

Even Star - Langkawi - Fremantle June 2006

Crew

Mark Loader Skipper

Vittore Pecchini Navigator

Daniel Rome Crew & Ship Jumper

Departed Langkawi 1st June 2006

Well what a shit of a trip it has been, it is now the 11th June and we have just departed from Nongsa Point Marina, this is the first time that I have had time to do a log entry, the rest of the time has been spent repairing the stupid boat. We left from Langkawi under motor and motored almost all of the way to Singapore, the motor had various failures, the primary fuel filter glass shattered and filled the bilge with diesel, I bypassed it as there is a second primary with water separator and I put a new filter in that at the same time. The port D1 forward snapped and I did a temporary repair using a galvanized turnbuckle, I did a few temporary repairs to the other D's as well as they all looked pretty sad, I didn't notice them before we left, my fault. The engine didn't start most times we tried, and after inspecting the cabling and the key circuits I was pretty sure that the starter motor solenoid was faulty. We stopped at a little island village called Kukup just before Singapore as it was late afternoon and I was not keen to try Singapore Strait with a suspect motor. When we left Kukup the next morning the gearbox started slipping, we had been checking the ATF oil in the gearbox, but this time the dip stick showed empty. We topped it up whilst drifting in the Kukup channel and got it going again just before we would have collided with the port channel marker.

I forgot to mention the fan belt, after we filled the gearbox with ATF and got moving again, the fan belt started smoking and squealing like a stuck pig, after around half an hour of work we had a new one in place and off we went to Nongsa Point.

With a few struggles we managed to motor to Nongsa Point where we commenced work on the problems. The first replacement solenoid we got didn't work, I tested it and compared it to the old solenoid and I was pretty sure that they had given us a 24 volt one. Wan, the mechanic that we found though the marina was very helpful and did a lot of running around and translating our requirement to the local businesses. Investigation into the gearbox revealed a leak on the gear shift lever; we purchased some "O" rings, removed the shaft, replaced the ring, made a gasket from a cornflakes packet and put it all back together. The second solenoid arrived we installed it, put the starter motor back on again (2 times) and we had an engine that started, gearbox looked ok as well. When I tried to put the engine into gear the gear lever fell to pieces, I opened it up to find it had been repaired before with hose clamps (not very well though) I did another hose clamp fix and it seemed to work ok. I changed the oil filter, we couldn't change the oil, I think it is too thick to drain, yuk. The heat exchanger and secondary filter were falling off the motor, the engine kill solenoid had fallen off twice before, I bolted, hose clamped them all back on and things don't rattle quite as much any more. We also replaced three leaking hoses, a new 2" exhaust manifold hose and things looked ok for departure. After 11 days of non stop problems I am certainly glad to be relaxing, we motored out of Nongsa Point and an hour later big black clouds came over and the wind picked up to around 20 knots from the West, we are going east through the south channel and in 20 miles will be in the South China Sea clear of most shipping and on our way, in the last hour the wind has gone more to the south, we may be hard on the wind when we turn towards Karimata Strait.

It is now Monday the 12th June, we are at 00 41 N, 105 31 E, 41 miles from the equator, nothing has broken for 21 hours, if we go a full day (just 3 hours to go) without a breakage it will be the first time on the trip that this has happened. Let's hope. Daniel the Pom did a runner in Nongsa, didn't tell me, just went, there are pommy bastards after all, I do understand that it was all a bit out of his element but I now have to deal with our Cruising Permit and customs issues as we are missing a person, and not to speak to me, should I write "ship jumper" in his RYA logbook.

