



Leopoldo

RODRIGUEZ

NOVI PROJEKTI, I TO U HRVATSKOJ
HISTORY CONTINUES IN CROATIA

TEXT & PHOTOS DARKO ŠUPEK

PREDSTAVNIK ČUVENE TALIJANSKE BRODOGRADITELJSKE OBITELJI POSJETIO JE HRVATSKU GDJE JE PRONAŠAO PARTNERE ZA SVOJ NOVI POSLOVNI POTHVAT - TVRTKU BARKE BONOM; S NEPRESUŠNOM STRAŠĆU PREMA NAUTICI, LEOPOLDO RODRIGUEZ SVOJIM NOVIM PROJEKTIMA, OD KOJIH JE PRVI SPRUCE 44, PONOVRNO UNOSI SVJEŽINU NA TRŽIŠTE

THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ONE OF THE IMPORTANT ITALIAN BOAT BUILDING FAMILIES VISITED CROATIA, FINDING PARTNERS FOR THE NEW BUSINESS VENTURE HERE. AT THE SAME TIME NEVER LOSING THE PASSION FOR NAUTICAL BUSINESS LEOPOLDO RODRIGUEZ BRINGS FRESH AIR IN THE MARKET WITH HIS NEW PROJECTS, THE FIRST ONE IS CALLED SPRUCE 44

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ovijest gradnje plovila za razonodu usko je vezana uz talijanska brodogradilišta, a obitelj Rodriguez svojom je dugogodišnjom brodograditeljskom tradicijom također vezana uz nautiku. Njihove komercijalne novogradnje u 50-im i 60-im godinama proslavile su se i na Jadranu, preko talijanskih hidrokrilaca i brzih katamarana za tvrtku SNAV; Carlo Rodriguez bio je jedan od njenih osnivača. To je samo najvidljiviji dio bogatog nasljeđa koje je ta obitelj ostavila u brodograđevnom poslovanju, a u nautičkom biznisu se istakla vlasništvom nad brodogradilištem Baglietto i brendom Morgan. Posjet Leopolda Rodriguezu Hrvatskoj značajna je vijest za domaću brodograditeljsku scenu, posebno s obzirom na njegove nove poslovne pothvate koje će započeti na našem tlu. Stoga je za početak razgovora najlogičnije pitanje bilo:

Zašto ste došli baš u Hrvatsku?

Zbog tvrtke Barke Bonom, zato jer smo suradnju započeli još prije pet godina, ali kako sam u to vrijeme prodao brodogradilište Morgan i kako otada nisam gradio brodove, nismo imali čime tu suradnju nastaviti. Danas, međutim, uskoro istječe sporazum s Morganom o izbjegavanju konkuriranja, a premda ne namjeravam graditi istu vrstu brodova, želim iskoristiti vrijeme kako bih napravio sve pripreme prije nego započnemo posao. Novi su projekti već gotovi, a realizaciju prvoga broda planiramo za ljeto 2012.

Zašto ste odlučili raditi s tvrtkom Barke Bonom, odnosno u Hrvatskoj, kad u Italiji ima toliko iskusnih graditelja i dobre radne snage?

Znam da se po nekim pitanjima u brodogradnji ne valja previše udaljiti od Italije, ali Hrvatska ima bogato kulturno i brodograđevno nasljeđe, u blizini je Italije i zbog nekih stvari mislim da je bolje graditi ovdje. Važno je i poznavati ozbiljne ljude ako želiš započeti s nečim u Hrvatskoj. Prvi će se brod graditi djelomično u Italiji, a djelomično u Hrvatskoj, ali ideja je da ubrzo kompletnu proizvodnju prebacimo u Hrvatsku.

Što ćete graditi? Danas ima mnogo novih plovila, kakvu ideju vi imate?

