

ASA 101-104: 3 – 11 Mar, 2020



Dist: 129 nm

Mvg Time: 44.6 hrs

- ❖ **Crew:** Capt. Steve Runals (VA), Armor Fair (NJ), Dwaine Castle (AL), John Lind (CO), Nan and Steven Fine (MD)
- ❖ **Boat:** IP 465: *S/V HARMONY*
- ❖ **Distance traveled:** 126 nm
- ❖ **Places visited:**
 - Caneel, Francis, Lameshur Bays, St John
 - Cruz Bay, St John
 - Culebra
 - Crown Bay Marina, St Thomas
 - Christmas Cove, Great St James
- ❖ Circumnavigated **St John**, crossed the **Virgin Passage** between **St Thomas** and **Culebra**, maneuvered around ocean ships.
- ❖ Sun, wind, rain – a little too much

Mar 3 – 4: Arrival & Underway



Dist: 7.5 nm, Max Spd: 6 kts, Mvg Time: 5 hrs

3 Mar:

- All students aboard and gear stowed by late afternoon. Confirm cruise plan and finalize meal and provision list. All but John head to store for provisions. Sticker shock at prices.
- Stow provisions; dinner at **OutRigger**.
- Return to boat, below deck orientation and bed.

4 Mar:

- Early start after breakfast ashore.
- Review Fed Min Safety Requirement booklet, find all safety equipment, complete below deck orientation, on deck inspection and discussion of sail and anchoring handling equipment. Discuss nautical charts and review coastal navigation procedures. Assume crew responsibilities for predeparture prep.
- Review MOB, with focus on recovery underpower.
- Depart **Red Hook**, into **Pillsbury Sound** - beautiful day with lots of power and sailboat traffic. All crew get a chance at helm to get familiarized steering this large, heavy boat.
- Practice MOB under power.
- Deploy sails, practice tacking and sail trim on the way to overnight anchorage in **Rendezvous Bay**.
- Anchored in a beautiful anchorage by 1700 hrs.. A little rolling with unseasonable SE light winds. Capt dives on anchor to check set. Anchor had dragged a few feet but well set now. Grill pork chops. Nice night. After dinner, review knots.
- Steve, nav for tomorrow, lays out course.

Mar 5: Rendezvous Bay to Cruz Bay and Francis Bay



Dist: 14 nm; Mvg time: 5 hrs; Max spd: 7.13, Avg spd: 2.45 kts

- Anchor secured and underway after pre ops checks by 0845 hrs.
- Raise sails enroute to **Cruz Bay**. Along the way practice tacking and jibing, identification of stand -on / give -way responsibilities for power and sail. Lots of ferry traffic.
- Secure on a National Park Service moorings outside **Cruz Bay** just before noon.
- Dingy into town for a walk about, dinner and a little exploring. Discuss dingy and outboard motor operation while underway. Back aboard and under sail by 1345 hrs.
- Sail on a close reach in building wind thru the **Windward Passage**. No tacking needed to get thru this sometimes challenging passage, some great sailing! All get their first chance at sailing in ocean swells. On a mooring in **Francis Bay** by 1600 hrs..
- Dwaine and Armor take and pass their ASA 101 test, John lays out our nav plan for tomorrow. Light dinner and enjoy a quiet night in this beautiful anchorage.

