

**Andreas Mecheels, IT Consultant from Germany, 45 years old and a yachtsman since his childhood describes his experiences after buying a Malö 37.**

**He takes stock of the first season: “Initially, we had chosen the Malö for emotional reasons, but later on she convinced us by countless technical details that her concept really works perfectly and that the associated shipyard is a reliable partner.”**

I owe my enthusiasm for sailing to my father. Already in my childhood, I sailed with him on his various sailing yachts from Dehler and on a Nauticat 39, firstly on Lake Constance and later, on the North Sea and the Baltic Sea.



**Andreas Mecheels, happy owner of a Malö 37**

Therefore it was quite self-evident and not surprising that my dear wife also discovered her love for sailing already in our younger days – either on my father’s boat in the magnificent Scandinavian archipelago or on our own sporty jollyboats, dangling in the trapez.

Along with our three children, also in love with sailing, we chartered a variety of boats over many years and got to know different types of yachts. While we were chartering, we were always missing a personal relationship to the boats. After all, we consider it essential to know your own boat and its technical features like the back of your hand in order to always feel safe at sea.

For that reason, we decided in our early forties to buy a new boat of our own. At that time already, we fell in love with the Malö yachts at the boatshow in Dusseldorf. Yet, at that stage they still appeared to be ‘unobtainable’ for us, so we opted for a Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 35. From the previous experience with our jolly-boats we liked her well-known, good sailing performance.

But once you have been infected by the ‘Malö virus’, you should not fool yourself. Time and again, we found ourselves admiring the new ‘37’ at the Malö booth when visiting any boatshows.

In the summer of 2006 we arranged for a test sail at the shipyard in Sweden – after all, it was free and you could only learn from the experience. The island Orust is quite easily reachable. Take the plane to Gothenburg and then a rental car for a



**Hanseboot 2006. One and a half years later we met the sample boat in Kalmar**



**Andreas, Johann and Björn on the test sail**



**Unique spirit at the Boatshow “Open Yards“ on Orust**



**Test sail at Kungsviken**

60 minute drive through a delightful landscape. Johann Hilmersson, Sales Manager at Malö, showed us the shipyard and the associated idyllic harbour of Kungsviken. We were especially impressed with the vertical range of manufacture, for instance with the dedication of the carpenters when they produced almost every single wooden part from teakwood trunks themselves.

Many other shipyards of that scale reminded us rather of artist studios, a bit shabby and chaotic. Here at Malö, everything seemed to be proper and well organized – an appropriate environment for building solid yachts of top quality.

For the test sail, the owners of the construction number 1 offered to take us along on their ‘Windöga’.

Good for us, that meant we would get a first-hand experience report. Besides, I was pleased there was only a light breeze of about 5 to 6 knots at the beginning because we were rather spoiled by the good performance in light breezes of our Sun Odyssey and we wanted to avoid a step backwards in this regard.

Up to that moment, our love for the Malö was mainly based on emotional reasons, but this cruise of several hours persuaded us with numerous rational aspects.

We felt the solidity of a Malö already when we went aboard – nothing creaked and the railings gave the impression of stability. My hand on the massive shrouds let me sense the reserves behind this construction.

But would such a heavyweight actually sail well, too? We were quickly satisfied. Even in the light breeze we felt on all courses how agile the boat reacted to our trimming activities. And that's what the pleasure of sailing is all about – to bring out the best in your boat without a ton less of weight.

Also Johann was pleased when we overtook a similar yacht from another well known shipyard from Orust. This seems to be the result of the more modern underbodies and the comparatively large sail area.

We were extremely happy with the functionality of the cockpit. Spoilt by the amount of space on our Jeanneau, we realised only now that the wind had increased as well, how much easier it was in a slightly narrower cockpit to support yourself in all working positions. This is something you would not detect aground at a boatshow.

One of the best features is the unlimited view of the horizon and the trimming strands while sitting behind the steering wheel. The real glass windshield is great – a lot of people buy a television set with the best possible picture quality, but when they are sailing, they look out through the tarnished foil of the sprayhood.

Unlike in a central cockpit yacht, in an aft cockpit it is better to look out underneath the genoa and not to forget - you hear the stern wave gurgle a lot louder. That gets me excited!

