

Sailing the Wind song to the USVI

**Owner Rudy Jasper, Captain Ed Casazza,
Crew George McGown and Bob Mills**

October 17, 2011

We left Kittery Point Yacht club at 6:30 am this morning with a heavy wind from the West, and impending southwest winds predicted for the afternoon. With the winds coming from the West we did not have any waves broken by land until after we rounded Thatches Island at 10 am at which point we had to put away the jib and reef the main sail. While reefing the main sail we broke the furling line by using the electric winch. After rounding Thatchers because of the impending southwest wind (direction that we are traveling) we decided to head as far west as possible so that we could ease the sails when the wind shifted and be able to still take advantage of the sails.

It was a rough trip across Boston Harbor but as we got close to land near Situate the waves again laid down. Good plan on my part.

Uneventful sail the rest of the day and pulled up to the fuel dock in Sandwich around 6:00 PM where we will spend the night and will hopefully slip out undetected early in the morning.

October 18, 2011

We left Sandwich at 5:30 am. We really wanted to pay for the night but there was no one around so we just left, we may have to send them a bill for cleaning the bird droppings off of the dock.

We had a fairly smooth trip down the canal, at around 9 knots, and still smooth out through buzzards bay, until around 8 am when the tide sifted, and slowed us down quite a bit, as well as throwing us off course. Once we made the turn at Buzzards light we again reached speeds of up to 6 knots. While still motor sailing we made Point Judith Harbor of refuge at around 3pm and anchored for the night We have storms predicted for tomorrow Wednesday, October 19 but we should be able to make it to Port Washington.

The boat is holding up very well with a few, but not serious malfunctions, including a broken main sheet furler, loose dingy davit, and a pin falling out of the bracket to the radar tower.

October 19, 2011

Left Point Judith Harbor of refuge at 6:30 am with the wind behind us and a following sea. Although the current was against us we were still able to motor sail with a short jib at average speed of 8 knots.

Through out the day the wind and sea kept building and the tide eventually changed in our favor and gave us another couple of knots boost, at times averaging 10 knots. We eventually had to put the jib away because the boat did not really sail totally down wind and the waves kept making the jib jibe. The seas built to 8' to 10' and we were glad to finally be in our slip in Port Jefferson, late that afternoon.

Rudy treated George and I to a great super at the restaurant attached to the Marina.

October 21

We left Port Jefferson at 4 am in a heavy southwest breeze (not good for traveling in that direction) with 3ft and 4ft waves that slammed the bow. It was uncomfortable, plus we were only traveling at 2 and 3 knots. So again I traveled towards a cut in the land to try to cut down on the sea way (waves) bringing our speed up to 5 and 6 knots enabling us to reach Hell Gate by around 11 am, it took us quite a while to reach the Liberty Landing Marina as we had to fight the tide coming from the wrong direction. When we landed at Liberty Landing Marina, George and I took the ferry to the statue of liberty. George and I had super on the boat, Rudy went off to visit family.

October 22

Left liberty landing marina around 7:45 and had an uneventful sail along the New Jersey coast

We had not been able to really just sail yet so we put the boat through some sailing maneuvers to see if it could sail. It did not go eight knots and I could tell that the owner was getting a little itchy about getting to Atlantic City, in the dark so we started the engine again. Hunters

Tomorrow will be the first over night sail as we attempt to reach Norfolk by noon on October 24,

October 23

Left Atlantic City around 9:30 am with flat seas, and a little breeze, allowing us to motor sail almost all day. Very uneventful trip through the night on our way to the Chesapeake then to Hampton roads and on to Portsmouth, VA where we anchored at the Hospital Point Anchorage area, after refueling at Oceans Marina, as well as changing the racor filter. As we were loosing some power through the night. The trip through the Chesapeake was exciting as there were a few war ships doing maneuvers. For those following us on the SPOT, apparently they shut off the single as we were around the Chesapeake bridge.

October 24

We reached Norfolk (Portsmouth, VA and anchored for the night after taking care of fuel and Racor at hospital point

October 25

Todays story is that we left Hospital Point around seven in the morning and made our way to Coinjock. I knew that my friend DR Lenny Block would be meeting us there. He has been flying down to meet me each time that I have sailed south the last few years. So Lenny and I arranged a surprise flight over the Outer Banks. To my surprise Lenny let me fly a bit. We stayed in Coinjock for the night and will be leaving for Belhaven early tomorrow. Three guys on a boat is wearing a bit so we needed a diversion.

October 26

The 25th ended as a great day, even though we are getting a little cabin fever I am fine I can just stay on a boat forever I don't mind staying on anchors and eating on the boat when Bob Mills joins us he will be the same he just wants to be on a boat.

