



Tiddly Winks

2006 TCYC SAILPAST - May 13, 2006

Sailpast - 1100 HR: The sailpast will take place at 11 am in Sandy Cove, West Vancouver. (Sandy Cove is approximately 1.5 miles east of Pt. Atkinson). Over the years, TCYC has chosen to use this site to represent the fictitious Tiddly cove, made famous by the Norris cartoons. Please remember to leave yourself ample time to get to Sandy Cove as the location is a bit farther than you might realize.



For those of you that are confused, last year Vice-Commodore Brian Ferris stood in for Commodore Penny Bax at Sailpast. This year we will be seeing him again.

The sailpast order is listed on the following page. The sailpast order and instructions will also be posted on the TCYC website. Each group of boats is lead by a Fleet officer's boat. The boat at anchor taking the salute will be Moomba. (For those of you new to the process, the salute consists of casting off the jib sheet and then retrim the sail as you pass by the Commodore's boat.

Anyone unable to attend the Sailpast or Commodore's Reception should send their regrets in writing to:
thecommdore@tiddlycove.bc.ca.

If you are looking for a ride to this event, please contact one of the Fleet Officers and they will assist you with finding a ride.
thecommdore@tiddlycove.bc.ca,
vice-commdore@tiddlycove.bc.ca, rear-commdore@tiddlycove.bc.ca, or
fleet-captain@tiddlycove.bc.ca

Sailpast Race
(Note: Novice Helmsperson required): A short race will take place after the sailpast. The start line will be near Sandy Cove. 'Maka' will be the Race Committee boat. They will provide instructions on the race course once the Sailpast has concluded.



Commodore Brian Ferris saluting you!

As per TCYC Tradition. The helmsperson for this race must be a novice (i.e. someone who has never won a sailing trophy). Skippers are allowed to stick nearby to

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Upcoming Events

- May 13, 2006 SAILPAST, RACE and COMMODORE'S RECEPTION
- June 17, 2005 Passage Island Race
- Thursday Night Race Series June 29 thru August 3, 2006
- August 12, 2006 ENGLISH BAY SCRAMBLE

offer tactical advice and assist with collision avoidance!

Commodore's Reception (14:00 HR):

PARTY TIME!

All TCYC members and their guests are invited to attend the Commodore's Reception. There will be barbeques (bring your own BBO item), salads, snacks, beer, wine, etc. This event will be held at Burrard Civic Marina Lounge (1655 Whyte). To get there, go past the Vancouver Planetarium & Vancouver Archives down to the waterfront then turn right.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Senza	Rhumb Line	Goose n Duck	Woodstock
Mumbles II	Désirée	Aldebaran	Bobcat
Jazz	Ultimatum	Sassy	Makai
Fancy Free	The Mikado	Ceíldh Mara	Prime Interest
Harwar	Arcades Ambo	Lodestar	Dubonnet
Valhalla	Time Away	Galileo	Drifter
Poco Loco Dos	Chimera	EOS III	Diane Patricia
Scot-Free	Urban Well	Zoe	Halfpenny Lane
American Eagle	Broos	Pegasus	Megstar
		The Saltire	Resolute
			Dover
			Kydaka

Bang and Return - April 8, 2006

By Evan Seys

Tim Coughlin of Tiddly Cove Yacht Club sent out a message looking to see if anyone was interested in a "Bang and Return" Race. "Now what would that be" I hear you asking. Me too, I can tell you.

Well the principal is simple really. The boats start all together no matter what handicap, size, speed or crew, and they head out to the first mark on as close to a reach as possible, then other marks are put down to keep the boats zigzagging out towards Point Atkinson. Then, after a suitable time period, the committee boat will sound a horn into the VHF mike on channel 68. At that point, each boat sounds its horn to show others around it that it is time, then you all turn around and head back.

Suddenly the last boat is first!! This was my sort of race! One just has to watch for "sandbaggers" though. That's just not cricket, and there are serious penalties for it.

The start was nigh and I headed for the line amongst a good fleet of some 17 boats, but I was "pigs tail" – that's

"twirly" or "too early" to you. Oh go on, figure it out – and I had to put in a 360 in a hurry. Well, that's an oxymoron if ever there was one. Nothing the *Perihelion* does is done in a hurry, except getting the beer out of the fridge when we finish a race! We got through 90 degrees and the gun went off, and at least we wouldn't get dizzy!. The fleet sailed away to the first mark, which in this case was the QC buoy off Stanley Park, while we were still doing our twirls thing. From there the boats were to go to a placed mark off Jericho and then to the QB and so on.