Tuesday 13th June, we passed our 24 hour non breakage record, we stopped the motor mid afternoon yesterday & checked the oil, gearbox & coolant, all was good, there is very little water in the bilge, just the layer of sludge that seems to never disappear, there was a 2 second drip from the stuffing box so I gave it another grease and it stopped. We crossed the equator at first

light, the almost full moon was still an hour before setting, I took a picture of Vittore at the wheel with a bottle of champagne, he read out a poem that he had been preparing for the occasion, in Italian first and then the English translation, not bad at all, it showed all the respect for Neptune that is required from a first time equatorial traveller. We are now at 00 04 S (yes, south at last) 106 45 E, doing 3 knots under motor with a light wind and smallish waves both right on the nose, we are heading 134 over the ground. I just wired up my weather fax to the HF and tuned in all of Wiluna's voice and fax frequencies as well as Radio America and the 5, 10, 15 and 20 meg time channels and also the Mobile Maritime Network South East Asia (was Rowdy's, now run by a sith african called Richard). We have 147 miles to go to Karimata Island, if the wind isn't with us we will stop overnight otherwise we will drop off some pencils and colouring books and a few printed photos that Reg & Denice took on our last visit 6 weeks ago on Intermezzo.

We meander on, it is now 16:00 on the 13th, Vittore made pasta for lunch, it was very nice, we drank Errol's bottle of Yellowglen with it and felt very relaxed afterwards, we have just passed the seemingly impassable 48 hours without a breakage, the engine is ticking over at 1900 revs (I will fix the gear lever when we stop at Karimata Island & we should be able to cruise on 2200 or so), the wind and waves and current are on the nose, with the mainsail with 2 reefs we are doing 4 knots over the ground, every now and then a set of larger waves puts us back to 2.5 knots we then speed up to 4 again ready for the next set. We are now at 00 17 S, 107 06 E, 123 miles to Karimata 320 from there to Bawean and another roughly 300 from there to Bali and a steak. The wind is blowing about 12 knots from 140, a shift in either direction would make our 127 degree course a lot easier to manage, come on Hughey do us a favour.

We are just motoring up to the anchorage at Karimata Island, we are about 5 miles out. Last night we motored all of the way, thunderstorms and lightning all around us but we seemed to miss the bulk of it. Vittore spat the dummy last night, I was awoken by the engine over revving and the fan belt screeching, I asked Vittore what was going on and he didn't appear to have noticed, when I asked again he spat it. You are rude to me, you thing that you are better than everybody else bla bla bla, I told him that I wasn't his girlfriend and didn't know why we were having this conversation, he continued on. This was the culmination of his last few days, hinting at running out of holidays, and that I had said "it would take four weeks", I told him six weeks from the start. Over the last couple of days he has, put us 3 minutes from being run over by a ship and when questioned remarked "beautiful", with a smile, sailed for over an hour with the headsail backed, I thought that we had tacked, no response when questioned, he was on watch but doing his study, face down in a book. There are other occurrences and I wasn't going to mention any of them but now "I amma getting offa in Bali and will tell Errol why, this is my right", what the hell. I think I know why John Sanders solo sails. I believe Vittore's real reason for departing is that he will have his 1500 miles by Bali and that is all that he cares about, his qualifications.

After a stopover in Karimata Island Vittore decided that he might like to stay on and do Bali to WA after all. We stopped overnight at Karimata, the winds were 30 knot ish from the SE and the seas outside our protected bay looked pretty lumpy. We met the locals again and gave them copies of the pictures that Reg & Denice took and copied for them, we also gave them the pencils and colouring books also from Reg & Denice as well as some rice, noodles, pasta and some chips and biscuits for the kids. This time we were on the other side of the point and the village was a lot larger, probably 100 or so people, lots of kids, they all wanted their photos taken, chooks, goats, dogs' cats and some other assorted wildlife. Vittore and I were invited to play volleyball and most of the village turned out to laugh at us. When they played a game between the locals after us, each time a team would lose a point they would all drop to the ground and do a few push ups, like they were exercising to fix the lack of fitness and that is why they lost the last point. We said goodbye just before dark and went back to the boat to copy a DVD of the photos for Ben (pronounced Bun), but Vittore's PC would only write CD and we had no blanks. Ben came with us and I gave him some alcohol wipes and dettol soap, he had a cut on his leg that was infected, our first aid kit had no antiseptic cream, I was a bit surprised to find that out. We had changed the oil & filter and just before departing at around 10am on the 16th June we topped it up and re checked other engine stuff. We are now around 30 miles out on route to Bawean where we may

top up the fuel before heading to Bali.