Uvijek gradim ono što volim, ne razmišljajući pritom o tržištu. Nastojim u svom poslu biti odličan, jer znam da ako ispadne odlično, tržište će moj proizvod prihvatiti. Ne zanimaju me velike brojke, tražim uvijek manju tržišnu nišu - male osebujne brodove u kojima se zadržava dodir s morem. To je moguće samo s brodovima duljine 25-30 metara. Uvijek gradim elegantne brodove, izbalansirane, brze, ali ne i prebrze, one koji mogu dobro ploviti i pri malim brzinama. Novi će brod biti iznimno brz - 70 čvorova maksimalne brzine i brzinom krstarenja od 36 čvorova. Dizajnira ga moj dobar prijatelj John Bannenberg, a imat će vrlo malu potrošnju: 20 litara na sat pri brzini od 30 čvorova! To je dnevni brod duljine 45 stopa, s jednom kabinom i mnogo otvorenog prostora. Osim ovoga broda, čiji su projekti već gotovi, već sam započeo projektirati i onaj od 80 stopa, vrlo elegantan i uzak, maksimalne brzine od 35 čvorova, ali s kojim će se moći ploviti i brzinom od 15 čv. Naime, smatram da je nužno smanjiti deplasman i iskoristiti sve što je moguće da se stvara manje otpora i koristi manja snaga za postizanje brzine. To uključuje i manju brzinu glisiranja. Što je brod na vodenoj liniji duži, manja snaga je potrebna za pogon u režimu deplasmentske plovidbe.

The history of pleasure craft boat building is strongly related to Italian yards, and the Rodriguez family is also related to conventional craft with very long tradition in boating business. Their new builds in the 50's and 60's became very well known in the Adriatic as well through Italian hydrofoils and very fast SNAV catamarans, the company co-founded by Carlo Rodriguez. That is only the most visible part of great legacy in nautical business that the family has left, including ownership of Baglietto yard and Morgan brand. Visit of Leopoldo Rodriguez to Croatia was therefore significant for domestic boat building scene, especially looking at the perspective of his new business ventures that are about to start here. The most logical question for the beginning was why exactly he is in Croatia in the first place?

Because of Barke Bonom, because we have tried to start collaboration long time ago, five years ago, and then because I sold the Morgan yard and since then I didn't build boats we didn't have a way to continue our collaboration. Now after few years I still have non competition agreement with Morgan but that expires soon. I will not build the same type of boats but I want to use this time to make some things before we start. I have some ideas to do something new and we are currently discussing to prepare the things for the future, in 12 months time I will be totally free and I start making new projects.

Why did you decide to work with Barke Bonom in Croatia, there are many good and experienced builders and labour force in Italy?

I know that you can not go far away from Italy for some aspects but at the same time Croatia has good cultural background, very near to Italy and does better then us in some aspects. It is also good to know serious people to start something in Croatia, in the beginning that will be mixture between Italy and Croatia and later once the things are well started it will be something totally set up here.

What will you build, there are many new concepts of the boats today, what is your idea?

My personal idea is that I will build something that I like, first of all I don't care much about the market, it has been what I always done - I do what I like. I try to make it very well and then if I am correct the market will like my product. If I am not good enough, the market will not like what I do. I am not looking for numbers but niche market - first of all I like small boats and I like personal boats, and the ones where you still have contact with sea. This can happen in the lengths until 25-30 meters maximum. It has to be sleek boat, you can be on 20 meter that is already huge. I like all the type of boats that don't take you away from the sea. I have always built balanced boats, fast but not too fast that can also run on the slow speed. I am exaggerating this concept, the first boat will be extremely fast - 70 knots with not much power and the cruising speed over 36 knots. My good friend John Bannenberg designs that boat with very low consumption, the boat will spend 20 litres per hour at 30 knots speed! It will be very sleek 45 footer, open daily boat with one cabin and a lot of open space. Then I have already started the design of 80 footer, always sleek, always narrow, because it is absolutely important to take away weight to use all that is possible to create less wake and to use less power to create speed, obviously



Bruno Bonifačić (Barke Bonom) and Leopoldo Rodriguez entered the new business venture in Croatia with a smile

Danas svi ugrađuju četiri kabine u tu veličinu; mi ćemo ugraditi tri, dajući prednost komforu i prostranosti. U tome će također biti razlika.

Hoće li doći do kakvih promjena u hidrodinamici korita, obzirom na visoke performanse vašeg plovila od 45 stopa?