As soon as the start gun went the wind seemed to die away, and we were left floundering around – last as usual! Then the "bang" went off, and suddenly we were first!!!! But there was no wind. We quickly hoisted the spinnaker as I could see a feint breeze coming from the NW. We managed to get the boat moving almost before anyone else did, so I started to get excited. But then another "wind" shift and the it was on the nose for the way home. Rats! We dropped the spinnaker and shook out the jibs and lumbered towards False Creek on our first tack, having only made it to half way to the first mark in the first place! What a shame, because suddenly all the small hot boats, some of which also had not made the mark, came storming back and pipped us to the post. We came 5th as a result I think, and the wind got up just as we approached the line. Double rats!

Celebrations were at the Stamps Landing Pub, and we all had a really fun day. And yes, I would do it again.



Evan Seys and his Formosa 51 "Perihelion"

Tim Wants You



Our Fleet Captain, Tim Coughlin is looking for volunteers to help with committee work onboard "Makai" for TCYC races.

The Fleet Captain position is notorious as a thankless position so lets thank Tim by volunteering one of our crew to give him a hand (Peter is going June 17, sorry Tim!).

I have it from a good source that you will have fun too!

Racing Schedule

- **Passage Island, Saturday June 17, 2006**
Featuring a single-handed division.
- **TCYC Thursday Night Race Series**
Thursday June 29, 2006 and runs until Thursday Aug 3, 2006
- **English Bay Scramble August 12, 2006**
- **Last Chance Regatta, October 7, 2006**

Race Results

BANG AND RETURN RESULTS		
	Boat	Time
1	DRIFTER	1:40:14
2	ALDEBARAN	1:40:45
3	DOVER	1:42:14
4	SWAN	1:43:35
5	PARAHELION	1:45:34
6	RHUMBLINE	1:48:08
7	RITZ	1:48:57
8	ZOE	1:52:42
9	MOOMBA	1:53:30
10	LODESTAR	1:53:44
11	MUMBLES II	1:54:44
12	PEGASUS	1:55:05
13	THOREEN	1:58:34
14	SENZA	2:07:17
15	WOODSTOCK	2:08:08
16	LIGHT RAPID TRANSIT	2:08:47

I can't believe I missed it!

By Julie Kadar

Being a new member of TCYC, I was very enthused to get out and do ALL the races



Zoeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee



"Mumbles 11"

.....but along came New Year's Day and between the sore head and the rainy day, bed is where I stayed. In March we found a crack in the mast that precluded racing until it was properly fixed. For a boat that does any regatta within driving distance, it was hard to miss all those days of racing this year. However, it wasn't until today when I was looking at the photo's on the TCYC website that I fully realized just what I missed. Check out these pics.....thanks to those of you who had them posted on the website (Tim?).



"Woodstock" planing



"Lodestar"



A reefed start!

Race Results con't

SPRING TUNE-UP RESULTS									
Div 1									
				Race 1			Race 2		
	Boat	Class	Skipper	Elapsed	Corrected	Pos.	Elapsed	Corrected	Pos.
1	HAKUNA MATATA	Beneteau First 310		1:05:25	1:05:13	3	1:07:58	1:07:45	1
2	WOODSTOCK	Martin 242	Achilles Dolhaine	0:55:49	0:52:44	1	DNS	-	4
3	KARMA	Tuulos 27	Ian Lloyd	1:04:29	1:03:19	2	DNS	-	4
Div 2									
				Race 1			Race 2		
	Boat	Class	Skipper	Elapsed	Corrected	Pos.	Elapsed	Corrected	Pos.
1	ZOE	Thunderbird 25	Rick Fowler	1:01:34	0:55:16	1	1:08:08	1:01:10	3
2	PEGASUS	C&C 27	Gerry Furseth	1:06:52	0:59:57	5	1:02:04	0:55:39	1
3	MYSTIC	C&C 27	Richard Stewart	1:06:05	0:58:31	4	1:05:45	0:58:14	2
4	DRIFTER	Goman Express 20	Niko Lourotos	1:07:42	0:55:46	2	DNF	-	5
5	MUMBLES II	Sun 27	Trevor Jenkins	1:07:03	0:58:30	3	DNS	-	6

