

SEARIDER



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BOAT NAME: SEARIDER
SKIPPER: JURGEN LEHMANN
CREW: STUART HOPKINS
COUNTRY: GERMANY
BOAT LENGTH: 5.4M
BOAT: AVON SEARIDER 5.4M
ENGINE: YAMAHA 90HP 2 STROKE



When I registered for the Round

Ireland Challenge with my Searider 5.4 I was very excited because I had never been to this part of Europe with my boat on a tidal sea. My trip started from Kiev, in Ukraine, from where I went to Berlin to pick up the boat and then on to Milford Haven. I was delighted with the warm welcome from the teams that were already there!

We left Milford Haven with the low tide and crossed a quite hefty rip tide before heading for Ireland. The east coast of Ireland was quite easy and we made good progress. This changed significantly when we came round the corner to the north coast! The wind freshened up and blew straight into our faces, creating unpleasant head seas.

The leg from Rossmoney to Fenit was very challenging and demanded everything from both teams and boats. Only with the support of Top Hat did the small-boat group manage to arrive, late at night, in Fenit. Here we learned that only a few teams had made it this far.

The next day turned out to be even worse than the previous one. Tornadoes were in the area and the sea conditions demanded full concentration just to helm the boat and stay in the group. After a very hard day at sea, Fungi the dolphin welcomed us to Dingle, where we got stuck for two days due to the weather forecast and warnings from the coastguard.

After enjoying the hospitality of Dingle – a really nice little town – we left the marina with the sunrise. After a fantastic visit of the Skellig Islands, Bull Rock and the Fastnet rock we headed to Crosshaven where we had a warm welcome from the many watching.

The last leg to Kilmore Quay was again delayed due to strong winds. We finally set off after having enjoyed a hearty breakfast and made it once more to the starting point of our trip. Here – a mile out of the port of Kilmore Quay – the entire flotilla met, and in a closed formation we entered the harbour! What a feeling! We really had made it!

I want to express my special thanks to the organisers and all those who supported this event before and/or during the trip, and all the teams for their memorable comradeship during, and even since, this challenge! It was an unforgettable journey and I am definitely coming back!

TOP HAT



THERE REALLY WAS NEVER A DULL MOMENT ON BOARD!



EVER VIGILANT & SKILLFUL SAFETY BOAT, TOP HAT

TOP HAT

BOAT NAME: TOP HAT
SKIPPER: PAUL GLATZEL
CREW: VIV GLATZEL, SAMMY GLATZEL & JAMES
COUNTRY: UK
BOAT LENGTH: 10M
BOAT: BOTNIA TARGA 30 – MOTOR CRUISER
ENGINE: 2 X 260HP VOLVO OUTDRIVES



Having taken part in the Great British RIB Rally in 2010 and completed a circumnavigation of the UK mainland, the opportunity to 'fill in the gap' by circumnavigating Ireland was too good an opportunity to miss. Early on in the planning we agreed that Top Hat (a Botnia Targa 30 with 520hp) would act as a support vessel for the fleet and would happily bring up the rear. With Viv, Sammy and James (Sam's mate) plus Buffa we arrived in Wales after a long overnight passage from Poole, exhausted but raring to go.

While we were a cabin boat and benefited from keeping dry, the event was never going to be easy and the crew took much the same battering as everyone else, with the added responsibility of needing to keep an eye on our small-boat group. James, Sam and Viv did a great job in some challenging conditions keeping them in sight.

Each day Top Hat liaised with the Irish Coastguard to log passages and vessel details and deal with incidents as they occurred. The first incident with Andy on Merlin off Wales was extremely sobering, as was the subsequent EPIRB alert in Mayo and the involvement of the helicopter and lifeboat as they were launched. There really was never a dull moment on board!

Taking Top Hat on the plane through Bull Rock was a moment I shall never forget, as was stopping off the Fastnet rock. What really makes an event such as this, though, is the people, and we have huge respect for Hugo and the team for organising everything the way they did. The crews were all great and we loved running alongside the small-boat fleet. It got a bit smaller as we went, but to come back with so many of the small-boat fleet was magnificent!

Ireland and its people are stunning in its scenery and their generosity. We loved the coastline, the islands and the little bays and inlets. We would love to return with a small trailered RIB to explore closer to shore – at a more leisurely pace. We will be back!

Paul Glatzel, Top Hat