



The **FLOTILLA REPORT**

The Official Newsletter of The Sailing Club, Inc.

<http://www.TheSailingClub.org>

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March 2017

To the Boat Show We Go

Even a hurricane can't keep us from looking at new boats.

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Kick off the 2016 Season at our Annual Meeting

Cash bar, buffet lunch, and exciting 2017 trips

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Learn!

Spring training season is coming fast.

Check out TSC's offerings.

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The Windward Islands

By Mary Ann Gordon

Winter storm Niko interfered with some of the arrivals due to cancelled flights, but most of the eighteen made it to Horizon Yacht Charters at True Blue Bay Marina as planned on Saturday, February 11. The final two crew arrived Sunday afternoon and were well received, although the sense of imminent departure was not just a feeling. Lines were cast off as soon as their gear was aboard. That day's activities were limited to a short sail to the planned anchorage site in Grand Mal Bay, due to the late start. All three boats: *Dream Maker*, *Abim*, and *Indigo* found secure anchorage along with strong rollers and lights-out was early that night.

Monday, February 13 was overcast, but a double rainbow gave hope for the coming days as we headed over to Tyrell Bay, Carriacou, under motor power since the wind was right on our nose.

All three boats settled upon dinner ashore at Lambi Queen (Lambi is local jargon for conch) and a few people tried it, along with local fish, vegetables and lots of cool beverages. The restaurant set up one large table for us where most of us sat, while three others sat at a nearby table and received a rotating group of visitors as everyone en-



Double Rainbow over Grand Mal Bay

joyed getting to know new folks, or wanted to check-up on friends. A good time was had by all... but a pair of sunglasses were left behind (prescription)... never to be seen again, although we checked the next morning.

It was a calm night at anchor that night,

with clear skies and a cool breeze. February 14th (Valentine's Day) dawned clear and sunny, and on *Indigo* we celebrated with French toast with hint of rum. Once we left Tyrell Bay, we were leaving Grenada and our skippers were required to report to the Customs Office to show all crew passports and check-out of Grenada in the Tyrell Bay Customs Office. So with high hopes, they left via dinghy for the posted office start hour — 8:00 a.m. However, island time is real and the customs office didn't have staff to open until closer to 10 a.m. Boats got underway for Clifton, Union Island (part of St. Vincent and the Grenadines) about 10:30 a.m. In Clifton, skippers had to repeat the process to check-in to St. Vincent and the Grenadines and pay fees. By the time all the processing was through, the sun was getting low in the sky and the skippers agreed to stay in the harbor for the night rather than sail around the island to Chatham Bay. The reefs protecting Clifton harbor provided a picturesque scene for dining on board.

Wednesday the 15th all boats got underway before 9:00 a.m. as everyone was excited to be heading to the Tobago Cays. But since it was only five miles away, and the wind was

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... Windwards

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fair, the plan was to enjoy some good sailing and then head to our destination in the afternoon. And it was a good sail... until the rain shower and strong winds changed things. We arrived earlier than planned at Tobago Cays, but were rewarded with some choice mooring balls that put us within swimming distance or a short dinghy ride to the turtle preserve. Romeo, the caterer for our beach barbecue planned for the following evening, stopped by as arranged at 3:00 PM. Plans were finalized for our food order and pick-up time and with that last bit of business taken care of, the trip leaders, along with everyone else, set about enjoying the rest of the afternoon. Fortunately, the earlier squalls had evaporated and the rest of the day was bright and sunny. Tobago Cays is one of the most beautiful places on earth, both above and below the water, and there was no wrong way to spend your time. Nancy Beirne put it best: "I life could be better, but I can't imagine how."

