

*Catalina 36 Fleet 9 Newsletter*  
March 2008



**February Cruise**

After being rained out last year, Kelvin arranged for great weather for the weekend, and was ready to lead us out the Gate with the intent of doing some whale watching.

Friday evening *Athena*, *JoJo*, *Serendipity Too* and *Migration* met at the Presidio YC to stage for Saturday morning's early departure. Being the last boat to arrive, we managed to squeeze into the only vacant slip, but had to work the bumpers in between the boat and the fingers of the dock. The only good place to tie up a 36 is on the end tie. Next time we will anchor out if the end ties are being used.

We met on *Serendipity Too* for drinks, appetizers and to catch up with our friends. On Friday night the YC had a blues band that started playing @ 8:00 PM, and played for most of the evening. The crews of *JoJo* and *Serendipity Too* went up to the club for dinner, and stayed much of the evening, enjoying the music and dancing.



Our intent was to head out the Gate early Saturday just as the ebb was starting, then spend the day looking for whales, and return on the late afternoon flood. The weather forecast for the weekend looked good, no rain, light winds, and no winter low pressure system until Tuesday. What made us nervous was the forecast for the sea conditions. The forecast called for 8 to 12 foot swell, which is a little higher than our usual comfortable level. But the good news was that there would be a 16 second dominant wave period, and only 1 to 2 foot wind waves, so the tall swell might not be too bad. We agreed it would be worth a look and planned to check the weather forecast again Saturday morning to see if anything changed.

On Saturday morning the weather and sea forecast was unchanged, but the SF Bar forecast was for 12 to 14 foot swells, with occasional 17 foot breaking waves in the shipping channel during max ebb. We reviewed our plans and options for the day before leaving the dock, and agreed that it was worth a look. The plan was to head under the Gate at slack current, so we would not be on the Bar during the ebb. Once we got out past Point Bonita we could evaluate the actual conditions. If it looked too bad we would be able to turn around and head back into the bay before the ebb really got moving.

We met up with *Gone with the Wind* at the bridge and headed out the Gate. The ride to Point Bonita was pretty smooth. We had earlier considered the Bonita Channel as an

option, but as soon as we saw the rollers over the Potato Patch a right turn option was quickly eliminated. The shipping channel still looked good. The swell was quite visible, but no white water, so we continued straight out. Off to our right we could see the much higher swell with occasional breaking tops. To our left we saw a similar swell, but with no breakers. The huge swell on the Potato Patch was a sight to be remembered, seeing the series of the waves in profile building, peaking and breaking, all the while being on a pretty smooth roller coaster.

At one point, with our boats one wavelength apart, we all would be on the tops of different swells at the same time, and then down into the troughs at the same time. It was quite a sight to watch a Catalina 36 disappear almost to the spreaders behind the wave. All through this passage we kept on the lookout for changes on the conditions that would indicate that we needed to change our plans.

Once we got out past buoy 3 of the shipping channel the swell had dropped, the big rollers on either side were gone and the E ticket ride was over. We had made a safe passage over the bar, with all on board being comfortable with the passage we had made. Looking back this was one of the nicest rides we have had over the bar.

At this point we agreed to head north on our quest for whales. We paralleled the coast ~ 4 miles offshore. Most of us were slowly motoring, with a few trying to sail in 5 to 8 knots of wind. We saw a number of dolphins and birds, but no whales. By early afternoon it was time to turn around and head back. At this point we were ~ 8 miles from Drakes Bay. After considering the conditions and forecast for Sunday, *JoJo*, *Serendipity Too* and *Migration* decided to continue to Drakes Bay and anchor out for the night. *Athena* and *Gone with the Wind* turned around and headed back to the bay.

Those of us who were able to go to Drakes were treated to quite a show from the colony of elephant seals on the beach. There were males, females and this year's crop of pups gathered on the beach. We went to shore and hiked up to the observation area where docents were answering questions about the seals and provided scopes to view them. We did find out that February is not a good time to look for whales.

Sunday morning the forecast was for much flatter seas and light winds. For the trip back down the coast we followed the coastline, staying 1 mile or less off the shore. Maybe that's where the whales were hiding, it was worth a try. At one point we found some sea caves and ventured to within 100 yards of shore. Going slow and staying in at least 30 feet of water worked well for us. There was a very small swell and the shore break was almost on the beach. We did find a number of hikers on the shore and took pictures of them taking pictures of us. This was quite a different view of the shoreline than we usually see.



In the end we didn't find any whales, but did have quite an enjoyable time on the water. We are planning to try this trip again, possibly during the fall migration. Next time...

### **Cruise Planning**

We still need cruise captains to volunteer to lead some of our cruises. Please contact Kelvin if you can spare a few hours to organize and lead us on one of our cruises. The calendar for the second half of the year still needs to be planned. Please let us know if you have a destination that we should be taking the fleet to.

### **Calendar**

#### **March 15-16**

The March cruise destination is Angel Island. We will meet at Ayala Cove on Saturday. Saturday afternoon can be spent on the island or relaxing on the boat. We will have the usual "bring what you have" shared group dinner on one of the boats. Sunday morning calls for more relaxing or hiking on the island, finished off by a nice sail on the bay.

#### **March 22**

The **Diesel Seminar** is being held on March 22 from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Encinal YC. There will be a \$20 fee to cover the costs of setting up this event. We have marine/aircraft mechanic Jason Morison doing the presentation again this year. This has been well attended in the past and everyone came away with a better understanding of what makes our iron genoa run. We will have coffee, bagels, fruit and sweet stuff. Please bring a note book and pen, along with your questions on issues that you need to find answers for.

As a bonus, one lucky participant will get a FREE oil service from Jason of Proline service!

Contact Jeff Berman (Jeff@fogcty.com) if you plan to attend this seminar.

For those who need directions by land: <http://www.encinal.org/directions.html>

#### **April 5-6**

The April cruise will be to Oyster Point YC. We will provide details in a separate cruise announcement.

### **Electronics Seminar – Date TBD**

We have an offer from Star Electronics for a seminar on GPS, radar or whatever electronics related subject we desire. If you are interested in something like this, please contact Kelvin Philips with your desired subject.

### **Membership**

Membership renewals for 2008 are now due. Please send in your \$25 membership fee to Mary Ann Herman. The mailing address can be found on the application page on Fleet 9 website. If any of your information has changed, please complete the application and send it along with your check.

Burgees are available to request by mail. If yours is in need of replacement, send a check for \$25 to our treasurer Mary Ann Herman for a new one. We also have them available on *Migration* so you can pick one up when you see us.

# C-36 Fleet 9 2008S schedule

March 07, 2008



Month	Date	Cruise Destination	Cruise Captain	
<b>JAN</b>	26-27	Angel Island	Chuck Herman	<i>Postponed</i>
<b>FEB</b>	16-17-18	Presidio YC – Whale Watching	Kelvin Philips	<i>President's Day Weekend</i>
<b>MAR</b>	15-16	Angel Island	Chuck Herman	
	22	Diesel Seminar	Jeff Berman	
<b>APR</b>	5-6	Oyster Cove YC	Jeff Berman	
	26-27	China Camp		
<b>MAY</b>	24-25-26	Drakes Bay / Napa River	Karl Livengood	<i>Memorial Day Weekend</i>
<b>JUN</b>	14-15	Napa River, if we do Drakes Bay in May		

## Board Members

Fleet Captain – Chuck Herman; chas\_herman@yahoo.com

Treasurer / Membership – Mary Ann Herman; chas\_herman@yahoo.com

Cruise Coordinator – Kelvin Philips; kphilips@zilog.com

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