Nothing exciting to report, we are now at 03 53 S, 110 41 E, approximately 165 miles from Bawean, around 470 from Bali, motoring into a 20 knot south easter, the main is up double reefed and giving us a little speed and a fair bit of stability, the waves are quite large for the wind speed (around 20 knots), the current is again with us at around 1/2 knot but it is opposing the wind and chopping things up a bit. No probs with the boat, we will get 100 litres of diesel and some fruit & veg at Bawean and get on our way.

Just 50 miles from Bawean & smoke billowing from the engine bay, we shut off the engine and first looks we thought that we had had an electrical fire in the engine bay, we let things cool down, checked water, oil & gearbox & all ok. The start battery was very black and the wiring on the port side of the engine bay was also charcoal like. We started the engine again and the smoke started up again. A close look and feel revealed a hole in the exhaust coupling near the salt water intake. I mixed up some epoxy putty (I hope it handles the heat), wrapped the exhaust in aluminium tape, a layer of fibreglass cloth over that and a couple of more layers of aluminium tape. I wrapped a couple of ties of coat hanger wire over the top and an hour later it is still ok, lets see how it goes. 45 miles to Bawean, I wish it was our final destination, Even Star has just about done it's dash with me, 3 weeks and just a few days off is not my idea of a cruise.

We arrived at Sankapura on Bawean without further drama, almost as we arrived a long vessel with a typical unmuffled diesel engine approached us, and a very pushy local asked if we needed a guide, we replied that we were meeting Ari and that we didn't need anything, he kept asking to come aboard, they anchored 5 metres away along side us and kept nagging us. I told them that we had engine work to do and that we were busy, they kept on at us, even upping anchor and coming even closer. About 10 minutes later Ari arrived in a little canoe, dugout, trimaran thing and we arranged to meet him onshore at 12:00, it was 10:30. I started to work on the engine whilst Vittore launched the dinghy. I tried once again to fasten the engine kill solenoid, this time using hose clamps instead of the rope and tape method that had held it together since Batam but no matter how I arranged the clamps the solenoid would sit on the wrong angle and either rub on the rear injector at the front or on the exhaust manifold coupling at the back. I finally swore at it, called the boat a stupid unreliable heap of shit, cut the solenoid wire and removed it completely and had a drink. We would use the rope that I had connected to the kill lever to stop the engine when required. This made the engine far more reliable as we now had a temporary start switch as the key was dead, a taped, wired and fibreglass wrapped exhaust system, a gear lever that no longer gave us reverse as the hose clamps that held the cables stationary were now moving, but no loose kill solenoid how modern.

We headed to shore at 12:00 we took our 4 jerries totalling 110 litres with us, on the way the outboard coughed and spluttered and died on us a couple of times but it seemed to get more reliable the further away it got from Even Star, there seems to be a zone around her where all things mechanical become determined to shit themselves, it may be an EMP or perhaps some kind of voodoo curse. Ari was on shore waiting within a bundle of diesel containers ready to fill ours. Despite me saying to him that he could take our containers to get them filled at wherever it is he fills them (maybe from siphoning it out of local trucks, not really, he is a very honest man), he still used his 1 litre ladle and a funnel and counted out 115 litres into our jerries. We decided that we would take them back to the boat, empty one of the 35 litre ones into the tank and get Ari to refill it, giving us 150 litres total. Vittore had wandered off somewhere so Ari came with me back to the boat; we unloaded the jerries, emptied one into the front tank and returned to shore. After refilling the jerry we put it into the dinghy and climbed aboard the bike trike trailer that formed the back part of Ari's limousine, positioned the plank that we sat on in the centre so that it was less likely to fall off as we ran the obstacle course of potholes, corners, speed humps and occasional running of the road to avoid oncoming traffic that we encountered on our way to the town centre. Ari took us first to the "Bank" where we were told that "we don't take cards" and "there is no ATM on Bawean", luckily Vittore had some Australian cash, he loaned the boat \$300, we changed it to Rupiah at the very low exchange rate of 5250 to the dollar, this was the rate that

