

Dawg Tales



Newsletter



Salty Dawgs at Cooper Island BVI

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From the Helm

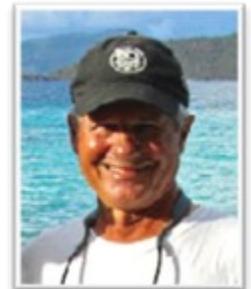
Greetings all Salty Dawg Members and subscribers.

Welcome to a New Year, and a host of Salty Dawg activities for all Members and friends to enjoy this Spring and Summer! For those doing some cruising or chartering in the Caribbean this winter, we have a great Salty Dawg Rendezvous event coming up. Our 5th Annual **Dominica Rendezvous** with an array of Salty Dawg and local events going on all week, March 15th - 22nd, details inside.

Next up will be our **Spring Rally to the US**, departing the BVI May 12th. And then, our **Rally to Maine** from two start locations – Chesapeake Bay or Newport, RI area. More details on these fun and well managed rallies are inside.

And, this summer includes three more great Rendezvous events for Members and anyone interested in blue water sailing. Our **Mid-Summer Rendezvous** July 10th in Hampton VA, the **Newport Rendezvous** July 14th, and our **Downeast Rendezvous** July 20th at The Apprenticeshop, Rockland, ME. Save these dates and stay tuned to our website and our next newsletter for more details on these Rendezvous events.

And, as I've said before if you haven't joined yet, your Membership in this neat organization is awaiting. [JOIN](#)



Cheers!
Hank George, President, SDSA



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Cruising Articles

Emergency Onboard

by Armin Stauch, S/V HECTOR

Below is a Captain's account of the emergency situation aboard SV HECTOR in the 2019 Fall Rally to the Caribbean when the U.S. Coast Guard air-dropped medication to an ailing crewmate. Remarkable teamwork & lessons learned.

The Crew, The Boat and The Trip

We were a crew of 6, including myself as owner and captain of HECTOR. I purchased the boat in August of 2018 in Greece and have the experience of about 6,000 nautical miles.

Before Departure

We met at HECTOR, my 44' catamaran, almost a week before the Salty Dawg rally would start in Hampton Virginia, because I insisted on learning about each other and preparing ourselves in the best possible way. I provided very detailed safety instructions to all aboard and explained the necessity of emergency grab packs. We prepared two grab packs for our passage. We also had a serious discussion about medical issues and requested everyone to disclose and detail their medical issues and history. I asked everyone about their critical conditions and requested contact information for their medical providers, family members or friends. We were very clear about the importance of disclosing medical conditions. We received some information, but none from one crew member, let's call him 'John'. He stated not to have any problems.



The Wakeup

While underway at night and during my off-watch, I was awoken by 'John'. 'John' knocked on my cabin door and told me there is a problem he needs to inform me about. I heard him say, it's nothing with the boat and it's a personal issue, and he would like to share it just with me. Okay, I said, and we settled inside the salon while the night watch team were at the helm.

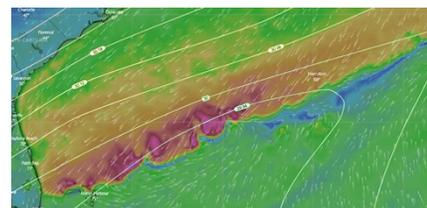
'John' explained to me that he was on the toilet a couple of minutes ago and flushed down most of his pills that were life critical to him and he could only find 5 remaining pills on the floor. The rest must have fallen into the toilet and been flushed out to the sea. He was searching for them everywhere. Five pills are fine for another 2.5 days but we were about 7 to 9 days away from our target in Antigua. I asked him where and how he stored the pills and he showed me a box with about 70 pills consisting of 4 or 5 different medications. All other meds were not essential, and he only had 5 essential pills remaining. These essential pills were necessary to keep 'John' alive. 'John' was a liver transplant survivor and needed these meds daily to keep the body from rejecting the liver.

The Group Discussion

I decided to include two other crew in the conversation so I had the benefit of their objective perspective and for accurate language translation as I'm German. 'John' explained what happened again. All of us were asking similar questions, such as; Why were you taking pills at the toilet? Why do you store your life important pills together with several others in one box? Why did you decide to go to the toilet, stand up, open your pill box, then flush the toilet and then recognize that some were flushed down? We all tried to understand 'John's' actions, but after a while we determined it was not worth asking more "why" questions and decided we needed to find a solution.