Koristim dizajn trupa PTP, odnosno korito izrađeno za utrke u vrijeme kad su katamarani počeli pobjeđivati jednotrupce u 'off-shore' utrkama. Jedan je talijanski projektant korita otkrio kako povećati brzinu broda na vrlo inteligentan, a jednostavan način. Umjesto da ga stepenasto ventilira, on to čini uzdužnim izbočenjima (patinas), koja je usavršio tako što ih je značajno povećao i učinio strmijim, te doveo sasvim do krmenog zrcala. Kako se pružaju od pramca do krme, zrak koji dolazi na krmu je sabijen, a brod je, zbog smanjenja otpora gustoga medija, hidrodinamički bolji i pri maloj brzini. Ukupno poboljšanje performansa je oko 16 posto. To će biti mali brod za velike brzine, sa samo dva motora marke Volvo od po 400 KS. Brod uvijek i prije svega treba biti jednostavan.

Ovaj posao nastavlja se na bogatu brodograđevnu tradiciju vaše obitelji?

that affects a lot of things, low planning speed etc. I always think about the length of the boat because the longer the boat is on the water line less power you need to make displacement speed. It will be boat of 35 knots maximum speed but where you can cruise at 15 if you want, with less accommodation. Today everyone is putting four cabins, we will put three privileging the comfort, the space, there are so many boats with many cabins - this will be my variation.

Will there be some changes in the hydrodynamics of the hull considering high performance?

I am utilising the hull design called PTP which is a hull developed for racing when the catamarans have started to overcome mono hulls in off shore races. One Italian hull designer discovered how to improve the speed of the boat in very intelligent way, as often the simple things are most intelligent. Instead of ventilating with steps he ventilates the hull with longitudinal patinas. He has improved those making it quite large and steep taking it inside the wake and also as they are going from bow to stern the air coming to the stern is compressed

Moja obitelj se bavi brodogradnjom od 1887. godine, kad je u Messini posjedovala brodogradilište za popravak ratnih brodova. Nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata, moj je otac počeo graditi hidrokrilce, pa zatim i ratne brodove duljine od 25 do 45 metara. Godine 1980. kupio sam brodogradilište Baglietto, koje je bilo pred bankrotom, a koje se bavilo uglavnom gradnjom brodova za ratnu mornaricu, ali je gradilo i jahte. To sam brodogradilište prodao 1993. godine, nakon čega sam krenuo u proizvodnju svoga prvog Morgana. Bio je to brod u stilu 'fast commutera', duljine 83 stope, a većina ljudi u brodogradilištu mi je govorila da sam lud i da ga nikad neću uspjeti prodati. Naravno da se nisam na to osvrtao, gradio sam ga za sebe, bilo mi je važno da se meni sviđa, ali zanimalo me i kako će tržište reagirati. Uvijek prvo izrađujem prototip za sebe, koristim ga neko vrijeme i tek onda ga prodam. To su bili počeci kasnije vrlo uspješnog brenda Morgan.

U to vrijeme brodovi su postajali sve sportskiji, agresivnog izgleda. Zašto ste se tada dizajnerski vratili korak unatrag?

Vratio sam se unatrag jer mi se takvi agresivni brodovi nisu sviđali. Sad ćete me pitati: 'Ali, sad ipak gradite zamjetno agresivan brod?!' Uvijek gradim klasičan brod koji može biti i brz, jer s brodovima nalik metku izgledate smiješno kad ih vozite polagano.

Brodogradnja je danas izrazito žilav posao. Kakve korake smjerate, a da opet postignete uspjeh?

Ne razmišljam u industrijskim kategorijama. Uspio sam gradeći male količine brodova, jer ne volim biti uključen u velike organizacijske poslove. Ovim se bavim iz strasti, ali ipak moram biti profesionalan, jer u protivnom neće biti dobro odradeno. Želim graditi specijalizirane brodove za manji broj osoba, ali iznimno dobro napravljene. Postoji mnogo drugih načina bavljenja brodogradnjom. Mislim da se industrija motornih plovila treba više ugledati na proizvođače jeditica. Tvrtke poput Bénéteaua su uspješne jer je njihov pristup tržištu racionalniji od većine brodogradilišta koja izrađuju samo motorna plovila. One uzimaju u obzir potrebe čovjeka koji želi biti na moru i koji želi pažljivo ocijeniti u što ulaže svoj novac, pruža li mu brod ono što on od njega traži. Prisutno je i tržište razmetljivosti na kojemu je brod statusni simbol, a to su dva sasvim različita tržišta. Mislim da se vlasnici sve više razumiju u ono što kupuju pa ćeš, ukoliko si kao brodograditelj ozbiljan i profesionalan, na tržištu napredovati. Ne mogu reći da je to najbolji način, ali ako promotrite američke brodove, izrazito su funkcionalni i sve prisutniji na našem tržištu, premda se u nas više pažnje ipak poklanja stilu i dizajnu. Povezanost izgleda i funkcionalnosti je od temeljne važnosti.

