

Langkawi to Fremantle 2007

Semi Circle – Bavaria 37

Skipper – Mark Loader
Navigator – Max (Neil) Edmeades

Hanuman – Fontaine Pajot Athena 40

Skipper – Gary McDonald
Crew - Alex & Val Lawson & Con the Gypsy

Max & I arrived at Langkawi on the 4th May at 10am, we put our bags aboard Semi Circle & had a quick look around the boat, and it looked very tidy and newish. We ran into Gary & the Hanuman crew not long after arriving, they had bought Hanuman down from Phuket and arrived the day before with no major dramas other than a lack of wind that forced them to motor all the way to Langkawi. Alex & Val were up to now power boat people who have sold an investment property, purchased Hanuman with little sailing knowledge and are going to depart on an extended Australian circumnavigation within a few months of arriving in Fremantle. This delivery is their sailing training & yacht shakedown cruise.

Both yachts departed the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club 7th May 2007 at 11am, Marco Polo, the Tayana 49 that Errol Robins was having delivered from Croatia by a South African delivery crew had departed Langkawi the day before but blown up their fresh water engine pump and had returned to get it fixed. They hoped to depart this evening if the part arrived and fits and more importantly works.

We took the western channel out, both previous deliveries that I had done on Intermezzo and Even Star we had exited to the South East and it was pretty boring. The western exit was a lot more interesting with islands and rock formations and lots of green. We were just about out in the open sea when we hit a piece of bamboo, the engine revs dropped a lot and it took a few minutes of forward & then reverse gear to get all of it off the prop. We were on our way. A few minutes later we caught our first fish, a Barracuda that we sent back, most of the Barracuda that I had caught recently wasn't very good eating so we didn't bother. Later that day we pulled in a small mackerel and had ½ of it for breakfast on the 8th.

We have motored all of the way so far, we are currently at 04 30N, 100 21 east, about 130 miles south of Langkawi. We have used around ½ tank of fuel by the gauge so have around 75 litres in the tank and a further 150 in jerry cans, this should get us to Batam easily with around 300 miles to go, hopefully we can sail some of it.

It's Wednesday the 9th May, we have had a pretty good day, we had just over 20 knots of wind for a couple of hours with lightning & some fairly heavy rain. Lots of fishing boats and a few bigger ships. We have just entered the shipping separation area of Malacca Strait, we are on the Malaysian side, ½ a mile outside the northern lane, motoring as usual, we have had around 1 ½ hours of sailing so far in 54 hours of travel. We just put 70 litres of diesel into the tank; I will tell the story of how we put 40 litres of diesel in our water tank later in the log. We are using around 1-½ litres per hour that gives us 900

miles range with 150 litres in the tank and 150 in jerries. We now have a full tank and 80 litres left in jerries. Current position is 03 00 North, 100 56 East, doing 4 knots.

It is now 13:00 on the 11th May; we are approaching Kukup, 5 miles north of Singapore Strait. We stopped at Pulau Besar yesterday, had a swim, a barbeque dinner on Hanuman and then got on our way again. Last night it blew 55 knots and there were rainsqualls, lightning and thunder and it was quite uncomfortable. Semi Circle behaved very well, we were motoring with no sails up, she took 3 drips of water on Max's bunk but no other leaks or creaks or breakages. We will dine at Kukup before heading across Singapore Strait to Nongsa Point Marina on Pulau Batam. Marco Polo has caught us up and is only 25 miles behind us.

I bought a NASA AIS Engine for the trip to Turkey in August and thought that Malacca Strait would be a good place to test it, I wasn't wrong. I linked it to Software on Board that does the AIS tracking very well, only problem is that I didn't register SOB before I left to it has a limit of 20 ships on AIS, we are continually well over this number. I will see if I can register when we are at Batam. The SOB looks like a nice piece of software and AIS is great, if only every ship, yacht and tug had to transmit AIS, no just the 300 after tonnes and over. Last night with the heavy rain the radar couldn't see the ships but the AIS still worked great.