Thursday, our layover day, started with the much anticipated arrival of the Windward Divers boat which came along side *Dream Maker* to pick up divers, Mia and Walter. They enjoyed two drift dives, one on End's Reef to the south of the Tobago Cays anchorage, and the other on Mayreau Gardens to the east of that island. Lobsters were abundant on both reefs, as well as eel, sea urchins, and a wide variety of reef fish and

sponges. Their guides spent both dives collecting a dozen invasive, non-native lion fish. These pretty creatures with poisonous spines have no natural predators in Caribbean waters and have spread throughout the sea, having a damaging effect on the native wildlife. Most of the remaining crew of *Dream Maker* piled into the dinghy to visit the reef, leaving Nancy to enjoy some quiet reading.

Crews from *Abim* and *Indigo* also headed over to the reef in their dinghies, but *Indigo* had problems with the dinghy anchor... it would not hold. It was a useless piece of metal. Walt and Ingrid, after trying to physically push the anchor into the bottom, gave up and decided to stay to snorkel the reef and then slowly swim back to the turtle preserve beach area. The rest of the crew went with Plan B — look for dinghy mooring balls. When that failed, Plan C was chosen — secure the dinghy back at the boat and swim over to the turtle sanctuary. That plan worked and by the time Bob, Linda, Joel, and Mary Ann swam over to the beach area everyone else was there! Those already at the beach had done some exploring and showed the late arrivals where to snorkel at reefs right off the beach.

Power boat pick-up for our group beach barbecue started about five p.m. and seemed to come entirely too quickly for some of us, just



Fine dining in Tyrell Bay


getting out of wet bathing suits and trying to find all essentials required. By the time everyone was on the designated BBQ beach island, the sun was getting ready to set. Thankfully someone shouted "Group Photo" and everyone headed to the beach for a great trip group shot.

Friday, February 17 — All three boats dropped our moorings about 9:30 a.m. and we set a course for Salt Whistle Bay on the island of Mayreau. This picturesque half moon bay was a favorite of those that had visited it on the 2011 St. Vincent trip. It was basically the same, but not as crowded at back then since it became part of the marine park. Harbor patrol is actively charging for mooring balls and supervising all anchoring. The positive part was that the moorings

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Snorkeling off the beach in the Tobago Cays


The FLOTILLA REPORT

The Official Newsletter of The Sailing Club, Inc.
19 Manor House Drive, Dobbs Ferry, New York 10522

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What Hurricane?

Sailing to the Annapolis Boat Show

By Mia McCroskey

The idea of attending the Annapolis Sailboat Show via sailboat tickled the fancies of a dozen Club sailors, who gathered in Rock Hall on a pleasant Thursday evening in preparation for crossing the bay. After checking out their boats, Steve Krakauer's crew aboard *Gambol* and Mia McCroskey's aboard *Intention* convened for dinner at Club favorite The Harbor Shack.

The next morning crews enjoyed a pleasant crossing, although more wind would have been a plus. In fact, more wind was in the forecast for later in the trip: Hurricane Matthew was working its way up the eastern seaboard. But the predictive models mostly had it heading back out to sea or dying out before reaching the lower Bay, and we were not venturing much further south than the Bay Bridge, so we weren't worried. Well, we weren't terribly worried.

In order to take full advantage of Saturday at the boat show, we took slips at Mears Marina in Eastport for both Friday and Saturday nights. With good facilities, helpful staff, and a complimentary weekend breakfast, it proved to be a pleasant choice. The walk from Mears to the boat show in Annapolis's harbor was a mile, or the water taxi service was running continually throughout our stay.

Saturday morning dawned drizzly, and conditions soon deteriorated. It seemed that Matthew was still coming north. While a few crewmembers opted to skip the show and explore Annapolis, most made their way over on foot or via water taxi. Foul weather gear was the dress of the day, and water-resistant bags for purchases.