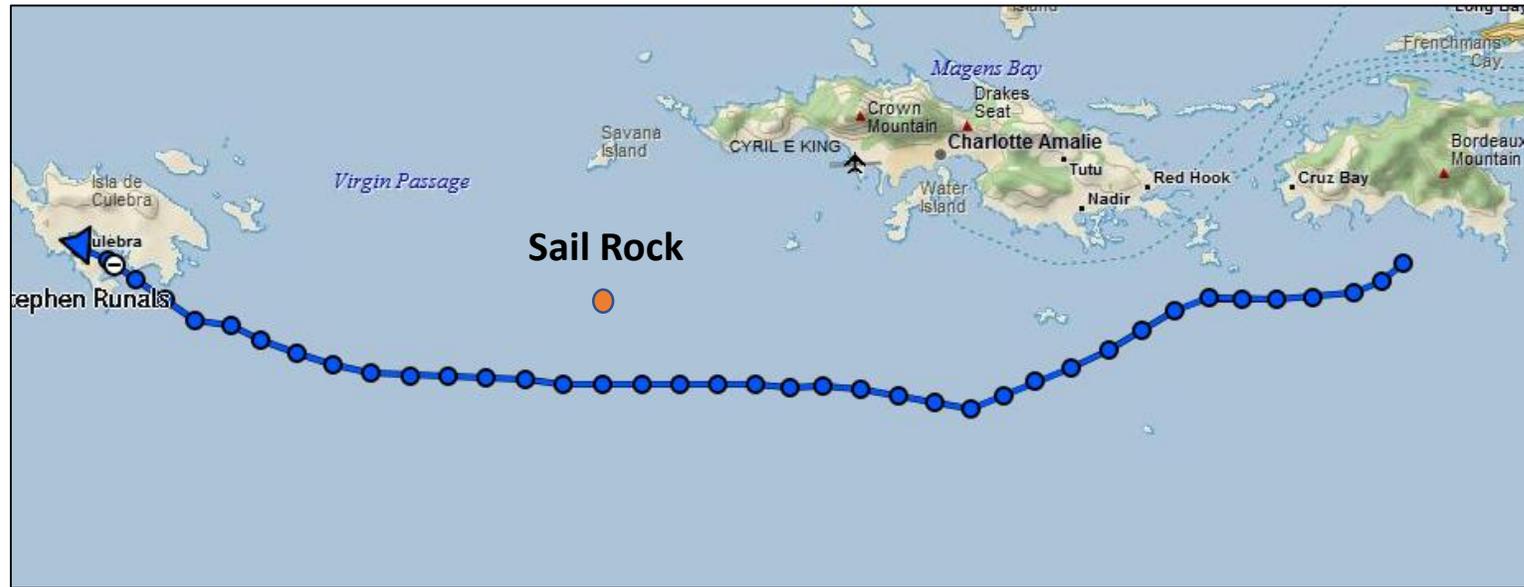
Mar 6: Around St John



Dist: 20 nm; Mvg time: 6 hrs; Max spd: 6.57 kts, Avg spd: 2.76 kts

- Today from **Francis Bay**, past **Bitter End**, into **The Sir Francis Drake Channel**, around the east end of **St John** to a mooring in **Lameshur Bay**.
- Underway by 0845 hrs after pre ops checks and a short review of marine weather. Once clear of the mooring field, raise sails. Motorsail in light S/SE winds into the bay south of **Josh Van Dyke**. Rain showers and occasional strong winds make for roly seas. Practice heaving-to. Shortly before noon pass the **Bitter End** and into the **Sir Francis Drake Channel** where the wind picks up as we sail toward the E end of **St John** – great sail. Along the way the crew rotates thru helm and taking two bearing fixes.
- John setups a danger bearing to keep us off **Eagle Shoals** after rounding the E end of **St John**. Downwind sailing with the preventor rigged. Practice jibing PST - TSP.
- Moored in **Lamasher Bay** by 1400 hrs.. Interesting watching the activity from other boats around us.
- Dwaine lays out course for tomorrow, all go for swim, enjoy some good snorkeling. Another great meal aboard with excellent company.