Montague Lamb Bake - May Long Weekend

This year, Tiddly Cove member's have been invited to join Vancouver Rowing Club for some of their cruises. The upcoming Montague Lamb Bake is one of the most popular VRC cruises and it is hosted in one of the large picnic sites in Montague Harbour on Galiano Island. A lamb and a pig are roasted on a spit on site and all guests are welcome to join in on the hand cranking of the rotisserie that starts early Sunday morning. Beer, wine and grub are included. For those of you that don't know Montague

harbour, it has a beach out of the South Pacific, great tide pools and wonderful walking trails.....and the Hummingbird pub to. For more information, please contact Julie Kadar @ jfkadar@shaw.ca



A Tribute to Single Handing

Next month I would like to do something different, but I will need all of your help. I would like to dedicate next months issue to single handing. In order to do this I will need all of your help in the way of contributions. For my part, I promise to write an article on my delivery of Goose n Duck from Seattle to Vancouver which included a collision with a very expensive power boat in the large lock on Lake Union.

I would like to get this issue out in two weeks time so please.....put pen to paper, fingers to keyboard and share a story with us. It can be fun, informative or in my case, just very sad! Have you designed some unique steering method for your boat when you are alone, then share it with us all.

All submissions can be emailed to me at jfkadar@shaw.ca

Thanks all, and I look forward to your submissions.

RNSA Single Handed Race 2006



33rd ANNUAL SINGLE HANDED RACE Saturday and Sunday, June 3rd and 4th, 2006

This 2-day fun race weekend across the Strait of Georgia is always popular with local racers, as well as with everyday sailors who like to challenge their skills and seamanship sailing single-handed across the Strait.

Saturday, from the Point Grey Bell Buoy via Cape Roger Curtis to Snake Island, and race back on Sunday.

The Nanaimo Yacht Club provides the venue for overnight moorage, and a social evening with buffet dinner, interim results and door prizes.

Many magnificent trophies to be awarded, including a Team Trophy, Novice Trophy (first timers), Old Salt Trophy (over 65), and others.

Entry fee is \$45.00 including moorage. Dinner is \$22.00 per person. Guests are welcome. Sponsor another boat that has not participated in the past two years and receive a \$10 discount on your entry fee.

Late registration by 7 pm Friday, June 2nd

It's a fun and challenging weekend – give it a try !

This RNSA event is hosted by [False Creek Yacht Club](#) and co-sponsored by Eagle Harbour Yacht Club and Nanaimo Yacht Club

Contact FCYC at 604 682 3292, check the website www.fcyc.com, RNSA Secretary, Janet Stamper jjstamper@shaw.ca, or

Club Race Officer, Court Touwslager racing@fcyc.com



false creek yacht club

A Sea Story

By Peter Lagergren

At the last TCYC meeting Jack Yamaguchi, myself and Ian Lloyd were standing around desperately clutching drinks and chatting about, of all things, sailboat racing.

Ian allowed as how he was going to have to rig up a spare rudder for Fancy Free in anticipation of the 'Round Patos Island Race'. Jack and I simultaneously croaked "It won't work!" Now, Jack has been around as long as I have, so he has obviously been privy to the same sort of Rube Goldberg steering inventions as I have. The fact that two guys with such geographically different sailing resumes could be saying the exact same thing should tell you something. Like, "it won't ever, never, no way in hell, work."

The standard thought is to rig a floorboard or a cabin table top to the spinnaker pole, lash it to the stern somehow and use it like the rudder sweep on a Greek trireme. Once again - it won't work.....and therein lies the source of this sea story.

The setting was some (don't ask) years ago in Galveston, Texas. We were a merry band of somewhat ruthless racers getting ready to do the Galveston to Progresso (Mexico) Race on a 47 foot aluminum Scott Kauffman two-tonner named Elusive. Visualize a 9/5ths scale Goose n Duck and you get the idea. She was a wonderfully fast boat and has won the Texas Ocean Racing Championship several times against some really hot competition. The only downside to her was that sitting on an aluminum deck for two to four days would put your bum into permanent disability. Driving the darling was also an interesting mix. Upwind you drove the 8 foot diameter wheel with two fingers as she sliced her way through waves and behaved like a 12-meter with power steering. Downwind, she became this maddened thing that wanted to swap ends as she went over the top of each wave. I like to use the simile of a Frisbee gone mad – it is colorful and quite accurate. The crew were all seasoned off-shore racers, most of whom were successful skippers on their own. We had all raced with and against each other for years so the whole offshore thing was some-

what akin to intramural football, with lots of good-natured competition between watches and some fairly serious post-race parties (Animal House comes to mind). We were fast, and arrogant enough to know it.

