










Tondelayo's Voyage

Life in Zihua, the British Drinking Team, and heading South

Dec 4, 2002 - Jan 30, 2003

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| | See Map - press your browser <i>back</i> button when finished. |
| Dec 4 | <p>Hanging out in Zihua. Only a few boats here but more coming in every day. Drinking a few beers with Jim, meeting new friends, waiting for old ones to show up.</p> |
| | <p></p> <p>A wreck on the beach at Zihua, lots of stories about who owns it and why it is still laying there.</p> |
| | <p>OK, not really sure what happened there that month, but I'm sure I had a good time. Had a pretty good party on the beach for Christmas. Pot Luck with turkey and all the trimmings. The Brits brought Hooligan Juice in a 5 gallon bucket. Mmmm good. I think I was sick for several days.</p> |
| Dec 29 | <p>Chris, Tom and Tim of the come aboard as crew, I nickname them the "British Drinking Team." The amount of food consumed is almost as astonishing as the beer.</p> <p>  </p> <p>Tom fishing, Tim on the sprit, and Staino (Chris) steering</p> |
| Dec 30 - Jan 1, 2002 | <p>Left Zihua for Acapulco, hoping to make it in by dark on the 31st. A little sailing, and some motoring. About 10pm a strange rattle started with the engine, so we had to turn it off to investigate. Turned out that a bracket that holds the engine to the mount cracked, and came apart. Bad news, no more motoring. So, we sailed for the next 2 days, most of it at about 2 knots.</p> <p>We arrived in Acapulco harbor just after dark, having been within sight all afternoon. Had to short tack up the harbor toward the anchorage, dodging (or being dodged by) power boats coming in at full speed. Sailed right in and anchored in a perfect spot, behind Evelyn Roberts (a Baba 40). Dropped by to get the low down on the anchorage, dingy docking, etc, and they gave me a huge chunk of dorado, which we polished off in no time as soon as we got back.</p> |
| Jan 2 | <p></p> <p>Tom at work</p> <p>Tom and I spent the morning extracting the bad engine bracket while Chris(Staino) and Tim went to buy the essentials: food and beer. Had the bracket out by afternoon, and went in town to walk around a bit and get a much needed shower. The public showers in Acapulco are not pretty, but at least they are cheap. Gabe on Polly girl stopped by at some point, and we heard that Nick on No Intentions was across the bay surfing. Other than that, not many cruising boats around.</p> |

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| Jan 3 - 4 | <p>Trying to find a welding shop that is open, but no luck, so we decide to party a bit over the weekend. Went out on Saturday to a bar with a Foam party. Pretty interesting, and for \$20 bucks you got all you could drink. Needless to say, there was a lot of alcohol consumed. Somehow we all ended up back at the dingy by the end of the night.</p> <p>Some people went for a jump of the one of the giant derelict boats that are in the anchorage. Went out to see the cliff divers, which were pretty impressive, turns out that they are just a bunch of teenage kids. The show cost \$2.50, but you got a free beer. I like their thinking.</p> |
| Jan 5 | <p>Monday, everyone back to work after the holiday, so I got the piece welded, and by night fall we had it back in and the engine was running.</p> |
| Jan 6 - 9 | <p>On the road again. Left for Huatulco in the afternoon. We decided that we spent exactly the right amount of time in Acapulco. Just long enough to see the sights, but not long enough to go anywhere more than once. Wind was mostly light, with some good sailing, and some motoring. Caught a 2-3 knot current on the way into Huatulco and showed up a little while before dawn, and sailed around outside until first light.</p> |
| Jan 10 - 20 | <p>Another Brit from Bristol showed up, a friend of Tim, so now we had 5 guys on the boat. A regular eating and drinking machine.</p> <p>Found an Irish Pub, here in Huatulco. Its run by an Irishman Victor and his girlfriend Alejandra. Had quite a good time in this places several times. One night, we drank 107 beers between 5 people. Victor was begging us to go home at 4 in the morning because he had to get up early to go buy more beer.</p> <p>We went over to La India, a cove a few mile down the coast. Great snorkeling, and perfect protection behind a reef. An occasional tour boat with 5-10 people would show up for a few hours, then head off. Nick and Liz of No Intentions came over and anchored next to us. We all went to the beach and built a huge bonfire one night.</p> <p>The BDT went to Puerto Escondido for the weekend. This place has been a favorite hang out for Surfers and expats to hang around since the 60s. Sounded like they had a great time, partying from Friday when they got there until Sundays morning when they left.</p> <p>Provisioned the boat up for a week of travel, topped off the water tanks, listened to the weather reports, and checked out of the country for El Salvador. It was decided that Chris and Tom would go with me on Tondelayo, and Rob and Tim would go with Marc on Tramonto.</p> |
| Jan 21 - | <p> chrisdorado_t.jpg (29388 bytes)</p> |
| Jan 25 | <p>Chris with a beautiful dorado</p> <p> boatsurfing_t.jpg (25554 bytes)</p> <p>A nice way to cool off</p> <p>Heading out to cross the infamous Tehuantepec and going to Barillas, El Salvador. A total of 10 boats left to cross that morning, and we had light wind on the nose in the morning and most of the day which died completely by sundown. By midnight, we were at the mouth of the beast, and it was blowing about 20 - 25 knots, and we had a great sail with a couple of reefs in. Slowly got lighter until morning. Ended up motoring into an unfavorable current until nightfall. Chris hooked up a beautiful 56 inch dorado and fought it to the boat where it was quickly gaffed and hauled aboard for dinner that night. We headed over to shore to meet up with Seahorse at anchor and wait for wind. All the other boats motored on through the night toward Puerto Madero, Mexico. Rolly anchorage, but we got a little sleep. Picked up in the early morning and sailed toward Guatemala. Motored and sailed until the next evening, when we got to the Mexico - Guatemala border. Had a high seas boat to boat transfer of some dorado so Seahorse could have some for a few dinners. Picked up a nice sierra on the hand line around sundown.</p> <p>Around sunset we passed into Guatemala, and the wind began to build. Continued getting stronger until it reached about 30 knots sustained around midnight. By this time we had all the reefs in and were going over 7 knots close hauled. The wind did not drop off until morning, so there were some pretty big waves by that time and Tondelayo way pounding her way through admirably. The off watch</p> |

