

2015 ATLANTIC RALLY FOR CRUISERS

The 2015 Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) certainly was a memorable rally with some superb stories. 198 yachts took part in the ARC, 15 of which were Oyster yachts. Three Oyster yachts also did the ARC+ (via Cape Verde), starting in Gran Canaria all the way to St. Lucia in the Caribbean, this journey saw many fulfilling the dream of sailing across the Atlantic. The Oyster owners' party was held at the Santa Catalina Hotel, Las Palmas just before the ARC departure on 22nd November and a stunning evening was enjoyed.

ARC+: Three Oyster yachts took part in the ARC+. *Nikitoo II*, Oyster 54, *Shelena*, Oyster 545 and *Spirit*, Oyster 575 - departed on 8th November and completed the ARC+ with the fleet of 59 boats this time. All in Cruising Class A, *Nikitoo II* was 12th in Leg 1 and 6th in Leg 2. *Shelena* was 8th in Leg 1 and 4th in Leg 2. *Spirit* was 4th in Leg 1 and 2nd in Leg 2. All arrived safely into Rodney Bay by 30th November with the prize giving ceremony having taken place on 9th December 2015.

Oyster ARC Support Team: Topping the table on customer service, the Oyster ARC Support Team checked and serviced systems and kit before departure to assist owners and crew to make the journey to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia. Philip Wilson of Oyster 575, *Isabel*, said the following about the Oyster ARC Support Team, "Thanks to so many people starting with the Oyster guys who are a credit to their product and organisation."

The Results: Oyster 56, *Raya*, completed the ARC first in their Class, as did winners of Racing B Oyster Lightwave 48, *Scarlet Oyster*. Oyster 625, *Delicia*, completed the ARC in the shortest distance closest to the Rhumb line in 2810nm, sailing 340nm less than Oyster 825, *Maegan*.

Despite trying too hard and blowing their A2 spinnaker, Oyster 825, *Maegan*, arrived on 5th December, 5th in Racing Class A and coming in 8th out of all boats on the water. *Maegan* received some superb feedback from the crew.

David Kenefick, an ex-Figaro Sailor said, "...For the first few days of the race we had in excess of 35 knots on a number of occasions and the boat performed extremely well in these difficult conditions. The deck remained dry despite surfing at close to 20 knots, while down below was so comfortable you would have thought we were still tied to the Marina in Las Palmas. As the days went on *Maegan* stretched her legs with ease of doing 250-mile days in pure comfort and style.

The boat is extremely well thought out with a large cockpit with all sailing controls behind (winches, steering position etc.) this makes for a clean and tidy boat. The sail changes and manoeuvres were hassle free and very easy despite the boat being over 80ft. It is a credit to Oyster that we crossed the Atlantic without a single problem onboard. All the onboard systems performed past expectations. My biggest regret was that the ARC wasn't longer as it was such a joy to sail on such a beautiful yacht."

Charlie Hatfield, professional Bowman said, "Crossing the Atlantic on *Maegan* was a very enjoyable experience, I was amazed at how she managed with the constant 20kts winds and Atlantic swells. She was very comfortable to be on at all times, and never felt on edge or unstable. To arrive in St. Lucia with only some sail damage, it shows the high standards the boat is built to, and this race was a great test on the boat to prove this."

Javier Jaudenes, Naval Architect/Designer of WinWin said, "Sailing across the Atlantic on *SY Maegan* was a fantastic experience. I was delighted by her comfort during the crossing. Her interior layout was able to accommodate ten race crew without any clashes. She truly is a worldwide cruising vessel with excellent reliability."

Gerald Veniard, Professional Navigator with multiple Figaro/Open 60 campaigns behind him said, "Very nice sailing and very good atmosphere onboard *Maegan*, with a very adaptable and highly motivated group of ten people. English, NZ, Irish, Spanish and French, *Maegan* speaks every language! She was always happy to push the limits that racing requires. I was very impressed by the reliability of the electrical and hydraulic systems onboard this Oyster 825. It is a great challenge to compete in an offshore race, 310hrs of racing and 3152nm covered, it's more than two thirds of the boat's life, with zero technical issues - that's outstanding!"