We stopped for a few hours at Kukup, Marco Polo caught up to us just before we pulled anchor to head across Singapore Strait to Batam. We decided that a night trip across Singapore Strait wouldn't be that bad, the weather looked good, no sign of building clouds that had been the norm of the past few days. Leaving just after dark from Kukup meant that we would arrive in Batam at first light, this is what we did and what happened.

Nongsa Point Marina was the same quiet friendly place as last years visit had revealed. Officials were waiting for us as we came into the jetty and our official stuff was done no problem. All three yachts had CAIT's (Cruising Authority for Indonesian Territory the only minor hold up was with Hanumans CAIT, Gary McDonald was not on it as Bali Marina did not have his passport info but it was all sorted in no time.

We took a bus to Batam City and did our shopping and had lunch, and then returned to Nongsa Point. The marina did not have enough diesel for us, they said that the tank was very low and that what was in there may be dirty, I am not sure if it was just an excuse and that they needed to keep a bit of fuel for some other customers or themselves. We decided we would get fuel at Bintan and that we would depart around 10am the following day. We relaxed in the pool and had a few drinks before dining in the restaurant at the resort. The food is pretty good and affordable (expensive to Indonesian standards) but the drinks, like their foreign exchange rates leave you lighter in the wallet than at other Indo establishments.

At 10 the following day all of our departure forms and port clearance were ready, we paid the port clearance fee of \$50 Singapore per boat, we each obtained a 30 day Visa on Arrival for US\$25 that meant we wouldn't need to do much paperwork at other stopovers, probably none if we go to Karimata

And Bawean islands. We turned not far out of the marina to port to head down Selat Riau that separates Batam from Bintan; we were off in search of diesel.

The first place we looked for the elusive crude was at Tanjung Uban on the north west coast of Bintan; there were jetties and lots of facilities for loading and or unloading bulk oil/diesel but no one to talk to and nothing that resembled an alien with his finger in his ear so we moved on. Max and I had tried out one of the two spinnakers on the way, a nice .75 ounce white kite that set very well and gave us good speed with the wind on the port stern in about 10 knots.

Just South of Tanjung Pinang were a few jetties and a barge that looked promising at a place called Mentigi, Max and I took Semi Circle to investigate the barge whilst the Hanuman's checked out the jetties and asked a few locals. The barge proved no good, even though it looked like a fuel barge in every way the local gentleman on board shrugged his shoulders and looked blank when we mentioned Solar or Diesel, we even tried the English Diesel and Fuel but no joy, you think he would have at least heard of the fuel that powered his vessel and the tug that was tied to it. Alex, Val, Gary & Con had better luck, the white ship that they pulled alongside was apparently a coast guard vessel, after much deliberation they agreed to fill four jerries with 100 litres of diesel, they wouldn't take money for it, nor could we buy or get any more. It was at least a start, a couple of hundred more litres and we would be off.

We headed east to Tanjung Pinang, the capital of Bintan, here we had more luck with the fuel, Hanuman were in before us to the port area, they took a short cut over some shallow areas that our keel may not have appreciated so we had to follow the shipping channel in. When we arrived the Hanumans had been in deep conversation with some locals who again told them that they were the Coast Guard, they certainly didn't look official, neither did their old steel vessel. As we tied up Alex said that the locals would get us our fuel for RP\$5000 per litre and we quickly found our jerries and some Rupiah. Alex took off in a wooden boat a couple of the locals whilst we waited at the boats. We were told it would be around an hour before they returned but just over 45 minutes later they returned, the fuel was RP\$6000 per litre and the locals wanted a couple of 100,000 for their trouble, it still ended up fairly cheap fuel. We topped up our tanks, stowed the empty and other full jerries and got on our way, it was around 9pm. We radioed Marco Polo who had continued on, they had no cash to buy fuel and looked like having just enough to make Bali without stopping, they were about 20 miles in front of us. The night sail out of the south of Bintan was uneventful, a few fishing boats, not much else. Next stop would be Karimata and or Seratu Islands near the south west corner of Kalimantan, we had ended up about 30 litres down in our diesel tank and one jerry was not filled so we plan to see if the Southeast Asia Cruising Guide Vol 2 is correct and that diesel is available at both islands.

