

Coho 2020 Seminar 01 – What to expect on the Coho - Bob & Doug

- The Route:** Seattle to San Francisco is roughly 750 miles and with a reasonable boat it should take about 7 good sailing days to cover the distance. Watching the weather to get a decent NNW wind you should be able to have a downwind ride most of the way.
- The Boat:** s/v Agatha, a 2017 Beneteau Oceanis 45
- The Crew:**
Bill Champion = Owner
Doug Lombard = Hired Captain
Bob Vizenor = Crew
Pam Vizenor = Crew/Cook
- The Plan:** Leave Seattle Sat 2018-08-25 at 3am to catch the ebb tide, head out the strait, sail S at 50-80 miles off, one stop in Newport OR for fuel, water, and meet up with Yaquina Bay Yacht club on Wed 2018-08-29 for their club race and BBQ. Then do one hop to San Fran 50-80 miles off arriving approx. 2018-09-03. Bill's wife Victoria and 12 year old daughter Rose would fly to San Fran with one of their 2 cats and meet us in Sausalito. The second cat (Gilligan) would sail with us.
- The Reality:** Left Elliot Bay Marina in Seattle at 5am on Saturday 2018-08-25 and arrived at Schoonmaker Marina in Sausalito at 1:45pm on 2018-09-07. Total trip was 14 days, 7 days sailing, 7 days in port. Three stops on the way down, Westport, Newport, and Coos Bay (Charleston actually). No cats sailed with us.
- Before We Left:** Bill and family were sailing up in Canada and the San Juans on a shakedown cruise / goodbye to the PNW tour. Bob and Pam were taking 10 days for quick trip to the Gulf and San Juan islands. Doug was teaching sailing classes.

Before you leave we recommend:

- Try to complete "most" boat projects early
- Try out all sails and practice with them and reefing them.
- Get jack lines and preventer rigged and practice with them.
- Get a full list of crew's medical status, including all medications
- Ask if any crew has ever gotten seasick & make a plan for meds or ??
- Get your InReach set up and registered with the Coho weather address
- Download all Apps you think you might use on your phone or tablet
- Download and install all updates on your phone, tablet, InReach, etc...
- Get the boat packed with all gear and all but the perishable provisions.
- Start checking the weather every day for a week or two in advance.
- Review Charlies Charts and Coast Pilot & familiarize yourself with the coast
- Determine the watch schedule and discuss it with all the crew

Day 0 F – 2018-08-25: Bob spent all day in work meetings, getting home to help Pam shop, pack, and load stuff on the boat around 4:30pm. Bob & Pam were in charge of all provisioning for the trip. Bill's family was taking stuff off the boat to make room for captain and crew, and Bill and Doug were busy working on last minute boat projects.

The day before departure we recommend you:

- Avoid drinking alcohol
- Get lots of rest
- Drink lots of water
- Start taking any seasickness meds
- Fill the fuel tank
- Fill the water tanks
- Rig the jack-lines and harness points
- Rig the preventer
- Check the weather (again and again)

Lessons Learned:

- We left too many projects until the last minute
- We stayed up way, way too late – 1am = 3.5hrs sleep
- We didn't stay fed and hydrated enough.
- We did not discuss health and meds with crew
- We did not determine the watch schedule ahead of time
- We did not have a preventer solution worked out

Day 1 S – 2018-08-25: We backed out of the slip at EMB at 5am and motored up the sound with the Ebb tide. Spent a lovely day motoring in flat seas to PT and rounded Point Wilson at 10am where we raised the main to motor sail. Stopped in PA to top up on fuel at 2pm. Had a lovely grilled salmon dinner at sunset and then Bob took first night watch at 10pm, but everyone stayed up to be there for the big left hand turn. We rounded Cape Flattery at 11:30pm, set the sails and killed the engine. Finally sailing on the ocean!

Bill (who has been a bit queasy since PA) immediately starts throwing up and retires below. Pam keeps Bob company until midnight and heads below. After a short nap Doug comes up around 1am to check on things. Doug shares his gummi bear snacks with Bob who immediately throws up over the stern. One-and-done, Bob is back in action.

