

Sunday, May 16, 1993

Fara Blanco Oceanside to Rodrigues Key

After a restless nights sleep, I awoke at 5:30 to make coffee and get ready for "takeoff" if the weather says "Go". NOAA said Winds North East 10K. Tonight S.E. 10 K seas less than 2 feet. Tomorrow S.E. 10K seas less than 2 feet crossing the Gulf Stream. Please God!!

By 8:15 A.M. all was readied for Engine start. All went well, with a slight hiccup from the Port Engine. There still must be some air in the line.

The genny and the port engine, however, crank superbly since Mort put the new cable and switch on.

At 8:30 A.M. we pulled away from the dock. Ann and Bob Lenk were on the pier to throw off lines, take pictures and wish us well.

At 9:00 A.M. Mort did first engine room check. All was well. By 9:30 we were at our first WPT # 94.

At 10:00 Engine room check Mort started the water maker. All else was well.

It is breezier out here than we expected, but it is otherwise fine. As a matter of fact the breeze is fine too since it is keeping the boat cool. They expect a high in the High 80's today. We have a light cloud cover of light stratus clouds. Waves are less than 1 ft. Apparent breeze out of N.E.

We are traveling alone. No other boats in our company so far. At 11:00 We saw dolphins! At 11:15 they were playing on our Bow.

At 11:40 we were abreast of #44.

You would know, however, that my knee is not cooperating. It was feeling terrific until the day of the "engine" "Battery" etc. I have been back on Naprosyn & Ice for 4 days now. I've got to get it better for the diving and the Raggea.

We had lunch at 12: & 12:30. Me first and then Mort. I ate the chicken from one small thigh and 2 wings (Treehouse Chie.) and Mort ate a few nibbles from one thigh.

We were abreast of #41 at 12:58. At 1:00 P.M. engine room check, all was A.O.K. It is gorgeous out here now. Emerald Water - crystal clear, Sun, and waves less than 1 foot.

At 1:30 we passed Heron & Chickens. We've been doing 8 knots at 1900 RPM's.

Passed #37 at 2:35 P.M.

We were anchored and engines secured at 3:15 P.M. Mort's beloved leatherman broke as we anchored. There are only 4 other boats in the anchorage. Beautiful. We sat on the foredeck and chatted & relaxed until 4:30 when it was Cocktail time. At about 4:00 (pre-cocktail) we used the Cellular phone to call Jim & Carol, a real kick. At 6:00 I made a great salad of Tomato, Vidalia Onion, cucumber, greek olives, Feta cheese + Croutons; and at 7:00 we had one salmon steak grilled (we shared it) All of this on the bow. Fantastic!!! By 8:30 we were in bed; but

5-16-93 Con't

before we had to spray below for mesquitos. The spray wasn't the best thing for Mort's lungs, even though we let the spray settle down before bedding down. The quiet was awesome. In a marina you forget how peaceful anchoring is.

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Rodriguez Key To The Bahamas Bank
11 miles East of Cat Cay

We spent a restless night, this being our first night on Anchor since July of 1992. But it was a pretty and quiet night.

I was up at 4:45. Had coffee & Vitamins, read my book and wrote a letter to J. & C. by 6:00 A.M. when Mort awoke, had coffee & all, and was on the deck to raise the anchor at 7:00 A.M. (The port engine needed to be pumped to start). We were through the reef at 8:00 on the button. It is lumpier than we were led to believe by NOAA, but - so far - not bad.

First engine room check A.O.K.

Already at - at 8:50 A.M. we have seen dolphin, flying fish, and our first Breaching Whale. - It was a small variety but definitely a whale. It breached twice, Exciting.

11:15 We are at the half way mark!

It is 11:30 A.M. and gorgeous out here. The waves have subsided from 2 ft. to less than 1 ft. at most times. The only other boat we've seen since entering the Gulf stream was a large freighter returning from the Bahamas.

At 12:00 we noticed a small dot on the Horizon. Turned out to be a huge freighter. When we came abreast of it (We altered course 20° or 30° so as to not collide) we saw a man jogging the entire

Cont 5-17-93

length of the deck. A funny sight.

We also sighted a large ship pulling "Fat Albert", the DEA's surveillance Balloon, aloft.

At 2:10 P.M. from the Bahamian Coast the Loran began to blink. This means weak signal.

Just sighted a huge "Man-o-war" Jelly fish. It is now 12:45 P.M. Lunch was a thick slice of Salami for each of us.

At 2:20 We saw the lighthouse with the naked eye. We had some difficulty agreeing on where the depth was. In future we do not follow the guide books suggestion that we come to the lighthouse up to 500 yards off the island. We just read the water. I will make a sketch, but the photo in the charts was our best.

By 3:30 we were anchored next to Lois Paw, Jim & Lois, from A.B. Sea Charters in Faro Blues Ocean. The anchorage was horrendous. If our anchor slipped we had our fantail on the rocks, so by 4:30 we pulled up anchor and by 4:45 we were past the shoal on our way toward Cheb. We will anchor for the night on the bank.

This has been exhausting, but the trip across the stream was wonderful!

We are not doing badly though, and we are here in the Bahamas.

Note: We had flashing 000's on our depth sounder almost all the way to Gun Cay Light. Most was sure we had lost our sounder, but thank The Good Lord it is working. The deep water just runs right up to Gun Cay Lighthouse.

5-17-93 Cont.

At 6:00 P.M. we dropped anchor at $25^{\circ}32.33' N$, $79^{\circ}05.52' W$, 11.3 N.M. from Gun Cay Light. It was high tide and there was 12.4' of water.

Mort had some difficulty with the anchor winch. The chain was paying out very fast and the clutch was not tight enough. This resulted in a bent pawl and a broken housing on the part that secures the rod that holds the pawl. Mort has a new pawl, but we will have to get the housing welded somewhere.

Miscellaneous, Mort took the incident very well. This, and I, were truly exhausted from our contortions at the end of this day.

We did 86.6 N.M. today, which will shorten tomorrow's run.

As soon as our engines were secured and charts put away, Mort and I took a scalding shower. (The water in the tanks gets very hot from the engine heat.)

Then we had a light cocktail and used our new-but secret cellular phone to call Carol & Jim.

We truly have Roaming capabilities. We were clear as a bell and only broke up a little at the end of the call. This was with the rabbit antenna, too.

We asked her to call all the children to tell them we are safely across the Gulf Stream.

Dinner was Gourmet Dirty Moore. We were hungry.

We decided to sleep in the salon. We are entirely alone, as far as our eye & our radar can see. We think we may bounce tonight because the back is lumpy.

We were asleep by 8:30 P.M.