The Annapolis Sailboat show is one of the largest in the US. Many manufacturers bring their best models for attendees to tour, touch, admire, and drool over. Temporary floating docks pen in the boats, providing a web of easy access for visitors. Around the edge of the harbor, hundreds of vendors are housed in enormous tents. To visit most boats and at least walk by every vendor is a full day's work. Because of the rain, the show was less crowded than it often is, but because of the shelter they provided, the tents were particularly busy. Because the boat manufacturers don't allow shoes on their show boats, many attendees – including several Club members – spent the morning walking barefoot in the rain along the floating docks from vessel to vessel. Few got away from the show without purchasing some new gear – after all, you can't beat “boat show” prices. But nobody reported buying a boat.

The planned joint barbeque at the marina was extinguished by the ongoing rain. Nonetheless, Grillmaster Bruce Gollob got a big blaze going in one of the large grills so that both boats could cook their steaks. While Bruce and Mia cooked, the crew of *Gambol* gathered around the grill during a convenient, temporary pause in the rain, while Mia's crew opted to stay dry aboard *Intention*.

Sunday morning dawned bright and sunny with gale force winds predicted. Jackie from Haven Charters called and offered us a free day on our charter if we didn't want to return the boats in those conditions. “I know the boats can take it,” she said, “it's your crews I'm worried about.”

Well, that was a challenge we couldn't ignore! In all seriousness, both crews agreed to make a go of it with the understanding that if it was too rough out there we could always turn back.

Leaving the Severn River we found a strong – twenty-plus knots – but manageable northerly. The hurricane had moved offshore far to the south of us, but it was a huge system, and this was the backside of the spiral, which can be as powerful as the leading edge. Also, nobody was mentioning the fact that tornadoes tend to form on the back side of a hurricane.

Jibs were deployed to reach out into the bay and make as much northing as possible toward the Bay Bridge. Unfortunately, we couldn't point quite high enough to make the main span and after



Charlotte Chappel

almost an hour of pleasant sailing we had to resort to the iron jenny to get us where we needed to go.

North of the bridge conditions changed. The breeze amped up to the promised gale, and the wind-driven swells became bigger and less organized. The boats pounded onward, making four knots, sometimes less, under power, when we'd typically get closer to six. With each slam of the bow into an unexpected wave we reminded ourselves that Jackie had said the boats could take it. With each crash from below as a drawer crashed came open or someone's bag fell to the floor, we reminded ourselves that we could do this.

Needless to say, nobody went below to make lunch on either boat. We just kept on pounding until we could finally turn east north of Love Point. This put us on a slightly better angle with the swells,

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... Annapolis

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and as we got closer to the eastern shore the land noticeably reduced the wind velocity.

Jackie from Haven reached Steve by phone and told him to skip the required fuel and pump-out stop. Low tide was approaching, and in addition the wind was blowing the water out of Swan Creek.

“When you get to marker five, have everyone lean out on the starboard side. Tilt the boat as much as you can and power through. There’s a shallow spot there.” She instructed.

She wasn’t able to reach Mia and *Intention*, coming a few minutes later. So Mia pulled in at Gratitude Marina’s fuel dock, a favored stop because it can be easier to get on and off that dock than the one at Haven. The northerly blew the boat into the fuel dock hard, requiring heavy reverse with the engine and quick hands with the dock lines.

The fuel dock is open to the north, and even with the short fetch from inside Swan Creek, the water was choppy. The boat swayed at the dock, its spreaders banging against the shingled roof. Crew up on deck doing pump out were showered with bits of shingles.

Once fueled and pumped, Gary took the helm to back out of the slip. As he was fighting to turn the bow into the wind, the crew heard a shout from the fuel dock they’d just left. Jackie was there shouting not to back up so far, it’s too shallow. Yikes, we usually have no trouble turning there! Gary got things sorted out, though, and Jackie was making the universal hand to ear “call me” gesture as we headed toward the marina.

Mia received the same instructions as Steve, with the addition that it was already too shallow in their usual slip, they were to go to the very first Haven Harbor slip.