The first day out we recommend:

- Start the watch schedule immediately and take naps before watches.
- Pay attention to how everyone is feeling
- Make sure everyone is staying well hydrated
- If it seems like people might throw up, make meals "soft"
- Eat small but frequent meals

Lessons Learned:

- We all stayed up all day and didn't start first watch until 10pm
- We didn't work out our watch schedule until around dinner time
- We didn't know that Bill was a Type II diabetic and took oral meds
- Bill did not start taking any seasick meds before we left

Things to keep in mind:

- PA is a good fuel stop
- Neah Bay is a poor fuel stop, often no diesel available, call ahead
- Neah Bay is a good place to stop and wait for weather
- The swells get larger and larger as you head out the strait
- The sea motion is usually a corkscrew once you turn south at Cape Flattery and this often makes people sea sick
- Our watch schedule was:

10pm	12am	2am	4am	6am	10am	2pm	6pm	10pm	
2	+ 2	+ 2	+ 2	+ 4	+4	+ 4	+ 4	= 24	
Bob	Pam	Doug	Bill	Bob	Pam	Doug	Bill		

Day 2 S – 2018-08-26:

Bob gets 4 hrs sleep from 2am to 6am and comes back on deck to find Bill still throwing up and Doug taking his watch. Bill heads below to get some rest, but continues to throw up. Doug has kept us about 30miles off during the 2am to 6am double watch as we continue to monitor Bill's condition. About noon the winds shifts to southerly and Bill is still throwing up constantly, so we decide to motor to Westport for a time-out. He has been throwing up continuously for over 12 hours and can't keep anything down, including his diabetes meds.

The bar timing isn't great, but the wind is low so not too bad, we cross around 4pm. After 15 min at the dock Bill is feeling better and asking for a snack. A light dinner is followed by a short walk around down and everyone is ready to turn in early.

Things to keep in mind:

- Have suppository seasick meds on board in case someone has severe sickness and can't keep any oral meds down
- Always have a Plan-B and a Plan-C in case something comes up
- Have Charlie's Charts and the Coast Pilot on board and read up on the ports coming up along the coast in case you have to duck in. Decide which are doable and which are to be avoided.
- Study up on basic bar crossing technique
 - Avoid high winds, can cause larger waves and breakers
 - Avoid a strong ebb tide, wind against tide can cause breakers
 - Avoid low tide, shallow water is more likely to cause breakers
 - Cross at high slack or the end of the flood if possible
 - There will probably be a dredger in the channel
 - Each bar is different, read up on them.

Day 3 M – 2018-08-27: Bill slept for 13 hours and we were a little worried he might have died overnight. We spent the day scouring Westport for seasick meds for Bill and stocking up on a few provisions we forgot in our mad scramble on Friday.

We discovered Englund Marine and everyone bought more warm clothing. Bill, and Pam bought new boots. Doug bought supplies to rig a preventer. These are great stores and are at most port towns in WA & OR

Bill started taking Dramamine in the morning and is sporting seasickness wrist bands and chewing ginger gum. Doug and Bill rig the preventer and we catch the afternoon high slack and head back out at 3pm. We headed off shore SW with a plan to jibe back towards Newport in about 18 hours (40 miles off). Bill seems to be doing better and I thankfully do not have to throw up again after we head out, my conditioning seems to last over a 24 hour shore break.

Things to keep in mind:

- It is REALLY cold out on the ocean, even in August. Bring lots of warm clothes, full foulies, boots, hats and mittens. We didn't take our foulies off until after the Golden Gate Bridge and sometimes slept in them.
- Englund Marine is a great chain of stores down the WA/OR coast with a wide selection of warm clothes and boat hardware.
- Ginger really does work for a lot of people to settle their stomachs, and it also masks bad breath, gum, candy, cookies, tea...
- Make sure you can access your doctor if you need a prescription you didn't think of before you left
- In August and September it will probably be foggy along the coast out to 30 or 40 miles.

