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Newsletter



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From the Helm

Fellow Dawgs, we have certainly come through a challenging period, dealing with health issues for us, family and friends, and for many of our Members, participating in the Homeward Bound Flotilla from the Caribbean. And, we are not out of the woods yet. Local flare-ups and continuing Covid-19 infections. It is pretty certain we will face challenges this fall and winter in getting to the islands, for those hoping to go.

As with the Flotilla, we are in close contact with various State and island governments to understand current and evolving restrictions for the Fall Rally participants. We will be announcing our summer and fall webinar series shortly. We will not hold our sit-down seminar or annual rendezvous in Annapolis, or seminars prior to the Fall Rally departure. We plan to staff a booth at the Annapolis Sailboat Show, if that is held. And, at this stage we are planning to go ahead with the Fall Rally, in a safe manner.

The accolades for our Homeward Bound Flotilla continue to come in with various magazine articles. I have to once again commend the many volunteers who made that event a success. In typical Salty Dawg can-do style, we pulled that off, as well as our recent Rally to Maine, and plan to do the same with our upcoming Fall Rally. So stay involved, participate in the webinars, share news on our Facebook pages, buy a shirt or hat from our Store to show your Salty Dawg pride, and as always, help another sailor.



Cheers!

Hank George, President, SDSA



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Folding Rope Tutorial

Cruising Article

A Passage Across the Indian Ocean

Salty Dawg Members sail from Darwin Australia to Cape Town South Africa

by Dennis Jud, Aboard SV Wavelength

Part 1 - Darwin to Cocos Keeling

I arrived Darwin, Australia on Sept. 4th, 2019 to assist Captain Mark in sailing his Cherubini 44 named Wavelength to Cape Town South Africa. After a couple of fun days exploring Brisbane, Mark, and I drove to procure various parts, tools, propane, etc. The predeparture work that lay ahead included fixing a wood beam related to the autopilot (AP) and installing two U-Bolts for the mast aft shrouds. Our second crew member arrived the next day and we dove into those two projects in VERY hot, sunny tropical weather, inside a no breeze marina.

The AP fix involved cleaning up the existing wood beam that had loosened itself from the underside of the deck, removing old screws and bolts, re-drilling four 5" lag screws, and a lot of epoxy. I am sure you can imagine the "monkey arms" required for accessing such difficult spaces with many tools. After all was said and done, we were pretty satisfied with ourselves for a job, we thought, well done. Cold beers and showers.

The installation of the U-bolts was another interesting challenge. This involved drilling through a 5mm stainless steel angle beam adjacent to the old, smaller holes. It was a test of patience, taking turns adding drilling lubricant and vying for the glory of the "break-through" for each of the four holes. Each hole took over

half an hour. Finally completed and double-nutted, the shrouds were reconnected and tuned. Again, cold beers and showers for the team. Another job well done.



"Moscow Mules" for the crew to Celebrate Departure

With those critical projects completed, a review of the weather and a departure time established, it was time for the provisioning for the first leg – a little over 2,000nm from Darwin to Cocos Keeling Islands, which should take 12 – 14 days. A little more with the stop at Ashmore Reef. After the provisioning and a rig check, it was time to shove off. Interestingly, this included passing through a single lock from the marina to the sea, not because of a huge difference in water levels, but more as a way to keep everything in the marina safe from surges, and probably to keep the sharks and crocs out. But part of the passage-making culture is meeting really fun and interesting people along the way. In this instance, at the marina in Darwin, we met the new owner of s/v Soggy Paws and his crew. We also met another cruising couple with an amazing assortment of tools and generosity and spent quality time with all of them over beers, apps, meals, and boat tours all around. The up-shot of that is that when we emerged from the lock, they were on the outer dock, waving and wishing us fair winds and safe passage. Very cool!

