

Latitude 38

PACIFIC PUDDLE JUMP RECAP

— INTO THE GREAT BEYOND

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PACIFIC PUDDLE JUMP RECAP

Every sailor who completed the 3,000-mile passage from Mexico or Panama to French Polynesia this spring had a right to be proud of their accomplishment. But doing so made them reflect on the amazing feats of the ancient Polynesians.

Compare their view of the world with the Europeans of the time. To Polynesians the world was all water with islands scattered here and there. After they had discovered an island, they navigated between it and other known destinations with remarkable skill. No instruments were available to help other than their star charts. Even more remarkable were the first explorers who ventured into the Pacific not even knowing there were any islands waiting for them. How many voyagers left and never returned?

In 1600 BC the Polynesians went into the Pacific. In 1300 BC they found Tonga and in 1000 BC Samoa. From their Samoa base they found Tahiti and the Marquesas around 300 AD, islands that are nearly 2000 miles to the east (to windward). Not a passage that many modern sailors would even consider. Then in 500 AD they went from the Marquesas to Hawaii and Easter Island. Four hundred years later they began backfilling the Pacific, populating the Tuamotus and Cook Islands. New Zealand was the last island they discovered on a passage from Tahiti in 1000 AD.

The Europeans did not 'discover' the Pacific until the 1500s, and by then the Polynesians had footholds on most of the islands in the Pacific. So crank up

As in the past, timing was everything. Boats that left even a few days apart experienced large differences in weather.

your watermakers, GPS, autopilots, and such, but give a nod to those ancient sailors who led the way thousands of years ago.

To westbound cruisers, March

in Mexico was a time for making final preparations for the 'great adventure'.

Passage preparation included seminars held by previous Pacific cruisers and experts on rigging, engine and refrigeration maintenance, medical issues and provisioning. Local Ham radio experts gave classes and tests, allowing several cruisers to communicate legally via SSB radio.

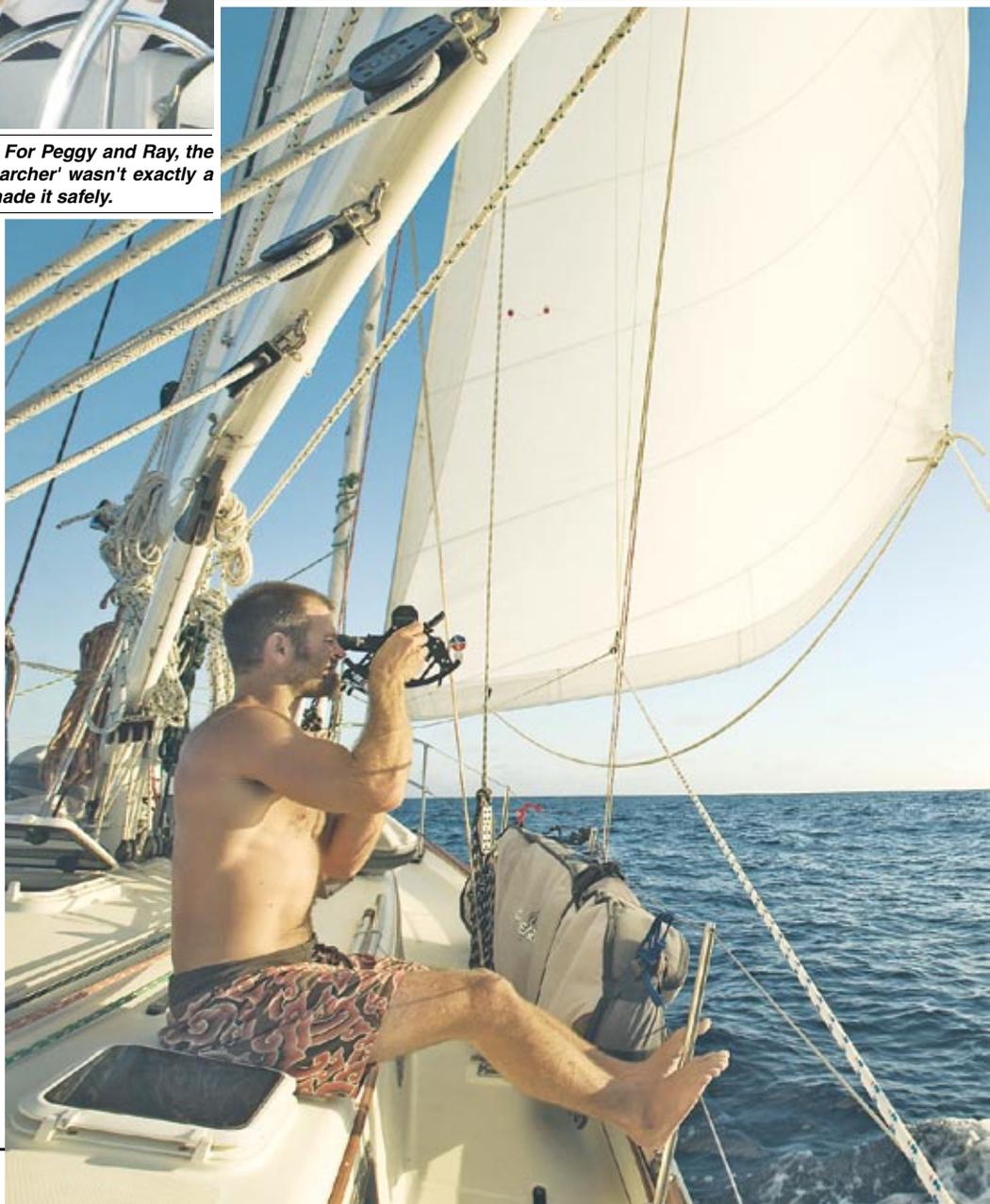
As reported earlier, *Latitude 38* hosted the annual Puddle