Danas i neki poznati projektanti iz drugih branša utječu na dizajn novih brodova?

Mislim da je dobro donositi nove ideje, ali samo ukoliko se one drže ograničenja što ih nameće brod. Jednom sam zamolio vrsnog arhitekta, koji mi je radio na kući, da projektira nešto na brodu i to je ispalo strašno loše. Svaki arhitekt mora imati iskustva s proporcijama broda i mora ga i sam koristiti kako bi razumio što je bitno. Ako su u stanju razumjeti brodski prostor, onda mogu biti dobri, ali nije dovoljno samo reći - znam kako bi ga trebalo nacrtati.

Kakvo razumijevanje očekujete od ljudi u Hrvatskoj?

Važno je imati dobre stručnjake u gradnji, kao i mehaničare, električare, sve one koji su vezani uz dovršenje gradnje. Prvi će se brod dovršiti u Italiji pa dovesti u Hrvatsku, a cilj nam je da montaža i završna obrada svih sljedećih bude izvedena na istovjetan način. Ipak, počnemo s jednostavnim modelom na kojem ćemo lakše moći sve organizirati i tako se pripremiti za nadolazeće veće modele.

Gradite brodove po narudžbi, što to točno znači?

Izvorno, graditi po narudžbi ('custom') znači graditi brod za klijenta neovisno o širini ili duljini, početi od nule. Ono što se danas naziva 'custom' gradnjom znači da klijent može unijeti neke promjene u uobičajeni nacrt ili izbor materijala, a to zapravo nije brod po narudžbi.

and the boat is more efficient, also at the slow speed. The total increase of performance is around 16 percent. It will be small boat with great speed with only two 400 hp Volvo engines with normal stern drives, it has to be simple boat.

This operation continues your rich family heritage in boat building?

It started with my family business, my family is in boat building since 1887, and they used to own the yard for military repairs in Messina. After the second World war, my father started building hydrofoils and then military boats between 25 and 45 meters. In 1980 I bought the Baglietto yard that was almost bankrupted. They were active in military boat business together with us and it was good to have them under control. The pleasure craft was second aspect of the business. I sold the yard in 1993 and I started designing Morgana one year before that with the permission from Baglietto to build it. The boat was in the style of fast commuter, 83 foot big and most of the people in the yard thought that I am crazy and that I will never sell the boat. I didn't care, I've built it for myself, it was important that I like it but I had the idea to sell her. I always build prototypes for myself and use it for a while before I sell it. That was the start of later very successful Morgan brand.

The boats at that time were becoming more sporty, aggressive looking, why did you go backwards?

I went backwards because I didn't like this type of aggressive boats. You are asking me - and now you are building an aggressive boat? I always build the classical look boat that should go fast. Also with this bullet looking boats if you go slowly you look stupid.

The boat building today is very tough business. What will you do to succeed again?

My attitude is not industrial, the same what I managed to do is small amount of boats as I don't want to be involved in very big organization. That is something I do for passion more than as a job but it has to be done professionally, otherwise it wouldn't be successful. My attitude is to build specialized boat for less people but particularly well done. There are many other ways to do boat business, I think that the power boating industry should look sailing boat industry much more. Companies like Bénéteau are doing very well because their approach to the market is much more rational than most of the yards in power boat business. They look at the need of somebody who wants to be on the sea and needs to evaluate very carefully the money he spends, if the boat is giving him what he requires from the boat. There is also show off market where the boat is status symbol and these are two totally different markets. What I think is that the owners are starting to know better what they buy, so if you build in more serious and professional way, you will grow on the market. I can not say that this is the best way, but if you look at the US boats they are very functional and have started to become more present in our market that gives more importance to style and design. The links between look and function is fundamental.

There are some famous non marine designers making impact on the design of the new boats today?

I think that it is fine to bring new ideas, if they follow the constraints of the boat. I asked fantastic architect who did the work on my house to design something on the boat and he did horrible job. Every architect must have experience of the constraints of the boat and must be the utilizer of the boat to understand what is important. If they have ability to understand the boat spaces they can be good, not just to say I know how the boat should be done.

