacht’s home port and the local economy seems to revolve around Pucci, Gucci and pesto, the posh backdrop does not mean *Almagores II* was built for sitting pretty. She has already proved her mettle with a month-long maiden voyage that involved

changing hemispheres, a junket to which all SWS yachts are subjected just as a shaking down. One of the owner’s sons went along for the crossing and never missed a watch. Since arriving in the Med the owner and his wife and guests have been aboard constantly cruising Corsica and Sardinia, only spending three nights in port. They are now debating an Atlantic crossing and a winter of Caribbean cruising. This is a yacht that knows how to reconcile the soft life with serious sailing.

While capable of taking on all kinds of conditions, *Almagores II* is designed to perform well in light winds and those are just the conditions we encounter. We head out of Portofino and round the tip of the bay to south westerly winds at about nine knots and very light seas. The boat performs constantly at or just above wind speed and is a real joy to helm. ‘When the owner is aboard I can’t tear him away [from the helm],’ says captain Francesco Donati. With a boat this easy and light to the touch, that’s easy to understand. And the sense of power and propriety he must get admiring the numbers on the instruments and the expanse of teak spreading out in front of him can’t be bad either.

The yacht’s capacity to accommodate and adapt to all





Flexibility is the watchword in the main saloon (above, left and below), where the large dining table converts to a storage box for charts or tableware, while the table to starboard becomes a low coffee or card table. The big curved cockpit windows let in plenty of light





aspects of life at sea is evident in the guest cockpit, a safe, luxurious and well-protected area that still offers easy access to the main companionway. An intermediate sunbathing area separates the guest cockpit from the helm station. The majority of the manoeuvring gear is concentrated in a clean, well-distributed space where, before long, everyone aboard has found a comfortable space to sit and chat. Movement fore to aft is mostly on a level through passages wide enough to be comfortable, but not so wide as to be dangerous in heavy seas. But foot chocks are removable so they don't become

stumbling blocks when it is time to take a swim.

The boat's wide transom opens to become a beach platform that also gives access to the tender garage. And there is still room for lateral lazarettes big enough for all kinds of sailing and sports gear.

Planning and the clever use of space are hallmarks of Nauta and Southern Wind's longstanding collaboration; *Almagores II's* interior is no exception, where adaptability and functionality are a constant. 'We plan systems and furnishings together so we can put even the tiniest of spaces to their best use,' says Andrea Micheli,





The full-beam master suite (opposite top) occupies the entire aft section and offers separate en suites. In the galley (opposite left), as with many other areas aboard, the aim is to utilise every space in the most efficient and flexible way

Pegaso's commercial manager. In the main saloon the dining table opens on pistons to reveal a split personality: it doubles as a large, shallow teak box that can be used for charts and maps or even napkins and tablecloths. The table on the starboard side also folds out and converts so it can be used as a low coffee table, an extra dining or card table. These, along with curved glass windows that let extra light and views in from the guest cockpit, are just some of the touches that make this cool, low key interior revolving around satin teak and natural linen, elevate from good to great.

In a departure from Southern Wind's usual 'crew area aft' layout, *Almagores II* has an owner's cabin with completely separate his and hers bathrooms aft. 'I think that a major factor in the owner deciding to go back to sailing yachts after years of motor boats has to do with the spaces you can get on sailing yacht these days,' says Donati. 'Things have changed from the days when performance only came with discomfort.' A wardrobe-lined corridor leads to two twin en-suite cabins, one of which also has a retractable bunk berth. As the owner enjoys plotting the route, the nav station is in a buffer area between the main

saloon and the galley and a VIP cabin is just to starboard. Access to the crew area, which includes two twin en-suite cabins, is through the galley. The crew companionway leads down from the foredeck; the mess table has been fitted with the last steps of the ladder.

Southern Wind has made a real effort to keep sturdiness and reliability high and displacement low. This is particularly evident in the engine room of all places. A Cummings 305 hp engine is mounted at the centre, flanked by twin Onan generators for central, balanced and logical weight placement. Watermakers and boilers are low and symmetrical and a system where water can be transferred quickly from port to starboard tanks provides extra righting moment when necessary.

Throughout the yacht, that symbol – three rings bound together at the base – keeps catching my eye: it is on the transom, the winches, even on the drain of the bathtub. A memory clicks: it is the image of the system physicists use when three particles are bound and balanced. And balance bound with elegance and performance are surely the paradigms for this yacht.



'Things have changed from the days when performance only came with discomfort'

ALMAGORES II

ALMAGORES II *Southern Wind Shipyard*

LOA 31.1m
LWL 27.7m
Beam 6.9m
Draught 4m
Displacement 64.5T
Engines
 1 x Cummins QSB 5.9 MC
 D 305hp at 2,600 rpm

Maximum speed under sail
 18 knots reaching
Speed under power (max/cruise)
 10.5/12.5 knots
Range at nine knots
 2,400nm
Thrusters
 Max Power R450 and R300

Generators
 2 x 19kW Onan
Fuel capacity
 4,170 litres
Water capacity
 2,400 litres
Sails
 Quantum Sails
Sail area
 477m²

Mast and boom
 Southern Spars
Owner and guests 8
Crew 4
Tenders
 1 x 4.08m Lomac;
 1 x 3.6m Genius
Construction
 Composite

Classification
 RINA Certificate Class C
 hull Mach; Y
Naval architecture
 Farr Yacht Design
Exterior and interior Design
 Nauta Yacht Design

Builder/year
 Southern Wind/2012
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The stern is both wider and lower to the water than southern wind's similar length series, the 100

The beam changes very little from stern to midships, creating considerable interior volume

Two en suite twin guest cabins are forward of the master suite, along a wardrobe lined passageway

The crew quarters forward are accessed through the galley

The guest cockpit offers both a social gathering area, as well as easy access to the companionway