The targa-arch is ingenious. Not only because the cockpit is free of sheet and traveller, but also because it is possible within minutes to fold out a real solid bimini with sufficient headroom, from where all halyards and sheetes can be worked easily. My concerns about the statics during hard jibes proved to be entirely ungrounded, by the way.

No matter what you reach for, everything seems to be in the right place, top quality and stable on a Malö. Precisely this uncompromisingly solid construction creates a reassuring feeling, if you rather spend your time sailing than overhauling.

If you get the chance, take the opportunity



**Planning work at the Yard Office**



**Discussion about details on completed boats**



**The Yard Manager Lars Olsen shows us our hull**



**Our rough-finished bulkhead**



**Deck and hull have been screwed and laminated together before interior work**



**Handmade woodwork**

to have a look into the engineering room in an aft cabine on a sample boat – it is a true feast for the eyes because every detail smacks of high-quality. I could, of course, tell you a lot more about our trial sail experience, but you are probably keen to hear about the actual purchase and what the discount was.....

Eventually, it took us until autumn to make the decision to buy a Malö yacht. Could we really afford that? But I remembered from buying our house, that although you do have a bad conscience about spending all that money, money that you don't really have, for quite some time, that feeling fades away rather quickly and you get used to it surprisingly easily.

In the end, it was my dear wife who encouraged me with the motto 'You only live once' or, as we say in Southern Germany 'Life is too short to drink bad wine.'

At the boatshow 'Hanseboot' in Hamburg we signed the deal. The entire boatshow crew congratulated us very cordially with champagne – a very nice gesture. We got the impression that for them as well, every sale is very personal.

No, there wasn't any discount granted – and in hindsight I even like that fact! Not at any time during my co-operation with Malö I felt that they saved money or efforts at my expense – they always did their best. Bargaining, like at a bazaar, would really not be in line with this sort of partnership.

This was the start of literally the best time period – pleasant anticipation. And thanks to the good order situation at Malö, there was plenty of time to enjoy it. It was only two seasons later that the boat would be ready but I would not have wanted to miss out on any of the months of the design and construction period. It is a truly wonderful time, when all the brochures and the few photos that you have collected in the course of time are getting you dreams started.

Besides, that gave us enough time to sell our Jeanneau appropriately, which was lying berthed on Lake Constance at that time.

The team from Malö took an active part in this process - and that free of charge. In fact, it was not one of my adverts in several sailing magazines or relevant boat markets that attracted a potential buyer but an advert on Malö's website.

This turned into a rather nice little anecdote: A Fin and his Swedish wife were driving in their BMW to Lake Constance in order to buy a French boat for the Swedish Lake Vettern from a Volvo driver from Southern Germany so that he, in turn, could pay for his Swedish boat. That's what I call globalisation! Today we are enjoying a very nice friendship with this couple.

We arranged for the detail planning of our Malö to fall on an Open Day on the island of Orust – a boatshow well worth visiting with its swimming boats on display and the opportunity to sail along with somebody.

The chief executive of the shipyard, Lars Olsen, invited us and about one hundred other clients to a fantastic lobster dinner in his quaint old shipyard hall. As we found out later, that was the former building of the dockyard Hallberg Rassy.

Needless to say that we were allowed to partake in a test sail on a Malö 37, which turned into an interesting regatta between two boats almost identical in construction. The optional folding propeller and the Tape Drive Sails on only one of the boats made all the difference.

Johan Hilmersson provided his advice in both a competent and patient manner – for one and a half days. We checked out many options, either by examining boats that were still in construction at the dockyard or by viewing the completed boats at the harbour.

Nothing was too much effort for him, not even a visit at UK Syversen in the close-by Smögen in order to choose an unusual sailing configuration. After we had put together a list of exactly 100 special requests, he was still smiling! A few days later, I received a written proposal for all special requests – and it did not contain a single mistake. The credit for the omitted standard equipment was



**The 12 mm Teak deck – a part of the boat's soul**



**Everything seemed to be proper and well organized – an appropriate environment for building solid yachts of top quality**



**The customer-specific working plan**



**The final assembly workshop**



**The final assembly workshop**



**Often I caress the perfectly hand-made curves of the magnificent woodwork**

absolutely fair. And the fact that we got the extra equipment still at the prices valid on the date of purchase, was self-evident for the Swedish businessmen.

During the construction phase, they were always pleased to see us. That does not go without saying at every shipyard. 'That is the only way to make sure, that everything will be manufactured according to the requests of our clients', Johan explains to us insightfully. I visited the shipyard three times during that time.

