

Tuesday, February 8, 2011

### **Halfway to the Cap Verde islands**

Tuesday, 08.02.2011, 11:30 UTC, 22:34.1N 019:24.8W The weather has been the same for the past three days. Sunny, with winds from 10 to 20kn from the North-East during the day, and 20 to 30kn during the night. As the wind increases during the night the waves get very choppy and the ride uncomfortable as the ship rolls with the waves passing underneath her, especially when a wave breaks. A right cacophony of clings and clongs. During the morning the wind goes down a bit, and the waves gradually too, until the sea is quite nice in the evening. And then it all starts again. I think it has something to do with the Sahara to the east of me, which might be the source of that wind as the land cools rapidly in the night. So it should get better further west. But the afternoons are really nice, and quite good for working on the boat too. Yesterday I fixed the problem with the head that was filling up. I removed the hose from the seacock and plugged that with a wooden peck. Good news and bad news: the boat is dry, but I have to use the bucket from now on. Then I had a look at why the Batteries are not being charged. I have two 135Watt solar panels at the stern, and even though the angle to the sun is bad on my current tack, they should charge at least a few Ah. Turns out the controller shows the battery voltage at 14 to 16V with the Solar Panels connected, and 8V when not. Maybe a broken diode, but whatever the reason, the controller is gone. Fortunately ... just for that contingency I had bought a controller for the wind generator which would accept at least one of the panels. I hooked that up, and now the batteries are being charged. With half the capacity, but better than nothing. I turned off the fridge and chartplotter, and am now only running the sumlog, compass, windinstrument and navigation lights. The AIS is gone with the Chartplotter, and I'm glad I invested into the little radar detector which worked very well through the night. Beep, beep, beep -- ah, there's another freighter. This evening we'll see whether the one panel is enough to balance the energy consumption. It's a little sad about the fridge, because it's full of cheese. But the Parmesan should be ok for a while, right? So, lots of problems on the boat. I didn't expect the voyage to be without problems, after all it's the first time I'm taking Gudrun out for a longer trip. But I hadn't expected that much, and in such a short time. On the other hand I'm quite happy that I managed to fix the things up with what I took with me. Feels a little like being an astronaut on a space station, hehe. Only they are in a much more dangerous environment. Minus the waves, lucky bastards. But also minus the dolphins. Last evening I cooked dinner and then went on deck to eat it. Only I put it down very quickly instead and took my camera because there was a school of dolphins playing around the bow of the boat. The sun was just setting, and I sat there in the cockpit eating dinner and watching the dolphins being silhouetted against the sinking sun as they jump out of the water. What a show!

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 05:40

There's a wealth of information here. Thanks! I'll be back for more.  
Anonymous on Feb 8 2011, 22:26