Mar 7: St John to Culebra



Dist: 34.75 nm

Mvg time: 7 hrs

Max spd: 6.8 kts

Avg spd: 4.2 kts

- Dwaine's course takes us south of **St John** and **St Thomas**, across the **Virgin Passage** to **Culebra**. Forecast is for NE winds 10-15 kts. Depart as the sun comes up. Wind light, from E. Sailing wing-on-wing with winds 7-8 kts with preventor rigged and staysail boom tied to weather.
- Track progress by taking two bearing fixes.
- By 1000 hrs. clear of **St John**, **Sail Rock** in sight; rain showers on and around us. Several cruise ship in port in **Charlotte Amalie**. Beautiful rainbow in the distance off **Sail Rock**.
- Pass close by a moored fuel ship off **Charlotte Amalie**. Shortly before noon off **Sail Rock**. Motorsailing in ocean swells 4-6 ft. Review ASA 103 topics along the way.
- Into the entrance channel to **Culebra**, anchored in **Ensenada Honda** by 1430 hrs.. An interesting sailing day despite the light wind conditions.
- A little shopping, walking about and dinner ashore. Laud Sat night traffic and crowds. Lots of folks enjoying being out in the warmth and sun.

Mar 8: Back to St Thomas



Dist: 25 nm, Max Spd: 5.45 kts, Mvg Time: 7 hrs, Avg Spd: 3.6 kts

- Significant change in forecast for the next several days. Rain today, clearing then strong easterly wind (30+ kts) with heavy rain tonight and tomorrow. Decide to return to **St Thomas** today to avoid crossing the **Virgin Passage** in forecasted conditions.
- Pre ops checks complete, underway by 0830 hrs. Nan, as navigator, gets us clear of the narrow entrance to **Ensenada Honda** and under sail by 0930 hrs..

- Several short tacks in shifting winds get us clear of reefs before settling in on to a long tack to St Thomas.
- Rotate steering and taking two bearing fixes.
- Sailing in light winds and building ocean swell makes for a rolly ride but all do well.
- Review ASA 103/104 topics along the way.
- Based on forecast conditions for tonight and early tomorrow decide to put into **Crown Bay Marine** off the **West Gregerie Channel**.
- Indications of changing weather as day progresses – lowering clouds, dropping barometer and gusty winds.
- Contact marine by VHF for entrance instructions thru its narrow entrance, secured by 1500 hrs. Dinner ashore at marina; welcome showers by all before the rain and strong winds arrive. A secure night despite the conditions.

