

Situation Report 004; 2012-06-17

Since my last situation report, *Saorsa II* has cruised along the south shore of Lake Ontario from Rochester spending two nights at anchor in Sodus Bay before proceeding to Oswego where the mast was un-stepped and stored in a frame on deck in preparation for a transit of the Erie Canal.

Our passage through the Canal was, thankfully, uneventful. In all, we passed through 27 locks. Seven on the Oswego Canal, nineteen on the Erie, and the Federal Lock on the Hudson River at Troy. During our transit, we docked at Phoenix, Utica, Ilion, Amsterdam, and Waterford.

Following the canal transit, we proceeded down the Hudson River to the Riverview Marina in Catskill, New York, where the mast was stepped and we have re-rigged the boat. As I write this, we are in Catskill and preparing to head down river early tomorrow morning.

A few specific comments and notable events:

The mast up and down exercises went very smoothly. I've done this several times in the past and that experience has been very helpful. The crane operators and helpers at both Oswego and Riverview commented very favourably on our level of preparation and how smoothly it all went. When one considers that we're dealing with a relatively fragile 50 foot mast weighing in excess of 500 pounds, it's always a bit anxiety provoking to be slinging the thing about.

The deep-fried Oreo cookies we sampled at the Dockside Café in Ilion, NY, were awesomely decadent. Highly recommended!

Sodus Bay on Lake Ontario is still a lovely anchorage and a nice spot to stop and rest.

The lock keepers on the Erie Canal system are really very good. They were universally helpful and courteous.

The little town of Phoenix, NY, is a lovely little stop. Perfect small town atmosphere with friendly folk and charming atmosphere.

The marina in Ilion, NY, is very well maintained and shows considerable evidence of pride of ownership.

Now that we are in the Hudson River, we have entered tidal waters and must constantly take into consideration height of tide and tidal currents. For example, tomorrow we will be leaving here at 04:30 in order to make the best use of the ebb tide to carry us down river towards New York City. Our current plan is to get from here to New York City by end-of-day on Tuesday. Then we'll spend a bit of time there before heading through the East River to Long Island Sound.

I finally gave up on the Jabsco brand water pump which was circulating cooling water to the refrigeration unit. I ordered a new Whale brand Gulper 320 model pump and had it waiting for me at Riverview Marina. It is now installed and working much better than its predecessor.

Cindy, "The Crew", is doing well and learning very quickly. She's now an experienced hand at locking through on a canal. Her enthusiasm for sailing and the cruising life continues unabated.

On the journal front, I've really been quite remiss. For some reason, I just haven't felt like putting pencil to paper and scribbling out my stream of thoughts. Part of the reason for this is that until now, the cruise has felt more like a "delivery" than an adventure cruise. As pretty as it was at times, going through the Erie Canal is rather tedious drudgery. Motoring along a ditch full of water is just not that appealing to me. Now that we're approaching the sea, I suspect my emotional state will get an uplift and the journal will bubble forth as before.