

Nordhavn Atlantic Rally - Commentary - Leg 1

DAN'S NAR REPORT #1 SUNDAY AFTERNOON 5-16

There are few things in this modern world that are more dramatic than the pending departure of a yacht on an open ocean passage. Multiply that drama by 18 and you can imagine the atmosphere in this morning's "Captain's" meeting. Nearly 100 people were present for final instructions before this afternoon's departure of Division 2, AKA the "slow group". Division 2 consists of the 8 smaller (and thus slower) boats plus the escort boat, the Nordhavn 62 "Autumn Wind". Division 1 consists of the 7 larger boats, which by virtue of their longer waterline length will travel about 1 knot faster. (The lead escort boat, the PAE-staffed Nordhavn 57 "Atlantic Escort" will float between the two groups.) The faster boats in Division 1 depart one day later. The staggered departure is designed so that all boats will arrive in Bermuda at the same time.



The previous 8 days have been frenetic, sometimes stressful, and mostly fun, as each of the boats has been prepared for departure. The 18 participating boats are located on 3 docks in close proximity; so the docks are always busy with carts hauling groceries, spare parts, dingys, liferafts and more. There have been 3 parties as well as numerous informal events as the participants have renewed old friendships and made new ones.

Each day has been busy with boat inspections, seminars and meetings. PAE people have been conducting boat inspections and interviews on each boat as well as making final preparations on our own boat, "Atlantic Escort." The seminars have ranged from trouble shooting an autopilot, to fishing techniques to dealing with medical emergencies. Alaska Diesel (their Lugger engines power 16 of the 18 entrants) is a major sponsor of the rally and conducted a seminar on maintenance and trouble shooting of their engines. ADE has had representatives available throughout the week to answer questions or help with any issues relating to their engines or Northern Lights generators.

American Bow Thruster is also a major sponsor of the NAR and had representatives available to check out and survey their bow thruster and stabilizer systems. Robert Kinney of Alcom electronics conducted a seminar and inspected the boats, which had his electronics, fitted.

We particularly want to thank major sponsor Yachting and Motorboating magazines for the wonderful luncheon party which they hosted. Peter Janssen (editorial director for both magazines)'s speech was poignant, powerful and emotional as he was able to capture in words the special moment in yachting history, which was about to take place. Peter's description of the special qualities of each of the participants was perfect.

At precisely 3:00PM, dock lines were thrown aboard and the 9 vessels in Division 2, plus Atlantic

Escort departed. A large group of people assembled at the entrance to the marina and there were waves, shouts and not a few tears as each boat passed by. The people from Division 1 shouted, "see you in Bermuda" as each boat heavy with fuel, water and supplies passed into the distance. The fleet fell into formation as they departed the Ft. Lauderdale breakwater so that the aerial photography could be conducted. Director Bruce Kessler is filming a documentary of the NAR, so cameras have been ever present throughout the week, as the various events have occurred.

I am aboard the Nordhavn 62 SANS SOUCI and am the leader of Division 1.
Tomorrow is our day 2

TUESDAY MAY 18 DAN'S NAR REPORT N#2

Position at 7:30PM on May 18 is 29 20.9 N 77 47.7 W

We have been at sea for about 27 hours now and are beginning to settle down to a routine.

The departure from Ft Lauderdale was CHAOTIC to say the least. We had a well-rehearsed departure plan, which had been discussed in several meetings. It was important to leave in a prearranged formation because there were 3 different helicopters in the air for magazines and the documentary.

While circling in the turning basin we delayed the departure several times waiting for traffic to clear while meanwhile the helicopters were hovering. Just as we were committed to the path towards the harbor entrance, we realized that a ship with assisting tugs was entering and coming towards us. We all squeezed past the ship (which was in the middle of the channel) and entered the very choppy and bumpy Atlantic. Right away, things went awry. We (Sans Souci) were to be the lead boat, but we headed out on the wrong course due to a temporary case of CRS. Some followed us and some proceeded on the correct course. Our formation was thus mixed up. After 30 minutes or so, we got reformatted and back into a proper lineup- except Sans Souci ended up in second place.

The filming commenced and I am sure that some incredible shots were taken as the brave fleet pounded into the 6-foot seas. The helicopter pilots are amazingly skilled. With a 20-knot head wind, they were flying sideways within 50 feet of the boat. The confusion and noise together with multiple radios and a cell phone call caused a case of TMI (Too Much Information). Also, I should add that at the very crescendo of the chaos, the refrigerator in the pilothouse flew open and a dozen soda cans poured out. One of them exploded and drenched us. Undaunted, we stayed the course and smiled for the cameras!

After a bumpy 24 mile ride into head seas to our first way point, we cracked off for a more comfortable ride to our next way point about 160 miles north. This gave the crew a chance to relax and settle in.

We are quite pampered aboard Sans Souci with 3 professional crewmen.

Rip Knot (I'm not kidding) is our courageous Captain. Several years ago, Rip moved Sans Souci from Seattle to Florida several years ago and later spent time on Sans Souci in Europe.

Phil Strable is our chef and is in charge of the galley. In his real life, Phil is a chef aboard private rail cars, so he is quite comfortable in the spacious galley of Sans Souci. He is very gracious and "at our service" 24 hours per day. Last night's chicken Caesar salad and this morning's scrambled eggs and bacon were served with a smile. Phil's mysterious persona is enhanced by his collection of brightly colored tattoos!

