

THE TELLTALE

Catalina 34 Fleet One - San Francisco Bay

Sailing in Mexico -- Part II

I am continuing my second year Mexican sailing expedition. I have left Ciao, our Catalina 34 1987, in Puerto Escondido, Baja California Sur, close to Loreto, after our previous mainland exploration. She was left on the hard during the stormy summer month, June to October, I got the opportunity to get the bottom painted and replace the large waste thru haul valve. I had to remove all the electronics and wrap them with foil paper to prevent them from getting damaged, if a lightning happens. I also removed the sails, solar panels, boom and all the lines to prevent windage and solar UV damage.

At the beginning of May we enjoyed the Loreto festival in Puerto Escondido. This festival has been celebrated for the last 16 years. There was dancing rock 'n roll to the tune of sailors band, dinghy races, bocce ball & horseshoe throwing championship and so on. It is a four day event. Over there I discovered my wife, Eva, secret talent on horseshoe throwing in which she finished with honors.

We arrived back on October 15, 2008 to Puerto Escondido. Ciao was commissioned. "Skymate" brand satellite VHF weather and Internet communication system was installed. I think this system it's a must when cruising to know the weather forecasting besides other applications.

Duane & Deb Quick (Owners of the C34 "Irish Whisky" also members of Fleet 1) jointed us in Puerto Escondido where we began our cruising south on the Sea of Cortez. We anchored and snorkeling at Agua Verde, Evaristo and Caleta Partida then La Paz there we enjoyed the Margaritas, beer and barbeques as well of the Mexican courtesy.

On our way of Mazatlan, across the south passage of the Sea of Cortez, the dolphins gave us a superlative show on which included three dolphins jumping out somersaulting and diving next to the boat. Not too far away there be a whale doing the whale feeding ritual (diving and jumped up) show.

CATALINA 34 FLEET 1 ANNUAL DINNER

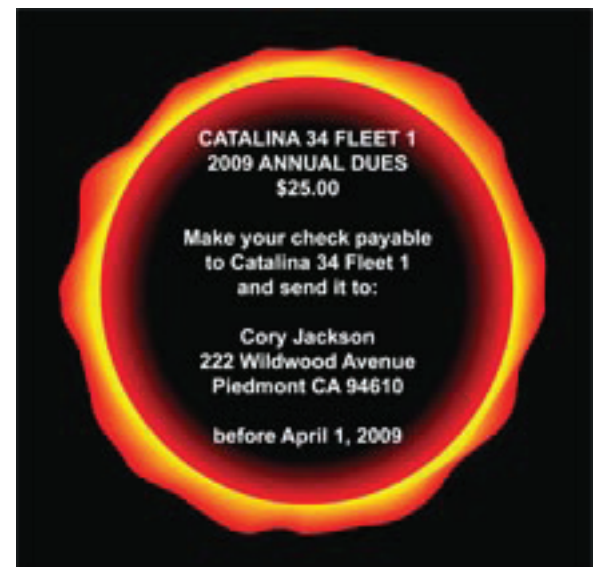
**Scott's Seafood
#2 Broadway,
Jack London Square**

7:00PM

**Saturday
February 28, 2009**

Cost \$55.00 per Head

**RSVP
By February 14, 2009
to
Cory Jackson**



All this happened on the wide-open ocean. This performance lasted for about two hours. We had another experience while sailing out of La Paz. It was the very dramatic reddish sunset with lights and shades coming from the clouds above.

The wind was running almost behind of Ciao she was moving rather fast, during Duane & Deb watch they realized that Ciao was moving rather fast, she was moving over 9 knots. It was 3 am. The Sea of Cortez crossing took 41 hours and it 10 gallons of diesel for 230 nautical miles. Not bad.

We arrived to Mazatlan at 2:30 AM. Ciao was anchored outside of Mazatlan on Dear Island (Venado) There is an unwritten rule about not to enter in the Mexican harbors at night.

Duane and Debb opened a bottle of Champagne and we celebrated the South Sea of Cortez crossing. It was Quick's first and Ciao's 4 Crossing.