Getting a 47-footer ready to leave on a 600 mile race is a lot like moving a family of four. Trucks and vans keep showing up at the dock and off-loading sails, food, water, and personal gear for what seems to be a whole day. Everybody turns to and crams all of this stuff below into the cavernous, dark, hollow interior. The only things visible below are a fine assortment of aluminum ribs reminiscent of a 747 without an inside skin, some hammocks for the diseased and wounded casualties, the navigators palatial digs, a marine head sitting proudly and quite publicly on display in the bilge, the cover over the auxiliary diesel and tons of mesh bags bolted to the ribs to hold all the supplies and gear. And about 4 tons of various sails neatly stacked in rows like piglets suckling up to the floorboards. Obviously, there was little incentive for anyone other than the navigator to go below. Hey, it's a sprint race, sleep on the rail like the rest of us. Besides, this is the tropics and going below to a heady atmosphere of diesel, mildew, puke and 100 degree (F that is) heat is not high on anyone's list of to-dos.

"Downwind, she became this maddened thing that wanted to swap ends as she went over the top of each wave. I like to use the simile of a Frisbee gone mad – it is colorful and quite accurate."

We set the strategy for the race on the likely changes coming in the weather. We were in a bit of a blow while we were on-shore and the forecast was for winds just left of the nose at 25-35 knots and seas 10 to 12 feet. Great, just wonderful, a 600 mile beat into the teeth of a sloppy storm system crossing from the Caribbean to the Gulf of Mexico. However, the upside was that the weather pattern would do more to discommode our competitors than anything we could ever do to them, so that was a real plus. We decided to hold up to weather of the rhumb line as long as possible and then count on the wind either backing to let us get into Progresso without having to tack, or lifting and letting us crack off and do a power

A Sea Story cont'

reach for the last couple of hundred miles to the finish. Head for Cuba and turn right is the condensed version.

Day One:

We start. So does everyone else, unfortunately. The Race Committee has decided that we will have the official start at the inner buoy for the entrance to Galveston Bay. We will then race a couple of miles to the sea buoy at the south end of the shipping channel, turn right 90 degrees, race down the beach for five miles in front of all the hotels in support of some municipal beach-party tourist event. We will then turn 90 degrees left at a temporary pin about a quarter mile off the beach and make the next 600 mile leg. Aren't we the most supportive of our local hosts? No big deal, just a quick jaunt down the beach so everyone can see the nice boats and their pretty sails up close. You won't even have to leave the balcony of your hotel room to watch the show. Which is a good thing, because it is blowing like stink, the surf is high enough to keep everyone out of the water and off the beach. I imagine walking on the beach was akin to being sandblasted. The only real spectators visible were a group of people huddling on the end of the pier that contained a casino right next to the turning mark. They got a great show – it was utter chaos with about two dozen big boats surfing down the beachfront with their chicken kites up occasionally broaching as the beam-on breakers slapped us around. Take-downs for the kites were really spectacular in some cases. We did it just right so there wasn't any drama for us, that is if you ignore the terror of zig-zagging down the beach in the third row of breakers with the boat trying to make a departure from controlled flight into the beach and the other boats all in equally scary shape right next to us, no more in control than we were. Can you visualize a J-24 regatta mark rounding, except in a gale and breaking seas? Turning left and going into the teeth of the storm on a port tack beat seemed such a relief. We weren't trying to stay in control and off a lee shore anymore, we were on our way to the finish on our best point of sail and in a nice blow. Hand up the PB&J's, we're on our way – last hot meal was this morning ashore, next stop - Old Mexico.

Night One:

The wind is continuing to build. We have the medium #4 up and we've taken a reef. The 6-man watches are alternating every two hours. We have one guy working the coffee grinder primary winch drive, one guy trimming the jib, one guy grinding the traveler winch, one guy grinding the mainsheet winch and one guy grinding the running backstays and a driver. All are in constant motion. This is turning into a real race – we are working the boat to weather in really sloppy seas at something like 10 knots. A couple of days like this and we'll be there in time for happy hour. Only downside is that if you catch a wave wrong the boat slams into it like hitting a brick wall. No hot drinks for the dog watch – it is blowing too hard and the gimbaled propane cooker is declared unsafe at any speed. Water and PB&J's. Yum.

No hot drinks for the dog watch – it is blowing too hard and the gimbaled propane cooker is declared unsafe at any speed.

Day Two:

Daylight on a wild looking sea-scape. Spume being blown off the top of waves and the occasional really BIG wave coming in a little off-axis from who knows where. It would look like some survivalist thing, except it is cloudy, which means no sunburn today, the temperature is around 80 degrees which is a welcome change from tropical miasma and as we get into deeper and deeper water(1,000' plus) the period of the waves is lengthening and the ride is getting better, even though the seas are building. At the noon position report the navigator pokes his head up and announces we are the lead boat by miles and miles. We all decide we like ocean racing, after all.