Our EMT is St. John O'Neil-Dunne. "Singen" is a student from Tulane with a wry sense of humor and is a look alike for Kramer on Seinfeld (especially the hair). Singen took great delight in telling us that extreme seasickness is best cured with suppositories and that he has them safely stored in the freeze!

Also aboard are:

Owners Ken and Roberta Williams. Ken and Roberta purchased Sans Souci 6 years ago after selling their software company. They have used their boat in the Pacific Northwest, Mexico, Florida and Europe but until now have not made any open ocean passages. They are a lovely couple and easy to get along with. With their software background, they are very "techy" and thus have Sans Souci equipped with some nice gadgets. The gadget I like best is the "always on" Internet connection purchased thru Stratos net. That Internet connection is distributed thru out the boat by a common wireless system, so I can use my laptop anywhere on the boat and get my e-mail. Is that good? The cost of the Internet connection is based on usage and will probably amount to several thousand dollars or more by the end of the passage.

Christian Fittipaldi. Christian is a world-renowned race driver who has competed in Formula 1, CART and NASCAR and most recently was a winner in the 24 hours of Daytona. As a racing fan, I had followed Christian's career for many years before meeting him when he called our Dana Point office several years ago with interest in a Nordhavn. Christian and I have formed a friendship and Marcia and I have been his VIP guests at several races. Christian has owned several boats and is very passionate about boating and the sea, but until now has not made an offshore passage. If Christian gets hooked on passage making, we already have the headline of the ad figured out - "Fast guy learns to go slow" or something like that.

Garret Severen. Garret is a fine young man who has worked for PAE for about 3 years. He started with the commissioning crew on the docks in Dana Point and moved to Stuart Florida when we opened the office there. Garret is "First Mate" aboard San Souci and as part of the PAE response team is prepared to help with problems on any of the boats in the fleet. A small inflatable is at the ready to take Garret and the EMT to the other boats if an "event" takes place in open ocean.

SEVERAL HOURS LATER:

I just finished a great two-hour afternoon nap and am gradually getting caught up on my sleep. When Marcia and I flew out to Florida on a Jet Blue "red eye" , I lost one night of sleep and couldn't ever seem to catch up during the busy week in Ft Lauderdale prior to departure.

The seven boats in our group have drifted apart somewhat. All but Emeritus are within radar and VHF range. Emeritus turned to starboard last night and has taken a different track. When Emeritus didn't answer this morning's radio roll call, we called them on the satellite telephone and found that they were 90 miles from us (VHF radio range is about 30 miles). We conduct a roll call each day on the radio at 8:00AM and 8:00PM to check on the condition of each boat. It is now about 4:30 PM, and afternoon will soon turn to evening. All of the boats will close in a little for the night. It is very comforting to look out and see your compatriots running lights.

We cooked our main 24V alternator today in a smokey event. At this point, we are not quite sure what happened but think that it might be the regulator. Despite the fact that parts of it were glowing red, we think that it might still work. Mickey Smith and I are going to have a post mortem e-mail chat about it later to try to figure out what happened.

In a radio chat with Seafox, we learned that Tom Selman has been battling with seasickness. We told him that we would launch the boat and rush over with the suppositories.. he has miraculously recovered.

The seas have calmed somewhat and a lovely long swell is starting to dominate. Chef Phil is going to produce a magnificent dinner tonight.

Best Regards from the happy ship San Souci,
Dan

From "Atlantic Escort" May 19

It's Wednesday morning - 03:00 - aboard Atlantic Escort. My fleet of 10 boats spread out before me - each stern light clearly visible equally spaced across our horizon. My concern over seperation and radar ineffectiveness has not been an issue. We've been able to aquire each boat on our radar and lock it into the plotting computer. Amazingly the Furuno Navnet radar has been able to hold each target while giving us continious information about each vessels speed and course.

All is well and we're making almost 8 knots towards Bermuda. Our chart plotter indicates an on time arrival Saturday morning.

Weather matches our forecast perfectly with easterly winds in the 15 knot range and seas four to six feet. We're anticipating continued good weather with lghter winds and calming seas.

There have been a number of minor issues with some of the boats. Egret (N46) lost one of her fin actuators the first night out. Scott Flanders - her owner was able to bypass the fin, lock the bad blade and continue on on a single fin. He's doing well and a new part awaits him in Bermuda. Aboard Satchmo (N46) Bill Bane and the crew was able to correct a fuel blockage which was causing alarming fuel vaccuum. We're experiencing minor problems and dealig with them as they come up.

We spent most of today maneuvering for photography and the radio was alive with the chatter of people enjoying themselves. I'm more confident than ever of our expeditions success.

More latter,
Jim Leishman

WEDNESDAY MAY 19 DAN'S NAR REPORT N#3

We are now in that wonderful "sweet spot" of a passage where routine, comfort and relaxation have taken over. Those prone to seasickness have their sea legs, running jokes and pranks abound and everyone is in their own world of reading, sleeping, fishing, eating, listening to music or playing with their (wretched?) computers. There is no sense of "when do we get there". In many ways, we are there!.