Mia organized the crew along the starboard rail, adding several demands of “no, don’t sit on the cabin, get up and lean out. Way

out...” while Gary steered. Sure enough, just after marker five Gary felt the keel touch bottom. Everyone held on tight, and held their breath, as he revved the engine and kept pushing through the soft mud. And then they were floating again, and they could see a whole bunch of people standing on the finger pier at the very first slip in Haven’s complex.

Gary pointed her at the slip and hit bottom about half way in. Crew passed lines to the Haven team on the dock, who heaved while Gary revved it once again. Gradually they dragged the boat in to the slip.

The only casualties were several cereal bowls that had crashed out of a cabinet on *Intention* and the refrigerator latch on *Gambol*.

For some crew this was the roughest they’d ever experienced. Assistant Trip Leader Gary Brubaker put it this way, “It was the worst I’ve ever seen, at least I’ve never been out in worse.” 📌

TSC Spring Training

On Land:

Get Your Head in the Game

FREE!

April 22

The Hills Highlands Rec Center
Safety, Communications, Piloting,
Anchoring, Essential Knots

On Water:

Get Your Hands On The Helm

\$285

May 20 - 21

Rock Hall, Maryland

Steering under power and sail,
Man overboard techniques,
Rafting, Docking

Watch Your Email for More Information or visit
www.thesailingclub.org/calendar

Spend a Day to Save a Life CPR and First Aid Training Saturday, April 8

Location and Directions

Whitehouse Rescue Squad
269 Main Street
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
(908) 534-2509

Pricing

CPR/AED2	\$30.00
First Aid	\$20.00
CPR/First Aid Manual	\$18.00
(not needed for renewals)	

Download the sign-up form
for complete details

<http://www.thesailingclub.org/training/firstaid.pdf>

... Windwards

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were in excellent condition. Most of the crews of *Dream Maker* and *Abim* hired a car to go up the hill to a restaurant on the other side of the island where they enjoyed a most delicious fish and chips lunch with some cold brews, followed by a dip in the swimming pool and a fresh water shower, compliments of the restaurant/hotel. The skippers and *Dream Maker's* first mate spent an equally lovely day on board their respective boats. In the afternoon some folks took a hike over the northern hills to enjoy some beautiful views; we were joined by a very friendly and lovely local dog who we named Henry. Jon and Cynthia opted for some shopping on the beach. This group, joined by Mia and Steve, opted for dinner ashore at Black Boy and Debbie's place — the same bar where we'd had a lobster feast back in 2011. The ambiance was enhanced by a complimentary bottle of wine, free dinner for the skippers (which they simply applied to their boat mate's dinner tabs) and



Joel Mack

some sort of island style, appetite opening aromatherapy. Jitender had read in the New York Times that this restaurant is one of the twenty-nine must-visit restaurants in the world while researching the trip. He was not disappointed!

The crew of *Indigo* had walked up the hill to the old church and explored some of the far side of the hill, with a stop in a small restaurant for a cool drink and to escape the

sun. Some of us had Pina Coladas and were pleasantly surprised by a small amount of nutmeg freshly ground on top. By the time we made our way back down the hill and back to the boat, we were more than happy to spend a quiet evening on the boat, using provisions and playing a few games of Farkle.

Saturday, February 18th -- Aboard *Dream Maker*, Jitender, Narayan, and Walter teamed up to take the motor off of the dinghy without Steve or Mia's supervision. Upon seeing their success, Steve observed that Mia should promote them from Minions to Minions First Class. Mia promptly made the adjustment to the crew roster.

All three boats begrudgingly left Salt Whistle Bay for a sail back to Union Island and the Clifton customs office with a promise to quickly check-out of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and head over to Chatham Bay for the night anchorage. This time the plan held. There was some really good snorkeling along Chatham Bay's north cliff wall and many people took advantage of this spot. There were abundant fish frantically swimming in large schools in one area where we snorkeled. Bob began to wonder what large creature was frightening the fish when he saw a large black object in the corner of his mask. After being completely startled, he realized it was Joel in his black snorkeling suit. The crew of *Abim* did some snorkeling and a enjoyed a relaxing sunset on the boat capped with a steak dinner and sundowners. Several of *Dream Maker's* crew also snorkeled the reef, counting several eels, a lionfish, and lobsters. The Minions First Class all ended up having drinks at a beach bar be-

fore catching a ride with a local back to the boat for dinner.