they were told by a phone call to Java, I paid Ari for the US\$150 of fuel (US\$1 per litre) about 1,250,000 RP and we headed off to get some paper towels and some fruit & veg. We were late to do this kind of shopping, the market seems to close late morning and other shops soon after, we got 4 packets of serviettes, almost paper towels, a rockmelon, some grapes, oranges and apples and headed off with Ari to have lunch at the local 1 star restaurant. Ayam Goreng, Nasi Goreng, cold green vegetable soup with lots of hot in it, two cans of coke for me, two iced teas for Vittore and a coke for Ari, 35,000 the lot, around AU\$6, not bad at all. On the way back to the restaurant Air took us to his house, we met the missus and kids, he tried to interest me in buying a tiny monkey for 100,000 RP, we looked at his collection of business and post cards from other visiting yachts, he asked also if we would like to buy a cricket 2,000 RP, big black apparently very noisy ones (a local kid came up with 2,000 RP and ran off cupped hands holding his new pet), Ari looked surprised that we didn't want one for the yacht, he made a cricket noise impersonation and laughed, I hate the crickets that we have, noisy bloody things imagine the introduction of these giants to complement the South African ones that we already have, still, maybe these ones eat Cane Toads. We arrived back at the boat, fuelled up, removed the bow vent and put a cap over it, it had leaked a couple of times, tidied up, checked all the engine fluids, pumped a heap of fuel from the front holding tank into the starboard main tank, upped anchor and off we went. Just past the reef and in-between the channel markers, then engine died, it spluttered before it went and sounded like no fuel, the wind was on the nose so we rolled out the headsail turned a 180 and sailed back to the anchorage, old faithful never ceases to perform when it is most needed, heap of shit. After 1/2 hour of stuffing about, including dragging anchor and ending up about 20 metres from the reef and groin the engine started. I bled it to the primary then secondary filters, then cracked the easiest injector fuel line and off it went. I can only assume that somehow air got into the system when we were pumping from the front tank although I can't imagine how this could happen. 2 hours after our first departure after re anchoring and running the engine for an hour to make sure it was ok, we were off again. We are now (22nd June at 02:42) just off the North East corner of Madura, around 180 miles from Benoa, 20 miles from Raas Strait. The engine has been fine since Bawean although I haven't given it any serious revs, 2000 is it with an occasional 2200 when things get too slow.

It is now 03:30, there is a ship either side of us and we are almost north of Selat Raas, we are doing about 4 knots, the seas are relatively calm and the double reefed mainsail is definitely helping us along, I have changed our route to go through the Selat east of Pulau Kamudi & west of Pulau Kangen this means heading 110 degrees for another 40 miles before turning south east again, it will help our angle to Bali particularly if the wind turns east at all, the water is calmer here than on the south side of these islands and, I've been through Selat Raas on the last trip and want to take photos of something else. For the last four mornings we halved talked to Richard at 00:30UTC on 14323 kHz, he gives us great weather info and we listen in to him talking to yachts as far away as Guam, the middle of the Pacific and other places that we have never heard of.

Same day, Thursday 22nd June 2006, the engine died earlier, sounded like fuel again, a change we weren't in a small channel surrounded by reef, there was plenty of ocean around us and I pulled out the headsail and perused the tool kit in search of something to fix the engine. No dynamite, no gelnite, a hammer yes, I could bash it to death, start at the injector pump, then take out the lift pump, secondary fuel filter and then start on the electrics. I wish it was running so that I could kill it, it seems an anticlimax to kill it when it isn't even alive. A plan, fix it then bash it to death, yes, satisfaction, revenge and yes, freedom. After letting the engine and myself cool down I had a quick look at how the fuel lines and injector return lines are run, the lines from the two tanks go via stopcocks to the primary filter, that is fine, the return line from the injectors has a T in it and feeds to each tank, port and stbd, no way of shutting it off. It seems stupid to turn off a fuel tank but still let the engine put its excess fuel back into that tank, eventually you have to pump all of your fuel into the tank that is off. Well that is not what happened here, both tanks were on but we had been on a starboard tack for a long while, all of the fuel had drained into the port tank and we sucked air into the fuel system. I shut off the stbd tank and ran the electric pump front the bow tank to put some fuel into the stbd tank. After a few mins I removed the fuel inlet line from the primary fuel filter and connected the line from the bow tank and switched on the electric pump. I loosened the bleed screw on the primary filter and waited until the bubbles stopped in the

