

## Log for distribution 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005

From: Wotan [<mailto:mfuu8@sailmail.com>]  
Sent: 01 December 2005 02:48  
To: Bimbi Fawcett  
Subject: Wotan's log for distribution

Hi All,

I have forgotten exactly when I sent an all stations missive so this is the story to date. We left la Gomera on Thursday 17th November and soon found ourselves in no wind. We were getting excited about sailing at 2 knots it was so bad. To make matters worse our water maker died two days out so we were a somewhat pongy crew. I may say they bore the disappointment of no hot showers, on which they had been sold the trip, very well. It was not until 22nd November that any serious wind set in by which time we were about half way, 400 miles, to Mindelo in the Cape Verdes. On Thursday 24th November we were awakened in the small hours by the smell of smoke which we soon identified after a brief search as coming from the lead from the towed generator. There was a short, which as soon eliminated by unplugging the towed generator. That evening we stormed into Mindelo, down the channel between Sao Vincente and Sao Antao with a NW 6-7 abaft the beam. We anchored in Mindelo at 2300 and set about some aquavit which Simon had thoughtfully provided.

Mindeló has had a rather bad press in the guide books and pilot books as being home to a band of pickpockets, petty thieves, dodgy boat boys and all manner of low life. This could not be further from the truth as almost without exception the people we met have been kind and helpful. We cleared in without much trouble other than a 45 minute wait at the Immigration, caused by the large number of yachts in the harbour, probably about 100. We soon discovered the Club Nautico, which has about as much resemblance to a sailing club as a pavement cafe, which in effect it is. Anyhow the yachties gather there in large numbers to swap stories of daring-do or nurse their wounds! We found a number of good restaurants including the Club Nautico and a reasonable supply of supermarkets and great fish and vegetable markets.

Some things did get lost in translation. I discovered that the chicken pieces I was due to cook tonight turned out to be a proverbial sow's ear!!

On Sunday we went by ferry to Sao Antao the island just north of Mindelo. We were accosted by an Alguer driver on the boat and eventually did a deal with him for a day's tour at half his initial asking price thanks to Chris Creak's excellent negotiation skills. An alguer is a pick up truck with bench seats and a canvas canopy, rather like a small army truck, which plies for hire all over the islands. The south side of the island is a barren moonscape, but the north side is staggeringly beautiful and covered in lush vegetation thanks to the moist Atlantic air which deposits water on the north slopes of the island. At the top of the island at 1400 metres is the volcanic crater, which is intensively cultivated. The volcano is extinct!

The mountains are very new and have knife edged ridges, which are intensely cultivated with little houses dotted all around. There is a highly developed system of paths which form the basis of a developing tourist industry. We had a delightful lunch in a village overlooking the sea with a charming French couple who had joined us on the alguer. They are sailing around the world and will be following us

across the Atlantic a day or so later. They have an immaculate 53 foot Amel laid out to live aboard, with a washing and a washing up machine. Christine was very jealous and was seriously thinking about jumping ship!

We left Mindelo late on Monday afternoon, 28th November, in beautiful sunshine after a trying day buying provisions, water and clearing out. Since leaving Mindelo we have been stonking along on a great circle course to Barbados at 7 knots. This morning we received a Mayday Relay from Falmouth CG over the SatC informing us of a yacht about 65 miles south of us which was sinking. Within a few minutes the VHF was alive with traffic of yachts heading to help as were we. Soon after the first message we were informed by Falmouth CG that a motor vessel was on the way to assist and we were stood down. I found the response very reassuring.

Tonight Simon has kindly agreed to cook as my chicken recipe is clearly not to be! We are at 17 deg 8 min North; 30 deg 23 min West, 1700 miles from Barbados.

With best wishes from all on Wotan