Jump Parties in Puerto Vallarta and Zihuatanejo, which were co-sponsored this year by Tahiti Tourisme Board, who sent a representative specifically to welcome the fleet to the islands. (As reported last month, a special event, the Tahiti Tourisme Cup, was held in their honor July 7 in Moorea.)

This annual westward migration usually begins in early March. The earliest to push off this year was the Santa Cruz-based Cal 39 *No Regrets* with the father-son team of David and Patrick Kelly on board, plus Patrick's girlfriend Carly Dennis. Due to an engine rebuild,



"Been there, done that." For Peggy and Ray, the crossing aboard 'Sol Searcher' wasn't exactly a piece of cake, but they made it safely.



SOL SEARCHER

NICOLE FRIEND

— INTO THE GREAT BEYOND

the last boat out of Puerto Vallarta was this writer's boat, *Sisiutl*, on April 28. Most boats left after the Banderas Bay Regatta in Puerto Vallarta. Other cruisers departed from La Paz and Zihuatanejo. In addition, a steady stream of boats set courses for French Polynesia from Panama and the Galapagos. One powerboat, Eric and Christi Grab's Nordhavn 43 *Kosmos*, made a direct passage from San Diego to Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas.

As in the past, timing was everything.

Boats that left even a few days apart experienced large differences in weather. Calms and winds from odd directions found many cruisers. Other boats breezed through with ideal condi-

MICHAEL SULLIVAN



"Sooo fine!" Young Kurt Talke of *'Southern Star'* catches a dreamy ride at Raiatea. Must have made the whole trip worth it!



MICHAEL SULLIVAN

Spread: *Gar Duke* takes a sun sight from the deck of *'Dreamkeeper'* on a perfect day in mid-ocean. Above: No wonder they call it paradise. The Emeryville-based IP 45 *'Southern Star'* lies peacefully in the Raiatea lagoon.

tions. Squalls are always found along the route. The largest was reported by the crew of *Dirgio*, who experienced up to 50 kts, which damaged their mast during an accidental jibe. At times,

squalls are accompanied by rain of Biblical proportions. *Dirgio* had one 'squall' with torrential rain for five hours straight. Other boats found barely enough rain to even take a shower on deck.

The number of breakdowns this year seemed to be typical, although this might be called the Year of the Engine. In addition to the loss of our own engine on the way to Mexico (rebuilt by 'Teapot' Tony in Puerto Vallarta), both the San Francisco-based Cape George 31 *Infinity* and the Long Beach-based Transpac 49

Sol Searcher lost theirs on the way to French Polynesia. They were forced to make the rest of the passage the old-fashioned way — under sail only. *Infinity's* engine was repaired by a helpful cruiser in an anchorage in the Marquesas. *Sol Searcher* sailed all the way to Raiatea in the Society Islands and had it replaced in time to join the Tahiti Tourisme Cup.