Night Two:

Still blowing strong. We do a couple of sail changes, from one flavor of #4 to another. It was the other watch captain's idea. My watch curses him roundly. He deserves it. I'll get him back, somehow.

Day Three:

Glory be, the sun is breaking out from the clouds at dawn. It is a fine day on the ocean – the wind is still screaming in the rigging but the onset of sunlight makes the whole day

A Sea Story cont'

feel better and everyone is touched with a completely irrational sense of well-being and optimism. The navigator pokes up and announces we will make the finish before nightfall and we are extending our lead. We congratulate ourselves on being so very cool. We are becoming legends in our own minds. The only downside, we are out of PB&J's. Still can't heat food because no one is brave enough to repair the cooker and also give it a test run. Hunger will set in shortly, which we will appease at the margarita stand right after the finish.

I am driving the boat really well this morning, catching the waves and the gusts just right to keep us at a full-tilt boogie. As we climb the top of one really big breaking wave I move the helm to the right a couple of inches to accelerate up the front slope. The feel of the rudder suddenly goes away, the nose swings left into the wave, which crashes over the bow and sweeps down the deck into the cockpit as we go into irons. I look over the stern and sea the rudder fin floating away on the back of a north-bound wave. I have this sinking feeling that things aren't going to go well in our future.

This is the fourth rudder I have lost off-shore and everyone of them has been fodder for an article and I know that no good whatsoever will come of this. We are 100 miles from an upwind shore that there is no way in hell we are going to be able to get to, we are 400 miles from a leeward shore which we can get to, sometime, long after we all die of dehydration, sunburn and exposure. We are not on any shipping lanes and there is no safety boat available except one from the Mexican Navy which may or may not be able to find us. The navigator is busily contacting everyone in the civilized world on the single side-band radio to explain our predicament and shop for possible options. There are none.

I guess this means we have to rig the emergency rudder and just sail our way to our destination, just like the Off-shore Racing Council safety rules intended.

We stabilize the boat by backwinding the jib which kind of heaves us to, even though we are still making a couple of knots forward speed in various directions as we get

tossed around by the waves. We quickly get mobilized and rig one of the pre-drilled floorboards to the spare spinnaker pole and clamp everything together. The safety inspection we have after every race has gotten us to the point of almost being blasé about our ability to quickly and competently rig the spare rudder. Which always happens in calm water at the dock, I might add. We hoist the contraption into place on the transom and lash it down just like we have done so many times before. Once it is lashed in place, we put one guy on each side of it to steer – as they get ready to go they look like the galley slaves hanging on to an oar in a Kirk Douglas pot-boiler. We take the jib around to the leeward side and the boat starts to accelerate very nicely. As soon as we get way on, she tries to broach going up a wave so the guys on the rudder push/pull the rudder to counteract the slide to the left. The truly large, heavy and substantial spinnaker pole folds up in half like a piece of limp spaghetti. The steersmen had an 8 to 1 leverage on the sweep and a few hundred pounds of force from them against 25,000 pounds of boat is enough to do in the pole.

We haul the wreckage on board and lash it all up again with the primary spinnaker pole. This time we add all kinds of reinforcing materials to the sweep to keep it from folding up. Sure enough, it is now strong enough – when a wave hits the boat and swings the stern around the pole doesn't fold up, instead it flings the steersmen to the side as if they weren't there. There is no way we can get enough meat on this thing to make an effective steering mechanism. It simply won't work. I wish we had gotten some inkling of this back in the innocent times we spent screwing around with safety gear thinking we were doing something useful. Time consuming for sure, but certainly not useful.

This is the fourth rudder I have lost off-shore and everyone of them has been fodder for an article and I know that no good whatsoever will come of this.

It doesn't take genius to figure out that we have to come up with a better idea. We really do need to figure this out, because in the tropics the countdown timer to the end is tied to the water supply. Run out of fresh water one day, and you are pretty much guaranteed to start losing people two days later. Which is horrible, unless it is yourself, in

A Sea Story cont'

which case it is the worst possible tragedy. When it is hot and the sun is shining you lose water as sweat at an alarming rate and there really is no way to slow down the process. Your body is a glass half full and it has developed a slow and steady leak. Getting to shore has just become a matter of life or death. We are working our way through the problem in a deliberate fashion, and with two of the crew being physicians we can be pretty sure that we can teeter along on the edge of dehydration for the maximum possible time. We are days away from either shore or rescue so we are preparing for the worst.

