



Danycan *ou l'offensive des navigateurs français*

by Patrick Lamache

Danycan *Or the challenge of the French yachtsmen*



The author during the prologue to the Coupe des deux Phares in 2017 (© N. Dickès)

During the summer of 2008 in France, still under the influence of the atmosphere of Brest's nautical festivities, the author inspects all the shipyards in the Great West of the country between Cherbourg and Noirmoutier. Already the owner of a 1965 Maraudeur, made of mahogany plywood, his goal is to acquire for renovation another Herbulot design: a Cap Corse or a Cap Horn. That motive should have led him to follow his inspiration but he fell in love with an old, 34-foot hull, on the point of decay, covered with worn canvas, on the banks of the Morlaix River. In addition to her beautiful lines, this Class III RORC designed by Cornu in 1949, with a prestigious past, formed part of the French sailors' challenge against Anglo-Saxon hegemony during the races of the 1950s. The yacht was known to have welcomed on board, during races and cruises, a man who, today, has become a legend of French sailing.

Born in 1966 Patrick Lamache, a modest but passionate sailor, discovered the sea at the same time as his father, a yachtsman in the 1980s. The beginning of the book traces 70 years of *Danycan's* history on the French Atlantic coast and in the Channel but also in the Mediterranean Sea. Her years of glory are placed in the context of the rise of the post war French nautical set. The fate of the yachts that crossed the wake of this 24-foot RORC is also discussed. Of the 300 boats that sailed with *Danycan* between 1952 and 1961, evidence of existence was found for about a third of them.

Throughout the pages, the author focuses on his learning of sailing during the dynamic era sparked by the victory of Tabarly in 1964. However, he also shows a technical side and illustrates the restoration of his yacht carried out between 2008 and 2017. He reports the advice given by some of the great characters of French yachting, and also talks about his research and his experience of the process of classifying a sailing boat as a historic monument.

His contacts include the Ministry of Culture, collaboration with the regional council of Brittany and the general council of Finistère, as well as the city of Crozon. Finally, he recounts his first years of sailing, up to victory in the Plymouth-La Rochelle race in 2018, after the complete restoration of the yacht.

With this book Patrick Lamache, who is a member of the Association of Yachting Historians and of the Yacht Club Classique de La Rochelle, shows his passion, which is shared by a growing community, for the history of yachting in France. But, for him, it is also the opportunity to bring back from obscurity a cruiser-racer that had a notable history, and to testify to her re-birth.

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