Autopilot failures

were experienced by several boats and prompted *Bold Spirit* to add a wind vane in Tahiti. *Sassona*, a Truant Triad 37 from Canada with the Alger family on board, turned back to Mexico after successive autopilot failures, and will attempt the Puddle Jump another year. There were also the normal failures of chafe, bilge pumps, broken shackles, blocks, plus blown spinnakers, etc. Considering that the boats are under sail 24/7 for weeks, the failures are understandable. Spare parts and an intimate understanding of your boat is a prerequisite for undertaking this kind of passage.

The most common complaint this year was poor fishing en route. Most boats dragged lures all across the Pacific, but very little damage was done to the fish population as a result. Although, if you counted the flying fish and squid found on deck each morning, you could say there were gazillions of fish caught. Guess we need a recipe for stiff, dried



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out flying fish! We knew the big fish were out there, though, because everyone reported seeing many pods of dolphin along the entire route, and they seemed to be eating very well.

The following are excerpted reports from some of the Puddle Jump 2007 boats:

"Overall, we had great weather with one squall and a lot of calms around the equator. For the equator crossing we dropped sails, barbecued steaks, got a bit lit, then sailed on!

"If we were doing the passage again we would have installed more solar panels, and brought more diesel. We had a great passage. . . it was all good!

— Mike Fulmor, J. Higbie, B. Edmonds, Arabella, Swift 40

"We had a very calm passage, with many days of very little wind. Comfortable, but long! . . . At the equator we had champagne — our only imbibing on the crossing.

"The radio nets were fantastic. The PanPacific Net at 1400z on 8143.0 started us out, and the Pacific Seafarers' Net at 0325 on 14300.0 picked up from there. Super net controllers — so nice having someone out there to keep track of you.

"It was very emotional when we got close to land. 'Is it really over?' 'Was it really that easy?' So much relief expressed by family and friends!"

— Darrel & Loretta Smith
CanKata, Privilege 37 cat

"We had almost no bad weather, got rained on only twice and then only for about a half hour each time.

"We tore the mainsail in half on day five just below the third reef; sailed with a triple reef for the rest of the trip.

"Most of the time we ate very well, the biggest problem I had was keeping things upright until I could get them on the stove. Once they were on the stove it was fine, but everything on the counter was in some stage of being on its way to the floor. It requires a 'special vocabulary' to cook at sea. Regular cuss words don't seem to work.

"What we missed most from being at sea: Ice, I'd have paid fifty bucks for a bag of ice.

"Watch out for freighter traffic. We were 450 miles out of PV and I was pretty sure we were beyond the traffic. . . We hadn't seen a ship for 18 hours and were almost run down. . . I'm sure he never saw me."

— Jim & Ryan Todd
Cardea, Vagabond Westwind 38

"We broke the main block and tore the main sheet when we got caught in a squall that took winds from 10 to 50 knots in one minute!

"Most of the time the weather was



ERIC GOSCH

On a perfect day in mid-ocean, Gisela takes a ride on 'Far Nieta's bow pulpit. The low points are always offset by the highs.

mild and the sailing was very pleasant. We used our barbecue a lot and ate very well.

"When things broke and the weather got bad it wasn't fun. That is when we started questioning how much time we wanted to spend out here. As soon as the weather cleared up it was all forgotten. We were all very happy and proud of our accomplishments the day we were sailing in to Taahuku Bay listening to the local Marquesan music."

— D. Mosher, T. Kane & D. Anderson
Dirigo, Catalina 440

"Overall smooth passage, other than roly seas behind us that made our boat 'corkscrew'. We had moderate winds of no more than 19 kts, and around 12 mild squalls, all of which we welcomed to cool us down and clean ourselves and the boat.

"At the equator a quick dip in the ocean, offerings to Neptune, a fresh water shower and a Mexican feast.

"Overall, we loved our passage and didn't miss much. We appreciated being on the ocean, witness to the power and beauty of the mighty Pacific and her changing faces.

"Like many people we had ups and downs throughout the passage. Some days we were in love with sailing and the thought of being out there for weeks.

THE PUDDLE JUMP'S ONLINE ARCHIVE

A Yahoo Group, started last year by the class of 2006, was again the means to organize the 2007 Puddle Jumpers. . . . One of the primary outputs is The Pacific Puddle Jump Passage Guide. The book contains a wealth of information on weather, provisioning, radio networks, medical, entry requirements to countries on the routes, safety, and other important topics.