Max & I retrieved the inflatable dinghy from the lazarette and started pumping it up and installing the outboard bracket.

It was around 2 in the afternoon on the 17th May when we set anchor just off the reef in front of the village at Seratu. Max, Gary & I headed ashore with a couple of jerries to investigate. The village is much more compact than the one on Karimata, about 50 huts

that look out over the bay, a small school in the rear, a Mosque, and almost the whole front of the village is full of fish drying racks. We took a heap of photos, checked out the Mosque and school, they gave us 20 litres of diesel for RP\$10000 per litre and we were on our way, it was around 4pm and we were keen to get to Karimata to give the kids some colouring and balloons, have a look around and get back to the boats soon after dark for a good nights rest. We anchored in the bay near the village at 5:30pm, we had just under an hour and a half before dark, and we quickly launched the dinghy, grabbed the pencils balloons & books and headed towards shore.

We had a few problems on the way to shore, the 2 hp outboard on its maiden voyage keeps stalling, as we decided to return to the boat it ran beautifully & we turned back to shore. We arrived to a shore full of people, kids everywhere and asked for Bun (Ben in English), locals motioned towards their left and a few minutes later Bun appeared and remembered me from last year, he asked about Vittore who also stopped last time on Even Star. We gave Bun a couple of bags of rice, the books and balloons and some first aid stuff, antiseptic and bandages, the contents of an expired liferaft first aid kit that was aboard, as well as some extra last year he had an infected cut that we put some cream on and we figured that a few extra supplies would be useful to them.

We then asked Bun if we could go to the huts that we visited the first time that we went to Karimata on Intermezzo early last year. I was keen to see the little girl who was only about 6 months old on the first visit, 9 months or so on the second and now around 18 months. We found her at the same hut, her mother motioned us to take her picture and when she was put on the ground by herself burst in to tears, I took a photo as her mother picked her up again, she was laughing at the poor little things fear of us.

We wandered around a bit more and took some photos, Alex entertained the kids, running around with them, hiding behind bushes and doing Merv Hughes crowd-copying maneuvers. It was getting pretty dark and as the outboard on the dinghy had been a bit erratic on the way in we thought we better get back to the yachts. By the time we got into the dinghy it was pitch black and hard to see anything at all. The dinghy started ok but we were only a few hundred metres out when it started mucking around. After a couple of restarts it stopped altogether, we could hear and just see the Hanuman crew on their way out and Max & I yelled out to them but couldn't their attention, a few more loud calls & they heard us and started heading our way, the outboard then decided to run ok and with the Hanumans following us we made it back to Semi Circle ok. Max & I had a couple of beers and a rum & coke, Max cooked sausages for dinner and we hit the sack hoping for an early morning departure.

At 06:45 I woke and it was quite light, I put the kettle on and a few moments later with Max up and a cup of tea in hand we started taking the dinghy apart, we removed the outboard & put it back on the pushpit bracket, lifted the dinghy onto the bow, removed the transom outboard bracket and started deflating it, hopefully far enough to fit it back in to the rather sparingly sized bag that contained it. We put it away in the lazarette and gave Hanuman a call to let them know we were 15 minutes from departure. They were up and about and almost ready too, about 20 minutes later we upped anchor and were on the way towards the south western corner of Kalimantan, where we would turn more to the east and head for Bawean Island where we would refuel for the leg to Bali. Across the Java Sea the winds were favorable, lightish and nearly on the nose but not too strong until we neared Bawean & around 25 knots of headwind slowed our progress marginally. We

hadn't added to our 3 mackerel fishing total but still had a few bags of frozen fillets in the Waieco fridge/freezer the we had purchased from Kate in Langkawi, Kate runs a boat maintenance & cleaning business out of the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club and her husband Rolph does desalinators & maintenance. They use local staff that they pay around MR\$900 per month and have been in Langkawi to 10 years. The Waieco has proved a huge bonus, keeping bread, fish & meat frozen and cooling each day's happy our drinks to perfection. We freeze a little water in a Tupperware container each day & have ice in our rum & cokes, bonus. The Waieco was only RM\$400 or around AU\$150, it is about 5 years old, has a selectable low voltage cut out and is pretty big, and what's more it works.

