

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

### **Getting ready for the Atlantic**

A look at the weather map shows that a new high is establishing at the Azores. This should bring perfect conditions to sail to the Canaries for the weekend, and so I'm getting ready to sail on Friday. I estimate that the trip to Porto Calero on Lanzarote will take about 8 days. The wind will be from the back all the time, so I know from experience that the wind-generator will be pretty useless. This is because as the boat is pushed along by the wind from behind, the apparent wind speed on board is not enough to turn the generator fast enough to charge the batteries. I have 216 Ah of charge in the batteries, which is enough to run the GPS, Navtex, VHF Radio, Iridum and iPod four to five days. But if I have to turn on the Autopilot and Radar, then the batteries can be drained in 36 hours. Either way the batteries won't last until I reach the Canaries. So I either turn on the engine now and then to recharge the batteries. Or I get a solar panel. Well, I guess it really is like Matt commented a few days ago: "Must haves are always a must! The nice-to-haves will soon become musts". Looks like the solar panel just made it into the must have category. Fortunately my favorite ship-chandler here, Nautica Sherry can supply one until tomorrow. 50 Watts only, but it should be enough if I don't have to use the Autopilot too much. I am really looking forward to the sail. I'm sure it will be something very different from the trip through the Mediterrean. Not only will it be with 600nm twice as long as the longest trip I sailed so far (Ibiza to Almerimar). But instead of 50nm to the next coast it will be more than 100nm (the Moroccan). Quite a distance if something goes wrong. Jeff did an eskimo roll with his boat and lost the mast. Like it did for the french boat in the berth opposite of Vespina's. They were on their way to Canaries one month ago, when a freak wave hit them in the night and turned the boat through an eskimo roll - 360°. Fortunately everybody was secured with their life-lines. But the mast snapped, and so did a lot of other stuff. They made it to Rabat in Morocco with their engine after pumping the water out, and now they are back here where they fit a new mast. I talked to the skipper Jeff about the incident, to learn what can be learned. He said they only had half of the genoa up when it happened, and didn't see the wave coming in the night. It suddenly crashed down on top of them from the rear quarter. But he doubted that he could have done much in any case. Maybe turn the boat directly away from the wave, so that they might have had a chance to ride with the wave instead of being hit from the rear quarter. Fortunately the whole thing happened very quickly and the boat was up again after only a few seconds. Unfortunately the hatch wasn't fully closed and so quite a lot of water made it into the boat. So I'll make sure I have my hatch closed tightly when conditions get rough. And I wear my lifeline and have it picked in all the time anyway. Don't you worry, I'll be fine.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 04:52

Good luck on your sail to the Canaries. I'm sure you are excited to finally reach the Atlantic. Be SAFE!!

-George

Anonymous on May 13 2010, 04:40

Falls du auch deinen Mast verlierst: Ich könnte mit meinem wunderschönen Maibaum aushelfen - einfach untenrum entasten und schon hast nen perfekten neuen weißen Mast!  
Schöne Reise!

Anonymous on May 13 2010, 10:19

Eine gute Heimkehr und immer eine Handbreit Wasser unterm Kiel!

Anonymous on May 14 2010, 01:39