

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Fiji to NZ (5) - bye bye Parasailor

Thursday, 2013-11-21, 11:45, 30:13.385S 176:03.840E, COG 200, SOG 7.5, Wind 25kn ESE

Yesterday afternoon was as expected overcast and rainy but relatively calm. Rob cut up a pumpkin and I made pumpkin soup in the pressure cooker - 1/2 pumpkin, 2 little onions, 2 grated carrots, chicken stock, pepper, nutmeg. Cook for 20 minutes then stick the hand blender in. Delicious boat food, especially on a rainy day.

After 3pm the wind dropped to 10kn and came from NE, and with us going SSW it came almost from behind. I took this as a sign that we were entering the NE quadrant of the low and that it's time for the Parasailor to shine (the Parasailor is a symmetrical spinnaker with a horizontal gap through the middle and a dynamic pressure wing like a kite attached to the front. Doesn't need a pole and I've used it from 5kn to 40kn of wind). Together Rob and I prepared the lines and dropped the main, and while Rob furled in the Genoa in I hauled up the Parasailor up and out of its sock. Great team. Then we sat in the cockpit for a while, watched a giant flock of seabirds take off from the sea, and discussed the weather and our further tactics. Suddenly the wind shifted back to E and increased to 20kn. Same grey overcast sky, no idea where that came from. And while we adjusted the trim of the Parasailor the whole thing basically exploded in mid-air. End of life after 3yrs and about 7000nm.

It took a while to drag all the trailing pieces bag on board and stuff everything into the bag. By then the wind had increased to 30kn and the sea was getting rougher. I was just sitting at the tiller and wanted to turn the boat closer to the wind to set the mainsail again when a massive wave hit the bow, reached up to the spreaders, and then came crashing down on me. After we stopped laughing we decided to leave the mainsail down and just go with the genoa for the night. We don't really need a main to go fast downwind in 30kn, it just rolls a bit more without it.

And it rolled a lot. The wind came up to 38kn and turned further South. We were glad that we had made some way to the east over the last days and could sail SW for a while, but it was still the most uncomfortable night so far. Every 20min a massive wave crashed into the boat and filled the cockpit with foamy water, but we stayed below and only poked our heads out to have a look around. Nothing to see though.

Today the wind's down to about 20kn again and we pulled up the main sail. Despite the mugging about with the Parasailor we made another 160nm in the last 24hrs and it actually looks like we can ride this low all the way into Opuā, which means we would arrive Saturday. But then I totally expect everything to change overnight and that we're going to be flopping about in little wind Friday, in which case we might arrive on Sunday.

312nm to go to Opuā

Posted by Axel Busch in Gudrun V at 16:58

Neeeeiiin, aus die Maus mit dem schönen Parasailor - so ein Ärger auch! Dafür macht ihr wirklich bemerkenswerte Etmals. Toll, viel Glück und hoffentlich keine Schäden mehr bis zum Schluss!

Anonymous on Nov 21 2013, 02:22