What do you expect from the people in Croatia to understand?

Important point is to have good people in technical aspect. Mechanical, electrical, whatever is related to finishing, like the first boat that should be finished in Italy and brought here the finishing must be the same, at the level that they should be able to reach. We are also starting with a simple boat.

Što mislite o današnjem stanju na tržištu?

Razumijem što se događa, ali smatram da će se tržište za dvije godine oporaviti, jer mislim da je toliko vremena potrebno da nestanu brodovi sa zaliha i brodovi onih koji nisu plaćali dospelje obaveze leasing tvrtkama. Tržište će u budućnosti biti upola manje od današnjeg, jer mnogi koji su mogli platiti samo trećinu broda danas više nisu klijenti, brod će kupiti samo oni koji to zaista mogu platiti.

Kako se brendovi poput vašeg promoviraju na tržištu?

Ako je proizvod namijenjen visoko pozicioniranom dijelu tržišta, s malim volumenom proizvodnje, tada treba naglašavati isključivo kvalitetu proizvoda, identificirajući ju s brendom. U tom slučaju oglašavanje i/ili sajmovi služe samo da se komunicira navedeno, te da se to isto pokaže, kako bi se omogućio direktan kontakt. Takav je bio pristup koji sam imao na tržištu s Morganom, koji je zajedno s promoviranjem kvalitete od strane samih klijenata dao pozitivne rezultate. Želim naglasiti da ću se takvoj aktivnosti posvetiti tek na kraju 2012. kada će se razriješiti i zadnje ugovorne stavke koje imam s Morganom.

Posao s Morganom nije završio sretno?

Nisam mario za loše glasine na tržištu u vrijeme kad sam brend Morgan odlučio prodati Aiconu. Mnogo puta su me nagovarali, ali sam ga pristao prodati tek kad su se oni pozicionirali na burzi i dobili 160 milijuna eura. Mislio sam da će s tim novcem riješiti sve svoje probleme iz prošlosti, ali sam se prevario, a oni se nisu pokazali korektnima.

Mnogo vremena provodite na moru?

Plovim na Morganu 70, posljednjem brodu kojeg sam izgradio; uvijek plovim na svojim brodovima. Zaista uživam u svemu lijepom što se pri tom događa: ronjenju, jedrenju, veslanju. U lipnju i srpnju sam na brodu i plovim prema jugu u potrazi za toplijim vremenom i morem, u kolovozu na Stromboliu, a onda u rujnu opet plovim.

Pamtite li svoje klijente?

Sve i svakog ih pamtim, a većina njih me i danas zove kada nešto treba pri prodaji ili kupnji broda. ■

You build custom, what does that mean?

Custom made means if you can really build the boat for the client regardless of the beam or length, starting from scratch. What is now considered the custom boat means that client can do some changes to usual lay out that is not custom boat.

How do you feel the market today?

I understand what is happening but I think in two years time the market will be OK because I think it will take that time to consume the stock boats and the ones that have not been paid to the leasing companies. The market of the future will be around half of the one that was before because a lot of people that were able to pay just one third of a boat are not clients any more, only the ones that can really buy the boat will buy one.

The operation with Morgan didn't finish in a good way?

I didn't care about the bad rumour on the market when I decided to sell Morgan brand to Aicon, they approached me many times and I agreed to sell only when they went on the stock market getting 160 million euros and I thought that they can settle all the problems from the past with that money. It was a mistake because their attitude was not correct.

You spend a lot of time on the water?

I have the Morgan 70, the last I have built, I always have the boats that I build. I usually sell it and build the new one. I really enjoy on the sea where I dive, go sailing, row - everything must be shiny. I make June and July on the boat and I spend August on Stromboli island in Sicily and then I go on the water again in September. And I cruise quite south in June to reach warmer weather.

Do you remember your clients?

I remember all of them, most of them still call me if they need something to sell or buy the boat. ■

Nova plovila koja će Leopoldo Rodriguez graditi i u Hrvatskoj biti će obilježena njegovim karakterističnim pristupom brodogradnji

The new boats that Leopoldo Rodriguez intends to build in Croatia as well will be marked by his characteristic personal approach

