

## MANCA 2014

### LEG 2 - BENALMADENA, JOSE BANUS, SOTOGRANDE, ESTEPONA

Easter bunnies, chocolates and lots of fun arrived with the international team: Kerstin from Germany, Finn from Switzerland and Rodney from New Zealand. Not unexpectedly, so did some very disturbed weather, kicking up some 2.5 metre waves with the wind forever testing the strength and the resilience of the beautiful Royal Palms surrounding Marina Benalmadena.

So we had to wait a few days before we could set out sailing. No problem! Finn had lots to do including: safety harness fitting, helm practice, Easter egg hunting, raising the courtesy flags, figure of 8 knot instruction, navigation lessons, green parrot spotting, walks on the beach and football practice.



CHECKING THE FIT, CROTCH STRAP AND TETHER

CHECKING THE HELM RESPONSE





FINN AND THE EASTER EGG HUNT ON MANCA

RASING THE SWISS AND GERMAN FLAGS...SORRY KIWI FLAG MISSING



Figure 5 FINN HOISTING THE FLAGS RODNEY PHOTO

GOTTA GET THE FIGURE OF 8 STRAIGHT



CHECKING THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR  
CHART

I THINK ESTEPONA IS SOMEWHERE HERE





BUSY GREEN PARROTS FORTIFY THEIR NESTS

LOOKING FOR BUILDING STICKS



KERSTIN AND FINN - BENALMADENA

The weather finally improves so we set out for Fuengirola shortly to discover that instead of 10 miles off, it was only 5 miles away. So we go to plan "B" and decide to sail on to Jose Banus despite being warned about the very high costs and the place only frequented by the rich and famous. The next stop was a bit far for one day. After a crunch at the fuel dock we were welcomed and settled in for the afternoon. Finn enjoyed jumbo belly landings on the beach while we sipped on a nice cold beer at a beach bar overlooking the sunny Med.

Finn perfecting the belly flop jumbo landing with style. Rodney photo.



Jose Banus would have been 109 Euros; very steep for anywhere in The Med. After a chat in the office about the crunch at the gas dock, the great distance to the only WC etc they graciously gave us a free night. Thank you to the staff at Jose Banus.

Next day we have an easy run to Puerto Duquesa. The wind was picking up on the approach but with it blowing offshore we were able to back stern to the wind and make a semi- controlled landing after a scrape with an anchor line quite near the surface at low tide. The depth at the dock was marginal but OK for Manca's 2.3m draft.



Finn helping with fixing position. Rodney photo.

Next day the fresh westerly is gusting right, left and astern at the dock. Making an escape looked dodgy or quite difficult. We waited trying to time the lulls but the gusts were quite erratic. With a forecast of 10-12K we finally squeeze out during a lull, hoist a small piece of sail and were briskly on our way to Puerto Sotogrande when, very quickly, the wind builds to 32k! Yikes. The small sail is quickly furled, Finn puts on a happy smile and with speeds over 7.5 we are soon at the entrance to the port. A bit of chat on the radio and we are assigned a dock without having to pull into the control tower. This would have had us hard against the dock with 25-30 holding us there all night.

Finn enjoys the sailing! Rodney photo.



Kerstin gets a rare moment to chill out at Sotogrande

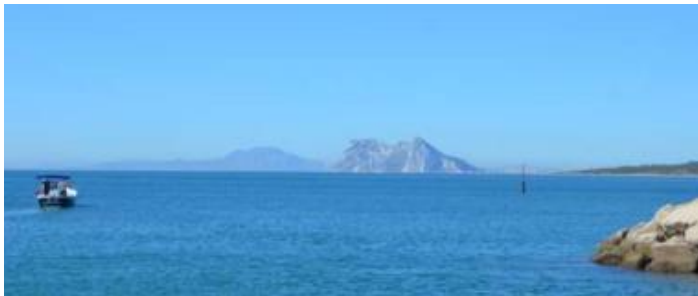
In the evening we found a wonderful café 200m from our dock and to Finn's delight, built into the ceiling there is a model train track extending around the whole restaurant. Yours truly and Finn spend the evening chasing the train around and around, occasionally, narrowly missing waiters with loads of hot food.

Manca at Sotogrande.



Next day at Sotogrande is a lazy one for a stroll along the beach. At the far end of the Eastern beach there is a great family restaurant looking out over the sea. Finn gets a replay of the previous night... more train spotting!

Plan A was to visit Ceuta, the Spanish Enclave on the Moroccan coast just a few miles across the Strait of Gibraltar, but with the dodgy weather we seemed unsure if we could cross and return in time to catch flights, so reluctantly, we headed east again and settled on a short sail back to Puerto Estepona.



Just a few miles west of Sotogrande:  
Morocco and Gibraltar

Rodney gently nudges Manca away from the dock at Sotogrande. Part of the beautiful harbor is behind.



We enjoy a light breeze on the sail to Estepona and by the look of the barometer a high pressure of about 1010 has settled into N. Africa and South Spain. The breeze dies and despite it being siesta a happy mariner comes to greet us and show the way to our dock. Finn has added 68 miles to his log. Not bad for 3 and 1/2!

Rodney, Kerstin and Finn



Estepona is a great destination. It is a busy, working fishing harbor with lots of active boats. All facilities are right at the end of the dock. There are nice beaches either side and after a short walk is the wonderful old village which is very well looked after.



Estepona Light

In my opinion it is time to put an end to some of the bad PR these beach towns suffered from the early days of over development. The east beach at Estepona is groomed, clean with a beautiful promenade; decorated, tree lined with shade screens.



Beautiful promenade Estepona



Traditional wood built Estepona fish boat

Fishers of Estepona land a very large tuna





The Estepona old city has been beautifully restored.



Old Estepona carefully restored and decorated.

Murals beside the Estepona Market



Plaque for Plaza de las Flores

Belladonna in the Plaza de las Flores. There is a great tapas bar in the SW corner and four mature belladonna trees..





Sculpture embrace near the partly restored 16th Century Castle

Cormorant dries her wings



She swims right beside our dock in Estepona.

Leg 2 - It was a delight to sail with Skipper Finn, Kerstin and Rodney on board.

Captain Finn and Manca



Leg 3 might see Manca finally make it to Africa. We shall see how the winds blow.

Terry, Estepona May 4 , 2014