We arrived at the leads at Bawean (that are ¼ mile east of where the chart shows) at around 3pm, we had decided to race (motors allowed) for the last 20 miles and Hanuman beat us by a hull after taking another shortcut into waters that I wouldn't go into without the owner on board. We arrived at eh anchorage near the ferry groin/jetty, put down our anchor in about 8 metres of water and started assembling the inflatable again. Once it was organized and all together we loaded up the 7 jerries and headed to shore, passing Hanuman on the way to drop off some ice for Val's Vodka & Orange. Gary was organized with his jerries as well and we headed to the falling apart jetty to seek out Ari who would organize our fuel. Ari was there when we arrived, he lives on the bay and whenever he sees a yacht heads down to meet them and get a bit of business. Ari charges US\$1 per litre for diesel and we usually give him a small tip as well. You can get fuel for RP\$5500 at almost any shop in Bawean but would have to lug the jerries or hire some transport so it is all a bit too hard. Ari brings 44-gallon drums and painstakingly ladles with a 1 litre or 5-litre ladle, all of the fuel via funnel into your jerries. He wipes out the 20-litre mayonnaise container with a cloth, siphons fuel from the 44 to the mayo container and then ladles it from there to the jerries. We took 175 litres and Hanuman 180, Gary took one load of jerries to Hanuman whilst I waited ashore, I paid Ari our \$175 plus a AU\$5 tip, Gary paid his \$175 plus a US\$5 tip that Ari tried very hard to make US\$30, first not giving Gary change, then US\$10, then after I said no, correct change, he gave in and handed Gary US\$20.

While Ari was getting the fuel Gary & I walked to the nearest shop to find some bread for Hanuman and to get a cool drink as it ended up. The little shops are quite interesting, benzene in 1 litre glass bottles presumable to fill motor scooters that seem to be the most popular mode of transport, families of 5 with two adults and one or two children sharing the seat and another child standing just behind the handlebars with a little head poking out above the headlight. Also in the shops a couple of open topped 44 gallon drums with diesel and ladle, a front counter full of various Indonesian cigarettes a range of cool drinks that are served up in a handle glass with ice for around RP\$5500 each. Gary & I chatted to the local shopkeeper for a while, not understanding many of the things that she said and her likewise looking confused with our language. We tried to remember what bread was called, Gary drew a loaf of bread, the woman said "Roti", then pulled out a packet of biscuits, we found 4 bread rolls wrapped in plastic & Gary bought those, I bought 4 packets of Indonesian cigarettes, maybe for bribes but more likely Max & I would enjoy them with our happy hour drinks. We strolled back towards the fuelling activity & sorted out the payment as mentioned before

When Gary returned from Hanuman we loaded up our jerries into Hanuman's dinghy, our soft floored dinghy with unreliable outboard was not going to cope with a person and 180kg of diesel. Gary followed me out past Hanuman to Semi Circle where we unloaded the diesel; we gave Gary the thong that had fallen off Hanuman a few days before that Max & I retrieved, and a frozen loaf of bread. We started packing away the dinghy and refueling while Hanuman did the same. About 40 minutes later at around 6pm, we upped anchor and headed out the leads, with Hanuman following a few minutes later. As we tuned towards the southeast, the wind increased as did the seas and as usual the wind was smack dab on the nose. We tacked a few times to avoid the Camar oil platform and also to try to get some easting whilst we could, we had the third reef in the main, no headsail and the motor giving us a few knots and lots of height. The next morning we decide the best plan was to head south in the east south easterly and get into calmer waters and lighter winds on the north coast of Madura. This worked a treat with the wind swinging more east and then slightly north of east and bringing us 2/3 of the way along Madura before we rolled up the headsail and motor sailed along the Madura coast in about 15 metres of fairly calm water a couple of miles off the coast.