Day 4 T – 2018-08-28: Around midnight we are getting close to the mouth of the Columbia and we see lots of freighter traffic on AIS and radar. The winds are variable and I have been hand steering on my watch to keep the sails from flogging in the troughs since the autohelm is a bit slow to respond. In my exhaustion towards the end of my watch I miss read the wind indicator and correct the wrong direction, causing a jibe, prevented from doing any harm by the preventer, and did a nice 360. We decide to motor across the freighter traffic for greater maneuverability and speed before setting the sails again.

We finally jibe back around 6am. But probably should have waited longer as we couldn't quite fetch Newport on that tack and had to compensate closer in. Our angle was determined as much by the swell direction as the wind direction. We pull into Newport around sunset. The bar crossing is fairly easy, but there is a dredger working the channel that we have to keep an eye on. The arches on the bridge are beautiful in the setting sun.

Steve Olsen and Chelsea Grimm got to Newport a day before us on s/v Jean Anne, their Lord Nelson 37, and give us the scoop on the marina and the Rogue brewery that is a short walk away. We have a quick look around, a delicious dinner and retire to bed.

Things to keep in mind:

- Don't hand steer unless you have to, the autopilot never gets tired
- Don't keep your head in the instruments all the time, look around even if it is dark and see how the wind is blowing on the sails.
- Always have a preventer rigged when running downwind
- If you have AIS, the commercial traffic will see you and make provisions not to run you down. All AIS triangles are the same size on the chart plotter regardless of the size of the boat
- AIS targets look closer than they really are at 1am when you are zoomed to 24 miles.
- If you do jibe, don't panic, slow down, steer yourself out of it, and it's not a sin to motor for a bit to get past something.
- Set your InReach tracking points far enough apart (30 min or 1hr) so that your 360's don't get recorded on your track 😊

Lessons Learned:

- Hand steered too much
- Looking at the instruments too much
- Tried to correct from jibe too fast and over corrected

Day 5 W – 2018-08-29: A day of errands and being a tourist in Newport. We visited the store in the marina that had a fishing tackle department and asked about tuna fishing gear. He told us to go into town to Harold's Bait and Tackle and ask for Marilyn. After taking a cab to town (marina is across the river) we had lunch and then went looking for Marilyn. We told her what we were looking for and after sizing us up as newbies she put together a 50' rig for us and sold us the most popular lures. She told us to head up to Englund Marine where her husband worked and ask him for a 75' rig. She told us in parting, "if you see that bitch Janine there give her a big lap on the ass from me." We got all of our fishing gear and headed back to the boat while Doug stayed in town to hook up with the Yaquina Bay Yacht Club for their evening racking as he had found a crew position. We (along with Steve & Chelsea) returned in the evening to watch the end of the race (a light wind drifter) and join them for the BBQ. Got to meet lots nice folks and swap sailing stories, traded burgees.

Things to keep in mind:

- Newport is one of the easiest bar crossings on the coast
- Meeting new people is the best part of cruising
- Don't be afraid of Marilyn
- Don't get so goal oriented that you don't stop and enjoy yourself

Tuna Fishing Tips:

- You want 2 hand lines, one 75' long and one 50' long
- The rig is a heavy-duty woven line, a swivel, a rubber snubber, a swivel, 200lb test monofilament leader, a swivel, and a lure w barbed hooks
- Most popular lure colors are "Mexican Flag" and "Zucchini"
- Get a nice plastic hand reel for each rig
- Trail them off opposite sides of the stern at 5-7kts when at least 20 miles off shore
- A gaff is handy, but not necessary, you can drag them until they tire out

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Day 6 T – 2018-08-30: The high slack is at 2pm so we fill the morning with laundry and lunch at the Rogue brewery. We have been checking the weather forecasts and texting with other Coho boats ahead and behind of us and it looks like some bad weather is coming in the area between Cape Blanco and Cape Mendocino, 35-40kt winds and 12-16 ft seas. We decide to head for Coos Bay as it is one day further south and just north of the bad weather. We will wait there for a better weather window. All showered and wearing clean clothes we head across the bar at 2pm. Since it is a short hop we decide to stay near shore (10 miles) and try to follow the tow-boat lanes to avoid the crab traps. No wind so we motor sail. We have the lat/long for the boundaries, but Bill finds a website where he can load the lane markers into Google maps. So we pullout our cell phones and keep the blue dot between the black lines all night.

