Welcome Email

Our upcoming Advanced Coastal Cruising Class is rapidly approaching!

This is the first of three emails being sent today, with others to follow over the next couple of weeks. Please read the entire email as it contains important information throughout.

Multi-day cruising outside the gate is much different than a simple day sail around the bay. Many of the differences will be discovered as we are underway, however, the first difference is the preparation required. Anytime you go outside the gate, there is homework to be done in the form of studying charts/cruising guides, weather forecasts to track, ocean swell data to consider, and tidal information which determines exit and return dates and times. This homework is not optional. It is critical to the safety of crew and boat!!

Because of the nature of the class, we may need to get an early start on Friday morning, which is one of the reasons for meeting Thursday night. My hope is to meet at 6:00 Thursday evening to provision and plan. Part of our planning will be to determine the best time to cast off Friday morning. Depending on the time we plan to leave on Friday morning, you may want to stay on board Thursday night.

Required Gear

- Harness & tether. This must be a proper sailing harness and tether set up. Homemade and/or climbing gear will not work. Tradewinds does not have or supple harnesses or tethers for the class. Bring your own.
- Gloves
- Plan for seasickness (incl. remedies). Unfortunately, I am not able to provide any medications. Please be proactive and bring your own. Interestedly to me, in past classes, those that were the sickest were the ones that told me ahead of time "I never get seasick." Even if you have never been sick, stuff changes.
- Layers of clothing incl. thermal underwear/socks & spares
- Sleeping bag/pillow
- Optional but recommended - Foul Weather bib overalls and jacket

<Instructor>

Plan a Cruise Assignment

As part of the class, there are 3 projects that directly relate to your success, and I believe enjoyment, in class. This email includes the first of the three projects.

Plan a cruise,
Prepare a lecture, and
Weather-sea state analysis)

My personal goal for you by the end of class is to leave you with the knowledge and skills to safely skipper a vessel from point A to point B, 100 to several hundreds of miles away, generally staying within 100 miles of shore, sailing and/or motoring as required, traveling during daylight and/or night time as appropriate, and stopping at various ports as required by crew and/or vessel limitations. During class we will be traveling approximately 125 miles, with stops in one anchorage and one marina. We should be doing some night time maneuvers (assuming it is safe to do so), and will be discussing the possible need for fuel, as well as consuming meals underway and in port. This first project is designed to help your understanding of all of the above.

As for the first project: Plan a cruise from Marina Bay in Richmond to Ensenada, Mexico, a distance of approximately 500 nautical miles.

Assume you are on a Catalina 42 with a 46 gallon fuel tank, and 100 gallons of water. Assume you have to motor the entire way, and your best cruising/fuel consumption is at 2400 RPM. At that engine speed you will average .75 gallons per hour of fuel consumption, with an average speed over ground of 6 knots. Always leave ¼ tank in reserve. Also, plan what changes you would make if you can sail ½ of the way with an average speed under sail of 4 knots.

Download PDF files of the following two books. There is no need to print them.

Coast Pilot 7 ... https://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/publications/coast-pilot/index.html
Sailing Directions, Pub 153 ... /https://msi.nga.mil/Publications/SDEnroute

Use these, the Advanced Cruising & Seamanship Textbook, and any cruising guides you might have to work out the following questions. Remember that there may not be only one right answer.

How many crew are you going to have. Count yourself as one crew member?
What type of a watch rotation will you need to set up?

What meals will you need while underway? Don't worry about exact menus, just a high level meal plan.
What meals might you cook in port and/or eat ashore while in port? Again, high level.
What ports will you plan to stop at?
What ports will you be required to stop for fuel?
What papers and documents will you need to bring with you to the Port Authorities in Mexico?
You are leaving on June 23. When do you expect to arrive in Ensenada?
What weather is normal at that time of year for the area you are passing through?
Identify any potentially challenging passages?

Please email me with your plan by Friday June 16. Don't try to get detailed answers to every question, challenge, or problem that might arise. Start by getting an idea of what the questions, challenges, and problems will be and come up with a high-level plan. Working to the detail comes later.

This class is one that you will get out of it as much as you are willing to put into it. I hope you will want to get as much out of it as possible. Call or email me if you have questions or need help.

<instructor>

Lecture Assignment Email

ACC Class Lecture Assignments

Good day all.

This is project two.

You are all experienced sailors. As such, I believe you do not need to be bottle fed information by your instructor. In other words, each of you is capable and qualified to research a topic and present that information to your crew. With that in mind, I would like each of you to research a topic and present it to the class. Some of it will be presented Thursday night. Most will be discussions in the cockpit and/or around the table during down times. Much of this information can be found in the text book. The rest can be found online. I might add that each and every topic and bullet point is directly related to one or more test questions.