I arranged a surprise visit with my friend Lenny Block who flew his plane to Coinjock from his home in Elizabeth Town. The other part of the surprise is that he took us for a tour by plane of the outer banks from Coinjock all the way out to and around the Cape Hatterus light. As I sat in the copilots seat, Lenny let me fly the plane, particularly around Kitty Hawk. When we arrived back to the boat we all sat down to dinner at the Coinjock restaurant. Today the 26 we left Coinjock at day break and sailed across the Abermarle.

The Abermarle was fairly rough but not unbearable. It can become quite treacherous as we have heavy winds over shallow water creating waves that are real close and can be pretty high, today the waves were only 1 and 2 feet high but they created quite a spray over the deck. Crossing the Abermarle and making our way down the Alligator River together with quite a few other boats. Down the Alligator to where it meets the Pongo we anchored for the night, George seems to be getting boated out. It is to be hoped that we will stop in Oriental where he can stretch out his legs. My job is to keep a full crew when we have to get back out to the ocean after Beaufort, moods are fragile and we could loose anyone. I don't want to loose George as his navigation skills will be extremely valuable when we go back out to sea.

October 27

We woke late this morning, it was real quite at our anchorage on the Pongo River for the night. We left around eight and traveled until I think around 12:00 noon to 2:00 PM, I forget, the fact checkers will have to verify this. Rudy arranged to stay at the Oriental Marina which had a spot for one night. We were discussing the impending bad weather from Hurricane Reno and we were wondering where we could hold out for a few days as we thought that there would not be many spots left in Beaufort, plus it would not be very protected. I heard Fred Manley, also from the Newburyport area on the boat Marianna calling another boat and thought that George would like to chit chat with him. I let George know to which he called him on the VHF radio and Fred recommended that we go up to the marina on broad creek The River Dunes Marina. That is where I am now typing this part of the log at 2:00 am cause I can't sleep. Other than having no communication with outside world because I have AT&T this place is flawless with real nice facilities including a swimming pool a hot tub and of course a great restaurant as well. A friend of mine Gerry Murphy met us here and we all had dinner together. Gerry Murphy is an ex coast guard helicopter rescue pilot as well as an off shore sailor who was able to bounce much info off of us as to local knowledge of the area as well as the off shore part of the trip that we would be making.

Gerry almost fell off of his chair when Rudy told him that this 46 ft Hunter was his first boat. It is interesting watching a guy cut his teeth on a boat that is 46ft long as we did the same on much smaller boats.

Sunday, October 29

It is now October 29 and we have been in this marina now for three days and it looks like we may be stuck here till Thursday or Friday. With the wind blowing from the North east against the gulf stream it will be to dangerous to go out on the ocean. It has been very windy and cold I cannot make phone calls except when we get the loaner car and go to town. We do have a lounge to hang out in and the sun is out so it may warm later in the day. Bob Mills has joined the crew so we will be getting used to him being on the boat.

Monday, October 30

The weather reports still does not look all that good and it is cold here. We took the loaner car that the marina supplies, went down town and did a little shopping as well as stopped in at The Bean, a local hang out for an ice cream. We are getting bored and we need a little diversion. We have also been playing with the single side band radio to see if we could get it to work without any luck.

Tuesday, November 1

George, Bob, and I pitched in to rent a car and drove out to Georges winter house in Jasper, North Carolina. While there we went to a barbecue spot The Pick And Pig, as well as took in a little blue grass at a local Jasper, market.

Wednesday, November 2

Back to boat shortly after lunch to another unfavorable weather report holding us up for another week. The wind just won't turn around. I am starting to think that if the weather router does not give us a good window soon I am going to have to talk to Rudy about an alternate destination. Charleston, Bahamas, Florida, somewhere to get this boat moving.

Our timing is starting to put us into the Thanksgiving holiday which won't be easy to get home. Although traveling on Thanksgiving Day may be something that may work.

Sunday, November 4

We borrowed the loaner car for a few hours today and went out and did some more grocery shopping. It looks as though we are going to be stuck here until at least next Tuesday as the weather has turned even worse with a full gale just out side the boat and 30 foot, seas out on the gulf stream. Eat sleep and wait.

Monday, November 7

The weather is looking more promising for a Wednesday departure fro Beaufort, so we will be heading out of the River Dunes sometimes Tuesday, November 8

Tuesday, November 8

We left the comphort, security and now the boredom of River Dunes Marina. It was a great stop but we wore out our welcome as each day we needed to use the loaner car to do some sort of errand. We left Broad creek mid morning 9 or so and arrived in beaufort NC around 2:00pm uneventfull trip. The Beaufort town docks was not as clean as the River Dunes, however there was a little more to do there as well as a lot more freedom to spend time away from each other. I had a great supper of shrimp and grits at Clausens resteraunt and as I was eating Bob Mills joined me there having the shrimp and grit speacial as well as a couple of beers before heading back to the boat.