The winds on the first leg to Ashmore Reef were unexpectedly light, starting NE and clocking to the ESE. Getting from Ashmore to Cocos Keeling was much better! As there were



Fishing Underway

three of us for this leg, we agreed to a Watch Schedule of 3-on-6-off. Some people like 4-on-8-off, thinking that the extra hour on is more than compensated for by 2 extra hours off, which may be good for some, especially if you need a full set of foulies for your watch, but I like the 3/6, because 3 hours on is easier, especially in rough conditions, and 6 hours off has proven to be plenty.

The rest of the passage from Ashmore Reef to Cocos Keeling was very nice. Yes, we got waves splashing into the cockpit on many occasions, but it offered some of my best sailing days/nights. Once these trades settled in, it was really great. Winds started out in the 8 – 10kt range and settled in later at around 12 – 15kts. Seas never got over about 8 - 10' but were mostly in the 4 – 6' range, but sometimes very confused. And it felt like it took forever to get past the line of longitude of the western edge of Australia.



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Pics & Fun



There are five islands that make up the Cocos Keeling archipelago. Horsburgh Island to the north, then clockwise around is Direction Island, where all the yachties anchor, Home Island, a mostly Muslim population of about 400, South Island (uninhabited), and West Island, mostly populated by Aussies (about 50 adults), which is also where tourists are accommodated. There is also one island to the north, which I believe is called Cocos Keeling North, but is inaccessible by yacht.

It took us 4 days to get to Ashmore and 10 more days to get to Cocos, where we spent 8 wonderful days. It was a beautiful place, but way short on fresh fruits and vegetables. When we arrived, there were only about 4 or 5 boats there. After a few days, other boats began to arrive – 17 of them—which changed the feeling considerably. We did meet a really nice local family camping on Direction Island.



Installing our Plaque

Peter, the father is a local contractor/yachtie, helper and all-around facilitator for getting things done at Cocos. He took us to his home on West Island, helped us get 8 jerry jugs of diesel and filled us in on the politics of the Islands. On the trip back across the lagoon to our anchorage, he threw out a couple of lines and caught two Coral Trout. I'd never heard of them before, but they were incredibly delicious.

Things worked out great on the island, even with the other boats invading our little oasis. We met many really great folks from all over the world. The "island tradition" is that visitors leave some evidence of their having been there... a plaque or something with a boat name, year and sometimes crew names. This is true at almost all the stops along a circumnavigation.

After those eight incredible days at Cocos Keeling, and after meeting all those fellow travelers and hearing various sea stories, we checked out, weighed anchor, & headed toward Mauritius, a little over 2300nm away.

Part 2 - Cocos Keeling to Reunion Island

After eight wonderful days of rest in a veritable paradise, it was time to say goodbye to the Cocos Keeling archipelago. We traced our inbound track back out through the reef, rounded Horsburgh Island, and set ourselves up for the next 2,350nm leg of our passage, this one intending to be to Mauritius Island, but we went on to Reunion for repairs. We figured this leg might be around 14 days, so we stocked up as best we could with quasi-fresh vegetables and various other provisions.

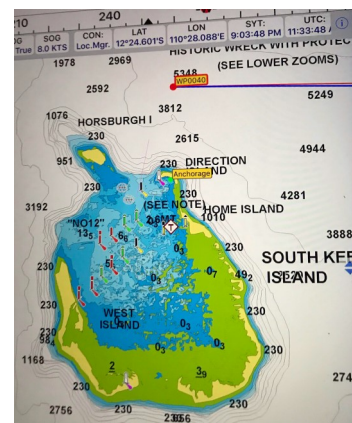
Over the prior 2,000 nautical miles from Darwin to Cocos Keeling, we had seen only one World ARC sailboat and one Indonesian fishing boat early on and spent almost the entire passage alone at sea. I don't think we even saw an airplane overhead, except for the Australian Border Patrol planes buzzing us between the mainland and Ashmore Reef. This isn't necessarily a bad thing and I really don't mind it at all, but it is humbling.