The *Indigo* crew made reservations, after a long beach walk, at Seckie and Vanessa's place and thoroughly enjoyed their Taste of the Caribbean dinner which included some of everything! The night was warm, the breeze was soft and we felt welcomed. Linda, Bob, and Mary Ann realized after some discussion this was the very same place we had a group "happy hour" on the 2011 St. Vincent Trip and did the limbo using a broomstick and danced into the night! Perhaps inspired by our talk, Walt and Ingrid decided to dance to the music provided before dinner arrived.



Abim crew heading back to the boat

Sunday, February 19th — We started back to Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou that morning so we could check back in to Grenada in the afternoon before the Customs and Immigration office closed at 2 p.m. We made it in time, but it is never easy. The same entry form that we all filled out when flying into Grenada needed to be filled out again. Of course we didn't have a supply of these forms on the boats so this meant extra trips for the skippers to bring the forms back to the crew, get them filled out, signed, and back to the office. Even so, we were at the bay early enough to do some exploring once we were checked in. Some people walked along the shore, others took a dinghy to the northern part of the bay to check out the mangrove lined cove and nature preserve. *Indigo* had our last dinner on board. The crew was somewhat apprehensive as we were



Green turtle, Baradel Turtle Sanctuary, Tobago Cays

using one of Bob's emergency meals brought from home — Trader Joe's cheese tortellini and a can of white clam sauce. Dinner started out on the quiet side until most realized the meal was quite good and went back for seconds. As the sun sank low to the west, crews of *Abim* and *Indigo* watched intently. On *Dream Maker*, the crew was equally focused — not on the horizon, but on the two big boats that lay at anchor between them and the setting sun. Their blocked view was made all the more frustrating when, just

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Annual Meeting and Luncheon

Saturday, March 25

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

The Somerset Hills Hotel
200 Liberty Corner Road
Warren, New Jersey 07059

\$35 per person

Door Prizes!

Cocktail Hour (Cash Bar)

Meet the Trip Leaders

Election Results

Board Installation

2017 Season Trip Presentations

Don't get wait listed: Bring your check book and your calendar.

Reservation form below. Mail paid reservations to: Jerry Peck, 22 Coventry Circle, Flemington, NJ 08832.
Questions or late reservations: Call 908-788-9698, or email: SocialEvents@TheSailingClub.org

The Sailing Club Annual Meeting and Buffet Luncheon Reservation Form

A check, payable to "The Sailing Club, Inc." must be included for all names below:

Your Name _____ Phone _____ e-mail _____

Guest _____

Guest _____

Boat US Discount



The Sailing Club, Inc. is a group member of BoatUS. The primary advantage of this membership is that it provides a discount for those Club members that may want to join BoatUS for their own purposes. It is a worthy organization with informative newsletters about boat operation and maintenance. There are various levels of membership that provide partial coverage for boat towing and trailer towing.

Our group code is: GA82513S

You can use this code for your renewal or initial BoatUS membership application.

If you have any questions please contact Commodore Bob Rainey, rjrainejr@aol.com, 908-872-9101.

... Windwards

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after it ended, Julio came on the radio to rave about it being the best green flash he'd ever seen. Mia's response was simply, "Photos or it didn't happen."

Monday, February 20th — Late on Sunday afternoon the skippers agreed via radio that we should leave Tyrrel Bay by 7:00 a.m. in order to allow time to stop at the Underwater Sculpture Garden that we had bypassed at the beginning of the trip to make up for the snow delay. As *Indigo* pulled out of the bay at 7:00 a.m., the other two boats showed no signs of life. By the time *Indigo* had passed The Sisters, we spotted first one set of sails and then another and so learned they were not that far behind.