Some time in the morning the second place boat, a Santa Cruz 50 passes us a mile to weather. The navigator keeps calling them on the radio and we expend almost all of our parachute flares firing them towards the Cruz. We are hull down from them, they don't have a full time radio watch and they blithely go sailing to the horizon, never having a clue that we were there. Our spirits sink with them as they sink over the horizon.

The navigator is in contact with the USCG in Miami and they scramble a C-130 that arrives overhead in the afternoon. Nice to see those guys and great to talk to them but there isn't doodly squat they can do for us. They could drop us life rafts - which we already have so we don't need more; they could drop us water, food and medicines - except we have to be able to maneuver to pick them up so that isn't on the table anymore. Basically this high-tech rescue machine circling overhead is just a comfortable set of bleachers for the guys on board to watch our drama from.

Meanwhile we are going through permutations of steerage and nothing, and I mean nothing, is working. Everything we try is overwhelmed by the seas and the sheer effort required to alter the course of this really big, over-powered surfboard we are on. We have some limited success trimming to boat to a neutral 'helm' and letting it sail itself until some wave slaps us and the boat spins

Basically this high-tech rescue machine circling overhead is just a comfortable set of bleachers for the guys on board to watch our drama from.

around one way or the other and we either tack or jibe into irons. It is very colorful but it certainly isn't effective. It is also very wet and very dangerous.

And then, lo and behold, I have one of the few really good ideas I think I have ever had. We rigged a Phoenician rudder and we threw it over the side and sure enough we were now in the boat business again. What's a Phoenician rudder you ask? Well, it is a drogue or drag producing device such as a sea anchor, or a spinnaker bag with the bottom cut out and warps stuffed inside streamed astern from each side of the maximum beam of the boat and led to the primary winches. It all trails behind in the wake like a big inverted 'V'. When you grind it in on one side, the drogue moves to that side of the wake and exerts a turning force on the hull. Ease on one side and grind on the other and you can actually tack. Eureka, we can actually go as high as a beam reach. We try to establish a course for Progresso and find we can tack the boat going over the top of waves. Sometimes it takes 5 minutes to catch the waves just right and be able to spin around on the top of one, clutch in the diesel at full throttle, backwind the jib and bear away on the new tack. We are not making any real VMG to Progresso, but we are only 200 miles east of Veracruz so we can reach back west to the east shore of Mexico and get there within 24 hours of running out of water. Likely enough, everyone will make it. We'll take to the life rafts just before we ground on the beach. In the likely event that we land on an uninhabited part of the shore we will use the few gallons of fresh water packed in the rafts to enable us to hike to either help or fresh water. At least it's a plan.

Night three:

Still blowing, gorgeous stars and phosphorescence in the wake. If it wasn't such a dreary event bordering on the dire this would be interesting. Everyone is hungry as hell, so we figure out that if we run the diesel like crazy the exhaust manifold gets hot enough to heat up Dinty Moore stew in the can. I think that now qualifies as comfort food. We are making 7 – 12 knots to our intended landfall. With any luck we'll be there in two days.

Day Four:

A Sea Story cont'

At dawn, a tanker over the horizon calls us on the radio after having heard one of our numerous Mayday's. We decline their offer of a tow. We can't stop or maneuver so there is no hope we can ever get lashed up to them. When we were on bare poles yesterday trying to get things sorted out we were surfing downwave at 6 to 8 knots with no steerage. What an odd thing – we have a minimum attainable velocity that is too high. Bet that never happens again. The upshot is that our slowest speed is higher than the top speed of the tanker's launch. We sit and sweat and wait. There is nothing to do other than to take our turns on the "tiller", trimming the Phoenician rudder to try and maintain some semblance of a course to the west. We trail a spinner over the transom to see if any fish take the hint and become our next meal. Sure enough we get a bite and haul in a 15 pound tuna. I never knew they were iridescent while they were alive. We bring him on deck, gut him and cube him and drop the pieces in a plastic bucket and crunch up the fresh limes we were saving for our victory celebration margarita's. Best ceviche I ever had. The fish had been dead three minutes when he made the alimentary trek.

Night Four:

At nightfall another USCG plane shows up and tells us that they have been in contact with the Mexican Navy minesweeper that is supposed to be shadowing the fleet as the safety boat. The USCG has gotten the Mexican Navy to try and hook up with us for a tow. Apparently there are issues with this for some reason that is totally incomprehensible to us. We can hear the frustration in voices of the search coordinators on the C-130, who are well aware that we are in deep trouble.