overflow fuel. I then closed the bleed screw. I opened the bleed screw on the secondary filter and bled it the same way. With the electric pump still on I cracked the same injector inlet line as with the Bawean death, and also manually pumped the lift pump (I don't think the electric pump pumps the fuel past it very easily). With the system now almost primed we cranked it over, using the temporary start switch under the nav seat floor. After a few minutes of cranking and the fuel flow getting better and better from the cracked injector she fired up. A few coughs and splutters and it sounded as sweet as a piece of shit. It is now two hours later; in about 5 miles we turn to the south east and should be able to sail for 20 miles or so. We have left the pump running, I put the fuel lines back to normal, i.e. the bow tank pumps into the stbd fuel tank, the pump is small & slow and we still may have a lot of fuel in the bow tank. We left the stbd tank off, we are running off the port tank (that we cant dip and don't have a gauge on), as soon as we turn more to a port tack and lean over a bit we will re open the stbd tank and equalize the fuel again (we hope) we still have 20 litres in a jerry can but I am saving that to drink with the coke when we are in the life raft (although that hasn't been surveyed since 5 years before the turn of the century (really, 11 years ago), Noah was very proud of it when he used it on the ark.

It's Thursday the 22nd still, 23:04, we are motoring into lumpy seas, about 100 miles from Benoa. We are doing about 2 knots over the ground, the sails have been put away, the inner forestay snapped today with almost no load on it, the rest of the rig is flopping and pumping over every wave and it can't handle too much more I suspect. I have put the main halyard onto the stern horn cleat and tensioned it, the spinnaker halyard is on the bow, also tensioned, the staysail halyard is attached where the inner forestay was and the pole topper is also attached to the deck in front of the mast. All of this has reduced but not stopped the pumping and none of it will help if one of the caps or ado's breaks, we will have to deal with that when & if. I say again, what a heap of badly maintained shit; I have spent more time fixing broken stuff in 4 weeks than in 7 years of owning Freelander, some people shouldn't be allowed to own a yacht.

It is now 6am on the 23rd, the wind and tide are against us (naturally), the heap of shit can just manage 2 knots so we are still 40 hours from Benoa if nothing changes, if the wind turns we may put up the main again and keep an eye on the rig.

A change of plan, we had no motor and it looks like we are out of diesel, apart from the 20 litres reserve in a jerry, we have decided to go to Singaraja on the north coast of Bali. I put the remaining 20 litres into the front tank and primed the diesel with the electric pump, up she ran no probs. With only 20 miles to go the wind was on our beam and we were doing 6 knots in the right direction. We would be pushing to make it before the end of twilight at 7:12pm but it like a pretty safe place to enter. 2 1/2 miles out I started the diesel and within a few minutes it died, 20 litres sloshing around, spread out over 2 tanks was not enough to stop air being sucked from the windward tank, bugger, old faithful was at it again. We sailed to the anchorage, it was over the depth sounders range until the chart plotter showed us about 1/2 mile inland, then it shallowed really quickly, we dropped the anchor at 15 metres and by the time we stopped we were in 5 1/2 metres. It is really hard trying to sail in no wind and get to the point you would like to be at. We had chops and mashed spuds for tea, a dozen drinks and hit the sack. Just before that a small boat paddled alongside and we arranged with a local boy Julham, to get diesel in the morning. At 0700 Julham and his father helped us get 200 litres of diesel at 5250 RP per litre, about 90 cents. After I took a ride on a motorbike to the ATM and withdrew 2,000,000 we returned to the bimo waiting on the shore near the boat and they took off to get the diesel. I went for a walk with Julham & we visited a mosque and a few scenic spots and I went to his fathers house Husein and met the wife and kids, 7 kids, the uncle, his kids and his kids kids were all there, nice house clean and tidy, they bought me a fruit cocktail with fresh fruit and juice and I chatted to his kids about boats & other things, me trying to speak a bit of Indonesian and they pretty good English. I returned to the boat & Vittore went ashore for a walk. I am awaiting his return, Julham is coming with us to Benoa, should be interesting.