The 2007 Pacific Puddle Jumpers based in Puerto Vallarta updated and reorganized it to hopefully be more user friendly. It is specifically formatted for online usage (or downloading), with many resources identified through links. This manual is also available on the Pacific Puddle Jump Yahoo group

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pacificpuddlejumper/> — an online resource for Puddle Jumpers. If you are interested in being added to this group, just click the "Join the Group" link and provide your information. Cruisers subscribed to this private group, then have access to a database of all members, calendar of events, email exchange, data files and Internet links for information important to the members. The database was seeded with information from past Puddle Jumps and supplemented with information added by this year's cruisers. Future Puddle Jumpers will be able to use this database as a start for them to build on.

— bob bechler

— INTO THE GREAT BEYOND



Other days we dreaded getting up for our morning watch, having had a sleepless, uncomfortable, sweaty night. Our emotions ranged from being elated and inspired to being melancholy and exhausted. Looking back on it now, we would both do it again."

— *Gar Duke & Nicole Friend
DreamKeeper,
Pacific Seacraft 40*

"As predicted, no wind for first three days out of P.V.

"As Don on *Summer Passage* predicted, NE trades filled in at 10-15 kts for three days, then 25+ kts for five days. Following seas 6-10 feet, with lots of rocking and

rolling. We were reefed down for comfort and safety, so we didn't make 200-mile days.

"We had a couple of squalls over 40 kts, but being cautiously reefed down made them very manageable.

"From the ITCZ to the Marquesas at 9°S we had 16 days of fantastic beam-reach sailing in a sunny 15 to 20-kt breeze!

"We wanted to swim across the equator, but as Gisela was walking down the ladder into water, something touched her foot and she scrambled back on deck.

"Loved being in the wide-open ocean. Water color was an incredible sapphire blue. We saw two incredible green

flashes. Sailing under the full moon was awesome!"

— *Eric & Gisela Gosch
Far Niente, Island Packet 420*

"We pre-cooked and vacuum-sealed as many meals as our freezer would hold, which made meal prep and cooking a snap. Used the green gas-absorbent bags for veggies and had fresh fruit and veggies almost the whole way across. Arrived with carrots and cabbage. I strapped my breadmaker to the top of the gimbaled stove and had fresh bread all the way. There were always fresh cookies and brownies for the night watches.

"Several days out of Galapagos we received one very accurate routing forecast email from Dr. Steve Lyons of *www.weather.com*. We also communicated once with Don Anderson via SSB and found his suggestions helpful for fine-tuning our passage route. From there we used daily GRIB files which were very helpful for keeping the sail plan tuned in to local weather changes, especially at night. All these weather resources combined with some lucky timing kept us in a weather sweet spot most of the way and resulted in a fast and near idyllic trade wind passage.

"After the genset broke, we dearly wished that we had had a trolling water generator.

"I loved the trade wind passage even when it was boisterous.

Mike was taken aback upon arrival at Hanavave on Fatu Hiva because of its natural beauty — particularly the skyline — and by the friendliness of the Polynesian people. Phil says that arriving at Fatu Hiva met with most of his wild fantasies of arriving at a South Seas anchorage — except that the topless

"Christian slaved for two days on our engine and pretty much rebuilt the thing — after 53 days marinating in salt water."

females were missing.

— *Judy Fontana & Phil Holland
Fetching Light, Hylas 46*

"We arrived in Nuku Hiva after a 33-day engineless passage. Nuku Hiva is beautiful. Susan got a fabulous tattoo



GISELA GOSCH

"Insert tab A into slot B..." Even on the nicest boats, like 'Far Niente', there's always something that needs fixing.

there to remember this adventure.

"We had heavy winds from NE trades and had to heave-to several times to rest. The ITCZ was a non-issue and we only had no wind for one day.

"We planned to go to Raiatea to seek an engine rebuild of our Perkins 25M. Instead, we had the miraculous fortune of running into Christian and Poki on *Irie* at Daniels Bay. While in the bay, Christian slaved for two days on our engine and pretty much rebuilt the thing — after 53 days marinating in salt water. It now purrs and runs better than before."