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| |  <p style="text-align: center;">Sunset off Guatemala</p> | <p>was sleeping on the wall since we were heeled over so far. By morning, the wind had blown itself out, so we ended up doing some motoring, and some sailing throughout the day. Around sundown I went to fire up the engine and noticed that it was not pumping any water. Ended up replacing the water pump impeller and then it was back to normal.</p> <p>About the time that we entered El Salvador, the wind again began to pipe up. A bit earlier this time, and it lasted until sunrise. We were already closer to shore than the previous night, so we continued to stay close and ease our way in and had another record sail in small waves. I think that we were over 8 knots for a while, between a couple of volcanoes that were funneling wind up near 40 knots. Eventually got to The Lempa Shoals and called Barillas marina for a panga to lead us in.</p> |
| <p>Jan 26 - 27</p> | <p>Barillas Marina - an awesome little resort marina. You can moor your boat in perfectly flat water and enjoy the pool, jacuzzi, direct TV, internet connection under the palapas, and more. Twice a week, there is a van that takes everyone to town, the real El Salvador, for grocery shopping and a look around. The driver has someone riding "shotgun" next to him, and yes he actually carries a shotgun. Lots of guns in El Salvador. I wonder where the money came from to buy all those guns?</p> <p>Well, the Brits, Chris and Tom called to change their flights (which were out of LA in a few days) and found out that they needed to go to an approved travel agent in the next 48 hours, to get them changed in person. The closest approved travel agent was in Guatemala City, so...</p> | |
| <p>Jan 28 - 29</p> |  <p><u>The changing of the crew:</u> Clockwise: Lisa, Chris, Pat, Tom, Andrew</p> | <p>Pat and Lisa on Seahorse and I decided to go as far as San Salvador to see them off. They were catching a first class bus from there to Guatemala. After a good lunch of Argentinean food, they caught the bus and headed off. The rest of us went searching for Science Diet cat food, then to this huge mall to walk around, saw the latest Bond film, then to dinner at Pizza Hut for one of those greasy pan pizzas, and then to a hostel for some rest. Met a few wacky people in the hostel, of course.</p> <p>San Salvador is a pretty modern, nice city filled with security guards equipped with machine guns. They take their gated communities here pretty seriously. The construction methods seem to be a bit above those practiced in Mexico. The people are pretty nice. Since there is no tourism industry, there are not loads of beggars and people are not always trying to scam you out of a few bucks.</p> |
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