On this passage we buddy-boated with a family on a Trintella 57', S/V Nimbus, until they diverted to Rodriguez Island, a couple hundred miles short of Mauritius. And I have to admit, it was comforting having them nearby, especially since they were within visual sight for most of this leg. At one point, they had to heave-to in order to fix a failed head-sail sheet, so we slowed down and let them catch up after they completed their task.

The trade winds settled at 12 – 18 knots from the SE, and the seas never got large enough to be of concern – rarely over 3 meters. We did get some significant "splashes" into the cockpit, but for the most part it was a very uneventful passage. It was nothing like I expected of the Indian Ocean. In fact, it offered some of the best passage days and nights I've ever had! After all the stories I heard about this ocean, I fully expected to get beaten up on this leg. The Indian Ocean is purported to be one of the most difficult pieces of ocean on any circumnavigation.



But this passage wasn't entirely uneventful. At one point, the AIS alarm went off and displayed a "Collision Warning!" Clicking to a different screen on the AIS, we see that a 758' cargo ship is on a collision course with us, with the CPA (closest point of approach) bouncing from .01 to .04 nm on either side of us, too close for comfort. **To continue reading about this adventure, [Click Here.](#)**



The Cocos Keeling Archipelago

How to Make Your Partner Love the Kite

The key to sailing successfully downwind with your trusty first mate and actually enjoying it is rooted in preparation. Quantum's Andrew Waters explains how to prepare and embrace the kite with your partner.

Sailing as a couple is a fantastic experience; however, it can go south quickly. All too often the phrase "Honey, let's put up the kite" is met with a grimace, bad memories, and a rise in stress levels. Without preparation and the right equipment for the conditions, what seemed like a good idea can quickly go wrong. But with careful set up, communication, and an understanding of your partner's capabilities, putting up and taking down a spinnaker can be done easily.

HANDLING OPTIONS

Two pieces of equipment that go a long way toward making the deployment and take-down of a downwind sail easier are a spinnaker sleeve and a top-down furling unit. While each takes a different approach to the task, depending on the sail set-up, both will make the exercise easier.

THE SPINNAKER SLEEVE

The spinnaker sleeve is used for a downwind running spinnaker, though it also works well with a reaching sail and both asymmetrical and symmetrical sails. The sleeve that the sail is housed in gets hoisted to the top of the mast and then is pulled up to unveil the sail, allowing you to control the speed with which the sail is opened. The beauty of the sleeve is that it's forgiving: if something doesn't appear right, simply pull the sleeve back down over the sail, make the required adjustment, and then start the process again. When it's time to take the sail down, the process is reversed. Once the sail is completely housed, the spinnaker sleeve is lowered with the halyard and stowed away easily in a duffle bag, ready for the next use.



THE TOP-DOWN FURLER

The top-down furling unit is best used with reaching sails and Code 0 type sails with straight luffs. It is similar to the spinnaker sleeve in that the sail is stowed and hoisted aloft prior to deploying the sail, but it is rolled around a torsion cable—not too different from the way the genoa might be—and unrolled in a controlled manner with the ability to stop and roll it back up if something doesn't seem right. Then, as with the spinnaker sleeve, it is stowed aloft by rolling the unit up. When the sail is totally packed away, the top-down furler is lowered to the deck and coiled into its own duffle bag.



PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

Step 1: Choose the right system

Which option is right for you depends on your sail set-up, so speak to your local Quantum expert to make sure you have the correct equipment for your choice of spinnaker.

Step 2: Set it up correctly

The preparation process also applies to the lines: Make sure the sheets are running outside of the boat (shrouds, lifelines, forestay, etc.) and through the blocks correctly. Ensure the halyard is also on the correct side of the forestay and will run freely to the top of the mast. If the sail is asymmetric, ensure the tack line and the tack of the sail are in the correct place at the end of the bow sprit (or the attachment point) before hoisting. If the sail is symmetrical, make sure the guy is in the pole correctly and that the pole is hoisted and set at the correct height with the downhaul/foreguy on to avoid the pole "skying" (or flying up).