Next day we entered Marina Mazatlan. Elvira, the Port Captain, was very helpful to ease our way in

there.

Then Eva, Debb and Duane went into town to do the Tourist Round while I stayed checking up on the boat. All the equipment and rigging worked flawlessly as it has been designed. The Catalina 34 is a great boat. We love her. "A home away from home."

Now we are back home in the Bay Area celebrating the holidays with our families. We will be returning to Ciao, in Mazatlan, at the end of January in order to celebrate the famous Mazatlan Carnival. After that we will be pulling up the anchor and heading south to Isla Isabela, San Blas, Banderas Bay and beyond getting advantage of the northern wind that will take us south. Hopefully in April the southern winds will pick up to bring us back home, up north.

Next time it will be the III part of Ciao the expedition.

Juan & Eva Spampinato - Ciao



Juan, Duane, Debbie, and Eva relax during their Mexican Cruise

Seaweed Soup – Race #1

On the first Saturday in November, the forecast was for strong winds strengthening as the day progressed plus rain. As it turned out, the rain part was correct but the wind only blew hard between Gas House Cove and Saint Francis Yacht Club.

The seven C34's racing that day gathering for the start had all heard the weather report and were set up with reefed mains, small jibs, partly furled jibs or their old jibs – saving their expensive new jibs for better weather. All went well until half way to Blackaller where the wind died – reefs were taken out, jibs were unfurled and those with small jibs started working out how to change up without losing too much time. *Queimada* led around the mark followed by *Mottley*, and *Crew's Nest*.

On the reach to the second mark – Harding – *Amandla* and *Crew's Nest* changed up to their 130% jibs. At the second mark, the order at the front of the fleet was unchanged with *Queimada*, and *Mottley* having increased their lead over *Crew's Nest*.

The tactically interesting part of the race was the reach from Harding to Mason where there were a number of options – those who made a long starboard tack away from the Harding – *Amandla* and *Mottley* - made out best. Approaching Mason, it appeared that *Mottley* would round first. But as *Mottley* tacked onto port to round the mark they had to duck (maybe a lee bow would have worked better) the starboard tacking *Queimada*. This allowed *Queimada* to round first with *Crew's Nest* in third place.

The order across the line was *Queimada*, *Mottley*, *Crew's Nest*, *Amandla*, and *Sea Spirit* – all within 2.5 minutes. With *Amandla* leading *Sea Spirit* by just 9 second. When the corrections were applied, the order was *Mottley*, *Queimada*, and *Crew's Nest*.

The only damage on the day was to *Rollover's* Jib – a rip from luff to leach about 4 feet down from the head.

Once the excitement of the race was over, everybody realized that it was really raining hard and that the trip home would be wet and cold. It would take a few days with the heater on the dry out the boats.

A great start to the C34 winter series – close racing, some demanding tactics and decisions.

Seaweed Soup - Race #2

As see through the eyes of Kurt Magdanz – skipper of *Amandla*

Earlier in the week many in the fleet including this author were expecting a typical light-air SF Bay winter in race. Conditions that morning turned out to be more like summer series with 22 knots per race committee coming straight out of the North from Sausalito to City Front – it is strange when the chop is coming from Sausalito.

Seven Catalina 34's showed up this day to race with many different sail / reefing combinations being displayed in pre-start maneuvers. *Mottley*, *Crews Nest*, *Queimada*, *Casino*, *Rollover*, *Sea Spirit* all had good starts. After the fleet rounded the first mark Blackaller and heading towards Harding rock, *Mottley* and *Casino*, stayed on port tack for the entire leg while *Crews Nest* and *Queimada* took starboard hitches before coming back onto port.. As it turned out, staying on port kept the boats on the lay line so *Mottley* rounded the Harding in first with *Crew's Nest* in second and *Queimada* following.

Competitive racing with several place changes would continue to occur on the run back to Blackaller, beat back to Harding, run to Fort Mason and final reach to finish.

Congratulations to *Crews Nest*, *Mottley*, *Queimada* who placed #1, #2, #3 respectively.