The Weather Situation

We were getting weather updates from Salty Dawg management several times a day by our satellite phone and had been advised that a massive storm front was approaching from Canada. The Salty Dawg weather expert, Chris Parker from Marine Weather Service, gave us daily reports about the location we should attain for our safety. The critical position was about 150 miles south southeast of our current position and the timeline to reach it was less than 20 hours. Having said that, we couldn't waste time talking and thinking if we desired to avoid a storm with 40 or more knots of wind. Our current position at that time was about 140 miles south of Bermuda.



Shoreside Communication

Our first action was to inform the Salty Dawg Shoreside Coordinators about the situation. They reacted very spontaneously and provided us with contact details for Bermuda authorities. We also contacted one of the crew's wife ashore and asked her to get information to/from 'John's' doctors. It was much easier for her to contact them than for us to do this via satellite phone. 'John' tried to get in contact with his doctors and friends via satellite messaging. As we were able to read satellite messages, we discovered none of his friends knew anything about his liver transplant and medical condition.



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Pics & Fun



Salty Dawg Founders, Linda, Bill & Zoe Knowles



Get Your Member Bugee [HERE](#)

Sail to the Bahamas

by Peter Baumgartner, S/V The Charles Edward

I have joined 5 sailing organizations to enjoy a variety of experiences and recently joined the Salty Dawg Sailing Association (SDSA) to participate in their **2019 Fall Rally to the Bahamas**. I arrived Hampton, VA at the Bluewater Yachting Center on October 25th and started to get myself and my 38' catamaran ready for the passage. The benefit I got by participating in the Salty Dawg Fall Rally was the support of many experienced sailors helping me to have a safe sail across hundreds of miles of open ocean.

This was my first ocean passage as an experienced skipper. To build my confidence, I attended many Salty Dawg **educational seminars**. Fellow sailors and boatyard workers came aboard to look at my rig. I received daily briefings during group meetings covering what to expect and how to prepare.

I wanted three crewmates to join me for passage, and selected two from the Salty Dawg **Crew List Service** who maintained good resumes. The third crewmember was my brother Charles. Once we were all at Bluewater Yachting Center in Hampton, VA, we listened closely for the much desired "weather window". To give us guidance on weather, the SDSA hired renowned meteorologist **Chris Parker of Marine Weather Center**. His briefings provided information about the Jet Stream, troughs, energy zones and possible pressure systems that were moving in our direction. He used several models and gave his opinion on what the models were suggesting for our routes. He interpreted the data as it related to wind speed and direction then moved on to waves and ocean currents.



Salty Dawg Crewmate

While I struggled in the early days to understand the significance of all he was saying, it all became clear by November 2nd.

On November 1st, I spoke with my crew and we shared our opinions about when to get underway. As Captain, I made the preliminary decision to plan to leave at sunrise on Sunday, November 3rd when the weather forecast and outgoing current were favorable. But at the Salty Dawg weather briefing on November 2nd, it became clear that by departing within the next couple of hours, the wind direction would allow the Salty Dawgs sailing to the Bahamas to be on a beam reach and broad reach for most of the voyage. The wind for the first 3 days would be in the teens, with wave heights up to 6 and 8 feet, mostly off the port quarter or stern. Then on the 4th day, winds would calm, and we would want to motor sail in order to be in Spanish Wells, before a strong frontal system arrived on Friday with gusts to 40 knots. The WX Briefing and senior Dawg advisory discussion ended at 17:00 and by 17:30 we could see seven Salty Dawg rally boats, including us, on our way.

We sailed from Hampton, cleared Cape Henry, roughly followed the red line of coastal buoys to Cape Hatteras. We then sailed southeast crossing the Gulf Stream. At the edges of the "stream" the fishing was good. Brother Charles had brought 4 fishing poles and we were getting lots of hits, but the 50-pound test was too light and we lost our bait. Then we pulled in a fish that was eaten by sharks, and finally landed a yellowtail amberjack that we cooked.

Our first landfall was to be Egg Island but we made a pilot error during the approach and we ran aground over the coral reef. It was at slow speed, but I had no business being close to this coral garden. Greatly alarmed, with a look out on the bow, we backed out of the coral garden and went wide around to Egg Island where we anchored and got to know some of the other Salty Dawgs.

The next day, we sailed to the end of Royal Island where we met the harbor pilot Woody. He came aboard the sailboat in front of us, tied his boat aft, and then led our four vessels through the ship crowded Spanish Wells, then through Devil's Backbone to Harbour Island.

Harbour Island's amenities include "pink" sand beaches, snorkeling reefs and fun night life. Many Salty Dawgs docked at Romora Bay Marina and Valentine's Marina. Others anchored and took dinghies to the island. Romora Marina staff members greeted us with rum drinks and a banana cake. By Saturday, many of us were looking for a place to watch football. Brother Charles drank beers and watched a college game with Denver Bronco's General Manager John Elway at the nearby Valentines Resort/Marina.

