

Caribbean & USA 2003

Best to print this and read it at your own leisure especially with a glass of red wine in your hand!!

NewPort Rhode Island USA

SY Lolita

A letter from the Knight dedicated to Friendship ...

It's been a while since I last sat down and wrote a letter, one that explains what I've been up to the last few months. Not having the means and time and being too lazy are 3 factors, which I'm trying to avoid in the future.

Visiting Malta after an absence of two years was great. My main objectives of going there succeeded to the max. Due to lack of dollars as usual, I had to work straight away which was good but not enough time to visit and hang around my family and old friends as much as I would have loved to. I spent enough time though to realize what's happening in Malta and around my friends, trying to figure out if I am a different person now then before.

My next ambition in life was to start working professionally on sailing boats. And so I did, being employed as the engineer on board a 150ft Great Bank Schooner ZACA A TE MOANA. Zaca is an extradinally gorgeous yacht, but required a lot of work on it which I did not mind since I respected her as if it was my own (same as any other boats I've worked on). And the best thing of all was that the great crew, including the Captain... all from different countries which showed in our personality, especially if eight crew lived up forward in the foscle in extremely tight space. Getting out of the Med was hard I'd must say, winds always on the nose, no matter if we headed north, northwest, west or Southwest, unreal. We also had to shelter in harbors many a times to escape bad weather which was great especially in Malaga.

In the Canaries the owner joined the boat permanently with his dream of sailing around the world. Across the Atlantic sucked abit due to lack of wind ... basically motoring all the way, there was a gap of no wind which most boats crossing through got trapped in. I never saw such flat water, especially after my first crossing where we were surfing 6m waves. The best thing of all was that us, the crew, were hanging off the end of the bowsprit into the ocean while the boat is moving forward at six knots. That was great fun I'd tell you. Antigua, English harbor was our first port of call. Spend Christmas there and cruised down to Mustique spending the beginning of the year on watch observing the rest of the world partying. Zaca was in a state by then that nothing was functioning and in desperate need of a refit. So from there we went down to Tobago and then to Trinidad, ending staying there for 3 months.

In Trinidad I must say that I had a ball, first of the entire entire refit was a good learning experience and secondly the locals are great. All they like is to do is drink, smoke and party heaps especially that Carnival was a doorstep away. Believe me on this, I never saw a whole nation enjoying themselves to music that much. Basically they don't live or work without it, simple and clear. I had the opportunity to work with these people that keep me going through hard times on ZACA. Thank you Trini's. And Carnival, by the way, was unbelievable, it's that experience were only photos explain it all. Zaca was ready enough to be sailed up to Antigua again to participate in the Classic Race ... which was the only thing looking forward at that stage. I picture you this: Imagine all these old traditional boats sailing full on against each ... perfect re-enactment and adrenalin. But, on the way up to Martinique, a gear in the steering mechanism failed, loosing steerage about 30nm west of the island. Made it safely to harbor after motoring 10 hours in 4m swell, +25kots of head wind. The gear was fixed within a week that was late but still marginal to make it to the race. The owner refused to participate at this stage and this pissed me off deciding to quit my job and move on.

Zaca for the amount of work I've put in never gave sailing pleasure.

So indeed I did. It's time for me to give a break from Schooners and go onto modern rig yachts just to get my sail trimming perfect. So I joined a 56ft Swan only 3 years old with the name of Lolita. The first deal was to deliver the boat up to Newport and see how thing go on especially that only 2 people run this boat. And guess what ... I got the job. God it's much nicer to sail small boats then mega once, there is more feel to them. I will be replacing the first mate, which will be leaving at the beginning of August. At the same time there is enough work to be done since this boat, apart from the normal cruising yacht, is used as a professional racer were 18 crew are employed to make this boat go fast, see how serious the owner is about his baby. A Swan Regatta is scheduled at the end of July here in Newport and before that we are taking Lolita to a shipyard to get her mast, rig checked and the rest, basically preparing it fully for the regatta.

The best thing of all is that prior to this I have a 2 week holiday where I'll be going backpacking up and down the east coast, most probably hanging around New York for a week or more ... Party time!!!

Well ladies and gentlemen, this were I stand at the moment. I hope u didn't find this letter boring or monotonous, if so trash it, otherwise reply and tell me what's going on with YOUR life.

Till I hear back from, you always do enjoy yourselves and keep smiling ...

Happy Days

Your Friend

Eleandro

30th May 2003