Kurt Magdanz – *Amandla*

Standing after 3 Races with 1 drop:
David Sanner *Queimada* 3, Chris Owen *Mottley* 3, Ray Irvine *Crew's Nest* 4, Kurt Magdanz *Amandla* 7, Bill Eddy *Casino* 9, Herbert Brosowsk *Sea Spirit* 11, Lynn Guerra *Rollover* 12, Ray Bonneau *Sailor Dog* 20

Race #2 play by Play:

Leg 1 Start to Blackaller

The challenge for the first leg was to be close to the pin (where the ebb was strongest), be at the line on the gun and not get washed over early, stay out of the traffic, and sail as fast as possible to the mark – the order around the mark was *Crew's Nest*, *Queimada*, and *Mottley*.

Leg 2 Blackaller to Harding

The wind direction caused this leg to be close hauled. There were at least two options – sail the leg in one port tack and hope for a lift from both the wind and tide as one neared Harding or tack once hoping for stronger wind and possible the start of the flood along the yellow bluff shore. *Mottley* and *Casino* choose the former and made gains while *Queimada* and *Crew's Nest* choose the latter. The order around the mark was *Mottley*, *Crew's Nest* and *Queimada*.

Leg 3 Harding to Blackaller

This was an unexciting leg. However at Blackaller *Mottley* misjudged the now flooding tide, tacked for the mark too soon, and were washed by the

mark on the wrong side allowing *Crew's Nest* to round the mark ahead of them.

Leg 4 Blackaller to Harding

Crew's Nest sailed a single port tack down the most direct route to pass within 2 feet of the Harding mark – much to the surprise of those following. The order around the mark was *Crew's Nest*, *Queimada*, and *Mottley*.

Legs 5 and 6 Harding to Mason to Finish

These legs were uneventfully provided one kept between the competition and the next mark while working to open up the required margin over the non-157 rating boats – *Mottley* and *Casino*.

The order across the line was *Crew's Nest*, *Queimada*, *Mottley*, *Casino*, *Amandla*, *Rollover*, and *Sea Spirit*. The corrected order was *Crew's Nest*, *Mottley*, *Queimada*, *Casino*, *Amandla*, *Rollover*, and *Sea Spirit*.



Eva
and
Juan
enjoy
the
good
life

Ciao - 2008

Seaweed Soup - Race #3

As seen through the eyes of Jim Murray, who was skipper of *Mottley* for this race. Chris Owen being out of town for the weekend.

The forecast was for 10-20 from the North. The course was #13 – start -> #2 (inflatable NW of Hyde St. pier), ->#1 (inflatable N of Crissy field), back ->#2, back ->#11, Finish.

As Division A was starting, the wind was from the NE at about 10 knots, but was gradually dropping. It was around 5 knots by the time the C34's started – five starts later.

Most boats were starting on port at the pin. We were planning the same thing on *Mottley*, but in the last minutes I didn't want to get too far away from the line as the wind was dropping. We ended up sailing along the line towards shore, and then tacking onto starboard for the start. We caused a good deal of confusion crossing the port tacking fleet on Starboard. Most tacked onto starboard and then back to port and continued towards #2 along the shore. *Mottley* and *Rollover* stayed further out where there was a little more wind. *Sea Spirit* arrived at the mark first but were washed past it by the tide in the dying wind. I'm sure everyone enjoyed the light-air practice, as we did on *Mottley*. *Rollover* was moving well. I think everyone eventually anchored except us. It turned out that the best strategy for this leg was to get a good anchorage near the mark.

We were a long way away, but it looked like *Crew's Nest* was anchored right next to *Queimada* just west of the mark. *Sea Spirit* was maybe 80 yards to the west and *Rollover* must have been 200 yards to the east.

After light to no wind for about 2 hours, the wind started coming up from the west - straight through the gate. As we got wind and I tried to get going towards shore, *Mottley* continued to turn to port, and we ended up doing a 360, having to fight really hard to get it to turn the last 180. Finally, at around 2:30, the race was on!