We motored on through the night and turned to the south as we reached the eastern end of Madura, we headed for the strait between Pulau Raas and Pulau Sapudi known as Selat Raas. It was still very dark as we headed in to the Selat, Gary's notebook PC had a crash a few hours earlier and now neither Maxsea nor Cmap would run, he was navigating using the Navman chartplotter and presumably paper charts so they would follow us whenever things were a bit tight. We had Maxsea working and also Software on Board with a NASA AIS box giving us ship locations, combined with the JRC Radar, Marine Radar Detector, RayMarine instruments and ICOM SSB and VHF we were pretty well equipped electronically. I had purchased the NASA AIS box and a rail mount VHF antenna from TMQ last month, with a view to testing it for the delivery from Turkey that I would be doing in August. The quality and quantity of information when combined with SOB is amazing, ships location, speed, heading and MMSI and in most cases their destination length breadth width, ships name, radio call sign etc etc. SOB then displays the ships on a screen with your yacht at the center (if you wish) the ships show as triangles with tracks, alarms sound when new ships appear or when chance of collision is detected. You also get MARPA like info with closest point of approach and distance, time of these occurrences, it's great stuff.

We were approaching the southern end of Selat Raas as the sun rose, a dark patch in front of us showing the merging of two currents that I had experienced last year delivering Intermezzo, the area not as rough as last time, the current must be weaker. During the night it had rained very heavily and there will still storm clouds, lightning and thunder around. The wind was variable but primarily from the southeast, not long after entering the Bali Sea the wind backed east and then slightly north of east so we took all of the easting that we could, while we could. Hanuman continued south, not able to head as high as Semi Circle. For most of the day we could only just see Hanuman, they must have been 8 or so miles from us, we enjoyed the 10-12 knot winds and motor sailed at around 5 knots. Hanuman headed east late in the afternoon and by 21:00 were back with

us, just north of Bali. It is now 04:00 on the 23rd May, we are almost at the NE corner of Bali, around 40 miles to go, we should be in Benoa Harbour around midday. Gunung Agung is on our starboard side, the lights of the houses very clear, as we are only two miles off the coast.

The sun rose just after we rounded the North East corner of Bali, we had around 1-2 knots of current against us, this would change in the near future to 5-6 knots with us. As with my last trip there were only a few fishing boats out, the first time with Intermezzo there were 1000 colorful perahu between Bali & Lombok, we could see them all parked up the beach, there fishing times don't seem tide, wind or weather related, we wondered what system they used to decide the time to fish.

We soon hit the whirlpools & eddies that frequent the strait and sure enough we hit the strong southerly current, giving us a top speed of 11.7 knots nearer to Benoa Harbour. We reached the safe water mark just before 10:30, followed the leads in and were in our pen at Benoa Harbour just after 11am on the 23rd May 2007. We helped Hanuman tie up before opening an arrival beer to celebrate the halfway mark of the trip. Marco Polo 1 were surprised to see us so soon, they had arrived less than 24 hours before, taking the route through the passage between Madura and Java, the winds were much more helpful for us.

We handed over our paperwork & passports to Made who seems to manage that side of things, all of our arrangements had been made using Bali Marina as our agents so there should be no dramas or formalities to deal with, we had already passed health and quarantine and entered Indonesia at Batam, our CAIT was in order, no one inspected the boat or came on board. We advise Made that we would like to depart the following day the 24th May, but later changed this to the 25th at 9am, the Hanuman crew wanted a couple of nights rest and had quite a few things to do before departing. Marco Polo's new owners Stan & Errol were in Bali and doing the trip at least until Dampier with the delivery crew, Rick & Brad the Sith African's, and had intended to stay for a week, when they heard that we were planning to get away ASAP they decided that they would leave on the 26th.