Sans Souci is on a rhumb line course for Bermuda which now lies 530 miles ahead and we will be sipping Pina Colatas at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club within 3 days. She is running sweet and is perfect in every way. Once again I am reminded of Jeff Leishman's design genius and Ta Shing's fine craftsmanship as the 5-year-old Sans Souci conquers this open ocean passage with ease.

Our gaggle of boats (6 of us) answered roll call this morning with extra gusto as I suspect the sense of well-being has infected the entire fleet. Bob Rothman (the 7th of our group) continues on his own special course and is about 40 miles away. The only known mechanical problem is on Sea Fox. One of their stabilizer fins made "an expensive crunching noise", so that fin was secured and they are running on one fin which will still give adequate stabilization.

I spoke with Jim this morning by SSB and got fairly good reception on the 4 meg frequency. His "slower" group of 11 boats are all well and are now about 90 miles ahead of us. We are closing on them at about 1.5 knots, and will thus catch them in about 60 hours.

At this point, it is self evident that the entire group of 18 boats will arrive safely, on time and together in Bermuda and that the fundamental concept of NAR is sound. Hats off to the entire NAR planning committee and especially to Jim for making this event possible. Their hard work and attention to detail is paying off big time. I know that history is being made. Thanks also to the participants themselves who have invested their time, money and effort to be a part of this rally. Without them, there would be no rally.

The seas and wind have settled down and are about as good as you can expect on an open ocean passage. As we learned on the ATW, there is nearly always the "lumpiness" of multiple swell patterns present in open ocean. As long as they are allowed to soften in light wind conditions, the motion of the boat and the speeds are fine.

The sky is bright blue and is dotted with puffy clouds and the crystal clear water (15,000 ft deep at this location) is a deep cobalt blue. The sun glistening off the deep blue sea is more beautiful than I can describe in words.

Chef Phil continues to be a joy. Last night's dinner was halibut wrapped in fila dough (aka halibut "en croute") and this morning was an especially delicious omelet with ham, bacon and cheese.

Could someone check for me and see if a cholesterol reading of 756 is OK?

Contented,
Dan

Position at 1:00PM EST May 19, 2004 30 00.2 N 74.51.9W

THURSDAY MAY 20 - Aboard Atlantic Escort

It's 03:00 on Thursday the 20th and the wheelhouse is again mine alone. Another great day of passagemaking with the best weather yet. As Walt Hack predicted the sea has calmed and the winds have gone variable - a nice break from the 15 to 20 knot easterly that has roughed us up since leaving last Sunday. Today we launched our small Achilles inflatable that we have stowed above our cockpit - resting on the tie rods for our towing bit. This is the rig we'd deploy in rougher conditions when launching the large Caribe from the upper deck might be to dangerous. The launch went without a hitch. James and Justin motored over to Autumn Wind and picked up Georgs Kolesnikovs bringing him back to Atlantic Escort. Georgs was unable to get his email out and came aboard to use our Iriudium system. James made another trip over to Autumn Wind and picked up Eric and Mke - bringing them back to Atlantic Escort to visit for the afternoon.

The faster group is closing in on us. Speaking with Dan this evening on the SSB they were only 75 miles behind and during the VHF roll call amongst our fleet we had to change frequencies as we were hearing the roll call of the larger boats behind. I imagine tomorrow we'll be in clear VHF range and we should arrive in Bermuda exactly as planned - together at 08:00 Saturday morning. Dan reported a pleasant day too within his group. Lots of picture taking, fishing - even a water balloon fight between boats - everyone is joking and having great fun.

Four Across is having trouble with their water maker and we've agreed to transfer them water tomorrow. Our Village Marine unit is pumping out fresh water at almost 40 gallons per hour so we'll fill their water tanks using a 400 foot hose we have aboard for such a purpose. The procedure will be to take Four Across under tow on a 300 foot tow line and then pass the hose to them. We expect the process to take a couple of hours and look forward to the opportunity to test our system in these calm conditions to prepare ourselves in the event fueling or watering a vessel might be necessary in the rougher conditions ahead.

Thats it for now,
Jim Leishman

THURSDAY MAY 20 DAN'S NAR REPORT N#4

Each day just gets better! It is Thursday morning as I begin to write this. We are cruising along on absolutely glassy seas and Jimmy Buffet is playing on the sound system.

Few things in this world can match the simple wonderful pleasure of a night watch in calm seas. My watch last night was from midnight to 3:00 AM. The bridge of Sans Souci was set for night running and the various screens, gauges, plotter, GPS units etc. emitted their soft red and green glows. The doors were open and the pleasant 75-degree breezes rustled the papers from time to time. Except for the occasional sound of water past the hull, it almost seemed as though Sans Souci were floating on a cloud. Best of all was the music. We have XM satellite radio on board and I had it tuned to channel 7 for 70's music. Every song was perfect for the moment and brought back many memories.

After roll call this morning, the boats came closer together for a photo shoot. About that time Crosser reported whales on their port side. We saw them and turned over to get a closer look. It was a pod of 4 sperm whales and we were able to get right along side of them for quite a long look. I have never seen a sperm whale (that would be Moby Dick) and the site of them diving into the crystal clear water is a memory that I will have forever.

