

## Log for distribution 6<sup>th</sup> December 2005

-----Original Message-----

From: Wotan [<mailto:mfuu8@sailmail.com>]

Sent: 06 December 2005 23:15

To: Bimbi Fawcett

Subject: Wotan's log for distribution

Hi all,

Since my last missive it has transpired that Caliso, the mayday yacht, is owned by a syndicate which includes the O'Kellys from Itchenor and the Leggets ex of Itchenor and friends of many of the crew on Wotan. Fleur O'Kelly was on the yacht crossing the Atlantic and was picked up by MV Endless. They left the yacht in a sinking condition, but we have been told that there is talk of trying to salvage the yacht. We are all delighted that they are safe.

On Thursday we decided to set the spinnaker, which in the lighjt wind up to 10 knots served us very well. We debated leaving it up for the night, normally regarded by cruising yachtsmen as an unseamanlike practice. We decided to keep it up as the weather outlook seemed benign. In celebration I attempted a twilight burst of star sights and failed to get even a single one before the horizon vanished. The RYA requires you to demonstrate that you have taken star sights for the Ocean Yachtmaster Certificate. All I can say is I will have to do a Donald Crowhurst and make up a set of sights to keep the examiner happy!

During Saturday the wind took off and despite our spinnaker we only achieved a day's run of 124 miles. During the night the wind picked up ti give us 5-6 knots. I had a wonderful dancing at the wheel to Eric Clapton as we sailed into the dark! Come Sunday morning the wind had dies again, so we had to take the spinnaker down and start motoring, the first time we had given into the dreaded iron foresail on this leg of the voyage. Later in the afternoon we were able to get the spinnaker up again and by nightfall we were storming along Christine reported squalls up to 15 knots when I came on deck. I had a look around on the radar and saw two rain squalls approaching and decided to leave the spinnaker up, foolish man! By 0030 I was trying to deal with gusts of 25-30 knots and Wotan was out of control. I called up the watch below who came up very quickly in various states of deshabelle. We decided to bring in the spinnaker but as soon as we eased the guy to trip the spinnaker, the spi pole broke at the mast fitting and the spinnaker went skywards, ending all chances of tripping it. The effect of the wind did the job for us as the tack tore off, satisfactorily shredding the spinnaker! Happily the spinnaker is repairable and no one was hurt. Spinnakers have a way of their own and needed to be safely back in the toy box before the going gets tough. With that sentiment, I am sure Skippette would agree.

At about 0300 this morning we breached the 1000 miles to go mark. We had a hat party at lunch time at which only Simon attended properly dressed.

Christine bemoaned the lack of her red high heeled numbers, which she complained were stuck below the spinnaker which she could not move.

Chris and I regarded the whole situation with equanimity, what ever that means!

We are glad to be missing the cold and dreadful weather back home. The met situation for the UK, which we study avidly looks decidedly uninspiring.

With best wishes from all on Wotan