Wednesday, November 9

Started the morning with breakfast cearel for me I don't know what every one else had. After breakfast Bob, George, and myself took a walk around town a bit till we found CRU coffee wine bar and had some coffee and pastry. Bob and George both were kicked off of the computer apparently not reading the sign saying for office use only. From there we went to the North Carolina visiter center, they sent us up the street a couple of hundred yards to visit the maritime museum which now has a great exhibit of the Queen Annes Revenge which had recently been discovered off of Beaufort inlet. Bob, George and I spent much time there between eating and roaming around town knowing that we will all be stuck very close together after we leave to go back out to sea.

Thursday, November 10

Same old same old. Other than finding another place to buy a cup of coffee as well as some pastry, while doing some business on my lap top. This place was the Bean restaurant above the Beaufort docks office.

During November 10 I went back to the visitors center and had a private tour of my choice of 4 houses as well as the jail.

Friday, November 11

Didn't do much at all today I have been running a little short on my prescription meds and tried to have my doctor fax some to the drug store in town but it never got through.

Rapped it up for the day with a great salmon dinner prepared by George.

Saturday, November 12 Race to the East

The weather has finally turned to our favor, as we have been waiting for the gulf stream to calm down from the northeast winds and the high waves that were created by tropical storm Sean I don't know if it ever turned in to a hurricane or not. Anyway it is November 12 I have just ended my watch at 5:00 PM to George who had just finished cooking a dolphin caught off of the back of the boat by Rudy. We have been traveling at an average speed of six knots since my first watch at 7am, We are sailing beside SlowDancing which is holding a few miles off of our starboard quarter. They are from Colorado and we met the in Broad creek, in fact they sent us over a bowl of Colorado green bean stew. They should be with us for a couple of days but will probably go farther out to sea than us since they are on the way to Martinique

Sunday, November 13 A long and winding road

If anyone had been following us on spot was paying attention it may have looked as though we were a little confused. The wind was light and on the nose, and the waves were square and slowed us down so we kept having to alter course. We still managed to chop off another 120 miles to our favor as we are heading east before we can cut down to the islands

Monday, November 14 free meal from the sea

The weather today is nice , some wind, not to much sea, and we are still motor sailing. If I had not mentioned before, we have not had a minute of silence from the motor since we left Beaufort on Saturday the 12 of November. We had good news though as we checked our fuel tank and refilled. It only took 30 gallons of fuel which was a lot less than we thought that it would take. Ruddy has set some lines out again, may be we will catch another fish. The whole boat was a little stuffy on the 13th so today during my morning watch I opened up a few of the curtains on the dodger. Rudy was a little sea sick on the 13th we all are feeling good today as we are getting accustom to our watches and seem to be getting plenty of sleep. Bob broke his glasses. Just after lunch George took out a package of pork ribs to thaw for supper. Shortly after that they were put back because another fish sacrificed it's life for another of couple of meals. George broiled it up with some bread crumbs and pineapple.

Tuesday, November 15 to close for comfort

Today marks day 30 for George Rudy and I together on the Wind song. Amazingly we seem to be getting along better now than the beginning of the trip. It has been a little hectic since we have been motoring 24 hours a day since November 12. Bob informed us that we have traveled 517 nautical miles since Beaufort. Todays weather report is predicting anywhere from strong, to gale force winds coming from the northeast for late Friday, so tomorrow we will start thinking of putting up the storm sails and make sure our fuel tanks are topped

November 16 break out the tape

We trudge along day after day, night after night at between 5 and 6 knots sometimes at 3knots and some times at 7 but mostly we are still trying to get east to the 65 parraell so that when we do turn towards the USVI's we will have the wind with us hopefully behind us. My morning watch is at 7am as it has been since we left Beaufort inlet. Shortly after my watch the wind started to increase rapidly and the looks of the sky it seemed as though a squall might form. Rudy and Bob helped as we tried to get the main sail in. The sail jammed in the furling track and by the time that we had it free the leech line tore in three large sections. During the next 2 hours we wrestled it out of the track and into the boat where Bob did his magic with two rolls of sail tape and a couple of feet of boo boo tape from the first aid kit. Bob is a tremendous asset when things break and I knew from the beginning that he would eventually be putting a sail together.

Afterward we all took showers together, well not at the same time as it is a very small shower, but together so that Rudy would be able to clean out, and dry the shower room. This was the first time since we left Beaufort inlet that we were able to take showers. We each have our own method of staying clean Rudy and Bob use baby wipes , I use these showers in a bag from REI, at night when I am on my evening watch. George and Warren I think take a quick swim off of the side of the boat a couple of times during the night when no one is around.

