

Offshore Update E's Alee – May 25, 2007

It's done. We have cranked the engine and are powering toward Bermuda. The consensus of all aboard was that we had given it a good shot, but everyone's tolerance and energy levels are at their end.

We have been tacking back and forth, inching our way toward Bermuda for about 48 hours. Our rhumb line to Bermuda is about 65 degrees. On a port tack our heading is about 150 degrees - and on the starboard tack our heading is just W of north (about 350 degrees). You can see that neither of these makes much headway toward completion. Combined with the wind direction (ENE), its velocity (25-30 steady) and the sea state (8-10 with fairly regular sets of three or more rogues of close to 20 feet) coming from roughly the same direction as the wind it is becoming futile. Even now, with the engine running at 2000 rpm and the headsail up, we are only making about 2.8 kts toward Bermuda. At this rate it will take us 70 hours to get there (198 miles remaining). The good news is that all of our movement is directly toward Bermuda.

Yesterday afternoon as the wind built we pulled a second reef in the main and decided to pull down the genny and replace with the working jib. After about two hours of intense effort the job was finished. During that time, Will was at the helm while the two Scotts, me, Johan and Elin were on the foredeck trying to deal with the sail. All the while the wind blowing 30+ and seas 10-15 feet or better. One reason it took so long was that after getting the sail down, and the new sail up, part of the genny got down in the water. That was the hardest part of all, getting that sail back on board and secure with waves crashing all over the deck and us. It's a good thing we did the change because not long after that the wind continued to increase till it was blowing 30 steady with gusts to 35 or so. Today when we tacked, the sail again got loose and got into the water. Another hour or so later, it was back on board again. It just got loose for the third time. Scott Sale and I have spent the last 2 hrs getting it back aboard, to the after deck and lashed down, hopefully for the last time.

As stated, we are all pretty exhausted, wet and wooley, but excited that one way or another we will reach Bermuda in the foreseeable future.

Will Haynie