

August 6, 2005

Dear Kyle,

First, I heard through the grapevine somewhere in Grenada you recently got married, congratulations!

Second, I have been intending to write you for some time to let you know how happy we are on our Hylas 49 (38) which we have had for three years now. After our kids-it's the joy of our lives. Before we purchased our 49, we had an Island Packet 380, which we sailed in the Caribbean and up and down the east coast. Because of our family size, we needed a larger boat. We spent a year researching and looking for the perfect boat for us. We even interviewed nearly 30 Hylas owners. The decision has proven to be great. Since we left Ft. Lauderdale, Amy and I, with our two small children have sailed about 8,000 miles, mostly up and down the Leeward, Windwards and along the Venezuelan coast. We have been spending about 3 to 6 months a year living aboard and home schooling the kids along the way. During this time, it seems like we have met most of the other Hylas owners – Hylas owners do get around. For example, this June at Village Cay Marina in Tortola, where we stayed before hauling out this year, it looked like a Hylas convention with a 54, two 46's and our 49 tied up. Then there was a couple years ago, when we ran into RYA and Stardust in Curacao and we all sailed together one sunny spring day to Grenada – what fun and what a sight that was - three 49's doing 8+ knots together along the windward side of Grenada! Somebody on land watching us even hailed us on their VHF and asked what kind of boats they were since they all looked so beautiful and graceful sailing along together.

Our boat has performed outstandingly. She is comfortable, fast and reliable. As an example, I was talking to Jerry Wertzbaugher (who also has a 49) in Trinidad a couple years ago about how in the winter, people wait for weather windows due to the frequent high winter winds and seas to make the sail north from Trinidad or up and down the Windwards. Neither of us bothered to wait for the “windows” – the Hylas 49 is quite happy in 30 knots and 3-4 meter seas. Our kids sit in the cockpit and read or sleep in those conditions and I remember those as some of our finest sailing days. The Hylas 49 is fast too. We don't consider ourselves racers by any means, but when we're sailing, we nearly always blow past other cruisers our size and we point better than most. We attribute that to the Sparkman & Stephens design. I admit, it makes me look like a far better sailor than I am! By the way, we have managed to rack up only 600 engine hours – we try to sail all the time (thanks to our fully powered winches).

As far as reliability and maintenance, no issues with QL's workmanship – it's brilliant. There were a few electronic items that had to be ultimately replaced, but those were due to the original manufacturer's defects and not the installation or construction. By the way, Lamplighter's and Ward Marine's work were outstanding. I would add specifically, the rig, steering, engine, wiring, stainless work and fiberglass have had no problems

besides replacing the mast steps early on and an exhaust elbow this year (which is pretty much nothing for a well-used sailboat).

I realize that the level of customization allowed by Hylas makes it more difficult and time consuming for the manufacturer and you, but we appreciate it the longer we have our boat-and so do the other Hylas owners we have met. Your patience and helpfulness during the design and construction is appreciated the longer we own our boat and we plan on owning this boat for many more years, hopefully until we are too old to sail.

Thanks for a great boat Kyle!

Sincerely,
John & Amy Peterson
SV Windhorse