Team Brunel got both the line honours for Division II (IRC Racing) and overall division winner, with ARC regular Oyster Lightwave 48, *Scarlet Oyster* picking up first in Racing Class B. Whether swept up by the emotion of the evening or as a carefully planned move, the ARC crowd were on their feet cheering after *Scarlet Oyster* crewmember Tijs Van Langenhove proposed marriage on stage to his partner of three years Anna Vugbblija; the couple having met originally sailing on *Scarlet Oyster*. A surprised and delighted Anna said, "Yes!"

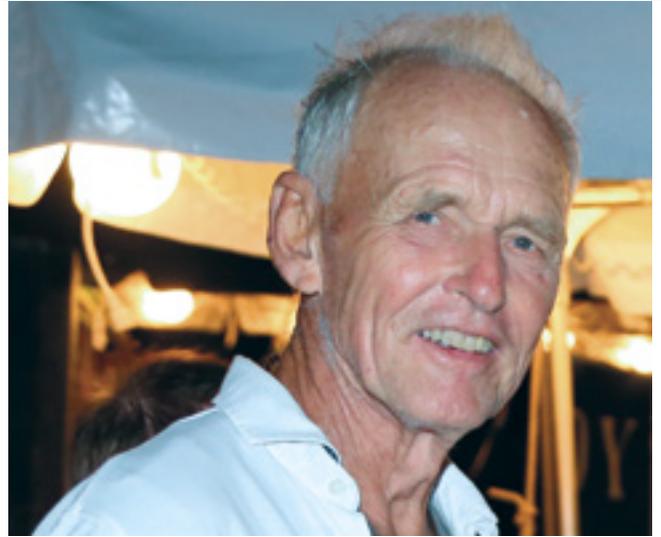
For further information about the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, visit www.worldcruising.com/arc

ARC 2015 OYSTER ENTRIES

MODEL	BOAT NAME
Oyster Lightwave 48	Scarlet Oyster
Oyster 49 Pilot House	Blew Beyond
Oyster 53	Crackerjack
Oyster 56	Aliena
Oyster 56	Britican
Oyster 56	El Mundo
Oyster 56	Into The Blue of Lowestoft
Oyster 56	Raya
Oyster 575	Isabel
Oyster 62	Dalliance
Oyster 625	Alpha Eden Island
Oyster 625	Delicia
Oyster 66	Marlene F
Oyster 825	Albatros
Oyster 825	Maegan

ARC+

Oyster 54	Nikitoo II
Oyster 545	Shelena
Oyster 575	Spirit



MANFRED KERSTAN

OYSTER 825 // ALBATROS

Manfred Kerstan is a man with tremendous energy and a love for life. Manfred completed the 2015 ARC aboard his brand new Oyster 825, *Albatros*. He was 6th in Cruising A Class, quite extraordinary for a man who turned 80 in May 2016. Named Mr ARC by the German media, Manfred said, *"It is now my 20th ARC, and I still like it. It's just a lot of fun every year and a great personal experience for me, plus my doctor told me I should go sailing as long as I could to keep me healthy. So I will follow his instructions and go on!"*

Born in Berlin in 1936, Manfred sold his business in 1979 and has been virtually at sea ever since, clocking up over 250,000 nautical miles.

"Sailing gives me freedom, I can choose to stay where I am or I can pull up the anchor and go. I don't really like regattas, but I do like to sail to wonderful places with nice people. I own a house which I like to stay in sometimes but I have no car just a bicycle – I am a sailor and the sea is my home. I have been around for 80 years but I can still do my jobs onboard and I love to go sailing and come to a beautiful bay like this (Nonsuch Bay). My Oyster 825 has a shallow draft compared to other designs and I do not need a commercial crew - I love to sail with the people I meet, so many sailors are really nice people and sometimes that is not the same with a professional crew. I have done 20 ARCs and also other Atlantic crossings and sailed around the world. I never ship it anywhere. As far as my next adventure, I have sailed through the Pacific but far too quickly and I didn't really experience it and Colombia, that is a place I would love to experience more."

WORDS BY LOUAY HABIB

