

Nordhavn 57: 'First to finish' in 2009 Ensenada Race



[KATIE JANE on station](#)



[GOLDEN SKYE-RC boat](#)



[RASCAL finish line](#)



[HASSLE-RASCAL finished](#)

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By Jeff Merrill

Nordhavns are respected worldwide for their superior finish, glistening gelcoat, shining stainless steel and lavish wood joinery. And many sailors decide to switch over to a Nordhavn trawler to finish out their on-the-water adventures as the extra work required to operate a sailboat gives way to the convenience and comfort of an enclosed pilothouse with no sails to trim and no traveling through the water heeled over at an uncomfortable angle.

Such is the case of Brian and Suzanne Hull who have successfully campaigned numerous racing sailboats over several decades out of the Coronado Cays Yacht Club, Southwestern Yacht Club and the Cortez Racing Association. A few years back they purchased the Nordhavn 57 *Katie Jane*. (Ta Shing, our building partner in Taiwan, completed 40 of the 57s before the design was retired about two years ago.) The Hulls have stayed active in the sailboat racing scene and, in fact, this year were invited to be the official finish boat for the annual Newport to Ensenada yacht race. Anchored on station off the coast of Ensenada they were the official “working end” of the finish line (allowing me to proclaim them “first to finish!”) For the NOSA (Newport Ocean Sailing Association (www.nosa.org)) race committee, it was a treat being able to record the finish times of the competing sailboats from the luxurious confines of the Nordhavn 57. The first boat to finish was the 60-foot Waterworld Trimaran *Loe Real* with an elapsed time of 8 hours and 46 minutes; the first monohull finished approximately two hours later. The Magnitude 80 broke the monohull record previously set by Roy Disney. The windy race which started on Friday morning saw the final sailboat complete the course by 4:00 pm Saturday – a fantastic showing by all contenders.

Regatta Chairman Jerry Montgomery is a good friend of mine and member of my home yacht club (Alamitos Bay Yacht Club in Long Beach, CA). When he mentioned the need for a

race finish boat had arisen, the Hulls stepped forward and offered up *Katie Jane*. The couple was certainly honored to be able to participate in this capacity, and proud at their own boat's showing.

Brian later reported: "The race officers were not quite used to all of the room and comfort our Nordhavn 57 provided. There were eight race committee people on *Katie Jane* over the weekend and they all commented about this being their best 'finish boat' experience! They were very comfortable, were fed proper meals, were able to finish boats from the pilot house. And with bow and stern anchors out, *Katie Jane* never moved the entire weekend, despite the 30 knot winds we saw. The sailors who crossed through the line waved and seemed to look at us with secret envy as we drank coffee, ate well and relaxed. After all, they had just endured 125.5 miles in the elements and mostly cramped quarters (although a good breeze). I have been in their topsiders many times and know that the thrill of racing sailboats is great sport, but I have to confess it felt good to be on the 'other side' and we really enjoyed supporting the race in this fashion. We may have even planted a seed in the minds of some of the crews that a proper trawler is not a bad way to go. I might add that the most challenging moment of the weekend was preparing bacon and eggs for ten!"

Longtime professional marine photographer Mary Longpre of LONGPRE PHOTOS was kind enough to provide several great shots of *Katie Jane* and the sailboats completing the race. We appreciate her allowing us to post some of the photos here. More images of the race can be viewed at www.LongprePhotos.Smugmug.com.

Despite extraneous factors working against this year's race such as the border drug war, the depressed economy and the Swine Flu, the lower-than-average attended race was as exciting and competitive as any of the past contests – a fact, said Chairman Montgomery, that's a true test to the spirit and longevity of the race.

"Ensenada has always been a great host for this event," said Chairman Montgomery. "It's prominently billed 'the world's largest international yacht race.' We fully expect that participation numbers will be back up next year to where they have been in the past".

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