The folks on Sea Fox are having quite a time. They claim to have caught the same fish 3 times. They first reported it last night and claimed it to be 4 feet long and that it got away. They said that they landed it and it slipped thru the scuppers and overboard. We protested that a 4 foot fish wouldn't fit through the scuppers and they then changed their story and said that it jumped through their transom door taking their prized lure with it. They then landed the same fish later and recovered their lure. They decided that it was too big and released it. They then claimed to have caught the same fish AGAIN. This time they released it again but not before scolding it and telling it not to bother them any more. See anything "fishy" in that story?

I should take a moment and introduce our fleet AKA Division1, AKA the "fast" boats. We consist of:

Sans Souci (Division 1 Escort)- Nordhavn 62 #9: We have a crew of 8 including Ken and Roberta Williams and your author.

Crosser- A Monk-McQueen 90 with a crew of 9.

Grey Pearl- Nordhavn 62 #8 with a crew of 5 including owners Braun and Tina Jones.

Sea Fox- A Krogen 58 with a crew of 6 including owner Dennis Fox and VIP guests Kurt Krogen and Tom Selman. Tom is owner of a Nordhavn 50 in his other life.

Goleen- Nordhavn 57 #29 with a crew of 4 including owners Chris Samuelson and the lovely Sonaia.

Emeritus- Nordhavn 57 #21 with a crew of 4 including owners Bob and Janis Rothman.

Unfortunately, Emeritus went ahead and has not been part of our happy fleet.

It has been really fun and rewarding to see how the dynamics of the fleet have developed. Having never done this before, we didn't know for sure how (or even if) the travel as a fleet would work. As it has turned out, it has been quite easy to stay together. The twice-daily radio roll call is the "campfire" time as we chat and each vessel reports on their situation. Numerous running jokes carry over from time to time and we have gotten to know each other better through these chats. I start the roll call each morning with 30 seconds of rock and roll music then and my best Robin Williams impersonation of "Gooooood Mooorrrnnning Group 1!!!!"

At noon today, we had a BIG event- we changed the clocks. We sprung forward to Bermuda time so that when we arrive there won't be any mix-ups.

THURSDAY MAY 20 DAN'S NAR REPORT N#4A

We've had a mechanical failure in group 1!! In a late breaking story: It was reported to the group leader that the espresso machine on Que Linda has failed! Disaster!!

Not wanting any of the members of Group 1 to suffer hardships of any kind, Phil, the esteemed chef on Sans Souci, made up an order of 3 lattes for delivery to their vessel. Our valiant young men, Garrett and St. John (pronounced Sinjin) launched San Souci's small dinghy and made the delivery. With Christian at the wheel, Sans Souci made a close pass by Que Linda so that Ken could film the delivery and get shots of Hal and Linda in their hot tub on the upper deck.

When the guys came back in the dingy, they jumped in the water. This was too much for Christian and he also jumped in from the upper deck for a swim in 15,000 feet of water.

This ain't roughin' it,
Dan

MAY 20 - Aboard Atlantic Escort

It's 03:00 on Thursday the 20th and the wheelhouse is again mine alone. Another great day of passagemaking with the best weather yet. As Walt Hack predicted the sea has calmed and the winds have gone variable - a nice break from the 15 to 20 knot easterly that has roughed us up since leaving last Sunday. Today we launched our small Achilles inflatable that we have stowed above our cockpit - resting on the tie rods for our towing bit. This is the rig we'd deploy in rougher conditions when launching the large Caribe from the upper deck might be too dangerous. The launch went without a hitch. James and Justin motored over to Autumn Wind and picked up Georgs Kolesnikovs bringing him back to Atlantic Escort. Georgs was unable to get his email out and came aboard to use our Iridium system. James made another trip over to Autumn Wind and picked up Eric and Mike - bringing them back to Atlantic Escort to visit for the afternoon.

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procedure will be to take Four Across under tow on a 300 foot tow line and then pass the hose to them. We expect the process to take a couple of hours and look forward to the opportunity to test our system in these calm conditions to prepare ourselves in the event fueling or watering a vessel might be necessary in the rougher conditions ahead.

Thats it for now,
Jim Leishman

FRIDAY MAY 21 DAN'S NAR REPORT N#5

It was another magic night aboard Sans Souci. After chef Phil's delicious dinner of Chicken cordon bleu, we conducted the evening roll call. These roll calls are becoming ever more fun as the jokes, pranks and outrageous fishing stories seem to grow. Goleen now claims to have caught Sea Fox's 4 foot fish and (wouldn't you know it) it got away again with a lure. Crosser was boarded by a giant squid which they fought and killed with dental floss. They are now enjoying calamari. While discussing the rather tricky routing in the final approach to the Bermuda Yacht Club, Grey Pearl wanted the Lat/Lon of the nearest bar. And much more.. Emeritus has finally come within radio range and will join tonight's roll call.

My watch last night was 9:00 to midnight. The moonless sky was breathtaking with stars from horizon to horizon. The running lights of our faithful fleet blended with the stars as we floated along on the surreal Lake Atlanticö.

I spent much of my watch standing at the Portuguese Bridge enjoying the balmy air and counting shooting stars. It was so beautiful, that several people who didn't want to waste the experience by sleeping stayed up. We chatted about nothing and everything in a way that just doesn't seem to happen in real lifeö.

