

May 10, 2010

*Lone Wolf* gets an “A” for arrival

By Jeff Merrill



On Thursday April 28th, 2010 Nordhavn 62 hull 31 *Lone Wolf* completed her Pacific crossing. This 2700 mile passage was especially cherished by the crew as they had notched 800 miles in the ocean a couple of weeks previously in an aborted attempt due to an [equipment failure](#).

Captain Ned – he of amusing anecdotes and silly sayings – traded emails with me this week to recount the trip and, as expected, I ended up laughing. (Why is it that when people cross the Equator they feel compelled to experience time honored weird and mysterious rituals in order to please Neptune or Poseidon? Well Ned is a self described mythological being anyway so maybe it makes sense – personally I could probably justify it due to lack of sleep, too many watches, and floating around in the middle of nowhere.)

Being out at sea continuously for a couple of weeks allows you to settle into a routine – one that is wonderful to break when you arrive. A long passage is an ordeal. The anticipation and fear of forgetting something stays with you, at least subconsciously. The worry that something will happen never quite goes away – whales, containers, other boats, equipment failures haunts you – let alone the navigation concerns you have trying to make sure you find that speck of land, but it all quickly vanishes with great elation when you complete the trip. The solitude underway, truly isolated from civilization, can be a nerve wracking – a sense of humor and positive attitude help you get through the tough days and then finally a glowing sensation that wells up as excitement when you can count down the final miles. There is a struggle in rough seas to even complete the simplest of tasks, like taking a shower or getting a drink from the refrigerator due to the constantly unpredictable motion. There is comfort in the steady droning of the Lugger main slowly propelling you forward, with the bow plowing the seas and your path etched with a quickly disappearing wake. You may have doubts about your own abilities along the way, and typically try to suppress the fears of what might happen, but you will grow increasingly confident in your Nordhavns’ fortitude as each sunset leads to a new sunrise. The crew of *Lone Wolf* now enjoys the sweet relief and pride that is earned with this accomplishment, and after a short rest and refueling they are poised to cruise the exotic islands they have always dreamed of.

If you have read my previous entries you will remember that I have been telling the *Lone Wolf* story from an educational perspective – the class room of the deep blue sea where all of the studying and preparations you make must be education enough to keep your wits and answer correctly the questions that are asked of you daily. I’m pleased to report that after safely dropping anchor in Taiohae Bay, Nuka Hiva, Marquesas Islands, French Polynesia (paradise for short) late at night, the morning of April 29th found the cheery crew reporting to the

headmaster's (port captain) office to receive their report card (customs clearance) and *Lone Wolf* passed with flying colors – a big “A” for arrival!

Some trip stats:

- The trip took 13 days 15 hours.
- *Lone Wolf* burned approximately 2300 gallons, fuel remaining- approx 400 gallons.  
Note: *Lone Wolf* carried an on deck fuel bladder as a safety reserve)
- Average speed 8.3 knots
- Strongest winds 40 knots ( a brief squall)
- Largest seas 12 ft.
- *Lone Wolf* crossed the Equator within 10 feet of where it dissects the 130 degree line of longitude (earning extra credit for Geography class!)



Also anchored in Taiohae Bay, Nuka Hiva at the same time was *Oso Blanco*, the Nordhavn 64 sailed by the Bloomquist family who travelled across the Pacific a week earlier buddy boating in with the Nordhavn 64 *Mystery Ship*, a sister ship crossing technique that is both smart and practical. It is very comforting to look out the window and see another boat – and when it is the same kind of hull you can look out and see yourself in a

sense...and know that you are all right and yes, you are hitting swells and rollicking about just as much as your reflection across the way is. *Emily Grace*, the Nordhavn 46 who also crossed this season arrived April 29th after 21 days at sea. So all four of our Nordhavn “students” graduated with flying colors.

After taking on fuel and getting a nice “land fix” the last I heard the *Lone Wolf* crew was off for Tahiti, Moorea and Mahini (wouldn't you like to have those three choices to sail to?). Captain Ned will continue to blog (note the photo of him typing away, it isn't a blurry photo, he's just got illusive electrons that cannot be captured by flash). With all that ocean crossing water behind them now it is time to enjoy the beauty of the South Pacific, one island at a time...sounds like the school year is over and they have just entered the first weeks of a well deserved summer vacation! Congratulations to all of the “graduates” of the Pacific Puddle Jump class of 2010.



Photos courtesy of Ned Lambton from the *Lone Wolf* blog - <http://thevoyageoflonewolf.blogspot.com/>



Jeff Merrill is passionate about the Nordhavn 62 and loves riding in her aft pilothouse while underway. Jeff has sold several new and used Nordhavn 62s and has hundreds of miles at sea aboard them.

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