I'll likely spend considerable time in the Bahamas aboard *The Charles Edward* from January through April. Then in May, I'll participate in another rally bringing my catamaran north to Rhode Island.

To read more about Salty Dawg activities and my hurricane relief effort, please [CLICK HERE](#).



Salty Dawg Education Seminars



Downwind Sails for the Cruising Sailor

by [Dave Flynn](#), [Quantum Sails](#)



“Here’s what you need to know about downwind sails before you talk to your sailmaker”

With a little luck and patient scheduling, the majority of extended cruising miles should feature plenty of off the wind work. While standard working sails are fine when the wind is forward of the beam, they are less than ideal at wind angles greater than 90 degrees apparent. Small size, heavy construction, and the fact that they get blanketed behind the mainsail, make them less than ideal tools for the job. Fortunately cruising sails to optimize downwind performance have come a long way in last decade or so, and cruising sailors now have a range of options. Let’s take a look.



Since time immemorial, the classic approach has been to add a “cruising spinnaker.” But what is a cruising spinnaker? Traditionally it was a relatively heavy nylon sail (usually 1.5oz), with a foot length between 1.65 and 1.8 of the “J” (foretriangle length from base of mast to forestay), and a mid-girth (width halfway up the sail) of 90-95% of the foot length. Shaping was usually pretty much like a symmetrical spinnaker with the leech shortened so that the sail had a distinct luff and leech and was designed for the tack to be set at a fixed point on the bow. This got rid of the pole, and voila, the asymmetric spinnaker.

The modern world of “asymmetric” spinnaker design opens up a range of options. Sizing and shaping have become much more sophisticated. The basic concept is this; a spinnaker that is larger and has more shape is better at broad angles. A sail that is smaller and flatter is happier at close angles. Everything in between is possible. The mid-girth measurement is a key guide. A runner will have a mid-girth equal to or even greater than the foot. A moderate reacher maybe 90%. A code zero 60-70%. To support girth you must add depth or the sail will just flutter, so bigger equals deeper.



The other design issue is how the area is balanced between luff and leech, and specifically how much is placed forward of the straight line luff. Asymmetrics for running have plenty of positive area forward of the straight luff which can rotate around to weather of the centerline when the sheet is eased and allow the sail to project from behind the mainsail. Optimize for closer reaching angles and this area is reduced. A Code Zero or Screacher (multihull version of the Zero) might have virtually none and be essentially straight or even hollow like a genoa.

There is also the simple issue of size. On a cutter with a big foretriangle (“J”), using 180% as a multiplier to determine foot length gets you a big sail. Maybe too big to handle conveniently. Conversely, on a boat with a small “J” (fractional rigs and modern mastheads) the bigger multiplier may be required to give the sail enough power to be worth it. Many cruising boats are adding bowsprits which open up options even further. With a sprit the only limitation on size might be the “aspect ratio,” or height versus width. Usually you don’t want to get too tall and skinny, or too wide and stubby. A balance is important to the sail’s performance.

Another consideration is boat speed. The higher the speeds a boat is capable of, the further forward it pulls the apparent wind. Longer boats go faster. Some modern designs, especially on the cruising multihull side of the equation, are getting quite fast. This means that smaller, flatter designs will work well. On a typical moderate displacement design of medium size, the apparent wind angles are usually wider, so there is more need for bigger and fuller.

Finally, what does the rest of the inventory look like? If a big, overlapping genoa is the primary working headsail, then closer reaching angles up to a beam reach and even a little aft will be covered. If the primary working sail is a small, non-overlapping jib or self-tacker, the boat is going to need help as soon as the sheets are eased.

So, what flavor do we need? Well, there is no free lunch. It comes down to the apparent wind angle you want optimize for. Most cruising sailors want simplicity. One sail to do it all.

The middle road means apparent wind angles of 80-140. Moderate overall size, keeping in mind the size of the “J.” Girth in the range of 90-95%. Moderate depth and projection forward of the straight line luff. This is what in many sail makers vernacular is an “A3” all-purpose reaching sail.



Halloween Fun!



Want to optimize for broad reaches and apparent wind angles of 110-155? Go bigger and consider a sprit. 180% foot length and 100% mid-girth with lots of shape and luff projection. Often described as A2.

Fabric weight is boat size dependent, but one can assume that the typical cruising sailor will not be using the sail in more than 20 knots apparent so lighter weights makes sense for an A2 or A3. Lighter fabric will also help the sail fly in the target range and make the sail much easier to store and handle.