They sometimes even waited with certain production steps until I could make a decision on site. Every single time Johan made himself available to me for the entire day. In between my visits at the dockyard he provided me with current photographs by e-mail every Friday.

By the way, not every single minor change during the construction phase caused any costs. The interim bills did not arrive exactly on the value date either – i.e. commercially absolutely acceptable.

On the 17th of March 2007, perfectly on schedule, the long-awaited moment arrived. Our Malö was ready for the take-over in the harbour of Kungsviken. The properly cleaned boat was poised for sailing and impeccable.

With a list of 100 special requests, there must have been something that had gone wrong or had been forgotten? But no, even the most eccentric extras were perfectly realized. Not a matter of course in the event of take-overs:

The boat was actually ready! A sparkling wine from Malö which stated the name of the owner and the construction number on the label was waiting on the cabin table. Also Lars Olsen, the chief executive of the shipyard came aboard to have a glass with us.

Since it is approximately only biweekly that the shipyard consigns a new boat, it is always a beautiful moment for him, too.

We did not take it for granted either that the shipyard crew handed the boat over on their well-deserved weekend, taking good care of us daily and competently. When late on

Saturday night, for instance, the radiator stopped working, Johan and his colleague Robert did not hesitate to come over immediately and clean out our diesel filter. Every other dockyard would have considered this ‘complaint’



Arrival in Ellös after a snow storm

as settled. But the team from Malö diligently emptied our diesel tank the next day, cleaned it and delivered new diesel aboard—to them, security is more important than profitability.

We spent a wonderful sailing holiday that Easter. When our boat, more or less the only one in the harbour, stopped swaying in the morning we knew that the harbour was frozen up again. And of all days, that happened on Easter Sunday, when the new owners of our Jeanneau were coming to see us for a short cruise.

But that was not a problem for Lars, he got his fishing boat ready and, using it as an ice-breaker, cleared the way for us again. After that, he even invited our daughter to his warm home to play with his children. Would every shipyard manager do that for his clients?

I have to admit, that we were being a bit crazy then. From time to time, we felt like being on an expedition to the Antarctica, for example when we were surprised by a snowstorm that put 10 cm of snow on the deck and the windshield while we were approaching the narrow inlet to the Ellös fjord.

With a lot of trust in the reliable technics on board, we finally managed to enter the Ellös fjord almost blindly. By all means, at the bakery we never had to queue in the morning.....



The sparkling wine from Malö with custom-specific label

During our holidays at Pentecost, we baptized our ‘VIRVELVIND af Malö’ together with a sister boat and its very nice owner family. Johan also accepted our invitation and brought his family along. The eleven

of us spent a lovely evening in the cockpit underneath the cosy bimini because St. Petrus only granted us 15 minutes without rain for the launch ceremony, but that was alright. Of course, we had some minor repairs to do after the



Take-over at Easter 2008



Easter Holiday



Easter holiday



The eleven of us spent a lovely evening in the cockpit



The experienced boat builders from Malö incrementally optimize their concepts over several model generations, and therefore offer a perfect sailing yacht not suffering from trend-following

first sailing season and some things needed optimising. At this point, I definitely realised that Malö not only build perfect boats but also offer a unique after sales service. Every concern is taken very seriously and is handled as a matter of course – if needed immediately.

During our first season with more than 1.800 nautical miles from ‘all around Sweden’, we got to know our boat in almost every weather condition. In between the sunny archipelago we enjoyed her good sailing performances in a light breeze and we also learned to appreciate her secure handling in strong wind at rough sea.

The uncompromising quality of the Malö 37 and her perfect layout convinced us in every respect. Even after 100 days aboard, when you think you know your boat by now, it manages to surprise with yet another detail that puts a smile on your face and makes you say ‘the shipyard really thought this through’. In the evenings, I often found myself sitting in the cabin, beaming, caressing the perfectly processed curves of the magnificent woodwork for several minutes.

A Malö is not simply a perfectly functioning boat – it is a masterpiece with a noticeable soul. However, we did not only buy a unique boat, but we also got to know remarkable

people who know how to build

perfect boats and how to treat their clients like friends. For that reason as well, we will spend our next sailing season along the marvelous Swedish west coast in the harbour of Kungsviken.