We arrived in Benoa, 25th June, after nearly losing the rig through another broken lower, just 15 miles from Benoa Harbour; we caught a Mahi Mahi and a Tuna just before that, during the night

we had gusts up to 40 knots coming down from Gunung Agung. Julham proved to be useless, sick part of the way, just bone idle the rest, then when we arrived he tried to get 100,000 RP from us, his father told us that the bus to Singaraja was 50,000, Julham claimed that he needed to eat, we gave him some drinks, fruit and the chicken that he had not eaten for tea and when he still wanted more money than the 80,000 we had given him we told him to fuck off, the total fare that I arranged through a few phone calls was just 40,000. I rang his father and told him that he had a rude and lazy son who had tried to rip us off and that we realized it was not his fault but that we were disappointed with his behaviour after we had agreed to take him for a sail for his own benefit.

Errol has suggested that we leave Even Star in Bali, he will travel up and do all of the repairs, put on a new life raft, the other one blew up when we inflated it, the rubber was turning back into petroleum, all of the stores were unusable, the EPIRB was corroded and unserviceable, I told the life raft people to throw it away.

It is now the 22nd of July; I am back in Onslow, Mark Standish and I will be returning to Bali next Sunday to bring Even Star as far as Exmouth via Dampier. Errol has replaced the stays, I will retension the rigging when we arrive, the engine has been serviced and all of the items that I put on my list have been fixed, lets hop for some nice weather to get her home.

Mark Standish & I arrived back at Benoa on the 30th July 2006, our Garuda flight left over 2 hours late so instead of arriving at midday we reached Even Star at 3pm. With little time to do much we unpacked and headed to Kuta for dinner and a bit of shopping. Next morning I tensioned the rig, Mark pumped up the dinghy, we did a few other small jobs and then went off to buy some silver, get the provisioning done and then back to Kuta to get some CD's & DVD's. Bali Marina have all of our paperwork and passports we are planning for a departure before midday tomorrow, the 1st August. I still need to replace the filter on the front fuel tank, Mark is going up the mast to tension the diamonds, we will then tie down the dinghy, get our departure forms, set up a decent trolling line and get out of here.

We finished all of the work at around 10am on the 1st, I headed to do our paperwork whilst Mark tidied up a few lines. As usual there was no probs with all of the Bali Marina staffs work, all done, got the weather from the net, paid out another million or so Rupiah for our CAIT changes, email pen fees, water & power and we cast off at 11:30. Out through the channel between all of the tourist parasailing, towed flying things and various local craft & we were out into 4 knots of southerly flowing Lombok Strait current.

It is now the 3rd at 11:30, 48 hours out, about 200 miles south south east of Benoa, we have motored/motor sailed the whole time, wind from the south east at 10 knots and less, current against us too, motor is on 1700 revs, part jib & double reefed mainsail. No fish, sunny and warm, things could be worse. I have just put some Tonic Water and coke into the fridge for this afternoons bundy & cokes and Gin & Tonic's, with lime of course.

09:50 on the 4th, we are motor sailing at 200 degrees, approx 4.2 knots, the wind should swing a bit more to the east tomorrow so we may get some decent sailing in then, we are only making about 80 miles per day at present. No fish, steaks for tea last night, haven't thought about today's dinner yet. Sunny skies, SSE winds, quite pleasant once again. Just 6 hours to happy hour. Errol spoke to Julie yesterday, it looks like Even Star will be staying in Onslow on the town mooring for a while, we might get out to the Monte Bello's if all goes well. The wind shifted a little to the east just after midday, we turned off the engine and have been sailing since then, it is now 20:10, nearly 8 hours under sail. Just after we turned the iron sail off we caught a small Mahi Mahi, just big enough for 2, I filleted it and with some chips it made a nice dinner, lets hope for something bigger tomorrow. We are 415 miles from Dampier Fairway, just west of the rhumbline at 13 37 S, 115 40 E, we are doing 3.5 knots 200 over the ground, very pleasant, double reefed main & double rolled headsail, the wind generator is putting in about the same as we are taking out,

perfect.