November 17 Life at an angle

Last night we were hit by a couple of quick squalls, as well as broadsided by some waves that broke right over the top of the boat. The wind had reached around 28 knots on my watch. We live every moment at an angle as we try to motor sail as far east as we can. If we don't get far enough east we will have a very hard time getting to our destination. The boat is at an angle and bouncy all the time with engine running Bob is finding it hard to sleep in his room. Boat slamming is making Rudy sleep in the easy chairs in the salon. I have to brace myself somehow to stay in bed. We are all not getting that much sleep, and have to catch cat naps when we can through out the day.

We did shut the engine down so that Rudy could check oil and fuel levels. And last time I looked, the sail repair was still holding. We would like to make a more easterly direction than we are but the wind and waves will not let us. There is a storm predicted for late Friday or Saturday with gale force winds between 25 and upwards of 50 knots our weather router is saying that it won't get up as high as the reports that we are receiving off of the single side band radio.

November 18 someday sometime comes

During my morning watch we finally noticed that the wind had sifted enough that we were able to shut the engine down and sail. We had been pinching towards the East as far as we could to make our shot at the Virgin Islands in favorable winds with a longitudinal goal of 65 degrees, to do that we have needed to motor sail since we left Beaufort on Saturday. It is now 5:30 eastern time 6:30 Atlantic time. We had crossed the time zone on November, 15 during supper 1900 Atlantic time. Our watches are still 2 hours on, 6 off, based on standard time. My watches are 7 am to 9am, 3pm to 5pm, and 11:00 PM until 1am. I have been sleeping on the couch, since Bob Mills joined us, and tonight since the boat will be at angle such as to toss me off the couch when it has a chance, I will be doing my sleep time on the easy chair on the low side of the boat.

November 19 and 20

Both of these nights and days were the same, as we had many mini squalls that just kept popping up. Some were very strong others not so. With the repair tape now peeled off of most of the main sail, and most of it put away, we are now sailing with a storm reefed main, as well as a reef in the jib. It has been necessary to have the jib reefed because it is so hard to bring in when we need to. So anyway we were able to sail these two days uneventfully, as most of the trip has been.

Monday November 21

As day broke we could see the mountains of the BVI in the morning haze around 5 am We anchored off of Sandy Kay, where we took a quick swim, and had breakfast before we headed over to Sophers Hole in Tortola, where we would clear customs and do some laundry as well as to just walk on land a bit.

Rudy and I had an interesting laundry trip as not only did the machines cost 2 dollars a load but to keep the ball moving so to say, we had to fill the machines with a water hose assist.

Tuesday, November 22

Today we left Sopers hole just around 10am or so and sailed across the bay to Jost Van Dyke. Rudy and I had a couple of drinks at Foxey's there. I ran out of money as I only planned to get a drink there. I was talking to a kid from Buffalo and as I was going back to the boat he ran out and gave me half of his pulled pork sandwich. It was real good, I wish I had brought my wallet ashore I would have had one of them.

We left Foxey's and Jost Van Dyke some where around 3pm and motored across the bay again over to another part of Tortola Island, Cane Island Bay and had supper and a couple of drinks there, the guys went to a restaurant for supper and music, I listened from the beach, which was fine for me. When we were in Sopher's Hole we took the main sail off of the boat and after doing that the furling rod would bang against the mast all night similar to a person banging on a trash can lid every couple of seconds, so we did not get much sleep that night.

Wednesday, November 23

Rudy was up early in the morning after telling the guys to try to sleep in, as each morning Bob and George are up very early around 5:30 in these parts. He was up trying to do something about the noise in the mast. We ended up hoisting the main halyard mechanism half way up the mast and pulling it back with a line the wrapping a line around the bottom to stop the whole thing from moving. So far it is working very well. From Cane Garden we traveled across Sr Frances Drake Channel over to Normans Island where Rudy, George, and Bob went a shore. While a shore Rudy and Bob went snorkeling and George sat on the beach. I hung out on the boat needing time by myself to just swim and play my guitar a bit. My luck, as soon as I brought my guitar out a motor boat grabbed the mooring beside me and blasted their music. Oh well every one has there own idea of fun. By early evening we were anchored on Peters Island, where Rudy, Bob, and I went in and had dinner and drinks. I had Yellow fin tuna steak which was spectacular, with a couple of Bvc drinks rounding out a great meal. Tomorrow is Thanksgiving I can never guarantee whether I can reach a cell tower so I made my calls today. Bob is going to want to call Dale tomorrow as they have not missed a Thanksgiving in 47 years.

We spent Thanksgiving in Road Town, a seedy little place also the capital of the BVI. Luckily we were out of there early the next morning and on the way to the Baths On Virgin Gorda. From Virgin Gorda we sailed to Trellis Bay, then back to the Bitter End again on Virgin Gorda. From there we went Back to Jost Van Dike where we cleared customs and then over to the USVI spending time in St John, and the Beautiful bays that it had to offer before our final destination of St Thomas where we would make our way home.

The end everyone still awake can go to sleep now.