



# Skylarking Across the Big Pond

*By Tom Lohre*



## Three Mile Marina

It all started in a tucked away marina in East Hampton. In 1980 Tom was living in New York City. He met a doctor who had just purchased a sail boat berthed in the Chesapeake. The doctor wanted to take the boat to East Hampton and knowing that Tom had experience sailing asked him to come along. The harbor they sailed into would become a second home for Tom while living in the City.

The marina was like the Sanford and Sons Junk Yard of marinas. Old boats, cars, stacks of metal and material laid strewn around in a organized but scattered manner. There were no amenities. The bathroom and shower were just a notch above the Clampits outhouse. The water had a strong odor from long ago dumping of chemicals. The source well provided non-potable water. Water was scarce commodity and whatever you do, do not wash



your car with it. The marina owner, Don, was adamant about conserving what water there was in the well. Don was a work of art himself. A towering man who knows everything. As a young boy he started his



## Log:

Sat May 16 Arrived on the feast of Saint Brennan

Sun May 17 Installed hand rails outside and in

Mon May 18 Installed Oven

Tues May 19 Stitched spots on genoa sail

Wed May 20 Spliced anchor rope with 1/4"- 4 line hold down

Thurs May 21 Caulked chain plate covers

Fri May 22 Caulked stanchions

Sat May 23 Cut and installed main hatch handle, Peter's Party

Sun May 24 Installed front hatch

Mon May 25 Cleaned fuel tank, Charlie's Party

Tues May 26 Installed hatch handles and holder

Wed May 27 Shopped for groceries

Thurs May 28 10 am left East Hampton; noon: 41.023100, -72.182400; arrived in Newport 11 pm,

entrepreneurship during the war by fixing appliances since no new ones were being made. Perfecting a way to twist broken nichrome heating wire in toasters he charged a quarter. In short order he had money to buy whatever he wanted. He went on to become an engineer working on the secret Montauk Project. The government project was the source for the movie "Contact" starring Jodie Foster. Word has it that they built the machine and when trying to teleport a battle ship with crew the ship appeared but with some of its crew embedded between metal bulkheads.

Needless to say the marina attracts the Bohemians, artists, misfits, etc. The normal marina in the area is super clean. Word has it that when Don goes to the big crane in the sky his marina cannot be sold. Don built the marina from a swamp many years ago. He

recently rebuilt the coffer dams that make up the edge of the land. In the late winter the land is crowded with sail boats propped up with screw stands placed judiciously around the hull. Each stand sits on a backing piece of plywood preventing it from sinking into the sand. By early spring the yard comes alive with power tools humming and power washers hammering at the old finish on the hulls that were not pressure washed when they were taken out. When you walk around you could swear that a few of the derelict boats were or are currently being used as homes. Occasionally you see men wandering around like they have become hermits from society

Saint Brennan  
August Corn







Fri May 29 Newport RI; Pick up life raft, noon: 41.485000, -71.319300; go to art opening;

Thurs May 30 8 am leave Newport for Province Town; noon: Just out of Buzzards Bay Canal, MA 41.788400, -70.467000



## Why I Wanted to Go

My reason for wanting to sail long distances derived from my career as a fine artist. Never having great success monetarily selling my art but still do it as my sole means of support, I developed a routine of going to great places were the wealthy hired me to paint. I learned to cook excellent food because I could not afford to go to restaurants. I learned to dress well out of thrift stores and all round live like the wealthy as I worked for the wealthy.

Later when I sailed into these same wealthy resorts making land as a huge expense. All on board shared docks

fees, fuel, food, ice, beer, etc. We all had a hefty credit card bill the month after we returned home.

While I was perfecting my talent in my thirties others were perfecting their ability to make money. My development as an artist took place in Greenwich Village, New York City where I was quintessential village fine artist. My friends were excellent artists and we all steadfastly refused to compromise our talents. My talent would take me through life much like a bird that did not reap or sow.

My skills as a waterman were welcomed and I gladly stuck my neck out creating debt while on these sailing vacations.

Now I see clearly how to proceed: buy my own boat; load it up with homemade hard biscuit, dried meat and fruit, peanuts and find two other sailors with similar tastes and set out yearly sails from Chicago to Mackinaw, Toledo to Buffalo or North Carolina to the Bahamas. You could do it in a 25 foot sailboat. When not on the water I could park it in my yard and Helen, my daughter, could use it as a playhouse until she came along.