Day Five:

Late this morning our covering C-130 shows up again. They fly back north over the horizon to find the Mexican minesweeper. They return a half hour later. The minesweeper could only make 8 knots so last night they had abandoned the attempt to catch us up and had returned to the rhumb line course to shadow the fleet. The USCG crew is beside themselves. Had we, or they, been told of this last night we could have heaved to and at least slowed down enough for a rate of closure. The C-130 flies

back to the minesweeper and pleads with and cajoles them into resuming the rescue effort. They C-130 flies back to us and reports the good news. We heave to. It is hot and sunny and the wind is blowing strongly, the ride is lumpy but at least we now have a plan. This is a no-going-back step. We are going to run out of water while we are still well to sea and not making any progress toward salvation. We are now committed to the Mexican Navy to save us. Gulp.

Night Five:

We run out of water. We run out of Dinty Moore. This sucks. Hope the Mexican Navy gets here quick.



Day six:

Like the cavalry, the minesweeper pops up over the horizon streaming black smoke and a bone in her teeth. She is a remnant of the USN from WWII and she has been painted twice since then. We all think it is the prettiest thing we have ever seen.

We are still lying hove-to and blundering along at a few

A Sea Story cont'

knots at the whim of wind and wave. The decision is made to go to bare poles to clear the deck for the taking of a tow line. On Elusive we are visualizing a fairly dramatic and professional looking lash-up where the minesweeper heaves-to upwind of us and slowly drifts down to us and converges on us as their drift downwind brings us into their lee alongside. Sounds simple and elegant and really a slam dunk. Instead, what happens is that the minesweeper heaves-to to leeward of us and puts a launch over the side and the deck crew passes a tow hawser to the launch. We are simply beside ourselves watching this play out as we all know a disaster is in the making. Fast and furious radio calls from us to them insisting on their moving to weather of us. The minesweeper declines saying that they know what they are doing. Shortly after which a wave picks up our stern and points us toward the minesweeper that is lying broadside 100 yards away. As Elusive slowly turns to being perpendicular to the minesweeper she begins to accelerate to 8 knots down the front face of the wave. The captain of the minesweeper suddenly discovers the error of his ways and orders the engine clutched in to get out of the way of the very large and now very fast dart heading for his midships. As the minesweeper propeller bites in the minesweeper pulls away from their launch, stripping the tow hawser out of the hands of the seamen holding it. The hawser immediately wraps itself around the propeller and brings the minesweeper to what would have been a screeching halt if it had been on asphalt instead of in seawater. On Elusive we are now scrambling around to find stationary things to brace against because we are going to have a real shipwreck in just a couple of seconds. When we hit the minesweeper, it is the loudest noise I have ever heard on the water, even louder than naval gunfire. The steel minesweeper acts like a very large bell clapper and makes the hollow tube hull of Elusive ring like a 10 penny nail hit with a greasy ball peen hammer (this last is Texas humor). Stainless steel deck parts of almost every description and stainless tubing pieces from the pulpit and stanchions leave in a cloud, like frag-

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ments from a hand grenade. About half of us fetch up against something uncomfortable and have the cuts and bruises to show for it. The other watch captain has one of his feet taken out from under him and slid along the toe rail opening his foot from toe to ankle and spraying blood everywhere.

After the contact we manage to throw a line up to the deck of the minesweeper so at least we have that part of the exercise completed successfully. While we tend our wounded the minesweeper crew puts a couple of divers over the side to clear the propeller. I got back at the other watch captain for the sail changes – I held his foot down while one of the cardiac surgeons on his watch used a surgical stapler to lash his foot back together - without an anesthetic. I'm sure he would have done the same for me if I had needed it, so I think of it as a job well done.

Shortly after which we are taken under tow towards Progreso. The navigator announces we will be there my nightfall so euphoria settles in and we break out the Jim Beam, the only liquid left on the boat. After a couple of hours and some preliminary chatter on the radio the septuagenarian owner is invited to the captains table on the minesweeper. We think, great, Joe gets to hob knob with the admiral and we get some supplies, like food and water. The minesweeper heaves to, the launch motors over to us and Joe gets into it and is taken away and very ceremoniously taken aboard the minesweeper. After all, he's a rich Texan with fastest boat in one of the biggest yachting events in Mexico so he is certainly a worthy companion at the captains table. This is where we find out where the crew fits in the third world. Joe gets dinner, a nice air conditioned cabin with a bunk and clean sheets. We get nothing – no food, no water, no news. Nothing. We grind on towards Progreso. The minesweeper is ominously silent.