The pleasant melodic and reassuring purr of the dry exhaust was a backdrop to the above scene. Our faithful Lugger engine located two flights below us has of course run non-stop since we left Ft Lauderdale without a hiccup. These magnificent engines are designed to run 20,000 hours or more and are superb pieces of machinery. Our trip around the world on the Nordhavn 40 in 2001/2002 put 3,500 hours on the Lugger engine, so you can see that most of us will not live long enough to see our Luggers wear outö.

I talked to Jim last night and this morning by SSB and he was euphoric about the wonderful day that they had in group 2. They launched their RIB and played, fished and moved from boat to boat conducting video interviews for the documentary. Group 2 was 24 miles ahead of us as of this morning, so we plan to catch them sometime this evening.

This morning has dawned with an imperceptible shift in mood and weather. As predicted by weather router Walt Hack, we now have light winds and seas from the west which means from astern. Following seas and winds are of course a sailor's delightö, but the glossy oilyö seas which so captivated us yesterday and now gone. The radio chat and activities on board have now

turned to preparation for tomorrow morning's arrival. Reality has intruded on the special bond that has formed among the 6 vessels of NAR group 1 over the last 4 daysà

It may sound strange to some of you readers, but I almost wish that Bermuda were further away than the 147 miles now showing on the GPSà..

Love being at sea,
Dan

From Dan aboard "San Souci" - May 23th.

With the theme song from the Tom Cruise movie "Cocktail" (Bermuda, Bahama, come on pretty momma) playing in the background, I say:

Good morning from Bermuda! We made it!! The fleet arrived yesterday (Saturday) morning exactly on schedule with pride and satisfaction bursting from everyone on board.

Our last night at sea (Friday night) was filled with excitement as the two fleets finally came together. We first saw group 2 on the radar, then one by one, their stern lights began to appear. It was a wonderfully satisfying moment which validated the endless hours of planning that have gone into this event. For the first time, radio roll call was a combined event in which all 18 boats (including Emeritus) reported their position in order of their size. Throughout the night, the radio was busy with questions and answers about the various issues of arrival.

Around midnight, we began to see the lights of Bermuda. At first, it was just an indistinct sky glow, but then individual lights began to show themselves. Several of us marveled at the oddness of this little rock of land sitting out in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

Our well-crafted arrival plan turned to benign anarchy when we arrived at the entrance to the "Narrows" passage thru the reef. We were to all enter together to give dramatic effect for the people waiting at the yacht club. However, the faster boats ended up about 45 minutes ahead of the slower boats and just proceeded on to the club. In the end all was fine because the staggered arrival actually helped the docking process run more smoothly. I was very proud of the participants as they deftly maneuvered their vessels into their "Med-moor" positions. Anchors were dropped and the powerful ABT bow and stern side thrusters were barking out their presence as each boat was maneuvered into position. Joan and Bruce Kessler were on the docks filming and Milt and Judy Baker with radios in hand were directing the various activities.

The Royal Bermuda Yacht club is PERFECT. It is exactly what one would expect. The building is old and the floors creak, and it reeks with history and British decorum. One expects HRM the Queen Herself to appear at any moment. In fact, she has visited the club twice (in 1953 and in 1994) as evidenced by the photos on the wall. The striking dissimilarity between the pretty smiling young Queen of 1953 and the dour stooped Queen of 1994 is amazing and reminds us that "time waits for no Queen" The walls are covered with old photos of schooners, steam yachts and various yachting characters going back over 100 years. The lobby and trophy room (where the

temporary PAE NAR office has been reestablished) open on to the outdoor bar and eating area. As one comes and goes from the slips, they must pass by the bar area^Γ?^a thus this "watering hole" has quickly become the social center for the participants. In a strange juxtaposition, the bar area is also an internet "hot spot", so the 100 year old edifice steeped in tradition has been invaded by laptops. While in Bermuda, I will be doing my internet business from the yacht club to give some relief to the expensive system aboard Sans Souci.

I can only describe Bermuda in superlatives. I LOVE this place. The air is balmy, the weather is perfect and the mood is friendly and relaxed. The rocky shoreline of the lovely bay that we are located in reminds me of Maine. The pastel colors of the building and houses remind me of a Mediterranean scene, the beautiful lush greenery and flowers reminds me of Singapore. With the knee high socks and the "British" decorum and accents, one at first thinks that this place is stuffy. There is however an almost imperceptible wink that says "hey relax, we don't really mean it.." A local guy came into the club last night wearing a blue blazer with tie, short pants, knee high socks and shiny black shoes. I said to myself - I LOVE this place.

Within a few hours of arrival, we headed up to Smatt's to rent scooters. PAE now has 10 scooters under contract for cruising around the island (no car rentals allowed- only locals are allowed to drive). As our valiant young PAE men roared off (on the left side of the road), Jim turned to me and said that open ocean passage making was child's play compared to the dangers that we are facing here in port.

