

About 7 or 8 days into the project my leg which had been bothering me began to swell up and become a giant Charlie horse. I just kept pushing through the pain because I wasn't going to let it stop us from going sailing. That is, until I described my symptoms to my sister who is an ultrasound technician and her reaction was, get off the phone get to an emergency room, you may have deep vein thrombosis. When she explained that it is a clot that can break loose travel to the heart, lungs or brain and kill me in a minute or two I was no longer complacent. Mick and I got on our bikes and I coasted over to Alban and Veronica's boat and explained the problem. They immediately put me in the back of their car and drove me to the local hospital.

Admissions did not speak English but the word "thrombosis" is Greek and this brought an immediate reaction. Within a few minutes I had 3 or 4 doctors with me examining my leg and asking me questions. How long had I had the problem? How many hours? About 8-10 days I said, this resulted in a general sigh of relief and as one doctor explained, "You usually die in the first few hours to three days, you are 9 days with this problem and you are not dead, this is a good thing". "Hmm, did you go to med school for 8 years so you could tell me being not dead is good?" I asked in jest (well mostly). This did bring about a general laugh. They then showed how to stick me with a needle in the stomach and inject anti-coagulants. One quick demo and then he explained I would have to do this 3 times a day for several days, and then wrote out a prescription. He then made arrangements to have an ultrasound done on me the following day by a doctor outside of the hospital. I was then to return to see him in two or three days. I asked if I needed to be in a hospital since this appeared so serious. He said no it had been more than three days and besides if the clot went to my heart or brain I would die no matter what. Now that was reassuring. I just had to lie in bed (I didn't want to tell him we just had a cockpit) and keep the leg elevated. After a day in the cockpit I couldn't stand it and moved down where I could recline with my leg up and boss Mick around. In exchange he got to see me self-inject myself while he gave a running commentary on how much it must hurt and how if I slipped I would be maimed for life. Such a sweet child.

I should note that after we returned, Mick jumped on his bike, and though he was in a foreign country and did not speak the language, went to find a pharmacy that was open and fill the prescription. I don't know many 14 year olds who would do such a thing without any hesitation.

Alban and Veronica drove me to the ultrasound and hospital again where it was agreed that if it wasn't a blood clot in a vein then it might be a torn muscle with a large hematoma or perhaps both. The full ultrasound by the doctor came to \$98 and all the emergency care for the hospital was \$4.50, that's not a misprint it was 4 dollars and change. Everyone in Greece doesn't drive around in big cars and the roads are pretty bad sometimes, but when someone needs medical care they get it because they need it, not because they happen to be able to afford it.

The big day finally came when we could slap on some bottom paint and move the boat from where it was hidden and put it into the water. This entailed, first of all, liberally painting ourselves with antifouling paint so no barnacles would grow on us, then moving a couple of old abandoned boats. This of course pissed off all the hornets who had taken



Bottom painting isn't a chore for me

up residence in the boats and the air was filled with angry hornets. This delighted the boys who had a competition to see who could swat down the most angry insects without getting stung.



A well color coordinated nephew if not so coordinated himself.



Heart of Gold on the "Dimitri Lift"

At last the boat was back in the water after 3 ½ years on land. This great little boat has sailed from Piraeus to Turkey throughout the Aegean and over to the Ionian. You could almost feel the joy as she went in to the water.

The lift was designed by Dimitri using his skills in engineering when he went to the university to get his degree as an architect. Instead he ended up taking over the boatyard business from his dad when his dad died. It is an ingenious trailer with hydraulics that adjust to almost any boat up to 15 meters, he holds several patents on it and hopes to sell the idea since it is ¼ as costly as a travel lift of the same capacity.