## Across the pond, by way of Greenland

By Beth Young

The East Hampton Press

May 19, 09 6:11 PM

[http://www.27east.com/story\\_detail.cfm?id=211400](http://www.27east.com/story_detail.cfm?id=211400)

On Wednesday morning, when George DuBose and his three crewmates leave the dock in Three Mile Harbor headed for Ireland, there will be just 3,000 miles, the occasional iceberg, the fog of the North Atlantic and harbors filled with ever dangerous breeding and breaching right whales between Mr. DuBose and his home.

Mr. DuBose bought his 36-foot, 1973 Pierson sloop, *Skylark*, sight-unseen on eBay in 2007, despite warnings from a surveyor that the boat's electronics were useless and its deck had serious leaks that had damaged the woodwork in the cabin, in the hopes of sailing it to Europe so he could spend more time with his wife and two sons, who live in Cologne, Germany.

He has kept a boat in East Hampton for 21 years, and decided to set up shop here while refitting the *Skylark*

because the cost of doing the work in this country is three to four times less than it would be in Europe.

"Some people, their big adventure is 18 holes of golf, but I'm a sailor," he said as he put a thick layer of caulk between the deck and a new hatch cover on a rainy Monday afternoon. His gear for the trip was strewn all over the deck and the dock. Several teak handrails had yet to be installed, and two members of his crew—electrician Andy Heermans and first mate Tom Lohre, a painter and experienced riverboat man—were already muttering good-natured mutiny down below about "Captain Crabby," who broke a screw as he installed the hatch. They'd just installed a three-burner propane stove for the trip, but their chef, who had prepared a fine menu for the voyage, had just backed out of the trip due to a family emergency. Mr. DuBose was counting on a diesel can full of Scotch hidden down below to get them through.

Mr. DuBose, a photographer, who estimated that he has shot about 300 album covers for rock bands, was raised in the United States, but he met a German woman, who also happened to be a doctor, on a sailboat in East Hampton in 1998. They were married in the summer of 2007 on a sandbar bird sanctuary just south of Gardiner's Island known as Cartwright Island. Before the wedding was over, the marine patrol found them and insisted that they leave.

Mr. DuBose has a second 26-foot Pierson that he plans to leave in Don Vanderveer's Three Mile Marina, a boatyard known for its appeal to artists, writers and other misfits, for use as his "pied-à-terre in East Hampton."



Sun May 31: 10 am arrive in Provincetown, Massachusetts; Noon 42.0366,-70.1549 ; dinner at Lobster Pot

Mon June 1: 9 am Rick leaves, Pierre Beauguard pays a visit, 10 am leave Provincetown under full genoa; noon 42.7578,-67.6993, 1 pm, cloudy, 2 pm raise main, main traveler hits George's leg, waves 3-4', winds 25 kts; 3 pm reef main, 8 pm low front moves over

Weather: SW winds 20 kts, 3-6 ft waves, Isolated showers and thunder storms

He is at a transitional moment in his career. The album cover business has dried up as more musicians take control of every aspect of production, and the ready availability of digital music has made his work an obsolete trade.

"I do photos for rock magazines, but that doesn't pay well," he said.

Mr. DuBose hopes to spend his cruising hours reading and adventuring on trips that he hopes to sell to sailing magazines.

But the music money still trickles in. Mr. DuBose was debating whether to buy a lifeboat that he couldn't afford for the trip—at a cost of about \$5,000—or lease one, when he got a call saying that the B-52s wanted to buy the rights to use the image on one of the covers that he'd done for them on T-shirts. He sold the rights for \$5,000, bought a six-man lifeboat for the safety of his four-man crew and named the new vessel "Planet Claire."

On Wednesday, after the arrival of crew member Rick Doherty, the sailors will first head to Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, which will be their port of entry into Canada. They'll sail through the Baldur Lakes of Nova Scotia if the weather is good, stopping at the French islands of Saint Pierre and

Miquelon just south of Newfoundland, before heading to St. John, Newfoundland, their last stop in the New World. From there, they will brave the two-to-three-week trip across the Atlantic to Baltimore Island, Ireland.

"It's the official entry port, but there's no port of entry. You have to go to the bar," said Mr. DuBose.

He then plans to sail, likely without his crew, to Holland and then down the Rhine River to a port in Germany 15 minutes away from his home.

