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North by Northwest

Five months and 8,500 nautical miles later, Sprague Theobald has returned to U.S. shores after taking *Bagan*, his Nordhavn 57, through the Northwest Passage. YACHTING caught up with the documentary filmmaker to gain insight on this fascinating route (see "Currents," August 2009). "The trip was amazing," Theobald says. "Visually it was more than I expected, it was harder than I expected, the desolation and isolation of being in the passage was far more powerful than I expected, the ability of the boat was *better* than I expected."

Of course, the only way to test one's mettle—and that of one's vessel—is adversity. *Bagan* spent 48 hours stuck in the ice. "It was the first time in my life I have actually known the experience of not having any options," says Theobald. "The ice was just having with us as it wanted and

was pushing us slowly to a rock-bound coast. It was either I was going to wreck the boat on the coast or I was going to turn the boat around and wreck the boat in the ice trying to get out of there."

Bagan held up like a champ. "With all the pounding we took and the ice just *screeching* past the side of the boat, we had one ding on the bulb about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch deep and four inches long," says Theobald. "That's it, the entire trip." What's next for the yacht and her master? Currently berthed in Seattle, *Bagan* is the subject of negotiations with several boat shows interested in including her as an exhibit. Meanwhile, Theobald is moving two film projects to the front burner, and editing hundreds of hours of HD footage from the Northwest Passage. For the full interview and to see more photos, visit www.yachtingmagazine.com.