Bill is all dosed up on Dramamine and ginger and despite looking at my phone screen all the time I do not throw up again. Being that close to shore it is very foggy and the mist drips off the bimini onto the seats keeping us wet on watch.

Day 7 F – 2018-08-31: We had slowed down a bit in the night to wait and catch the high slack in the morning at Coos Bay and we motor over the bar at 5am in dense fog. Of course there is a dredger in the middle of the channel. The AIS identifies him as a dredger, so we are not surprised. When we get very close we can finally see him all lit up with giant flood lights. The channel to the marina in Charleston is twisty and we have to closely follow the markers and the GPS. We get tied up and catch some sleep before heading out to go exploring.

Steve and Chelsea on s/v Jean Anne arrive a few hours after us and tie up nearby. We meet a couple other boats at the dock from Seattle who are making the trip south and waiting there for the weather to change as well. Walking around town we find a few restaurants and stores along with a nice coffee shop with free Wi-Fi which is great because cell service sucks here. We also find another Englund Marine, our 3rd on the trip so far.

The weather forecast looks like it will be a few days before we get a weather window to continue south. It is a warm sunny day, so Doug and Bill clean the boat and make some tweaks to the preventer system.

Things to keep in mind:

- Harbor hopping isn't too bad, along as you are not in a hurry
- If you are harbor hopping be sure to time the legs with the bar crossings
- If motoring inshore use the tow-boat lanes to avoid crab traps
- Englund Marine is a great chain!

Day 8 S – 2018-09-01: We meet a family on the dock with 2 kids and start chatting to find that they limped in overnight with a tow because they lost one of the blades on their 2-blade folding prop. They had been sailing and when they started their motor it had a very bad thumping sound. They sealed the wife's iPhone in a Ziploc bag and taped it to the end of the boat hook to take movies of the underside of the boat. After several tries they finally got a clear picture of the prop with the missing blade. He can get a replacement prop delivered tomorrow, but it is the Saturday of Labor Day weekend and no divers are available. Bill had recognized a power boat at the dock, also waiting for weather, that he met in Canada a month ago. While chatting about Max's prop situation they offer him the use of their hooka if he wants to change it himself. After exhausting all the options within walking distance we find a rundown cab to take us in to Coos Bay proper to see the RBG movie. It was the cab ride from hell, but we made it in one piece there and back.

Things to keep in mind:

- Again, the people you meet are the best part of cruising
- It is amazing how fast you make friends and how generous they are
- Even tiny red-neck towns have interesting movie theatres

Day 9 S – 2018-09-02: "Stuck inside of Coos Bay with the Frisco blues again"
Still no break from the weather, so we decide to head to town to look around some more. We get the wife of the taxi from hell, he drives nights, she drives days. Find a nice place for brunch then explore the waterfront. We find a delightful marina and wish we had made the 5 mile journey up river to stay here. We pick up some more provisions, including soy sauce for the hoped for fresh tuna. We discover 7 Devils Brewing Co and they have live music tonight, so the whole gang from the marina meets there for a great evening of food, drink, and music.

We check the weather constantly and the forecast is still the same. It looks like it won't ease up until the 11th or 12th, 2 or three more days.

Things to keep in mind:

- Patience is a virtue
- There are interesting things everywhere if you keep looking

Day 10 M – 2018-09-03: Still no change in the forecast off the capes. But there is supposed to be some wind in the marina that afternoon, so the smaller boats move deeper into the marina where they will be bow to the wind and have a more comfortable motion. We consider it, but the depths are too shallow for the 7 ft draft of Agatha. We do hop across to the fuel dock before the wind gets too strong, but it still takes 3 tries to get on the dock with the wind blowing us off. We trudge back to the coffee shop several times to get Wi-Fi to download new grib files.

