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Fellow Vanatics

A quick report on Hoganäs 2004.

First the bad news. The en-route weather.

As often happens in light aviation, the good old European weather contrived to dampen enthusiasm (excuse the pun). A real shame because Olle and Kristina Berquist and their band of friendly helpers had put a lot of effort into making the 10th anniversary fly-in something a bit special. But it can't be helped, Olle as much as any of us appreciates that we aviate for fun and that our personal safety and enjoyment are the key things. In the event, all of the intending participants from Spain, France and Italy had to cancel.

However, the fly-in still had its excellent international flavour. Roger and Gill had travelled out in G-HOPY a few days before (all right for these retired folk !). They had been relaxing in the sun and swimming off the beach as we fretted over the UK 'summer weather'. I set off alone in G-RVAN early on Friday morning having spent the obligatory large number of hours over the preceding days studying every scrap of weather information in the hope of finding a 'better forecast' from somewhere. My intention was to fly to Roskilde in Copenhagen to fulfil the schengen requirements then a short hop to Hoganäs. In the event I made intermediate stops at Midden-Zeeland and Rendsburg because I was catching up with the worse weather fastest than I had estimated (but at least I stayed in front of the stuff coming up from behind !). When I finally arrived late afternoon, Karl Martin and Peter Gorman in G-RVIB had landed a short while before. I had heard Andy Philips in G-GRIN working Dutch Mil on the way out but him and Terry elected for a relaxed overnight in Texel, arriving at Hoganäs the following morning. There were Finnish, Danish, Swedish, Dutch and German RV's a in attendance. I think the numbers being about the same as last year.

Saturday was a cloudless sunny day (the only problem was the midges, something unusual at Hoganäs and caused by their prolonged spell of hot weather). Karl and Peter went off on in G-RVIB for a local flight and returned about six hours later having flown around the southern coast of Sweden and out to Orland island for lunch before returning cross-country. Apparently, with the duty free fuel being so cheap they had worked out the more they flew the more they saved. You just cannot fault the logic of the Irish can you !

The Saturday night meal was good, made even better by the ambiance and the opportunity to make new friends over the obligatory snapps and herring.

Olle then held a presentation ceremony when all RV pilots and crew were given commemorative glass tumblers engraved with an RV6 and also 'Hoganäs Calendars' which started at the weekend and go on to next years event. The calendar is made up of photographs taken at previous RV fly-ins and was a nice touch.

Sunday was departure day. Roger, Andy and me filed a joint flight plan and flew in loose formation to Texel, which proved to be 3 hours away with the strong headwinds all the way. After an excellent lunch we set off down the coast, each branching off in different directions at Dunkirk, Roger into France for yet more relaxation, Andy back to his strip near Southampton and me off up towards Luton.

In a nut-shell, not the best en-route weather but a well organised and very enjoyable event.

Regards
David Broom
G-RVAN

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