Step 3: Execute

Finally, no matter how many times you and your partner (or other crew) have hoisted the spinnaker, it is important that you talk through the tasks at hand.

- 1) Make sure that whoever is at the helm, even if it's the autopilot, has the correct course set with the preferred wind angle or a landmark reference identified and that the course is maintained.
- 2) Make sure the lines that will be needed—sheets and potentially a guy—are on the winches and safe to operate. If the lines are not needed, ensure they are flaked and clear of potential fouls.



Big Waves!



JOIN the FUN NOW!

- 3) Ease the mainsheet so that the mainsail will help “blanket” the sail while deploying.
- 4) Discuss the steps and progress as you go so you and your partner are aware of what the other is doing. Make one final check so you know that everything and everyone is ready for the actual unveiling of the sail.
- 5) Once the sail is up, set, and stable, tidy the lines at the mast or in the cockpit and then sit back and enjoy the ride!

Taking down the sail is the opposite of putting it up and still requires the same communication and planning to ensure a smooth and easy process. Don't wait until the last minute, and give yourself plenty of sea room to execute without a time restraint.

Speak with your Quantum expert about a spinnaker. They'll make sure you are getting the correct sail for your intended use. As you begin using your spinnaker, get comfortable putting it up in lighter winds and gradually build up wind strength as you and your partner gain more confidence with your process. Spinnakers are a lot of fun and quickly knock miles off a distance passage!



Please contact [Dave Flynn](#) at Quantum for more information and your Salty Dawg Member Discount!

Coming Events

Rallies

The Salty Dawg Fall Rally to the Caribbean

Our Fall Rally to the Caribbean is the largest organized flotilla of cruisers leaving the east coast for the Caribbean and is scheduled to depart on **November 2nd**.



Join the fun and meet like-minded sailors while building lifetime friendships. The Rally includes weather routing by The Marine Weather Center, position tracking by PredictWind, and an extensive level of shoreside communication, advice and support from veteran Salty Dawgs before, during and after the offshore passage.

Pre-departure events will begin on **October 26** in Hampton, VA. Choose your destination of beautiful Falmouth Harbour, Antigua or gorgeous Harbour Island, Eleuthera in the Bahamas. The Fall Rally opens the door to new friends and experiences while cruising safely.

All Salty Dawg rallies and events are led by seasoned sailors who volunteer their time and knowledge to help cruisers realize their sailing dreams. We plan to conduct events in accordance with health safety recommendations during this period of Coronavirus.

[Register Now](#)

[More Information](#)

[Contact Us with Questions](#)

Details will be forthcoming on how we plan to safely conduct these activities during this period of COVID-19

Rendezvous & Seminars

2020 Rendezvous

We normally schedule a series of Rendezvous events for sailors to get together through the year. With the issue of COVID-19 and difficulty in holding events with a large group of people, we will not be able to conduct such social gatherings for some time. On the recent Rally to Maine, participants found opportunities to do small group social gatherings, with folks at a distance, or had been tested negative for Covid-19. Such informal gatherings with appropriate self-controls will make sense until we have a vaccine.

We are planning a series of webinars. These will cover topics usually addressed in our Annapolis Seminar around the time of the Boat Show and those addressed in our pre-departure seminars in Hampton, VA in late October. Additionally, we will address several other topics of interest to cruisers and blue water sailors. One of the early ones will be a talk by Bob Osborn on cruising the Eastern Caribbean with a focus on what to expect this Fall. You will want to hear that one. Look for the schedule of webinars coming soon – we'll send to all on our Newsletter list and post on our website.

Please check our [website](#) regularly for updates.