Day 11 T – 2018-09-04: After a windy night the morning is clear and sunny, but still breezy. We head to the coffee shop first thing to update our forecast. It looks like there might be a window opening up this evening, but slack at the bar is not until 2am. Doug convinces us to take a hike to the beach after breakfast. Beautiful landscape.

On the way back to the boat we stop at the coffee shop again and the weather window has shifted up a couple hours. We decide to make break for it and catch the 3pm slack at the bar. Even though it is still quite windy (25kts) the forecast is to ease up over the next 8 hours. There is another system coming, so the window at the capes will only be open for a few days

We hurry up and get the boat ready to go, casting off at 3:30 and scoot across the bar. The reefs at Coos Bay extend quite a ways out to sea, so even after crossing safely over the bar we need to keep a very uncomfortable beam reach with the waves and swell beam on as well. After about an hour we are clear of all the reefs and can fall off to a deep reach heading SSW, angling offshore. The wind eases soon after and the sailing becomes comfortable again. Night watch is uneventful as we passed beyond the crab pot zone earlier in the evening.

Day 12 W – 2018-09-05: Daylight broke with finally some sun and the clouds thinning out. WE are final far enough offshore to be free of the coastal fog and clouds. We could take our warm hats and gloves off for a while in the afternoon and get a little sun on our extremities. It was a generally uneventful day as we stayed on the same Starboard tack all day long. We actually had some time to read and write and relax on the boat. Pam makes a fabulous steak dinner, we eat like kings. As we pass Cape Mendocino shortly before midnight we tack over to port and start heading slowly closer to shore.

Day 13 T – 2018-09-06: Another beautiful morning at sea but we can see the clouds and fog approaching as we slowly approach land. I decide this is my last chance to troll for tuna and toss the lines out in the late morning, one off starboard and one off port. Bill and Pam humor me, but doubt I will catch any fish on this trip. After an hour or so I look up at the lines and think, hmmm the bungee on the port line seems to be stretched out a bit. I haul it in and what do you know, there is a nice little tuna that has been hooked well and seems to be all tired out. We didn't have a gaff on board so it was good he was hooked well. I dispatch him according to a fading memory of a tuna fishing trip out of Westport 5 years ago and we have tuna sashimi for lunch! The afternoon is uneventful and then we have seared Ahi steaks for dinner, another meal fit for kings.

Day 14 F – 2018-09-07: Overnight the wind shifts and dies a bit, and even sailing a deep as we can we are not able to keep our desired heading and are drifting off to the west towards the Farallon Islands. We finally pack it in and resort to the Iron Jenny as we are eager to get to San Fran as soon as possible. The Golden Gate Bridge slowly comes into view through the fog as we approach and the cameras come out. We cut over a corner of the potato patch since the weather is calm and cross under the bridge at 11:45am. Within 5 minutes we are all sweltering and stripping our foulies off. We head north to Sausalito and find our slip at the Schoonmaker Point Marina.

Appendix:

Apps we like to use:

- Navionics
- Predict Wind
- SailgribWR
- PocketGrib
- InReach weather
- Google Maps

References to Have on Board:

- Coast Pilot
- Charlies Charts
- NOAA Tidal Current Tables: Pacific Coast of North America and Asia
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- Guides for California
- Guides for Mexico (Shawn & Heather's books)

Anchorage in San Francisco: (<https://boatingsf.com/places/anchorages/>)

- Aquatic Park
- Belvedere Cove
- Central Basin
- China Basin
- China Cove
- Clipper Cove
- Downtown Sausalito Anchorage
- East Garrison
- Horseshoe Cove
- Paradise Cove
- Point Stuart Anchorage
- Quarry Beach
- Richardson Bay Anchorage