

I am standing the 9:00 pm to midnight watch every evening we are underway. This evening I'm going to have a small tape recorder in my hand and record the "thoughts from the midnight watch." It will be a little more about the boat, and trip in prose rather than mostly pictures.

1. The boat is a Gemini 105 Mc, a 33.5' catamaran made by Hunter (?), It was a single 27 H.P. Westerbeke diesel engine with a none steering outdrive and two kick-up rudders that make it quite easy to steer when underway once you are used to the configuration. The boat has been equipped with excellent cruising gear, including an auto-pilot, 2+ GPS's , a 6 gph water maker, a 2 KW invert-charger, a wind velocity/ direction instrument display, (which can drive the autopilot for an apparent wind heading,) radar, EPRIB, composting head, fresh water, pump and water heater, Follow-Me TV receiver, In-Reach satellite communication, main sail, furling jib, spinnaker, jeniker, spinnaker pole, dingy with an 8 hp Nissan outboard, air conditioning, multiple auto inflatable life jackets, some with integrated harnesses, and some with separate harnesses, spot lights, many tools and spare parts. Unfortunately, because the boat has spent many years in the bright and hot summer sun and salt water with high humidity, many things are not functional or reliable as we are taking this journey.
2. Paul has already purchased a motor sail-or that is a little larger, and this boat is going to fixed and sold as soon as the repairs are completed.
3. The ~800 miles from San Juan, Puerto Rico to Marina Hemmingway, Cuba has had light to moderate winds 8 to 20 mph, waves of 1-10 ft. almost always behind us. As a result we have sailed only about 20% of trip, motor sailed about 60% of the trip and motored about 20% of the trip. We started the journey with a port and starboard fuel tank of 18 gallons each and 7 jerry cans of 5 gallons each for a total of 71 gallons, We will have used about 55 gallons when we arrive in Marina Hemmingway.
4. The accommodations on board consist of a master queen bed forward center, a convertible salon with benches for 5 ship center and aft of the master stateroom forward, a narrow walkway down 3 step to both port and starboard from the salon, a quarter a galley along the starboard walkway, work area along the port walkway. The head is forward of the port walkway, and a quarter berth is aft of each walkway that tucks under the side benches in the aft cockpit. The engine, water tanks and fuel tanks are all aft of the cockpit.
5. The boat generally runs very dry in up to moderate seas and has an 18" high throat

vertical dimension between the hulls and as a result pounds in the floor under the boat center when the waves get steep.

6. Not only have the wind and waves been good to us but there has been no rain and as we started the trip the moon was a little past 1/2 and waning, and therefore now just past full so none of our night travel had been without good to moderate moonlight.
7. For two portions of travel along the north shore of Cuba there are specified shipping lanes for east and west travel that are each three miles wide with a 2 mile separator. We wave tended to stay just a mile outside the shipping lanes on one side or the other, in part to avoid the portion of the Gulf Stream which traverses the north boundary of Cuba and runs at up to 3 knots according to the cruising guide.
8. We saw 5 medium size dolphin along side the bow yesterday having fun in jumping sometimes in pairs and sometime all five at once. They certainly do like to play and have fun.
9. We didn't see very many ships (one every 3 to 4 hours) for being so close to land (within 50 miles) most of our journey. When we left Cuba we were measuring the miles to be within 100 miles of the Florida Keys since we were having engine fuel supply trouble again and Paul has a 100 mile towing insurance policy with Tow-Boat-US. We saw even fewer pleasure boats until we within 20 miles of the Keys and then there were lots of fishing and cruising boats.
10. Most of the north shore of Cuba is protected by barrier islands from any storm north easterly storms that come roaring across the Atlantic.
11. We had an active XM radio reception once we got near the eastern end of Cuba and Paul (H) set the antenna with a little westerly tip on the aft deck roof in a clear spot to the sky to get a clear view of the sky where the XM satellite is located.
12. The hull, in a 15 knot wind, heels only 1 or 2 degrees average and rolls about +/- 5 degrees but when the waves fill the hull throat there is a floor shock and bang on every big wave. This is with a full main and 130% jib flying making 5.5 to 6 knots.
13. A few days ago we had a jeniker flying (which is a lighter weight head sail) in a 15 knot trailing wind and the sail split horizontally about 18" below the hal-yard, and the lower 90% blew off to the starboard side of the hull. A little bow work hauled in the lower portion as a very wet sail, and the upper 18" was

hauled down with the sock that douses the sail. It will need a skilled sailmaker to repair it if it is worth repairing.