At the other end of the spectrum are the small, flat, genoa-like sails like the Code Zero. These are really big reaching genoas as much as anything else. Foot lengths will be shorter, 150-165% of J, girths will be in the 55-70% range, shape will be flat and luff projection minimal. Optimum apparent wind angles will be 50-120. Fabric weight will need to be stronger and more genoa like as well. These sails often require specialized composite materials. Nylon has too much stretch for the loads they see at close apparent wind angles.



Handling systems come down to a choice between spinnaker socks and top down furling systems. Socks are simple and work well particularly on spinnakers with big girths. Top down furlers work but can struggle as the girths get bigger. The work well on smaller, flatter sails. Big width up high is still tough to get furled tightly and reliably. Top down furlers also need clearance between headstay and furled sail. A sprit really helps. A proper torsional rope is critical. Expense is higher.

So what would my dream, no budget inventory be for downwind sailing? I'd have a big A2 runner in a sock for broad angles. For reaching, a Code Zero on a top down furler. The Code Zero would take the place of a big overlapping genoa allowing me to use a small, easily handled and more versatile headsail for upwind work. Both would set on a sprit.



Coming Events

Rallies

2020 Rally Registration is Open!

We're excited to let you know that we've opened registration for three 2020 Salty Dawg rallies. Now you can sit at home by the fire or on the boat in a Caribbean harbor and plan an entire year of Salty Dawg cruising adventures. [Click here to find out more...](#)



First up on the rally schedule is our [Spring Rally to the US](#) The fleet will depart the Virgin Islands on May 12, weather permitting, heading to Blue Water Yachting Center in Hampton, VA (or other ports on the US east coast) or to Bermuda. Join us in the British Virgin Islands for pre-departure activities beginning on May 1. For more information on the Spring Rally [Read More](#).

The Salty Dawg Rally to Maine is scheduled to depart the Chesapeake Bay on July 10. We'll gather in Hampton on July 8. Or you can elect to join the rally activities in Dutch Harbor, RI starting July 13 with a planned departure on July 15. It will be a terrific Downeast Adventure! [Read More](#).

Join the largest rally from the U.S. to the islands each year: **The Salty Dawg Fall Rally to the Caribbean**. Pre-departure events will begin on Oct. 26 in Hampton, VA and departure is scheduled for Nov. 2. Choose your destination – Antigua or the Abacos in the Bahamas. The Fall Rally opens the door to new friends and experiences while cruising the Caribbean. [Read More](#).



The SDSA unites experienced ocean sailors with developing cruisers to broaden their blue water horizons. All Salty Dawg rallies and events are led by seasoned sailors who volunteer their time and knowledge to help cruisers realize their dreams - safely.

Registration is as easy as **A-B-C-Departure!** Questions? Contact Tatja at tatja@saltydawgsailing.org

Rallies * Rendezvous * Education



Underway



[Join Now!](#)

Rendezvous & Seminar

2020 Rendezvous

We've got some great social and educational Rendezvous events lined-up for 2020! Join your Salty Dawg friends and others to share friendship and camaraderie at the following events:

- **Dominica Rendezvous** - March 15-22
- **Midsummer Rendezvous** in Hampton, VA - July 9
- **Newport Rendezvous** in Dutch Harbor, RI - July 14
- **Downeast Rendezvous** in Rockland, ME - July 19
- **9th Annual Annapolis Rendezvous**, Annapolis, MD - October 8
- **Costume Party and Pig Roast** in Hampton, VA - October 31



Please [Click Here](#) for more detail and to Register for our Rendezvous.

Annapolis Seminar – Oct. 7, 2020 - Annual day-long passage-making seminar. [Click Here](#) for Info.

The Tale End

Welcome Aboard!

We would like to welcome the McCammon Family as new Members to the Salty Dawg family!

The McCammons recently purchased the sailing vessel Sapphire from Bill and Linda Knowles. The pretty blue former Flagship of the Salty Dawg Sailing Association will be loved and will help give the McCammon Family an experience of a lifetime.

Will, Becky, Drew, Josh and Sarah McCammon are a lovable North Carolina family of 5 that homeschool and are always looking for adventure! You may even see them in a rally. Please say hello if you see them!



New Sponsor!

We are pleased to announce that [PredictWind](#) has come aboard as a Major Sponsor of the Salty Dawg Sailing Association. Members will be able to subscribe to PredictWind apps at special prices. And, PredictWind will support a new workshop for Salty Dawgs on offshore weather routing, weather forecasting, and navigation. And, much more. A notice will be distributed to members and subscribers with all the details shortly.



Member Boats For Sale

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