Rally Update

Our Rally to Maine that started from Hampton and Newport, RI was recently completed. Boats departing the Chesapeake had an unseasonably good sail to Newport. Once joined by boats starting the rally in that area, the fleet began regular, informal gatherings, such as at outdoor picnic areas, appropriately distanced. They managed one dinner, a lobster and shellfish dinner in Cuttyhunk at an open air venue with a large tent and picnic tables well-spaced. With some nice day sails in Buzzards Bay, and then a passage through the Cape Cod Canal, boats arrived in Portland, Maine. This was different from our usual Maine destination of Rockland, but Portland offered an accessible testing site where participants could be tested for Covid-19 to meet Maine requirements.

As with all of our rallies, we had weather forecasting and routing by Chris Parker, vessel tracking by PredictWind, Port Captains, Shoreside Coordinators, Captains meetings, and everyone practicing good Covid-19 protocols. We used Zoom meetings when needed, and plan to do the same for the Fall Rally.

If you have any interest in sailing south this fall, our departure date is November 2, and we encourage you to register now. This will allow us to understand the number of boats for discussions with Bluewater Yachting Center Marina, PredictWind, and Marine Weather Services. We are looking forward to hearing from you and making another successful passage!

[Find Out Who's Open in the Caribbean!](#)

Participant Feedback—2020 Homeward Bound Flotilla

by Will Viss, SV Altair

I used to think sailing rallies were for those sailors with large boats and large wallets. I was also under the impression rally organizers charged high fees and did very little except handout safety-gear checklists. Turns out I was wrong.

In May 2020 I sailed solo from St. Thomas, USVI to Norfolk, Virginia. While at anchor in St. Thomas, I heard through the grapevine that the Salty Dawg Sailing Association had waived their fees due to the COVID-19 epidemic and that they were building a network to share weather and other information in an effort to get sailors home safely. I signed up and didn't think much of it.

Enroute, I encountered challenging conditions. Tropical Storm Arthur had formed near the Bahamas and began making its way toward the entrance of the Chesapeake, which of course was exactly where I was headed. The wind increased as did the waves. During the night I lost a port-side, top-shroud. I had picked up dirty fuel in St. Thomas, causing the motor to hesitate and eventually quit. I was four days out from Norfolk, in the path of an oncoming storm, with a compromised rig and little to no help from the motor.

The Salty Dawg organizers had been tracking my progress with growing concern and soon their messages started coming in on the satellite phone. Over the next four days they worked with weather-router Chris Parker to provide weather information, a Gulf Stream strategy and tips to secure the rig and troubleshoot the motor. With their help, I arrived in Little Creek, Virginia on May 18, 2020 at 4:30 pm, a mere twelve hours ahead of the eye of TS Arthur. Had it not been for Russ O., Chris P., Jack F., and the others, I don't think I would have made it.

To the Salty Dawg Rally organizers and everyone on their staff: thank you, thank you, thank you. To the sailors who are considering joining a Salty Dawg Rally: let me assure you, they are the real deal.

And because all's well that ends well, included is a picture taken on arrival with mom, dad and the family favorite, Raisin.

Welcome Aboard David Walters Yachts!

We are very pleased to announce that [David Walters Yachts](#) has joined the Salty Dawg Sailing Association as a Gold Level Sponsor!

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Join Your Family of Cruisers and Get Great Benefits!

We invite you to join our organization and partake in the camaraderie and friendship shared among our family of sailors. We are a non-profit charitable and educational association that conducts rallies, rendezvous, seminars and charitable events for fellow cruisers and communities.



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- *Membership Dues are Tax Deductible and Reinvested into the Organization*

Join the Fun today and [Become a Member](#). Contact [Membership](#) with questions.

Member Boats For Sale

1993 Caliber 40

Located on Patapsco R. in MD, the famous blue water Salty Dawg boat, s/v RUM RUNNER. Ready to go. Contact phil.worrall@att.net

1981 Hans Christian 39' Pilot House

Located in the Chesapeake Bay. Comfortable offshore cruiser. Many recent upgrades. s/v Moonstone. Contact Lu.warnat@gmail.com

2004 Beneteau Oceanis 473

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