Julio's *Abim* did not stop at the sculpture garden as a couple of people's early Tuesday morning flight meant they had to finish the charter check in on Monday afternoon at 3 p.m.. *Indigo* stopped off at the underwater sculpture garden. Trip Leader Mary Ann had really been looking forward to snorkeling this spot. However, due to some recent storms the area had been badly disturbed and many statues had fallen over. Mary Ann states: "I'm glad we stopped and I had a chance to snorkel over it, but I must admit I was disappointed. Many of the statues were deeper than I anticipated. Joel and Walt both dove and provided more detail to what we could see from the surface. There was a large school of Sergeant Major fish that kept swimming with us, as if we were part of the school. That was great fun!"



Ray in the turtle sanctuary



Front, L to R: Narayan Bhagavaltula, Jitender Singh, Bob Rainey (ATL), Cynthia Hauris, Kim Vallejo, Linda Baker, Steve Krakauer, Ingrid Vandegaer, Walt Croom, and Joel Mack.

Rear L to R: Nancy Beirne, Mia McCroskey, Rudy Vallejo, Mary Ann Gordon (TL), John Hauris, Walt Wronka, Julio Menendez, Jerry Peck

Aboard *Dream Maker* the engine's overheat alarm had started going off for no apparent reason — the engine had coolant and oil, exhaust water was flowing, and the engine was not particularly hot. On the way to the sculpture garden Mia called the charter company. Hearing her description of the situation the mechanic said it was probably a bad sensor and to just silence the alarm. Up until the last moment Mia had been considering skipping the sculpture garden. But as they came abeam of it Steve said he'd stay on board and she could see that

the crew really wanted to do it. So she donned snorkel gear and led the Minions First Class, Walter, Jitender, and Narayan, into the park. They soon found the ring of standing statues at about twenty feet. Mia and Walter dove for a closer look while Jitender and Narayan took photos from the surface. Not realizing that there were other sculptures in the garden, they beat a hasty retreat to *Dream Maker*.



Jitender, Debbie, and Blackie

Back underway Jitender produced a brochure that he had picked up somewhere and read that a number of the sculptures were laying down on purpose to reveal the impact of the shifting bottom sands.

We resumed our sail for True Blue Bay marina and our point of departure eight days prior... it seemed a much longer time! Marina crew boarded our boats from a dinghy and took them back into slips like they do it everyday... which they do! The crew of *Dream Maker* gathered on the stern of their boat for a group shot.

The resort facilities were a welcome site and quite a few folks wound up in the resort pool that afternoon or enjoyed the shaded areas. All crews met up late that evening at the True Blue Resort restaurant for dinner and good-bye hugs because the morning was going to be rushed for many.

Like all trips, not everything went exactly as planned, but enough things did go as planned and some of the changes were so much better than what was planned! Thank you to everyone on the trip, especially the skippers and first mates who tried very hard to accommodate the needs of all their crew. It was the smiles and enthusiastic involvement of everyone that made the trip wonderful...of course, the tropical islands with warm breezes helped a lot too. It was all fun, but tiring! 🍹



C/O Mia McCroskey
19 Manor House Drive, K12
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

2017 CLUB EVENTS

Date	Event
<i>May 20 - 21</i>	<i>On Water Training</i>
<i>June 24 - 26</i>	<i>Annapolis</i>
<i>September 15 - 18</i>	<i>Baltimore Inner Harbor</i>
<i>October 20 - 23</i>	<i>Tilghman Island Day</i>
<i>January 27 - February 6, 2018</i>	<i>Hawai'i</i>

Check www.thesailingclub.org for details on these and additional events as well as our upcoming sailing season

Photographers in this issue: Mary Ann Gordon, Steve Krakauer, Joel Mack, Jitender Singh, Mia McCroskey, Rudy Vallejo, Kim Vallejo