14. The engine is currently running very well after having periodic trouble with black algae in the fuel tanks and fuel delivery system. Algae is typically formed when there is water in the diesel fuel from condensation or deck plate leakage, and then the black algae find a home in the water and eat the diesel fuel until they die and form a sticky black residue in the bottom of the fuel tank, only to become floating clumps when the seas get rough and the tank has fuel washing back and forth in the tank.

15. The engine is equipped with an auxiliary electric fuel pump to help the fuel prime at startup. We have been using it every few minute to few hours to try and clear the fuel supply lines when the engine starts to die from fuel starvation.

16. The boat is equipped with keel boards that when down increase the keel depth to about 5' , as compared to the up position of about 2 1/2' which mages the boat a great thin water sailor.

17. Paul Hubble, who joined us in San Juan as our 3 crew member, has been a great asset. He is an experienced sail and power boat captain with great knowledge of boats and the waters of north and cen-

tral America. He is of positive spirit and knows how to fix things that go wrong. He will also proved he knows how to catch great dinners from the sea, as shown on page 25.

18. The boat is equipped with a new very bright aft deck light with a motion sensor. It makes a great exit and entry light and a good deterrent to intruders if the boat is left unattended.

19. In the middle of the night 1/2 way to Cuba we went by an unmarked 18" fishing (?) buoy that had a line attached to it and we promptly slowed down to 2 knots as we tried to drag it along behind us. With some extra light and a very sharp knife Paul Roberts was able to cut it loose and the wrapped line floated away with no harm.

20. All of use made a standard practice of wearing a full harness with a tether when at the helm at night since we were alone in the cockpit with the other usually sleeping.



Marina Hemmingway is located about 15 miles east of Havana, in a well protected harbor and can accommodate about 150 to 200 boats along fairway walls. The condition of the boats in the harbor ran from very good to excellent with large powerboats from Valletta, Malta (5,000 miles to the east) to the Freemantle, Australia (14,000 miles to the west) in the harbor.

Away from the boats in the marina Cuba shows many older cars some with beautiful shines on them and many bicycle and scooter travelers.





High security and run down buildings are the norm for the Havana area with the exception of some nice buildings and hotels as you get near to Havana.



The Melia Habana Hotel, where Paul (H) and I travelled to by taxi in a vain attempt to get a good internet connection was very nice both inside and out. This is a hotel that serves primarily foreigners as can be seen by the signage.

Unfortunately that do not offer currency ex-

change, and neither would the ATM across the street from the hotel accept any of my credit or debit cards for local funds. Fortunately, Paul had some Pesos to pay for a drink at the bar for both of us since the bar didn't except credit cards either.



The hotel lobby was nicely furnished and decorated, but with few guests, maybe because it was late in the season for tourists in Cuba.



The consulate office of Monaco were directly across the street, along with some nice apartments and a few high end stores

In Cuba “checked cabs” come in all sizes.



Many of the more modern business establishments were gas stations. This one, as with many of them is Cimex station. (I assume operated by an oil company of Mexico)



Notice the multi colored attached residential buildings, and the cars of older US origin and more modern cars of Japan or South Korea origin.



I was pitched overboard during
a trip from Havana to Key
Largo at $24^{\circ}31'N \times 81^{\circ}09'W$
on May 24th, 2016.
If you find me please send an
email with information about
where you found me. Thank you
JOHNPH@COMCAST.NET
FWHUBBLE@GMAIL.COM
ROBERTPAUL3@GMAIL.COM
We will respond.

During our 120 mile crossing from Cuba to Key Largo we tossed over a corked wine bottle with a \$1 bill and a note (at left) showing the date and location it was thrown overboard. This is a sailor habit when in open ocean and often brings an email respond many months or years later.

The rising draw bridge opening at 6:00 pm at Plantation Key inlet was our welcome home sight with only a few miles to go to Key Largo on the bayside.



Many of the Plantation Key homes are worth a picture. (left, and the next page)



Notice the climbing madaquins under the corner of the roof.





The final 12 miles to Key Largo is a passage of open bays and channels between small islands with many turns and we were glad we had Paul Roberts and his local knowledge at the helm.