Mr. DuBose said he chose the chilly northern route, rather than a straight open-water shot to first the Azores and then Spain, because his boat was not designed for ocean travel. It can't carry enough fuel and water in the event that it were to get stuck in an infamous high pressure area just west of the Azores, where the lack of wind can strand sailors for days in the summertime. The winds on the northern route are promised to blow between 20 and 25 knots pretty much all of the time.

"May and June are the worst time for fog in Nova Scotia, and there are icebergs off of Newfoundland," said Mr. DuBose, who has seen icebergs only from his seat in a commercial

airliner flying over the Atlantic.

“Then, I was reading in National Geographic that the right whale in May and June comes to Nova Scotia to breed, so now they’re my biggest concern—whales having sex, breaching and not paying attention,” he said. “We plan to play loud rock music, Led Zeppelin, so they can hear us coming. We’re definitely not going to play any whale songs.”

After this trip is over, he plans to continue to refit the boat, in between lending it to friends for voyages throughout Europe, before bringing it back to East Hampton in six years.

I don’t think my wife will ever live in East Hampton,” he said. “I like living in Europe, but I still like summering in East Hampton. But I can’t stand the people in the summer.”

Reader Comments

May 20, 09 1:51 PM

Bueno Suerte Boys! LIFE IS GOOD WHEN YOUR REALLY LIVING.

ride the truth wave (southampton)

May 21, 09 8:54 AM

May I offer a small correction.

There is no such palce as the “Baldur” Lakes....They’ll be sailing through the Bras d’Or Lake in Cape Breton N.S.

Bill (North Haven)

May 25, 09 7:29 PM

a trip up into the 50 latitudes will be sheer misery. Freezing cold gale force winds and bad visibility. There is plenty of wind between here and the Azores. The high pressure no wind situation exists in the 30 latitudes not the 40’s. I’ve made the trip between here and the Azores four times and have never been becalmed. I would

advise this man to reconsider. the high forty latitudes is a dangerous place for an experienced mariner with a solid boat, much less tis man and boat

EG (11937)

Jun 9, 09 11:36 PM

Hi, I’m the identical twin brother. Keeping the home fires burning here in Cincinnati. From the weather reports it has been foggy, mild and some rain along with 6 foot seas and low winds. Go to Google Maps and search on ‘Skylark Transatlantic Crossing’ and you’ll see the progress map. Their last stop is St. John’s and then the long crossing. Thanks for everyone’s praters and well wishes. God speed the brave crew of the Skylark. Remember the Santa Maria, Ninta and the Pinta were only 26 foot beauties. And they didn’t even know there was Guinness over the horizon.

ChuckLohre (Cincinnati)

It’s July 26, 2009 and I am writing the story of my trip. In the fall or spring, I will have a show of art about the trip. The sail was excellent. Sure, it was cold going through the Labrador Current but the temperature stayed within the predicted range of 40 to 60 degrees. Sure, we had an old boat completely refitted with bolts always coming undone, instruments always needing calibrations and old lines and hardware breaking but we are sailors; capable of fixing anything and always rising to the occasion. We experienced no heavy weather for we crossed during the most benign time.

I learned that the wives play an important part in the experience. Our wives were very worried. It was nothing we expected. I watched an endless





## The New Old Boat

George purchased the sailboat we were to sail to Ireland off E-Bay. He wanted the 1981 boat for it was the same brand as his first boat and he appreciated the extra strong 1/2" fiberglass hull. The boat was in Philadelphia. After moving it to Three Mile Marina, he proceeded to completely

expanse of water and sea life while a dark cloud of land based anxiety floated overhead. The fact that we had cell phones and e-mail while in the middle of nowhere made it possible to directly experience their concerns and worry.

The fact is that one person dies every year off the east coast of America in a pleasure sailboat. All the high seas sailors we spoke to said that driving on the highway is much more dangerous.