Max & I started a bit of boat work, connected the water hose to the tap via the marina supplied water meter and tidied up a bit. Max changed the primary fuel filter and then unfortunately needed to bleed the diesel but at least he had then bled it once before being at sea to do it, it is always a worry when your first bleed is at sea. We had made a list of things we needed for provisioning and would go tomorrow to the silver place and to Macro or Ardis supermarkets to do that. At around 4.15pm the hanuman crew and we headed off to Kuta in 2 Bluebird taxis to do a bit of shopping and have dinner. Max & I both wanted some DVD's, I a pair of shorts to add to the one pair I had and the two pieces of rag that had been the cheap shorts that I bought in Langkawi. We started near Matahari's and worked our way up the street, first we had to find an ATM so that I could get some reddie's, then a couple of beer for the walk and off we went. We found the Video Shop that I had bought a heap of DVD's from last time, the selection didn't seem as good this time I ended up with 10 DVD's and then had to find another 4 free ones, I

chose a few music DVD's but the range wasn't there, a couple of kids DVD's for Dylan & I was done. Max & I headed up the road with the Hanuman Crew, Gary had gone to a mobile phone shop to buy a new phone, and we all met at Made's Warung and sat down for dinner.

We are now 2 days out of Benoa, winds have been stronger than expected, we just tacked from Starboard to Port to avoid the iron ore ship Sea Grace, on its way to Dampier. There has been heavy rain and squalls all morning, it is now blowing around 35 knots from the southeast, we are not making great progress, we are at 11 56 S, 116 03 E, doing 3 knots heading 100 degrees, nearly east, Dampier is at 176 degrees, nearly south, bugger. This rain & cloud will hopefully decrease during the day and then we will be in no wind and sloppy seas, we can't wait for some 15-knot easterlies in flat seas. We haven't seen Hanuman since yesterday afternoon, they come within range of their very weak VHF then disappear over the horizon again, and perhaps we will see them today. I bought a SSB receiver (not transmitter) that is on board Hanuman so they can hear us on 6227 mHz, I give our position every 3 hours and hopefully they hear it as well as our COG and SOG and try to rendezvous with us once a day, I hope that they don't get any problems, they can't contact us when out of VHF range, and that is only 5 miles or so.

We met up with Hanuman the next day, they had gone west for a few hours and then back to the east, they had engine problems, both engines had stopped, blocked filters and dirty fuel the main problem from what they told us, they had worked for hours to get things going again. It is now Tuesday the 29th May, we are just less than 290 miles from Dampier, the purple fish line is now behind us and we are in Australian waters. Last night about 20 miles north of the purple fish line we saw the looms of 3 fishing boats, a fourth came within a mile of us and shone a spotlight on us for 20 or so minutes, we tacked to port and headed east away from them for half an hour before resuming our 175 course towards Dampier. Coast watch flew over us about lunchtime and we had a chat, advised them of the boats last night and gave them the details they required, we also enquired about Hanuman and if they had seen them, their radar put Hanuman 20 miles to the north of us. We are doing 5.5 knots at around 165 degrees now, the wind has died down, the seas are calming and it a beautiful sunny day. We just lost our fourth lure for the trip, our lines are too thin for the big strikes, we will get some decent unsportsman like cable when we get to Dampier, a few new lures and try to get the Waieco freezer topped up before we get to Onslow. We will do a pit stop at Dampier, top up the fuel water and some food, and some bundy, and head for Onslow where Max will get off, the new owner will get on in Exmouth for the trip to Fremantle, if we can make it by the 12th, otherwise he may get off in Geraldton. Con from Hanuman will sail with me from Onslow to Exmouth. Max and Stan Robins will drive my car to Perth, Julie & Dylan will be there on the 12th, they can use it, and then I will drive it home with all of my nav junk & charts back to Onslow.

It was a pretty uneventful couple of days before Dampier, the wind would kick east during the day and more to the south each evening, our 20 or so miles that we were east of the rhumb line helped us heaps and we were never quite hard on the wind. As we were approaching a couple of well heads marked on the chart we noticed a ship holding

position between them. We called them up on 16 and asked what clearance they would like, 5 miles came the reply from a friendly voice, we advise that 2 miles was what we currently expected and the voice reluctantly after a delay to ask the captain agree to “2 miles, but no closer and clear the area ASAP, happy sailing” We agreed and did a small tack when we were almost on the bow of the ship to keep to our 2 mile agreed clearance. As we moved away from the ship I gave them another call, advising them that we were now moving away and thanking them for their assistance.