Ken and Roberta have taken a hotel room for a few days to get some privacy and Christian has taken a hotel room. Christian's very lovely and charming wife Andrea arrived yesterday afternoon and the 3 of us had dinner last night at a quaint Italian restaurant. We hadn't had pasta during the entire passage and Christian said that he was craving it. When we arrived, the best outside tables were all taken. Christian began rattling in fluent Italian and a table magically became available. During the passage, Christian has had non-stop questions about the technical aspects of a passage maker. The dinner conversation was about steering and the interplay between the stabilizers, the rudder and the bulbous bow. He would not quit until he understood it. One can imagine that there have been many similar episodes after practice or qualifying in which the sensitive interplay between down force, gear ratios and tire pressures were discussed to the nth degree.

While wondering the docks, I ran into Bob Rothman of Emeritus and asked him about his wayward course. He finally admitted that he is a loner and a "contrary" guy who isn't comfortable traveling in a group. Thinking to myself, then why did you join a group?, I told him that there wouldn't be much opportunity for him to deviate from the plan for the next leg since it is a straight line from Bermuda to the Azores. With a twinkle in his eye, Bob said "ahhh but you are wrong^Γ?^a there is the rhumb line route and the great circle route" With that Bob and Janis his lovely wife of a lifetime walked away towards the yacht club.

I could not be happier with the rally situation at this point. Leg 1 went perfectly and frankly turned out even better than I had thought. In all of our planning of the details, we had not anticipated the simple FUN and JOY that would come from this rally. I have not done well in naming the individual boats and their owners and crews, but they all have a story to tell and I am

proud of each and every one of them. Without exception, the boats (Nordhavn and non Nordhavn alike) have been well prepared and have been well operated. The competence and confidence of the participants is high and will only grow as the rally proceeds.

This will be my last report, as I must head home soon. Business and personal pressures are calling me and I must heed. Kirk White of PAE will take my position as group 1 leader for the final two legs. I wish the rally group well and know that they will complete this undertaking with great success. This first leg to Bermuda has shown me that the NAR management and the participants themselves are first class and will cope with whatever befalls them.

I will stay here in Bermuda for a few more days, but won't post any more reports. All they would say anyway is: I LOVE this place and we are having fun.

Satisfied,
Dan

From Milt Baker, NAR Organizing Committee - May 23rd.

Leg one of the Nordhavn Atlantic Rally 2004, the first-ever Atlantic crossing by a large convoy of motor yachts, is history.

All 18 rally yachts and their nearly 100 crewmembers arrived safely in Hamilton, Bermuda, at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club on Saturday, May 22, and the rally fleet's first experience with "Med mooring" was smooth as silk--thanks in large measure to good preparation by rally skippers and crews and to light winds and very flat conditions.

For most of the yachts, the trip was about 990 nautical miles.

Division 1, the slow division, departed Fort Lauderdale Sunday afternoon, May 16, in 15-20 knot easterly winds, gusting to 25, and 5-6 foot seas. The 11 Division 1 yachts were led by Nordhavn's company yacht, the Nordhavn 57 Atlantic Escort, skippered by Pacific Asian Enterprises (PAE) vice president Jim Leishman.

The start was documented on video under the direction of Bruce Kessler, who is making a video production on the rally. At times, three helicopters were in the air off Fort Lauderdale with video and still cameras rolling. After the start, the yachts settled down on the slow slog to Bermuda.

To provide a more comfortable ride, rally weather forecaster Walter Hack of Ocean Marine Navigation Inc. called for the fleet to follow the Gulf Stream for 180 miles north before turning for Bermuda. That added about 70 nautical miles to the trip, but by all accounts it worked. By the time Division 1 boats turned for Bermuda, wind and seas were down.

"It was a little bumpy for the first day and a half," one rally crewman reported, "but I think we'd all seen worse. And then it got dramatically better!" The yachts' stabilizers helped a great deal.

The 11 division 1 yachts traveled within sight and VHF radio range of one another all the way to Bermuda. At night they maintained a minimum distance of one nautical mile from one another, and the closed in a bit during the daytime.

Division 1 escort vessel was the Nordhavn 62 Autumn Wind, captained by Bill Smith. Division leader Brad Smith, a PAE employee, was aboard Autumn Wind, and he quickly learned that his expertise was much in demand. Technical questions for Brad came rapidly, and division 1 skippers found him a terrific resource.

The seven Division 2 yachts, larger and faster, departed Fort Lauderdale 24 hours after the first yachts. Their forecast also called for heading 180 miles north in the Gulf Stream before turning. All but one of these yachts followed the recommendation and traveled together, but skipper Bob Rothman of the Nordhavn 57 Emeritus decided to take the most direct course to Bermuda and traveled outside the group. He slowed down on the approach to the island, arriving with the rest of the fleet.

Division 2 escort vessel was the Nordhavn 62 Sans Souci, owned by Ken and Roberta Williams and skippered by Capt. Rip Knot. Acting as division leader aboard Sans Souci was PAE president Dan Streech who did his best Robin Williams imitation on the daily roll calls, opening with a few seconds of rock music followed by a hearty "Goooooood morning Division One!"

Two days out of Bermuda, one crewmember called the weather "oily calm," and another called it perfect trawler weather. The fleet launched small boats, took pictures of one another, swam in 15,000 feet of ocean water, and even delivered lattes to one yacht whose precious cappuccino machine had ceased to function.

