

Lake Tarpon - Sept. 10th (continued)

Out on the lake, Becky and Ed were way up ahead of us on the west side so we fired up the Tohatsu and caught up just as the wind improved to the point where we could sail. Ed operates on the 2 knot rule. "If you're not going at least 2 knots, it's OK to fire up the engine!" With their Hobie Al's it's hard to tell when they're using their "engines," as they just pump the peddles to keep moving! We knew the canal to the restaurant was a bit more than halfway north along the west shoreline, but we've never actually been there, so we started tacking along the shore. Finally after rounding one final point Ed spotted a HUGE yellow sign with an arrow that pointed left. It was pretty hard to see the canal until you went around a large bush of some sort. But once around it, it was a straight shot to the end of the canal where a hotel (Used to be a Sheraton) and the restaurant were located. Not much dock space, but if we come again, we can anchor some boats out and ferry in passengers, like we do on Lake Harris.

Once we were all tied up, we headed into the restaurant only to be surprised that almost everyone from the Squadron, who had been at the ramps were there! Mark Stewart, Phil Reed, Miriam and Brenda, Jose and Dimitri, Simon, Russ, and Jeff and his wife. All together we made quite a long table when the six of us were added to the party. And the food and beverages were quite good, and not expensive. I ordered an appetizer and it was all I could eat! On top of that we discovered that the attached hotel was very much in operation and one could get a room for a reasonable price. Perhaps we've discovered a great new summer destination!

After lunch and a few adult beverages were consumed, we wanted to go back out to enjoy the increasing breeze! Brenda Bell sailed back with us, giving Laure and Frank more information about the SeaPearl Tri. The breeze had indeed picked up, and the storms seemed to be a lot more south of us. Whisper hit her stride at 5 knots a few times, although it was mostly a 3 to 4 knot ride south toward the John Chesnut Canal and Ramps. You can catch some photos of the outing at:

<http://members.ij.net/wctss/wctss/photos75.html>

One negative thing about this outing was the growth of weeds in the ramp canal. It seems to have gotten progressively worse since the last time I've used it. I know times are tough, and many park service people have been laid off in Pinellas County, but if they don't do something about the weeds, in a few years the ramp will be unusable, and they'll be losing a lot of \$6 launch and park fees! When we got back to the ramp, Simon launched his Goat Island Skiff, and only had a paddle to get it out to the lake. The wind was against him, and he really struggled to get through the thick weedy growth. There just didn't seem to be any avoiding it. Simon did report, however, that the effort was worth it, as he probably had the best sail of the day in an increasing afternoon sea breeze!

Squadron Events! or What's Coming Up?

1. Oct. 14th - 16th - Indian River Lagoon Cruise - Launch at Jonathan's Honest John's Fish Camp - 750 Old Florida Trail - Melbourne Beach, FL \$5/day for launch and storage. Camp on an island in the lagoon, or aboard your boat! Bring firewood and hone your skills for Cayo Costa! Not that far to drive and lots of fun! Honest John's is a family owned fish camp that has been there 100 years! It is a historic place and Jonathan is offering us a \$5/day special deal to launch and store out boats and trailers. You can call Jonathan at: 321 890 6171.

www.honestjohnsfishcamp.com

2. Nov. 18th - 20th - Fall Cayo Costa Cruise - The Squadron's Premier Event !! More of our boats participate in this event than any except maybe Cedar Key! Launch at Eldred's Marina at Placida, or on Bokeelia Island at the County Ramp or over at Pineland Marina. Gather Friday night on the beach of the cove at the north end of Pelican Bay. Saturday a daysail and come back to Pelican Bay for another great night aboard. Camping is by stealth over on Punta Blanca Island opposite the cove.

3 Dec 3rd - Canoe Trip with Mark and Katie Stewart - Camp at the Stewart's camp/home. Lots of room for vehicles/tents and they even have a few rooms to share for those who are adverse to sleeping on the ground in tents. More details later on which rivers/springs will be included.

4. Late December and Early January Cruises are being planned - a Christmas Break cruise to the 10,000 Islands, and a post break (retirees?) from Flamingo to Marathon and beyond. Get in on the planning!



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