Bermuda Stop-over during Caribbean Rally

Pros and Cons

Pros

* Excellent haven for bad weather diversion
* Breaks the trip up into two shorter legs allowing for rest
* Refuel, water, and provision stop
* Planned or unplanned crew change is possible, allowing for two separate “one week” commitments for each crew.
* Good marine services if needed
* SDSA has a cruising permit fee waiver, possible access to duty free fuel, and a few events
* During stopover a limited amount of touring opportunities are available

Cons

* Weather windows may be lost, or once there, finding a new window may require lengthy delays.
* Not a direct route, so total miles is higher
* Physical and psychological momentum of a non-stop passage will be lost
* Opportunities to participate in first Rally activities in Antigua may be missed
* Risk of losing crew during stop
* Bermuda stop can be expensive
* Extra burden of check-in and out

Newport Departure for New England Based Boats

Pros and Cons

Pros

* For New England boats, a separate, October passage to Hampton, VA is eliminated. This eliminates all the burdens of two passages.
* Start is much further east than from Hampton (“built-in easting”)
* Bermuda as a safe-haven is nearly on the rhumb-line so adding a planned or an unplanned stop adds fewer overall miles to the trip

Cons

* Colder first few days, and higher risk of encountering storm conditions early
* Crossing the Gulf Stream from Newport could be more challenging
* Weather windows for departure may be more limited than from Hampton
* While a Bermuda stop may be on the rhumb-line, all the negatives of such a stop will be in-play
* Less suited for less-experienced crews