



THE FIRST 1000NM ON TALATA OUR NEEL 47

We are Tania and Lorenzo on the way to sail across oceans and around the world. What were the drivers for our decision to choose a NEEL 47?

- *Living above the waterline*
- *Marriage of the advantages of a monohull and a catamaran*
- *Good speed potential and seaworthiness on all points of sail.*
- *Modern, open-plan, light-flooded design*
- *Accessibility of engine and technical installations.*
- *Handling under sail for a short-handed crew ...just to mention the most important*

On November 2019 the next step in our adventure came true. We moved aboard our NEEL 47 in La Rochelle. There were some adjustments to make and things to complete before we could start our journey. NEEL-TRIMARANS supported this phase very well despite the impatience on our side.

By the end of February the weather forecast was favourable for a Bay of Biscay crossing. We cast off the lines - the adventure could begin!

*The first 1000NM with wind from all directions, forces up to 35 kn and waves of 5-7 m perfectly demonstrated the potential of our cruising trimaran. We weren't really surprised about this good performance as we know the "older sibling" NEEL 45 from several cruises in the Caribbean and an Atlantic crossing in 2014. Consequently, we were certain **we'd found the sailing multihull for our needs with the best marriage between performance and comfort for a longterm cruising couple. And sure, as in every good union, compromise is a key element!***

The features we'd seen in the NEEL 45 were bettered with redesigned interior layout, improvements under sail and further enhancements in handling.

Close-hauled with slight heeling and the windward ama (side hull) in the air, even in heavy seas you feel safe and the boat is easily controlled. The centralised lines and halyards along with short and protected access from the cockpit to the helm contribute to this very ergonomic and secure feeling at all times.

You want to take the helm from time to time? Be prepared for a refined, responsive feedback which will give you a big smile every time you take over from the autopilot. Tacking is easy due to the self-tacking jib and the design of the "banana-style" ama. We did choose the carbon mast which along with weight gains and rigidity provides the added benefit of being able to drop the jib (rolls on a flexible cable) which frees the genoa and simplifies tacks and jibes. Watching the lee-ama cutting effortlessly through the water is pure joy!

Maintenance - a necessary evil on board - is even worse if you need to be a circus artist to get to your main installations. Fortunately, no contortionist abilities are required on board a NEEL. Everything is easily accessible in weather-protected compartments. No excuses then for minimalistic maintenance!

We sailed the first 1000NM with an average of 7.2kn - so there is still a learning curve for us to surpass the magical double digits in speed promised by NEEL. Right now, due to the COVID-19 pandemic we're liveaboards, "parked" in a marina on Portugal's Algarve coast. And it's here that the comfort of our light-flooded "loft at sea" shines, offering the well-being of a tiny home and amazing 320° visibility from our lockdown post. Even on a gloomy, rainy and

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windy day we can enjoy the different zones all the way to the spacious cockpit, always connected yet protected from the elements outside.

What improvements would we wish for? Well, furniture with less sharp edges, more and smartly organised storage, better ergonomics for inner nav station, and even better finishing quality. More trimming possibilities for the mainsail would be desirable. Let's see what NEEL-TRIMARANS's next design will look like.

Thank you NEEL-TRIMARANS for this unique concept - which we can highly recommend putting on your shortlist when evaluating your dream boat.

Tania & Lorenzo

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