

11

Tuesday, April 4, 1989

Our small flotilla was programmed to depart Boot Key Marina this A.M. ~~to~~^{on} the first leg of our trip to the Bahamas. Our erstwhile captains and mates; Mort and Estelle of Miss Shugah Too, Dick and Jessie ^{Ray} of the Prime Kate, Bobby Catlin of Even So, and Howard and Robby ^{Wilson} of Ja Ja, congregated on the pier - coffee in hand - at 7:00 A.M. to listen to the long range NOAA report. To do this trip safely and comfortably, we are told to go only if the winds will be out of the S, SE, or SW less than 15 knots for two consecutive days. This will give us the best possible conditions for crossing the Gulf Stream.

Unfortunately it is a "no go" as far as three of the Captains are concerned. High winds are called for 4/4/89 and 4/5/89. does not look too swift either. However, Howard said in spite of everything, he was ready and he was going. He cast off his lines at 8:00 A.M. and at 9:00 A.M. we got a radio message that he was anchored off of Boot Key. Not only were

the winds too great, but hours later when he once again decided to give it a go, he could not get his engine started. Bob Morrow, Dockmaster at Boat Key Marina, had to go out with the work boat and tow Ja Ja back.

All in all, Mort, Dick and Bobby feel justified and vindicated in their decision since it blew like a gun of a gun for almost two days.

The plan now is to wait until the winds clock around to the S± once again. It looks like it may be a "Go" situation Saturday.

Needless to say everyone is disappointed, but safety first. We will use the time to rest up from the rigors of provisioning and bringing all systems up to, we hope, optimum performance.

Saturday, April 8, 1989

After a restless night we were up at 5:30 listening to NOAA. It looks like a great day to begin. Winds out of the N.E. at 10 knots - sunshine predicted and fair winds predicted for tomorrow.

At our 7:00 A.M. Captains meeting we all felt it was a good time to try. Unfortunately Howard and Bobby do not have their repair complete, and they will have to catch up. So our small Flotilla is the Prime Rate and The Even So and the Miss Shugst Jos!

We pulled away from our slip at Boot Key at approximately 7:45 and pulled into Linellas's to top off our fuel tanks. We left Linellas's at 8:45^{A.M.} after having been passed by Dick & Bobby. We'll catch up to both of them somewhere under way.

At approximately East Waterwoman Shoal, we saw our first Dolphins. A good omen! We received goodbyes on the Pici from Billy ^{Citwood} ~~Atkins~~ and Barbara + Ed Hoskins. Via the VHF Radio we had good wishes from Phil + ^{Walter} Wheeler of Schools out and from Cindy + Dave Weinstein of Mama Bear and from Billy Bolling and Bob Morrow ^{waves} frantically to us from the Dock office.

At 10:36 A.M. we passed Prime Rate and hailed them with Anchors Away on the Blow Horn. Shortly before that we had passed East Turtle Shoal.

We passed Even So at 11:18 A.M., just before we were abreast of Tennessee Reef Light.

We arrived at Rodriguez Key and our anchorage at 3:00 P.M. We waited for Bobby Cutler and his staunch vessel, Even So, since he has experience with anchoring at Rodriguez.

In spite of his experience it is very-very shallow and we anchored a good mile off of Rodriguez Key (and then without water) but the tide is rising.

To make the chase more bending - not to mention that anchoring was a bear - Mort began to smell heavy diesel fumes. On checking once again - because we checked the engine room every hour or the hour to find perfect conditions - my Dear Captain found a full ~~pan~~ of Diesel Fuel under the generator. Something unknown was leaking copiously!!!

Mort immediately told me to call Dick and Bobby for assistance. Bobby brought Dick aboard by Dink enroute to picking

(5)

his helpmate on the trip, His Cousin Joe Duck, in spite of being wasted, helped most emotionally and physically to repair what turned out to be a loose connection on the Aeroquist fuel line on the generator. Thank the good Lord!!!! We are nervous but grateful. Please God nothing else wrong today! Joyfully we heard that Jaja would join us by 9:30 P.M. - all repaired. They arrived safely.
Sunday, April 9, 1989

We spent, Thank God!, an uneventful night. It was our first night on anchor with this boat. We awoke at 5:00 to listen to NOAA and make our decision about making the crossing. All conditions looked good. ~~Sunshine~~ Sunshine predicted and Wind out of the S-SE at 10 knots. We pulled up the anchor at 7:05 A.M. and followed Prime Rate and Jaja who got a 45 minute jump on us. Our decision was to follow even so - even though he is slower than we, since we had some desparity in our Loran yesterday.

We entered the Gulf Stream about 10:00^{A.M.} It was about 15 miles off of Malasser Reef. The swells are large and I am tense.