— *Susan Travers & Elba Borgen
Infinity, Cape George 31*

"We had a little celebration at the equator. First we photographed the GPS showing us at the equator. Then we took some pictures in our party hats. Trinda wanted to swim at the equator, so we all did so, 2,376 miles from Mexico and 725 from the Marquesas. Next we drank a toast to King Neptune and asked for fair winds and following seas. In preparation for the big event, we spent a couple hours making crowns



FAR NIENTE

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and a scepter to wear during the festivities. All of our tablets are now missing that nice thick cardboard backing!

"Things we wished we had done differently? Caulk the decks or remove the teak first. A wet bed is no fun and caused temper problems."

— Larry & Trinda Littlefield
Katie Lee, Passport 45

"Hindsight: For our own sake, we should have let a sailmaker check our sails before departure. As a result, the foot of headsail and staysail had to be stitched the full length, and the gennaker ripped in the upper area.

"We talked about stopping the boat at a nice moment to go for a swim. Maxime followed a trusted sailor's advice never to do it in the open ocean. Moments later we saw a shark fighting what we thought was a big tuna that didn't make it to our fishing line."

— Uwe Dobers & Maxime Daporta
Magnum, Peterson 44

"We waited in Mexico listening to Don of *Summer Passage* and left when he suggested. We were rewarded by wonderful wind.

"We suffered from chafe and rash on the *derriere* — 'swamp ass' is the technical term — from constantly sitting in wet, salty shorts on the moving boat.

"After the crossing we felt a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. Ginger's *pareu* was the clothing item of choice, don't leave without one!"

— Peter & Ginger Niemann
Marcy, 47' Custom

"Being a singlehander, the thing I missed most was a friend's company! Sharing the exhilaration of being at one with nature. . . 'a small boat in a big ocean'.

"My problems centered on electron-

is the ability to chat on VHF to ships passing. I spoke to *Heifer Express*, a dedicated cattle transporter which carries over 2,000 head from New Zealand to Mexico. Imagine that hold!!"

— Jeanne Socrates
Nereida, 36-ft sloop



MICHAEL SULLIVAN

Upon arrival snorkeling is a pastime that all can enjoy. But its particularly sweet when you have a hookah rig, as 'Southern Star' does.

ics: The SSB radio not transmitting adequately — voice too weak & Winlink/Sailmail connections failed; the gas (propane) solenoid switch failed (should have taken several spares); fridge problems; temporary problems with my engine starter motor; windlass seized with salt/corrosion build-up which I freed with TLC.

"One good side benefit of having AIS

"This is the third Puddle Jump and fourth major Pacific crossing for Bob and Sisiutl. This time we are continuing across the Pacific and plan to be in South Africa next year.

On the three Puddle Jumps, I have taken different routes and crossed the equator at 125°W, 130°W, and 133°W, yet all of the elapsed times for the passage were about the same. Leads me to believe that all the fretting about routing and the ITCZ crossing is not that important. Go with what is presented to you at the time and just enjoy the passage.

"This passage was pretty ordinary. No really big days and not many slow days. Most days we covered 100-120 miles. Some squalls, but again nothing out of the ordinary. We had no major equipment problems and, in fact, ended up in French Polynesia with more working than when we started.

We enjoyed the Marquesas but had to cut our time in the Tuamotus shorter than we wanted. Arrived in Tahiti in time for the Tourisme Cup and had a great time."

