

Day 21: August 6, 2010

A bit of a frenetic day as we prepare to leave. We sailed off about 6 pm into a beautiful sunset, Greer and Ryan sitting on the bowsprit as their adventure begins. Neither Greer nor Ryan have seen whales before so they are in for a treat (I hope). As we were pulling out, a bottlenose dolphin joined us riding along our side escorting us out to sea- at least until a giant cruise ship crossed our path- so close we could hear the music blaring. John Atkinson has joined as extra crew until will pick up Roger and Peter in Key West on Sunday night. Kyle made a scrumptious meal of chili and mac & cheese and we all enjoyed the evening sail.

Roger called with the latest news from NMFS about the permit. Because Johnny biopsied three whales with Iain, NMFS has decided to make him a co-investigator on the permit for biopsies. Indeed, the letter has arrived via email so we can biopsy from here on out as long as he is on board. Roger will still train me and add me after this leg. It's great to have it solved, but it does show the silliness in the process. Johnny's salary demands have naturally increased!

The array is in the water and going well. we are headed out to deep water and so will be taking the long way to Key West. The Gulf stream is keeping us at 2 knots (remember you can walk faster than 2 knots). Students are playing cards though watches will start at 7 am which is the sunrise time down here. Our satcom is working. Iain just called to test the phones and I am emailing. It is indeed handy to have.

If you have a minute- go to our website:

<http://www.usm.maine.edu/toxicology/gulf/index.php>

Scroll down near the bottom and you will find links to "logs", "pictures", "voyage tracks" and "project details" soon there will also be links to video's and fundraising. But go into the logs and you will find links to recent writings from the students on the voyage and more are coming, plus links to all of these emails. In the photos you can find pictures from the first leg and the first port stop.

Glad to be back and sea and hope you are all well.

John