We lost a couple more lures that had our lure collection looking pretty lean, we didn't see the culprit but something fairly big.

We had already called Customs and emailed them well in advance of the 96 hour required notification, but I called again two and then one day from our expected arrival, on the day before arrival they even rang us on the satfone to double check our arrival, and to let us know that we were required to call customs when we reached the Dampier Harbour limit, about 5 miles outside Fairway buoy and Legendre Island. It early evening when we made the call and were advised that we should wait at Fairway buoy for the Customs Response Vessel who would escort us to Dampier, this was different to my previous entries to Dampier.

We waited about an hour before the CRV called us and Hanuman and we headed at around 4.5 knots towards Hampton Harbour, it would be around 3am before we arrived.

We arrived ok, picked up a mooring that the CRV led us to, and prepared the boat for the customs, quarantine and formalities that were due to start around 04:30 with the arrival of the AQIS man. The CRV was unsure if they would be bringing him out to Semi Circle or if we would be heading in to the floating pontoon, the second option was it, the CRV called us up at 04:30, advised that their shift was over and that they were going to pull their boat out of the water, and that AQIS were awaiting us at the pontoon. We threw off the mooring line and headed for the pontoon. Peter Cochrane who I had met a couple of times at the Onslow Mackerel Motel when he was there to do Onslow Salt ships was there on our arrival and he quickly got into the paperwork and inspection. We had gathered together all of our declarable items, put cheese, veges, potatoes, seeds, egg and meat items and bags and cartons that had contained them all into garbage bags. The wood carvings that I had bought in Bali we had unwrapped and had ready for inspection, there were no surprises, all meat and dairy products from Malaysia needed to be taken, long life milk was ok to keep, cheese from Bali was ok, it was the Kraft soapy variety anyway and probably doesn't contain any food. When Peter was part way through, customs started their paperwork and very thorough inspection and search, two drug dogs came aboard and vacuumed the boat with their super tuned noses. All was ok, no problems, we had already emptied the water tanks, we showed them any little spaces that might be hard to get to or find and all seemed fine, UNTIL. Allison, the Customs Officer who appeared to be in charge of the proceedings advised us that he GST and duty on the import of Semi Circle should have been paid before arrival, and that it had not. I thought that this would be no problem, we just needed to know how much. Errols Customs Import Broker had not submitted the paperwork, for some reason Errol was supposed to call them four of

five days before our arrival, they had all of the paperwork, I don't understand why they didn't submit it to customs weeks before. As it happened it didn't really matter. As Semi Circle has heaps of wood below she would require an AQIS inspection by a bug expert in Perth, this meant that it was impossible to calculate the GST and Duty as their maybe additional costs, particularly if the Perth inspection was followed by a 3 month fumigate and boat "glad wrapping". So we couldn't pay the duty, the boat isn't imported yet, we can be given a clearance to the next port, Geraldton or Fremantle, not Carnarvon as the Carnarvon Officers were in Exmouth dealing with Marco Polo I's entry. If we cleared to Geraldton we would have to stop there and we may not want to so we cleared to Fremantle and if for some reason we had problems or bad weather then we could stop somewhere in between. I had walked back and forwards a few times to Customs and now was heading back to Semi Circle for a couple of rums. I had rung John Hansen and let him know of the Customs issues and suggested that we leave Semi Circle in Dampier, he cancels his flight to Exmouth where he was due to arrive on the Saturday morning, and we come back with more crew after the 17th June when I was due to head back to Onslow. John rang a while later and said that he would fly as planned to Exmouth and then hire a car to drive to Dampier, this was perfect in the end, We weren't allowed to drop Max off in Onslow or pick anyone up in Exmouth, so Max and Con would drive the hire car to Onslow, hand it back at the BP and when Julie returned from a long weekend trip to Coral Bay, drive our car to Perth where it would be available for Julie and I for a few days in Perth before I drive it back to Onslow.