PAE is sponsoring the rally is provide owners and crewmembers an opportunity to take part in a safe and enjoyable ocean-crossing event, experience the personal challenge of crossing the Atlantic aboard their own vessels, and enjoy the camaraderie of voyaging with friends and a degree of added safety by having other vessels nearby. Rally staff members travel ahead of the fleet, easing official clearance and making advance arrangements for dockage, duty free fuel and other luxuries and necessities in each port. A physician and two EMTs travel with the fleet, along with PAE technicians and other experts.

Problems aboard rally yachts were remarkably few. Three yachts experienced problems with active fin stabilizer systems, but two of the three ended the passage with stabilization from their systems. One yacht's watermaker ceased to function, and at least one other watermaker was reported leaking. Thanks to satellite telephones and e-mails, parts for the systems were ordered and are expected to meet the boats during the Bermuda stop.

Fuel system problems are common aboard small yachts on offshore passages, especially when the weather is rough. However, the NAR fleet had virtually no fuel problems. A few of the yachts reported changing filters due to dirt in fuel taken on before departure and one broke a fuel fitting, but everything was handled onboard with no significant loss of time or speed.

The yachts reached Bermuda right on schedule, passing Five Fathom Hole at the entrance to the 17-mile channel into Hamilton at first light Saturday and arriving at the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club a few hours later. All 18 yachts were Med moored at the yacht club well before noon, and the demand for lunch on RBYC's scenic patio all but overwhelmed the club's staff.

The Nordhavn Atlantic Rally yachts will be at RBYC for about a week. Division 1 yachts depart for the rally's longest leg--1,800 nautical miles to Horta on the island of Faial in the Azores--on Sunday, May 30, and Division 2 yachts on Tuesday, June 2. All are scheduled to arrive in Horta on Friday, June 11.

After a little over a week in Horta, the yachts depart for the final leg, 1,125 nautical miles to Gibraltar.

The rally fleet consists of 18 yachts ranging from 40 to 90 feet, all but three of them Nordhavns. The yachts include:

Nordhavn 40 Uno Mas, John and Sue Spencer
Nordhavn 46 Satchmo, Bill and Ellen Bane
Nordhavn 46 Envoy, Wayne and Pat Davis
Nordhavn 46 Egret, Scott and Mary Flanders
Nordhavn 46 World Odd @ Sea, John and Dulcie Harris
Nordhavn 46 Star Gazer, Michael Perfit and Kevin Keith
Nordhavn 47 Strickly for Fun, Scott and Terri Strickland
Nordhavn 50 Sundog, Robert Greenbaum
Seaton 55 Que Linda, Hal and Linda Wyman
Nordhavn 50 Four Across, Doug Seaver and Charles Metcalf
Nordhavn 57 Goleen, Chris Samuelson and Sonaia Hermida
Nordhavn 57 Atlantic Escort, Jim Leishman
Nordhavn 57 Emeritus, Bob and Janis Rothman
Krogen 58 Sea Fox, Dennis and Julie Fox
Nordhavn 62 Grey Pearl, Braun and Tina Jones
Nordhavn 62 Autumn Wind, Bill and Arline Smith
Nordhavn 62 Sans Souci, Ken and Roberta Williams
Monk McQueen 90, David Stone

--Milt Baker

Day 5 in Bermuda

Day 5 in Bermuda: the fog is rolling in and it's been raining intermittently. We haven't seen steady sun in 2 days, but the mood continues to shine bright amongst the Rally participants. What a wonderful place Bermuda has been. Beautiful beaches, loads of culture and hospitable residents who instantly befriend you - eager to give so much local knowledge that by the time the week

here is done, we'll hardly feel like visitors still trying to master driving scooters on the wrong side of the road.

The Royal Bermuda Yacht Club has been such a gracious host - that they don't appear to mind that our getting ever-closer knit group has seemingly taken over the joint. With our laid back style and raucous laughter, the Rally participants share lunches at the terrace with RBYC members: two completely conflicting styles, but all with one similar appreciation for the love of our boats and being on the water. More accustomed to seeing sailboats and coastal cruising motorboats, our fleet of long-range trawlers intrigues them. But we all are just as happy to share information on our Nordhavns as they are to share their island with us.

The first few days in Bermuda have been time for play. After the moderately uncomfortable passage from Ft. Lauderdale, everyone was eager to blow off steam and partake in a "Dark and Stormy", the Bermudian beverage of choice. The hours have been passed away with lots of organized dives, scooter tours of the island, shopping trips galore and dinghy rides. Monday, May 24 was Bermuda Day, a national holiday here which was marked by a road race and festive parade. Rally participants lined the road enjoying the Carnivale-like procession with lots of bright-colored costumes, island music and dancing everywhere. Island-style had officially taken over our group.

Late Monday afternoon, the sun ducked in and the winds came a-blowing as a small front parked itself over our island, trying to ruin our good mood. On Tuesday night, 20 knot winds gave a scare to one of the boats that appeared to be dragging anchor. Not used to the med-mooring style of docking, it left many with their guard up for the night, but no more drama ensued.

Now at the mid-way point of our stay, work begins on the boats. A Naiad tech was flown in to work on some stabilizer components that failed while underway on Leg 1. Boxes of parts shipped from the States have arrived via fed ex and the PAE commissioning team has spent the day tackling issues from non-functioning autopilots to a stubborn fuel leak. Brad Smith, division two leader, reports that there's been no major problems, and the guys have a handle on all the worklists. Certainly by tonight's Harbour Night out on Front Street, island-style fun will be in full swing once again.

