Seakeeper Gyro equipped Feadship subdues the sea with ease

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Netherlands-based Feadship is no stranger to milestones, having launched over 200 custom luxury vessels worldwide. One of its 1977 builds, the 23m MARIA, recently reached its own landmark, becoming the first Feadship to be fitted with a Seakeeper gyro.

MARIA's current owner retained her original name, which is now an acronym for Memories Are Really Important Assets. "While it respects her past, it also reflects our belief about why we spend time on the water," he said. The recent addition of the Seakeeper M26000 gyro has significantly improved the family's experience aboard.

"My children being able to invite friends who have no sea legs for a long weekend trip is great. Everyone in the family getting a good night sleep while anchored, despite the relentless Pacific swell, is priceless. The anchoring options now seem unlimited," he said. "Any form of stress reduction directly improves family time."

MARIA benefits from impressive stabilization at anchor and underway. In a sea trial in beam seas off Catalina Island, the gyro achieved 92% resonant roll reduction. "This is a lifestyle-changing number in terms of creating a safe and enjoyable environment aboard," said John Kermet, Seakeeper COO. "Our family loved MARIA before adding the Seakeeper—we now love ALL our time on MARIA," said the owner.

West Coast Propeller of Redondo Beach, California, USA, performed the refit, their first gyro install. The company has provided diversified marine services since 1997. "There's no doubt that this type of stabilization is gaining popularity as the number of installations increase and people become more aware of the benefits," said owner Michael Lonnes.
MARIA was previously equipped with a hydraulically actuated fin stabilizer system. "It was great to remove the external appendages. We noticed improvement in the cruising rpm/speed ratio after eliminating fin drag. The engine room benefitted too, since we removed the entire hydraulic system dedicated to the fin stabilizers," said Lonnes.

Feadship itself was key in supporting the engineering for the gyro installation. "We had access to the complete set of original 1977 drawings," said Lonnes. Because of MARIA's steel hull and aluminum superstructure, "Feadship also contributed a finite element model and analysis of the new structural grid. We were very confident that the final installation would remain robust and not introduce excessive stress in the hull."

"With great engineering from Feadship, and careful field fabrication, there's less than 19mm clearance between the Seakeeper frame and the new deck framing. The end results are impressive—we fit the largest Seakeeper unit into the smallest space available," he continued. "The support from Seakeeper was also great. Sales manager Brook Stevens was available to answer all our questions throughout the entire process."

Along with the gyro installation, MARIA's refit included complete hull fairing and repainting; replacement of windows, decking and lighting; and upgrades for the anchor handling system, bow thruster and davit. Lonnes and West Coast Propeller had already been involved with MARIA for two years, from making the original pre-purchase evaluation and delivering her to California, to a previous mechanical and electronics systems upgrade.