— Bob Bechler & Karin Laubscher
Sisiutl, Gulfstar 44

2007 PUDDLE JUMP PASSAGE DATA

Boat Name	Boat Make & Length	Captain & Crew	Boat's Homeport	Departed From / Date	Landfall & Date	Days Xing	Miles Xing	Eqtr X Long.	Engine Hours	Best 24 Hr	Worst 24 Hr	# Fish Cght	Breakage & Breakdowns
Arabella	Swift 40	Mike & Barb Fulmor	Oxnard, CA	Pto Vallarta 3/31	Hiva Oa 4/23	23	2,800 nm	132W	60	140	50	1	Self Steering, Auto-Pilot
Cantanka	Privilege 37 cat	N/A	N/A	Panama 3/07	Hiva Oa 4/12	36	4,100 nm	87W	167	77	150	1	None
Cardea	Vagabond 38	Jim & Ryan Todd	Santa Cruz, CA	Pto Vallarta 3/25	Hiva Oa 4/18	24	2,904 nm	130W	153	69	83	2	Watermaker
Dirigo	Catalina 440	Denny Mosher	Napa	Pto Vallarta 3/13	Hiva Oa 4/01	19	2,903 nm	131W	175	120	130	2	Damaged mast in 50k squall
Dreamkeeper	Pacific Seacraft 40	Gar Duke & Nicole Friend	Sausalito, CA	Pto Vallarta 3/24	Hiva Oa 4/15	22	2,824 nm	131W	185	88	98	1	Boom Vang, Engine Cooling
Far Niente	Island Packet 420	Eric & Gisela Gosch	Hemet, CA	Pto Vallarta 3/16	Hiva Oa 4/04	20	2,800 nm	131W	166	91	120	N/A	Watermaker
Fetching Light	Hylas 46	Judy Fontana & Phil Holland	Sta Barbara, CA	Galapagos 3/19	Fatu Hiva 4/05	17	3,042 nm	N/A	200	110	23	2	Whisker Poles, Genset
Infinity	Cape George 31	Susan Travers & Elba Borgen	San Francisco, CA	La Paz 4/5	Nuku Hiva 5/11	35	N/A	132W	19	164	-10	None	Engine, Head, Auto-Pilot
Katie Lee	Passport 45	Larry & Trinda Littlefield	Befair, WA	Zihuat 4/01	Fatu Hiva 4/28	27	3,120 nm	132W	155	65	100	2	Wind Vane
Kosmos	Nordhavn 43	Eric & Christi Grab	San Diego, CA	San Diego 4/28	Nuku Hiva 5/19	21	2,832 nm	136W	160	123	500	1	None
Magnum	Peterson 44	Uwe Dobers & Anne Crowley	San Francisco, CA	Manzanillo 3/24	Fatu Hiva 4/19	21	3,100 nm	127W	170	84	92	1	Auto-Pilot, Tom Sails
Marcy	Custom 47	Peter & Ginger Niemann	Seattle, WA	Zihuat 3/22	Nuku Hiva 4/10	20	2,964 nm	131W	185	120	9.5	1	Rudder Post Bmg, Alternator
Nereida	Navad 361	Jeanne Socrates	Hamble, UK	Zihuat 3/26	Fatu Hiva 4/19	24	2,730 nm	131W	148	83	62	N/A	SSB Radio, Propane Solenoid
Quest	65' Schooner	Denise Lahey & Pierre Colin	Gloucester, MA	Pto Vallarta 4/24	Nuku Hiva 5/11	21	2,879 nm	134W	171	93	60	1	None
Sisiutl	Gulfstar 44	Bob Bechler & K. Laubscher	Portland, OR	Pto Vallarta 4/28	Nuku Hiva 5/26	28	3,176 nm	128W	140	57	80	3	S/W Pump
Sol Searcher	Transpac 49	Ray & Peggy Wilson	Long Beach, CA	Pto Vallarta 3/31	Nuku Hiva 4/30	30	2,850 nm	133W	180	-8	30	None	Engine, Auto-Pilot
Surprise	Schumacher 46	Steve & Susan Chamberlin	Pt Richmond, CA	Chacala 3/19	Hiva Oa 4/4	16	2,963 nm	132W	171	93	60	None	Rudder Post Play
Wyntersea	Kelly-Peterson 46	Dr. Jack Wynters	Victoria, BC	Manzanillo 3/26	Hiav Oa 4/20	25	2,800 nm	130W	147	80	25	1	None

* Many 2007 Puddle Jumpers did not report their data.

— INTO THE GREAT BEYOND

"After losing our autopilot on day seven and the engine on day 10, we hand steered 24/7 under sail for 20 days. We have hydraulic steering, so you can't even tie down the wheel, and there was just the two of us! We were stuck in the doldrums at 3°N for almost three whole days! In one 24-hour period, we sailed for

"Tropical rain washed over the fertile volcanic soil and carried the scent of the frangipani and freshly washed earth. . ."

6 hours, moving at 2 knots over ground and made 12 miles toward our destination. Then we had to drop the sails again. In the next 18 hours we drifted backward 20 miles! We sailed all the way to Raiatea where we had the engine replaced with one shipped in from New Zealand."

— Ray & Peggy Wilson
Sol Searcher, Transpac 49

"This is our fifth trans-Pacific crossing on this boat, and it is still a delight. Our 'whomper' (165% jib top) gave us boat speed equal to wind speed in the light reaching off the coast: 189 nm with 8-10 knots on the beam. We arrived with 70 gallons of fuel (50% remaining). We used a weather routing service; it was excellent: good wind, few squalls.