Bon Voyage Bermuda

With today's departure of the faster boats in Division One, the second leg of the Nordhavn Atlantic Rally officially commenced. In conditions that drastically contrasted from Saturday's calm departure of the slower-paced Division Two boats, the newly pared-down fast group battled 30-knot winds blowing out of the west that made for a hairy exit. Fighting a swift current and strong wind gusts across its beam in addition to having to navigate through a line of mooring balls, Crosser, the flagship of the NAR, lost a couple of fenders and left its mark on the RBYC docks before Nordhavn's Garrett Severen maneuvered the appropriately named T/T Sans Souci (which means "no worries" in French) against the bow of the 90' Monk-McQueen and pushed it

into the clear. The mighty Crosser escaped with merely a few scratches and should be congratulated with essentially winning the tough crusade against the wicked weather. Bystanders commented that the winds were the most severe the area has seen in over a month.

After retrieving Crosser's two lost fenders, Garrett steered the tender over to Grey Pearl. Set up on the dock in front of Crosser, the Nordhavn 62 fared a much easier departure thanks to the full power Captain Braun Jones received from his thrusters which draw off the wing engine. With the thrusters at full strength, Braun was able to quickly get off the dock without much fanfare, save for the fact that Leg One crewmember, Mark Wildman who was helping to handle lines, and who was scheduled to fly out of Bermuda later that night, wasn't able to jump off the boat. Fiancé Mary looked in disbelief from the docks as Mark waved and shrugged his shoulders. "He's been talking about going to Horta all week!" Mary lamented, and then added, "But if he thinks I'm lugging his suitcases to Baltimore by myself, he's nuts!" No worries. Garrett met Mark and delivered him safely back to the pier.

About 15 minutes later, Sans Souci, the Division One escort boat, left the dock and led the new group of 6 boats on a rhumb line to the Azores. Despite the strong winds, conditions looked favorable as the gusts coming out of the west would soon be behind the boats headed on their easterly course.

It was hard to believe that just two days earlier, the Division Two boats enjoyed a light easterly breeze and no troubles at all getting underway. "It's as if the weather gods are looking down on us!" noted Rally coordinator Milt Baker. The newly expanded group included Sea Fox, the 58-foot Krogen, which decided that it was better suited to the slower pace of the smaller boats. Unfortunately, just as it had on Leg One, Sea Fox suffered the loss of a stabilizer, making the 10 days that remain slightly daunting and almost definitely uncomfortable. Poor Julie Fox, who upon hearing the weather forecast out of Fort Lauderdale opted to fly to Bermuda thinking she'd rejoin the boat on the second leg, which, although 4 days longer, was supposed to yield much smoother conditions. The forecast from weather advisor Walt Hack indicates only 5-7 foot seas for the next 5 days, but it's not much consolation for a boat with a broken wing.

Jenny McCauley-Stern

Bon Voyage Bermuda

NOTE: Nordhavn's Commissioning Manager, Kirk White, has taken over as Division One leader on board the escort boat Sans Souci. Here is his first report.

"GET ON THE LEFT!!!" Justin screams as I steer my scooter down the right (normal side) side of the road and cars are headed at me. The drivers are slowing down and probably thinking something about tourists that will not be printed here. What shall I do...move further right? This is my first excursion away from the marina and what fun it was. Following Justin was just like being in the desert, up on the side walk, jumping off curbs, full throttle.

Some things that I learned about Bermuda during my short stay there: Do the terms Dark & Stormy or "swizzle" mean anything to any one? It is possible that this had something to do with Justin's scooter riding abilities.

Speaking of scooters, tourists are not allowed to rent cars in Bermuda, so the only transportation available besides taxis is the scooter. The locals can only have one car per house hold, so they to drive scooters by the gross. Men and women in business suits and ties, golf clubs, you name it, they haul it on the scooter. What is of particular interest is the short skirts and high heels on scooters, hmmm...

So much for that...Fast forward to the business at hand. All vessels in the first group got under nicely on Sunday. Winds favorable, seas favorable. Everyone happy. Yachts running good except for Sea Fox, a Krogen, which has Naiads, and had to pin a fin right out of the box. Don't know how they're getting along.

Today, Grey Pearl, a Nordhavn 62 lost an alternator belt this morning. But they are running on the wing to make the repairs.

Our first medical issue developed on Four Across, the Nordhavn 50. It seems someone on the vessel is possibly passing kidney stones. He is being monitored carefully by our resident doctor, Kevin Ware.

Meanwhile on board Sans Souci, Garrett has caught a very nice tuna that we shall consume with haste, with Wasabe and soy sauce. Phil, our chief, makes a mean tuna roll. All fishing lines are out this morning, no luck yet, the lines have been in the water 15 min.

We tried our best to be entertaining last night at our first roll call for Leg 2, but alas, I feel that Mr. Dan (Streech) took that show and has made it a very difficult act to follow. We shall not give up and will try harder - even if it requires rehearsals.

Please feel free to write in with your questions. If you want a personal reply, just indicate it and I'll be happy to email you direct.