Night six:

The navigator (who's Joe's son-in-law) announces we are 10 miles from the harbor. More Jim Beam. More kidding about our salvation at the hands of our hosts. Lots of ribald comments about Joe leaving us to our own devices

A Sea Story cont'

while he parties with the upper crust. We are still hungry and pretty thirsty but the whiskey takes the bite out of the unpleasantness.

Suddenly there is Joe on the radio calling us just after dark. He is speaking very elliptically and it is damnably difficult to make out what he is trying to communicate. Apparently there has been a very long, detailed and abstruse discussion between himself and the captain on the nuances of marine law and salvage rights. How surprising. Finally, after the promise of significant cash changing hands after landfall the captain agrees as to how it really still is Joe's boat after all. Joe wishes us luck and signs off. Great. The pain will only continue for a little while longer. More Jim Beam. We can see the lights of Progresso ahead. The minesweeper slows and stops and heaves to with the bow into the wind with us trailing astern. We are going nowhere. Joe calls back. The captain has called all of the TV and print media at the nearest large city, Merida, and has invited them out to film and report on the brave and efficient Navy bringing the disabled large yacht into harbor. We are going to sit there all night behind the minesweeper until well after sun-up so we can make a grand entrance in front of the TV cameras. The Jim Beam is now looking like a really bad idea. Everyone is now so dehydrated that not one of us can pee. We descend into unmentionable descriptions of our saviors. It gets really, really bad and I am proud to say I was one of the most vocal.

Day seven:

At 0900 the minesweeper accelerates and brings us into the channel for the harbor. As the TV crews swarm around us in launches a small harbor boat takes us in tow and drags us to the entrance to the yacht harbor at the very plush resort that is race headquarters. Somewhere along the line, the organizers told a little white lie. They said there was 12 feet of water in the harbor at low tide. We draw 9 feet. As we pull into the two-boat wide entrance to the yacht basin we stick hard into the putty. No amount of revving of the diesel or pull from the harbor launch will budge Elusive. We are nearly delirious from thirst and pent-up anger, so we hatch a plan. We get a couple of guys to swim ashore on both sides of the entrance and send a nest of lines over. We tie Elusive up like a fly caught in a spiders web, effectively completely blocking the channel. We pull the transom over to the side of the entrance where the hoi polloi go and where immigration is all set up, step off the boat with our bags and head right for the bar. We drain mug after mug of water and when we can finally pee again, we really hit the bar. People in various increasingly important looking uniforms keep walking up to one or the other of us to plead with us to move the boat. We offer them drinks instead, but nobody budges.

And that, dear hearts, is how the "Mexican Standoff" got its name.

Newfoundland Medical Dictionary

ARTERY.....THE STUDY OF PAINTINGS
 BACTERIA.....BACK DOOR TO CAFETERIA
 BARIUM.....WHAT DOCTORS DO WHEN PATIENTS DIE
 BENIGN.....WHAT YOU BE, AFTER YOU BE EIGHT
 CAESAREAN SECTION.....A NEIGHBOURHOOD IN ROME
 CATSCAN.....SEARCHING FOR KITTY
 CAUTERIZE.....MADE EYE CONTACT WITH HER
 COLIC.....A SHEEP DOG
 COMA.....A PUNCTUATION MARK
 DILATE.....TO LIVE LONG
 ENEMA.....NOT A FRIEND
 FESTER.....QUICKER THAN SOMEONE ELSE
 FIBULA.....A SMALL LIE
 IMPOTENT.....DISTINGUISHED, WELL KNOWN
 LABOUR PAIN.....GETTING HURT AT WORK

MEDICAL STAFF.....A DOCTOR'S CANE
 MORBID.....A HIGHER OFFER
 NITRATES.....CHEAPER THAN DAY RATES
 NODE.....I KNEW IT
 OUTPATIENT.....A PERSON WHO HAS FAINTED
 PELVIS.....SECOND COUSIN TO ELVIS
 POST OPERATIVE.....A LETTER CARRIER
 RECOVERY ROOM.....PLACE TO DO UPHOLSTERY
 RECTUM.....NEARLY KILLED HIM
 SECRETION.....HIDING SOMETHING
 SEIZURE.....ROMAN EMPEROR
 TABLET.....A SMALL TABLE
 TERMINAL ILLNESS.....GETTING SICK AT THE AIRPORT
 TUMOUR.....ONE PLUS ONE MORE
 URINE.....OPPOSITE OF YOU'RE OUT