

SAIL
SPECIAL MULTIHULL ISSUE
SPECIAL MULTIHULL ISSUE • CRUISING THE BAHAMAS • AROUND THE WORLD IN A CAT • NEW BOATS: LAGOON 400 + MAJESTIC 530
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SPECIAL MULTIHULL ISSUE

JANUARY 2010

SAIL



**THE
MULTIHULL
GINO MORRELLI
SPEAKS OUT GURU**

**2 COUPLES
2 HULLS
AROUND THE WORLD ON A CAT**

**TRY ATRI
ARE THREE HULLS FOR YOU?**

PHOTO FEATURE
THE BEST OF
**WINTER
SAILING**

Cat Country

CRUISING THE BAHAMAS
A DAYSAIL FROM
FLORIDA GETS YOU
TO PARADISE
P. 36

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MULTIHULL SPECIAL // WHAT'S INSIDE:

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Leading multihull designer Gino Morrelli speaks out

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Two hulls not enough? Consider a cruising trimaran

[P.50] FIRST TIME AROUND

Two young couples decide to circumnavigate on a catamaran



The pleasures of
shoal draft; a Tiki
30 catamaran on a
beach in the Exumas

JUST A LONG DAYSAIL FROM FLORIDA, THE BAHAMAS ARE A FAVORITE CRUISING GROUND. THE MORE HULLS YOU HAVE, THE MORE YOU GET TO EXPERIENCE, AS THESE SAILORS FOUND. FOUR GUYS CRUISED THE EXUMAS ON A 30-FOOT CATAMARAN, WHILE AN ALL-FEMALE CREW SAMPLED THE JOYS OF THE ABACOS ON A CHARTER CAT

Cat Country



Ah, the simple life (left); An old plane wreck makes for great snorkeling (right)

Simple Joys

FOUR GUYS GET DOWN TO THE BASICS IN THE EXUMAS

BY BILLY VAN DER WAL

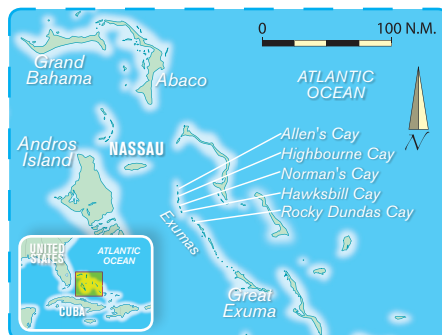
“I can tell you guys are roughing it, but if you need any ice or water, just let us know—we make 400 gallons of water and 400 pounds of ice a day.” To the owner of the 40-foot sportfisherman anchored next to our 30-foot catamaran at Highborne Cay in the Bahamas, we must have looked pretty desperate. But that was all part of the adventure.

“We” were my dad, Onne, me, my 10-year-old brother Adrian, and my 22-year-old cousin Luke. Dad wanted to show us the more adventurous side of cruising the Exuma Cays in the Bahamas. Rather than chartering a big crewed catamaran, as we have done numerous times before, he wanted to prove you can have just as much fun roughing it, so he borrowed a Tiki 30 catamaran.

I’ll admit that I wasn’t too excited about

leaving Rhode Island in June; I had just finished my finals and was looking forward to sleeping late and hanging around at home with friends. The fact that I was supposed to keep a journal and document the trip didn’t thrill me too much either. But my mom was pressuring me to get a job, and my sister was stressing out about SAT tests, so I decided sailing for 10 days in the Bahamas wasn’t such a bad option after all.

We picked up the boat in Nassau and sailed it 26 miles south to the pristine Exuma Cays. First we provisioned with everything four guys would need for a week: hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans, ketchup, potatoes, lunch meat, cheese, bread, cereal, long-life milk, water and Spam. At 16 years old, I don’t have much cooking experience outside of boxed mac and cheese, but our meals were simple. We usually ate baked beans cold out of a can for dinner and grilled burgers or hot dogs on our one-burner stove.



PHOTOS BY ONNE VAN DER WAL, MAP BY STEVE STANKIEWICZ



A great thing about a small catamaran is that its minimal draft allows you to go almost anywhere; A Bahamian local that likes to play catch (below); Eat, sleep, snorkel and sail—is there anything else (bottom)?

The great joy of cruising in a small catamaran like the Tiki 30 is that the shallow draft (2 feet) gets you into places where bigger boats can't go. We spent most of our days exploring the stunning cays and snorkeling in the crystal-clear water. Off Norman's Cay, we found a DC-3 airplane that had crashed 400 feet offshore back in the 1970s. It was like something straight out of a James Bond movie. The plane was completely intact, submerged in only 20 feet of water with one of its propellers stuck in the sand, and we were able to snorkel through the fuselage and the cockpit.

On Southwest Allen's Cay, we saw 30 prehistoric-looking iguanas sunning themselves on the rocky beach. We decided to join them and realized they were amazingly tame, content to sit alongside us. Like pet dogs, they chased sticks we threw for them.

Now deliberately on the hunt for exciting adventures on desolate cays, we set our course for the "Sea Aquarium" at the southern tip of the Exuma Cays Nature Reserve, which is renowned for its snorkeling. We swam next to yellow-finned silver jacks and fed stale bread to other reef fish; we snorkeled between colorful 10-foot-high coral heads only a few feet below the surface while trying to catch a glimpse of some groupers hiding in the rock and coral crevices.

At South Hawksbill Cay we took a hike in search of several natural wells that collect rainwater. We found them after a hard slog through lush vegetation and harsh, rocky terrain. The hike proved to us that not only are the Exumas perfect for snorkeling and swimming, they also offer great hiking and exploring.

Three miles off Hawksbill Cay, we pulled the boat up on a sand spit at high noon and sat in the middle of the ocean making drip castles while enjoying the vastness of the turquoise water surrounding us—an awe-inspiring moment. When it came time to anchor at night, it didn't take us long to realize that we needed to be at least 300 feet from land to be out of the mosquitoes' radar range—they can easily spoil a nice relaxing dinner.

The most memorable part of the trip for me was snorkeling in the caves on the coast of the Rocky Dundas Cays. Looking toward the island, we could see only a rocky cliff overhanging the water—underneath was a hidden entrance to a cave. We swam to the cliffs and dove 10 feet to reach this door into a new world—a 20-foot high cave with a hole in the ceiling that enabled us to see the ancient stalactites, stalagmites and columns surrounding us. It was a strange feeling to be hidden inside the island.



➔ Billy Van Der Wal is looking forward to more family sailing adventures

As we reveled in the spectacular scenery, our solitude and the simplicity of our life aboard the mighty Tiki, we realized that this was a vacation best suited to boys. My mom and sister would not have enjoyed this voyage. The bunks were tight, there was no privacy, we washed in the sea, we used a bucket as a toilet, and we wore the same clothes every day. But this is what made the trip so cool. I truly enjoyed spending quality time with my dad, my cousin and even my little brother. It was a relief to take a step back from our busy daily schedules and enjoy the simpler pleasures in life. Like my sister, I have college applications and SAT tests looming ahead of me. And I know that a lot of kids are looking for some experience that sets them apart from their peers during the competitive admissions process. Many go to special camps to experience such adventures. I feel fortunate that my dad took me along on his own "rustic pathway." *AL*