We were a long way away, but it looked like *Amandla*, *Queimada*, and *Crew's Nest* were first around #2, and were battling it out as they tacked up the city front. When we finally got to the mark, we were crossing tacks with *Casino*, with *Rollover* a short distance behind, and *Sea Spirit* maybe 100 yards ahead. We

started off sailing near the shore like everyone else, but noticed that *Casino* had gained several boat lengths on us when they were out and we were in. We decided to try staying out and found that the speed through the water was only .2 knots or so less than the speed over the ground. There was a good steady breeze and we were sailing fully powered-up and continued to get lifts, as the wind may have been more from the SW. Almost everyone else was staying close to shore, as I think this is what "local knowledge" would advise. We made up a lot of time and were now about 100-200 yards behind the leaders: *Queimada*, *Amandla* and *Crew's Nest* – at the second mark.

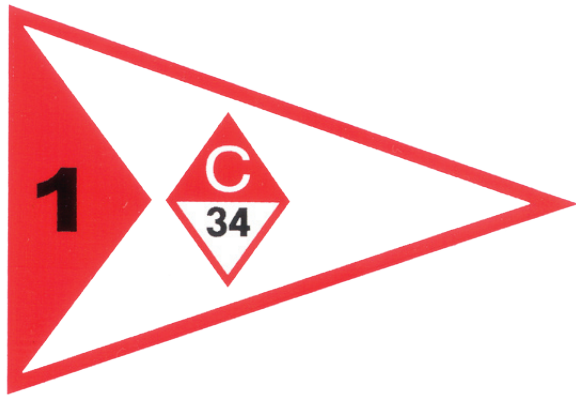
When we rounded #1, we headed straight east, but noticed that the leaders were further out and were pulling away from us, so we jibed to port and headed out to the better wind. We could see the leaders way up ahead altering their positions, no doubt continuing to have a good race.

After rounding #2 for the second time, when we were in front of the GGYC, it looked like the leaders had become more spread out, perhaps 100 yards between them. The order was *Queimada*, *Amandla*, *Crew's Nest*, *Mottley*. As we approached what looked like a tide line, I looked ahead and saw that the boats that used to be dead ahead, *Queimada* and *Amandla*, had been pushed way to the right. I voiced this observation and our GPS man said it was because the current was pushing them to the right. We tacked and went way into shore near the beach to the west of Anita Rock. We tacked and made the mark ahead of both *Amandla* and *Crew's Nest*. *Queimada* was long gone by this point, but this was quite a thrill for us since we had been so far behind. The next leg was the last: a run to the finish with no changes in position. Once again we are reminded that in racing, especially on the city front, it isn't over till it's over. You can go from last to first or first to last (we've done the latter).

Order of finish: *Queimada*, *Mottley*, *Amandla*, *Crew's Nest*, *Sea Spirit*, *Casino* (with *Casino* correcting out ahead of *Sea Spirit*). *Rollover* was scored a DNF because one of the crew had to be back at the dock by 4:30PM.

It was a beautiful day but got pretty cold as it got late in the day.

Jim Murray - Mottley



**CATALINA 34 FLEET 1
ANNUAL DINNER**

**Scott's Seafood
#2 Broadway,
Jack London Square**

7:00PM on Saturday February 28, 2009

Cost \$55.00 per Head

Boat Name: _____

Sail Number: _____

Name: _____

Selections: GRILLED KING SALMON SHIITAKE CRUSTED BREAST OF CHICKEN BEEF BROCHETTE

Guest Name: _____

Selections: GRILLED KING SALMON SHIITAKE CRUSTED BREAST OF CHICKEN BEEF BROCHETTE

Agenda:

6.30 PM Cash Bar opens
7:00 PM Dinner

8:30 PM Presentation of 2008 Awards
 ROTY and COTY
 Door Prize drawing
 Election of 2009 officers

Please mail your reservation and check to reach Cory Jackson at 222 Wildwood Avenue, Piedmont CA 94610-1102 before **Feb 14, 2009**.

Make your check payable to Catalina 34 Fleet 1.

If you plan to bring your boat, call JACK LONDON SQUARE MARINA as soon as possible and tell them you are part of the Catalina 34 Fleet 1 Group - no, this does not get you a discount but might get us all docked in the same area.

Phone Number: 510-834-4591

Cost: \$1.50 per LOA per night