Mar 9: Christmas Cove



Dist: 13 nm

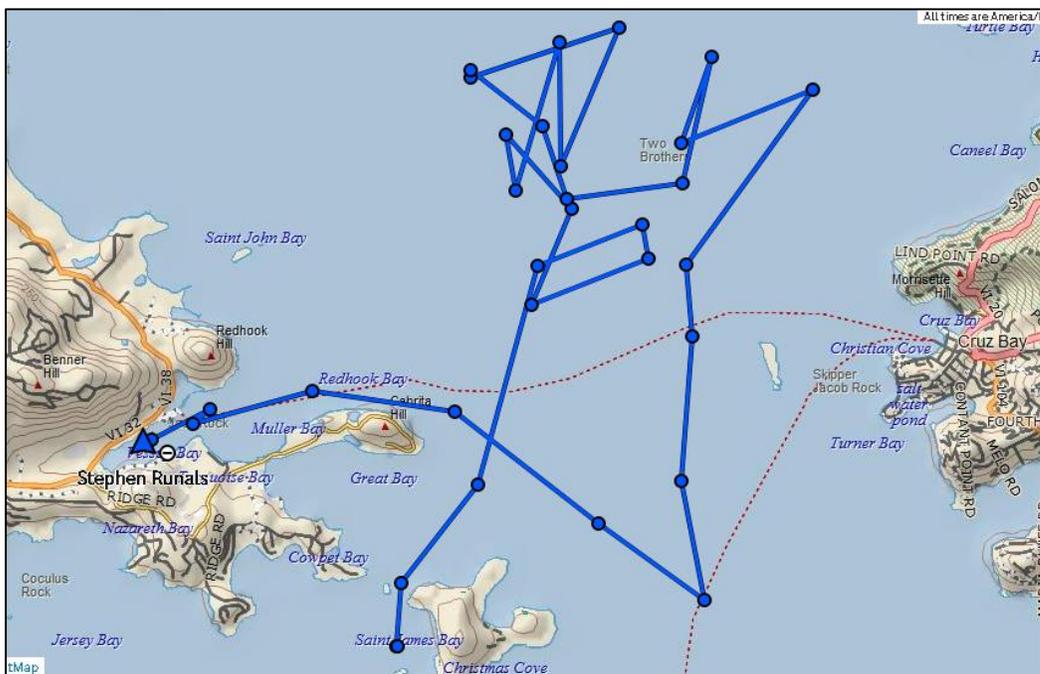
Mvg time: 4.5 hrs

Max spd: 7.13 kts

Avg spd: 3 kts

- Armor lays out our route back East. Gusty wind with heavy rain showers delay departure till 10:30 hrs. Course takes us out into the **West Gregerie Channel**, past the mooring field off **Water Island** and down the **East Gregerie Channel** to the entrance to **Charlotte Amalie harbour**.
- Once past **Cowell Pt**, sail toward **Buck and Capella Islands** in light winds and rain showers. Despite the rain and wind, lots of charter boats with folks from the docked cruise ships heading to moorings off **Capella Island** give us a chance to practice “right-of-way” rules.
- Tack our way to the buoy off **Packet Rock**. Careful attention at the helm gets us safely past the west end of **Capella Island** in squalls with heavy rain and gusty wind..
- Once into **St James Bay**, carefully avoid the **Cow and Calf Rocks** as we work our way to the mooring field off **Great St James Island** and **Christmas Cove**; sometimes heavy rain. Loose an informal race with a catamaran for the last mooring but find a secure place to anchor. Secure by 1400.
- Time to dry out, something to eat and a little study before it’s time for the ASA 103 test, well done by all. Time for a swim and deck showers before dinner under clearing skies.

Mar 10 – 11: Home Again



Dist: 14 nm; Mvg time: 5.3 hrs; Avg spd: 2.5 kts

- Pre ops checks complete, anchor secured and underway by 0845 hrs..
- Transit the **Current Hole** and into **Pillsbury Sound** for a final day of sail handling before returning to **Red Hook** and the ASA 104 test.
- Beautiful day with winds forecasted to be in the 20 kt range.

- Rotate helm and sail handling positions as we tack and jibe thru all points of sail in sometimes frustrating wind conditions – strong gusts followed by light, shifty winds leaving lumpy seas conditions.
- Unexplained change of watercolor - deep blue to a milky white throughout the morning Lots of power and sail traffic as well as many ferries between **Red Hook** and **St John**.
- Return to **Red Hook**, slight delay getting on to the fuel dock; refueled and secured in our slip by 1300 hrs.
- Time for a short break, a little study before John, Steve and Nan take and pass the ASA 104 test.
- Power goes out throughout the Island for about 2 hrs; restored in time for an excellent dinner ashore. Over dinner, discuss the course and identify lessons learned. All agree its been a great course with some challenging conditions but a great learning opportunity
- Final day focused on cleaning boat, packing and preparing to return to life ashore. All leave ready for more.

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Some insights:

- ❖ A great learning opportunity, meeting and exceeding expectations.
- ❖ Insights into the impact of tides and currents on cruise planning and while underway.
- ❖ Importance of being able to read and understand the information available on charts – matching what's on the chart with what you see around you.
- ❖ Importance of matching sails to wind and sea conditions
- ❖ Value of the information in **Local Notice to Mariners** and cruising guides to assist in cruise planning.
- ❖ Importance in monitoring and identifying trends in wind/sea conditions, barometric pressure, battery consumption.
- ❖ Importance of pre ops checks and staying “in tune” with boat systems while underway.
- ❖ Value of a mainsail preventor when sailing off the wind.
- ❖ All agree there is so much more to explore.