John Hanson had called me and was a ½ hour out from Dampier as Max & I were in Farmer Jacks getting a bit more food, John's son was coming too, although he didn't advise me of his age. We just arrived back at the boat with the extra provisions as a white Corolla pulled up at the end of the groin near the start of the ramp to the floating pontoon. John's son Dougle, looked about 12, John in his early forties. We did quick introductions to Max & Con, Hanuman had left early this morning and with the strong tail winds that were blowing would be around 100 miles in front of us by the time we departed at 4pm. A quick motor out the tug channel and we turned around the end of East Intercourse Island, into Mermaid Strait after hoisting the main.

It was a lovely sail through the night, winds behind us at 15-20 knots, no drama, we dined just on dark and pulled in the lines for the night as the sun set.

Next day we had covered nearly 70 miles during the night, we wouldn't get the full benefit of the tides at Mary Anne Passage but we would have the current with us on the way in and only an hour or two of incoming against us on the way out to the southeast.

Over the next day we caught a couple of mackerel and a couple of tuna and were dining in style on raw tuna with soy and wasabi. We entered the north of Shark bay and during the night discovered that we had no drive from the propellor, we suspected that the prop was gone but wouldn't be able to confirm that until later the next morning when the wind died sufficiently to jump over the back of the boat and have a look with the mask, yup a definite lack of a spinny thing on the end of the prop shaft. We decided that even though we had a spare prop, we didn't have the nut and hub thingo that held it in place so we

decided to continue south and not opt to go into Carnarvon. The winds remained from the north and we made good time down to Steep point, picking up a couple of mackerel early in the morning to add to our increasing supply of fillets in the freezer.

We reached Steep Point at 4pm, the tide was on its way out but things didn't look too bad to get out and away from the cliffs before dark. As we approached Monkey Rock the first of the waves caused by the outgoing current hit us, they were about 2 metres high, breaking and really slowed our progress. With the small staysail up and a triple reefed main we didn't have a lot of power but the 20 knot winds on the way into Steep Point warranted not too much sail. We went sideways and backwards a couple of times before Jon got the hand of bearing away and powering through the bigger waves and then heading back up again when the flatter water happened. About 20 minutes and we were turning more south around the cliffs that were bare of the usual balloon fishermen who frequent the area when the winds blow offshore. The northerly winds are not popular with everyone it seems. We sailed happily into the night, dining on cold sausages that I had cooked in the last part of Shark Bay, ham, cheese and some tomatoes and lettuce, washed down by a can or two of Bintang.

We weren't far out of Steep point when we had a phone call from Hanuman, they were about 8 miles out of Geraldton and were going to do their Customs & import stuff there. They planned to leave again for Fremantle on Saturday, we would pass by probably on Friday and be around 100 miles in front of them as they left. We had two days of no fish caught, things were looking grim for the full freezer that Max had ordered as he left at Dampier.

Thursday the 7th May, we finally hooked a decent Mahi Mahi, we had missed out on a fairly big fish a couple of days before, losing another lure, chewed to bits and spat out by what we suspect was a large mackerel. We now have mackerel, tuna and mahi mahi in the freezer, quality but not a huge quantity.

Our trip south was relatively easy, nothing over 20 knots, winds that let us get just to the west of the Abrolhos Islands, giving us a good chance of laying Fremantle without too many tacks if the wind was west of south.

It is now 05:40 on Sunday the 10th of June, the loom of Perth is on the horizon, we are 35 miles bearing 136 to Fremantle, Software on Board tells us that at our current rate we will arrive in just over 6 hours. Errol has spoken to Andrew at FSC and he will come out in a boat to assist us dock if we call him, if the wind isn't too strong, or light we should be able to park ok without a boat.

We almost arrived without assistance, half way down D jetty the wind went on the nose and dropped to a few knots, we gave the following FSC boat the nod and they tied along side and towed us the last few metres. Hanuman arrived that evening and spent the night on the courtesy mooring at FSC and came in to the VIP jetty mid morning. Marco Polo is currently 70 miles west of the coast, abeam of the Abroholos, they estimate that they

have around 170 miles to go and arrived the following afternoon, assisted by north easterlies.