"Sea life spotted? Porpoises and one pilot whale surfing the wave behind us.

"What we missed most from being at sea? Not a blessed thing except, perhaps, the news. We all fantasized that Bush resigned! One of our crew wrote a wonderful description of our encounter mid-ocean with a cruise ship-of their sending the launch and our being wined and dined and treated to a lecture on cetaceans of the southern ocean. We posted it on our website, but only a few readers figured out that it was a hoax.

"Our worst experience occurred post passage. We were anchored in Tahauku Bay, off Atuona, to check in, get provisions, et al. The harbor was crowded, all boats anchored bow and stern. We were as close to the outer limit line as we could get but still had only

about 12' of depth, with a southern swell coming around the breakwater and breaking hard on the beach. In the middle of the night two very large swells rolled in and — according to other anchored boats — broke right at *Surprise*. The bow went skyward and the stern came down hard on the bottom. The impact shattered the master link in the steering gear and badly twisted the autopilot mounting bracket. Fortunately the rudder, made with many layers of carbon fiber, withstood the impact. It was also fortunate that we carry an emergency tiller, as well as rudder."

— Steve & Susan Chamberlin
Surprise, Schumacher 46

"We never did feel truly alone in the crossing as we were visited daily by birds, dolphins, squid and flying fish. One night we even gave refuge from the sea to a large bird as he/she sat on the stern rail for the entire night, only flying off at first light after leaving a great mound of fresh guano.

"Fifteen days into our passage and just north of the equator a fish processing ship passed by us to the north and it was the only vessel that we saw after 200 miles from the Mexican shore.

On July 7 the fleet was welcomed to the islands by a special event in their honor, the Tahiti Tourisme Cup. The 'Adelia' crew loved it.

MICHAEL SULLIVAN



There's a big, big patch of water between Mexico and the Marquesas. Seen here is 'Southern Star' en route to Nuku Hiva.

"On our 18th day the weather changed. What we first thought was just another squall became a storm and, since the winds had been quite light up until that point, we were under full sail. With sheets of horizontal rains, winds holding at 45 kts and gusting to 50 kts Jack remained at the helm, with green water washing into the cockpit, until it passed seven hours later.

"But it was during that moment as dusk descends and the sun slips below the horizon to emit an amazingly green flash that we saw a wonder of the world.

"After 2,800 miles and 25 days at sea, the sight of landfall was magical. We surveyed the landscape that varied from the bare windblown shoreline on

the south east of Hiva Oa Island to the lush valleys that towered over the anchorage. Absolutely breathtaking!!

"Tropical rain washed over the fertile volcanic soil and carried the scent of the frangipani and freshly washed earth out to us across the sea to create a memorable welcome to French Polynesia."

— Jack Wynters & Linda Wasylciw
Wyntersea, K-P 46

"It's best not to buy a boat in November and ex-



LATITUDE / ANDY

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LATITUDE / ANDY

pect to cross the Pacific in April. There are so many things to do, and having to become familiar with all the systems on the boat while doing all the preparations for the crossing added a lot of stress. In order to have some more fun as the preparations take place, I would suggest that at least a year be allocated.

The finale of the Tourism Cup was a twilight dance routine put on by Moorean teenagers at the water's edge.

The more you know about your boat, the more you know what needs to be given attention."

— Barbara Koth & crew
Gypsy Soul, 44-ft cutter

"Answers to the most commonly asked questions, since we are a powerboat: We hold 1,250 gallons of diesel. From San Diego to Nuku Hiva we used 1,000 gallons, averaged 5.7 knots, 2 gallons per hour, and 2.8 nm per gallon. Quite a few people were shocked to see us at Nuku Hiva after we told them we came direct from San Diego! Currents and wind most certainly have an impact on us, and we had about five days of a counter current near the equator that slowed us down quite a bit, hence a 123 mile day. We are thankful everything went smoothly, and we are very excited to be in the South Pacific!"

— Eric & Christi Grab
Kosmos, Nordhavn 43

There were, of course, many more boats which made crossings to French Polynesia this year that did not give us reports.

All in all, it's probably fair to say that completing the Puddle Jump is one of the greatest adventures of any sailor's life.

— bob bechler
