

Headlines

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Nordhavn trawlers Serena Ray (47) and Cloudy Bay (55) help with Zihau SailFest 2011 in Mexico

By Jeff Merrill





We have seen this before where a sailboat race organizer wants to have the most plush and palatial race committee boat (see the 2009 story about *Katie Jane* [First to Finish - Nordhavn 57](#)) and once again Nordhavn is THE trawler of choice. For every cause there is usually a purpose and this report focuses on a wonderful charity event in Mexico that two Nordhavns happened to find themselves literally in the middle of.

For the past 10 years the city of Zihuatanejo and volunteer cruisers have hosted **SailFest**, a celebration of sailors enjoying the cruising lifestyle in wonderful Mexico (www.zihuasailfest.com) which also doubles as a major fundraiser for local disadvantaged children

(www.porlosninos.com).

Sans sails, the crews of *Serena Ray* and *Cloudy Bay* were drafted into prestigious duty as race official boats, anchored as the book ends of the start and finish lines. Both were festooned with dress flags to keep things bright and festive. You will notice in the photos that both Nordies were also “wearing” their at-anchor flopper stoppers – glorified spinnaker poles with lots of authentic sailboat running rigging – line, blocks and tackle – about as close to the joys of trimming sails and heeling to leeward as our heroes would get.

I have corresponded with John and Rosie Olson (aboard the Nordhavn 47 *Serena Ray*) and Henry and Janice Trembecki (aboard the Nordhavn 55 *Cloudy Bay*) who had a blast being anchored with a front row seat to all of the action. John sent me the following details:

“This was the 10th annual SailFest in Zihuatanejo and this year over 30 vessels entered (including the 2 Nordhavns). The week’s cruiser events included a Pursuit Race (February 2) and Sail Parade (February 4). *Serena Ray* and *Cloudy Bay* both volunteered to serve as the Port and Starboard ends of the Start/Finish line for the race. *Serena Ray* served as the race committee vessel for the event. Twenty-five sailboats competed in the Race.”

In addition to the race, and since everyone is ready for a great time and a good cause, the fleet merges into a parade as a conclusion to the “on-the-water” events (which allows the trawlers to participate) and John also informed me,

“Over 30 vessels (including *Serena Ray*) participated in this day-long event. The Zihuatanejo Port Captain leads the parade of boats around Zihuatanejo Bay and then up to Ixtapa. Money is raised for the schools and approximately 150 guests from around the area, each giving a 300 peso donation to SailFest, were welcomed aboard the parade vessels for the event. Guests had a chance to see whales, sea turtles and the beautiful Zihuatanejo coastline from a different perspective.”

Sounds like a great way to hitch a ride and go for a cruise, but as we all know when multiple boats band together in fleets, something is bound to happen and *Serena Ray* was called to the rescue to assist a floundering sailboat (I don’t remember hearing stories of sailboats rescuing

power boats, do you?). John also let me know about this incident, “One of the participating sailboats ran into difficulty during the event which disabled the vessel (no engine and unable to sail). Serena Ray diverted and towed the vessel, a 46-foot steel cutter, back to the fleet anchorage.”

With all of these good deeds and gestures of good will it would seem that the Nordhavn duo and their onboard couples have left a favorable mark on the locals of Z town and the close knit sailing community gathered in paradise.

The estimated amount of funds raised for the local school children this year totaled around \$430,000 pesos (\$38,600 USD) and as you can imagine, that goes a long way in Mexico! If you are interested in making a contribution you can visit “for the children” www.porlosninos.com and learn more about the efforts of wandering sailors and community organizers to help support local children with food, clothing and education.

Sombreros off to the Olsons and Trembeckis for helping out with the event and sending us this report and these photos so we can share them with everyone else. All you sailboat organizers out there should be on the lookout for nomadic Nordhavns; they love to anchor in luxury and help you send your racers out on the course, particularly when they too can participate and especially when it’s for a good cause.



Jeff Merrill is a Nordhavn salesman based in California. Jeff has been with PAE/Nordhavn for over 11 years and has traveled over 10,000 miles on various size Nordhavns. If you have any questions about Nordhavns Jeff would be happy to help out.

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