<participant name> - Center of Effort and Center of Lateral Resistance
Impact of COE vs CLR
Diagraming locations of COE and CLR
Practical method(s) for determining CLR
Actions to move COE forward or aft (aka increase/decrease weather helm)
Flat vs. Full sail(s) actions that will flatten or cause a full sail and when each is beneficial

<participant name>- Weather and cloud identification
Understanding an Ocean Prediction Center surface analysis (see next bullet for a link to get you started)
http://www.opc.ncep.noaa.gov/Pac_tab.shtml (especially the eastern pacific)
Cloud types, their identification, and what they each means as far as weather change expectations (e.g. rain)

<participant name>- Handling heavy weather and emergency situations and their prevention
Heave to vs lying-a-hull (when and how)
Methods for towing (planning, execution, and precautions) including diagrams
Distress signals (all signals provided for in Rule 36 and 37 of colregs)
Advanced anchoring and use of kellet/sentinel and trip lines. How might each anchoring method be used during heavy weather and/or to prevent an emergency (e.g. dragging or collision)
Sail configurations for various weather conditions, including heavy weather.

<participant name>- Sailing in known and unknown waters
Sources of information (discuss cruising guides, Coast Pilot, and Sailing Directions Enroute)
Cautions found in the Coast Pilot regarding exit out of the Golden Gate, and into Pillar Point Harbor and Drakes Bay. We will be using this information to mark a chart with areas to be avoided.
Use Sailing Directions Enroute – Pub 153 West Coasts of Mexico and Central America to discuss information found regarding a planned trip from San Diego to Ensenada (especially sections 2.1 through 2.7).
Calculating fuel capacity, range, and fuel reserve requirements
Planning for water requirements

<instructor>

Meals

We need to figure out meal assignments. I recommend everyone eat dinner before arriving Thursday. There will be several meals to prepare onboard, including 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 1 or 2 dinners. We will be staying one night in Pillar Point Harbor (most likely at the dock) and one night in Drakes Bay at anchor. An option for one of the dinners is to go to one of the restaurants that are within easy walking distance of Pillar Point Harbor.

Please start communicating with each other immediately regarding meal assignments. Are there any dietary requirements and/or food requests, as well as who wants to do what in the way of meals.

A small warning … the oven on the boat is small … anything to be baked needs to be in a small pan.

And a recommendation … keep it simple. During a 500-mile coastal cruise you will NOT be preparing elaborate meals while underway. Anything that can be precooked probably should be precooked. Hot liquids on a stove while underway may not be the best choice.

<instructor>

Weather/Sea State Go/no-go Email

Beginning immediately, conduct a weather/sea state analysis

Read “Exiting Chrysopylae … “The Golden Gate” also known as “Is it safe to head out the gate?” at http://tradewindssailing.com/wordpress/?p=1981 . Check the tides and currents through the Golden Gate to determine the best times to transit outbound and on the return. Pay special attention to the Coast Pilot to determine if it is best to transit or avoid the gate on an ebb.

Beginning immediately, do a daily weather and sea state analysis using the links provided on the Tradewinds web site and those provided below. Based upon the information contained in " Is it safe to head out the gate?" and your personal analysis of the weather/sea state, make a go/no-go decision. Each of you should e-mail me no later than noon the first day of class with your go/no-go recommendation.

Here are a couple of weather links that I find especially valuable. Some of these are already on the Tradewinds site, and you may have already found them. Some of the other links are not.

http://marine.weather.gov/MapClick.php?w0=t&w1=td&w3=sfcwind&w3u=0&w10=swlp&w11=swlm&w12=swlp2&w13=swlm2&w14=wwh&w15=wvh&AheadHour=0&Submit=Submit&FcstType=graphical&textField1=37.7632&textField2=-122.5852&site=all&unit=0&dd=&bw=&marine=1

This is a point forecast provided in graph form. It is very readable, and the weather elements you show can be changed to suit your needs. This graph shows something called significant wave height (SWH). It is an estimate of the average of the biggest 1/3 of the waves that are expected. Combined seas tells you the biggest waves to expect, while (SWH) lets you know what you will be “hit with” on a regular basis. In other words, how comfortable will the waves be. I use (SWH) in my go/no go decision making. When the (SWH) is equal to or greater than the period, I don’t go. For example, a (SWH) of six feet isn’t bad, however, if those waves are coming at a six second period, it gets very uncomfortable, and I don’t recommend going. This link is set for 8 miles outside the gate. You can change it by changing the Lat/Lon in the web address.

http://forecast.weather.gov/shmrn.php?mz=pzz545&syn=pzz500

Very good, very easy to read five day forecast of weather and sea state in the area off the Golden Gate, out to 10 miles, shown in simple text.

https://ocean.weather.gov/Pac_tab.php

This is the ocean prediction center's main briefing page for the eastern pacific. It includes current and forecast surface analysis pages. Learn to read a surface analysis and you will never regret it. Here is a link to a YouTube video that does a pretty good job of describing the info found on a surface analysis; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9AfqznSwk4 . One thing the video doesn't mention is that generally, the closer together the isobar lines, the harder the wind is blowing.

The ocean prediction center link also includes current and forecast data on wind, wave, and sea state conditions.

http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_page.php?station=46026

The most recent data available regarding conditions at the San Francisco weather buoy, 18 miles offshore from San Francisco. This link also includes historical data of conditions at that buoy.

See you next week.

Don