Sailing across the North Atlantic in a 36' sailboat with two other sailors, I learned anyone could do it if they do not mind occasionally being beat up by the waves, do not get seasick and do not mind that it takes so long! Any boat can do it if the boat is sound has good sails, lines and hardware but most of all a crew that is competent and calm. A calm wife would also be helpful. [tomlohre.com/sailing.htm](http://tomlohre.com/sailing.htm)

The End of the 27East Story and comments

## The New Old Boat

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## What to Study

The trip was going to happen and I started studying what I thought you would need for the journey. What I studied turned out to be secondary to the greatest focus: the sails, lines and hardware. In five months of studying heavy weather procedures, first aid, communications, weather forecasting I never brushed up on my sailing terms and was completely embarrassed those first days out at sea. I had not sailed in three years and it showed. The boat was ten feet longer than the one I learned on and all the parts had a lot more momentum. It was not until the end of the trip that I started getting used to the operations. The captain was right with it, as was the sail master, Ben. I was liability for the first few days



## George

When George first mentioned the idea of crossing the North Atlantic in his new old boat I was game. For many years while sailing with him in New England I always tried to persuade the vacationers to take their two weeks at sea and go to Bermuda, one week sailing there, one day to turn around and one week to get back. It was rather an extended version of their daily wants to leave one quaint harbor and sail to another quaint harbor, take a shower, have a nice meal in a fine restaurant and then do it all over again the next day. I never got my wish until George moved to Europe and wanted his boat there.

My reconnecting with the sea started with meeting George. He was living in New Yorker when I lived there. We clubbed at the same spots and knew the same people. The first time George was in my apartment it was an auction of my paintings. George picked up several gems. In time their friendship blossomed

driven my their mutual interest in sailing. I remember many years helping prepare the boat for the season and then being there for the first sail on Memorial Day and the last on Labor Day. In short order George learned of my invaluable skills in seamanship. It would give me unprecedented access to George's boat. On numerous occasions I would take the boat out by myself. My last trip on his old 26' Pearson "Defiant" was three years before this trip, sailing with my wife, Irene, to Block Island. Having moved back to Cincinnati and having a child my yearly summer sails were replaced with brief trips with Irene when Helen, our child would be with Irene's friend in upstate New York.

Irene and I fell in love on the "Defiant." I was invited to crew on a three week trip up the east coast to Maine and Irene invited herself along for a week staying for the full three weeks. To make the trip more exciting we experienced Hurricane Bob while berthed in Newport, Rhode Island. Leaving the next day for Cuttyhunk the waves were 6 feet with a fetch of 300 feet, the space between the crests. When we got there late in the evening we found no water, fuel or electricity but we did spend a lovely night in a quaint hotel room. Cupid's bow had struck and we spend the rest of the sail in bliss albeit to the rest of the crew's happy gaze.



Wed June 3: 7 am leave Lunenburg; Noon 44.466900, -63.503900 , 3 pm motoring; discover oil low; 3 pm arrive in Halifax; dock at Dartmouth Yacht Club; meet with Raymarine technician, take cab ride to “The Binnacle” looking for sail guides; dinner at local restaurant  
Weather forecast: SW Winds 10 kts, Rain possible,  
Thurs June 4; Dartmouth Yacht Club, Andy leaves boat, stitched sail guides







Fri June 5; 7 am leave Halifax; Noon just east of Halifax 44.582800, -62.980600

Notes: They say it gets 20 degrees colder when you get to St. Johns. We'll be four men in a ice hut. You're a sailor you'll get the job done. You're a sailor you can fix anything. Getting rough? Let out the traveler. We worked for three weeks on the boat before setting sail. All systems are on trial. Sailing skills are rusty. Getting to stitch on the sails bred familiarity. Saw whales off P-town. Saw twenty seals at various times off Nova Scotia. May have seen a puffin amongst many seabirds. Everyone asks when we are leaving. I tell them when we are ready. We are a week behind schedule. We will arrive when we get there. Learned there is no fog this time of year. We are really on a cruising sailboat where you motor if there is no wind. With the engine running at 2,400 rpm we use about 1/2 gallon an hour, 5 miles a gallon. To Do List: Install four pad eyes, Install flag halyard, Install topping lift, Stitch sail guides, Install man overboard throw line, Hack saw forward hand rail pins, Add bead of caulk around rub rail, fix table leg





## The Refit

Then came the complete rewiring. Andy was the electronics expert. A musician living in New York City and friend of George's, he was a master at installing the complete new suite of electronics from RayMarine.

I was gone for a little over six weeks but we were only at sea for three weeks. The rest of the time spent working on the boat. Skylark, the name of the boat from the previous owner, was a complete refit. Wiring, major hardware, electronics, stove, refrigerator, winches, cleats were replaced. It had a new engine with 100 hours on it but that was about the extent of anything else being new with the old 1981 boat. Work started with the boat out of the water and all the through holes, the five holes that go through the hull and have valves on them to open and close, being rebuilt. Everyday a crew of four would saw, drill, measure, fit, sand, bolt, screw things from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The

captain and electronics expert spent three years working on the boat and the closer the take off date came the more action in the boat yard became. Endless trips to the hardware store augmented with constant reading of installation manuals and authorization by the captain concerning what you were doing. I installed handrails, the oven, stitched damaged parts of the genoa sail, spliced ropes, caulked while the rest of the crew had endless tasks. Slowly the long list of things to do and buy got shorter but we left East Hampton on May 28 with still a long list. I had called Three Mile Marina my home in East Hampton for thirty years and was probably not coming back. We picked up the plastic duffel bag lifeboat in Newport, Rhode Island and continued on to Provincetown, Massachusetts. We continued to outfit the boat in P-town and set off for Nova Scotia on Monday June 1. First landing in Lunenburg, we continued on to Halifax where an electronics expert tried to get the autopilot to perform properly. Andy our fearless electronics expert left the boat after being seasick for several days and not comfortable with the high seas. His wiring was flawless and all inconsistencies traced back to the equipment. George and I continued on to Saint Pierre, a French colony in Newfoundland. Taking 6 hours watches we made in it three days. We continued to outfit the boat in Saint Pierre. Ben Morris arrived from England and immediately set out to get the spinnaker pole working. George went up the mast for one last time. We set off for Ireland June 11 around noon.



Sat June 6: 5:46 am raised main sail; winds SE 5.6 kts; heading 80; bar 1019, temp 81.3 F; noon docked at Cansco Nova Scotia 45.338500, -60.996200; George went ashore looking for cigarettes and fuel came back with coco, paper towels and roll your own tobacco. Stayed until 3 pm and sailed into our second low. We were in the northwest quadrant so winds were 20-25 from the ENE, waves 5-8 ft



Hunger Strike  
Tobacco  
Sea Life  
Mid Ocean  
Sex at Sea  
Making Coffee  
How to Reef the Main  
Foul Weather Suits  
How to take down the spin-  
naker  
Watches  
Foul Weather Gear  
Fresh Corn  
Things in your pockets  
Paper Towel Cleaning  
The hell with the boat I'm off  
watch  
First aid  
Boat Yard  
Fastnet Race

Harmonic Player in P-town  
Whales off P-town  
Have GPS & VHF, Charts  
Okay equipment  
Man Overboard half way to  
Nova Scotia  
Guitar Player in Lunenburg  
Halifax  
Saint Pierre  
Spinnaker Pole  
Newfoundland  
Sea Birds  
Porpoises  
Ships at Sea  
Weather Helm  
Shower Stall  
Tying Haylards to prevent  
banging



Sun June 7: 3 am RADAR mast forward support pole came undone. Triple lashed it to the railing and boat. Temp 47 F, Boat took a lot of pounding. Maybe we heard more noise from the boat since the motor was off. In the morning variable winds from the north, motoring for St. Pierre; Noon 45.204600, -58.917400; Saw porpoises for the first time; 4:12 pm 1/4" above 15 gal mark in diesel tank; took nap earlier







Mon June 8: 4:33 am, 57.9 F, Winds out of SSW, full genoa, Speed 7 kts, Bar 1013 R; Noon just off Saint Pierre 46.500000, -56.540800; The crew is so respectful. Always saying please and thank you. You just have to sneeze and the whole crew blesses you. The boat makes many noises. Most of them repeat themselves as the spaces get pinched again and again. Some sound like children playing others sound like a woman's voice. Of course the major sound is the humming of the engine with three levels of noise: the muffler, the timing and the a low hum.





Tues June 9 Harboring in Saint Pierre, Noon 46.776600, -56.174800

Wed June 10 Harboring in Saint Pierre, Noon 46.776700, -56.174800







Thurs June 11 11 am leave Saint Pierre, Noon 46.783800, -56.164000

E-mail

From: =ploenes

Subject: With you

Date: Thu Jun 11 11:39:13 2009

Hi George,

great adventure !!! Hope you and your colleagues are fine somewhere in the= Atlantic

Please, tell me where are you so I can look with my son at the map,

Hope to see you soon here in lovely, sunny and hot Cologne (today 29 degre= es celsius)

Best and a big hug

HANS

From: oliver.lambertin

Subject: SO you are on the way !!!

Date: Thu Jun 11 11:39:13 2009

Hello George,

we see us at Enkhuizen !!

have a nice time going around the World and don't fall over the edge ;-= )

Greetings also from Astrid Sia and Andel yours OLI







Fri June 12







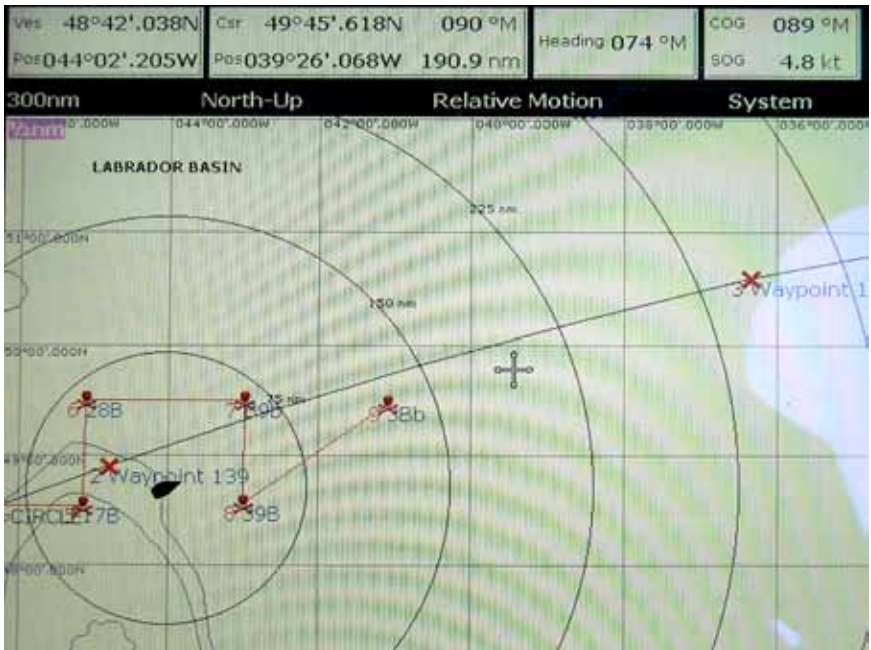
Sat June 13 47.3501,-49.59.89







Sun June 14 47.5983,-48.0458









Mon June 15 48.3828,-44.1862







Tues June 16 50.4000,-36.0000







Wed June 17 50.3551,-38.0892





Thurs June 18 49.8000, -32.0000







Fri June 19 51.8002,-31.2866





Sat June 20 52.1477,-26.5361





Sun June 21 52.1265,-22.1928

E-mail

From: Seeckermd

Date: Thu, 21 May 2009 16:32:33 EDT

Subject: Re: Hello message from Skylark  
message received.

Susanne









Mon June 22 52.0931,-15.8134

E-mail

From: Tjmw Walsh

Date: Fri, 22 May 2009 12:09:25 EDT

Subject: tim walsh

is andy going with you?

best of luck

tim





Tues June 23 52.0300,-15.5800





Wed June 24 52.1602,-14.2129

E-mail

From rikehecker

Date: Sun, 24 May 2009 11:50:40 +0200

Subject: hello from cologne

Just in case you are on your way already here the mail:

Ahoy Captain,

we wish you a great start for your tour, fine weather, your sails full of wind, and a safe passage back to the old country, are you posting pics in the internet along the way?

Lot of Love

Joe and Rike

From: lee bennett

Date: Sun, 24 May 2009 03:45:26 -0700 (PDT)

Dear George,

Have a fun and safe voyage=2E This is a dream come true for you!!

Take care Love your sister Lee





Thur June 25 51.0000,-11.0000

E-mail

Subject: Parts...from Rick

From: Deborah Doherty

Date: Wed, 24 Jun 2009

G,

My DSL modem crashed have a tech coming tomorrow to get me back online.

Have flag, 175w inverter, coffee, Camels under control. Not sure if what

Barry is sending to me by Sat. I can get Samson 3/8 xls for 1.08 ft

locally. Will bring that if it doesn't show up here by pm Sat. Lee cloth

and pole looking into now as backup.

Good sailing, sounds like a great but challenging leg. See you on Monday

around 6pm. If all else fails, I will be in the pub that does

immigration/customs in B-more

R







Tues June 23 52.0300,-15.5800





