

New Zealand to Ushuaia via Cape Horn

Wed 22 Nov left Auckland

Left the jetty around 07.00

Customs aboard while floating in the harbour at 08.00.

Departed around 09.30.

Set sail in the afternoon.

Fri 24 Nov

Bound for the Horn

Dear Family and Friends,

This is the third day out and still the weather doesn't look like we are on our way to the Horn. We have a glorious sunshine, it is 18 degrees in the air and 17 in the sea, the wind is around 18 knots from behind, speed has picked up to 13 knots and the seas are still pretty calm.

We have seen whales several times and Lasse, who hasn't seen them before is very happy. We have also seen several of the majestic albatrosses diving for fish just near us.

We are 14 in total, but Andre and Paul, the two stewardesses (Ann and Gillian) and Chris (our chef for this trip) don't do any watches. That leaves 9 of us to form three watches with 3 in each. We have three watches of 4 hours at daytime and 4 watches of 3 hours each at night time. We should all be wearing fleeces, foul weather gear and life jackets, but for the moment it is jeans and t-shirt (the Kiwis are still wearing shorts). I have had a nap on deck after lunch. At night it gets colder and when we are working on deck we all put on life jackets.

We are sailing more or less east. South of us the mighty lows (low pressures with storm force winds) are wandering across the roaring forties and screaming fifties, but they stay away from us and we just have a touch of the stronger wind and sea now and then. That is the strategy anyway. We will turn southeast later on (we are now at 37 degrees South) and Cape Horn is at 57 degrees South, so we must sooner or later face the tough sea, but as long as we can remain in these benign conditions, we prefer so.

Our weather routing and forecasting service will guide us south, when they think we can do it dodging the lows as much as possible.

Chris is a very good chef, but maybe not the same elegant touch that Clare had. We all eat in the cockpit and it is a great camaraderie between us.

Lasse sleeps in "their" midship cabin (he and Bittan were with us to New Zealand from Fiji and they will be aboard in Antarctica and South Georgia, so I call it Lasse's and Bittan's cabin), Nigel and Sigge share a cabin aft, the two stewardesses are in the other aft cabin and in the forward guest cabin we have turned on the air con full blast and we keep our fresh vegetables there. To-day I also discovered that

Chris is sleeping there as well. Bloody cold it was!

We have taken on two extra crew members, both with experience as skippers or first mate on large yachts and both have been sailing on Timoneer. They are great assets.

Everything is working fine aboard. Some details are new, like an instant hot water tap in the stew station midships, some handles in our bathroom and an extra canvas protecting the helmsman and all the controls in the cockpit. But otherwise everything is as it should be. I have been working a little on my pictures, as it is such easy sailing and kept in contact with my companies.

It is great fun to have Sigge, Lasse and Nigel around. Nigel has been working hard with other business, but Sigge and Lasse are enjoying themselves and each other. And they are all great company to me. The day before we left they brought me Havana cigars and a great cognac. But during the sailing we haven't had anything stronger than a beer. They all seem to be very happy and relaxed aboard and it is great that we all take part in the watches.

I asked Lasse if I could write to Bittan, as I thought it would be nice to hear how Lasse has it from another source as well. We were sitting together on the aft deck house the other day dreaming about our ladies. And talking about children and grandchildren. We are two happy guys! And he is a great friend to have aboard.

To-morrow the wind will increase and a few squalls should pass by in the morning and evening before the nice weather returns. We have had it so extremely nice that I think all of us are looking forward to a little tougher sailing. But I probably shouldn't say anything like that. Before we have rounded the Horn, we will probably have got more than we bargained for!

All my love to Jen and my children and great hugs to friends,
Jan-Eric

Sat 25 Nov (after passing the date line)

Excuse me, but is this really the way to Cape Horn?

Dear Family and Friends,

We are now on our fifth day sailing. The sun is shining from a relentless blue sky, the wind is 20 to 25 knots from northwest, the drinks have been taken in one of the cockpits looking at the albatrosses showing off just behind our stern, the sleep is undisturbed except for our watches, the dinners are taken on deck and the air-conditioning is running when I thought we would wear woolly socks. Both Lasse and Sigge has been sleeping on deck after lunch, whereas Nigel was reading a detective story with his bare feet on the cockpit table (Yes Lyndsey, that is how far it has gone!) and I have been on deck most of the day taking photographs of albatrosses in t-shirt and jeans (me, not the albatrosses).

We are sailing in a nearly easterly course as the weather is quite nasty further south, and we are riding along the south side of a high pressure ridge just north of us. If we go further north the wind will subside and it will take too long time to reach our goal, if we go further south we will hit the storms. But Commanders, who helps us with weather forecasts and suggest our routing, has so far done a great job.

We have had squalls for a few hours and we had half a day with clouds, but mostly it is just gorgeous. The water and air temperature are both around 17 degrees. But, of course, in order to round the Horn we have to turn south at some point. The technique is to do it at the right moment to have nice following winds and hopefully no nasty storms. But we all realize that we will meet nasty and stormy conditions at some point.

To-day we changed time and date. We have been on New Zealand time since departure and Ushuaia is 7 hours ahead of us, but a day behind (complicated!). So to-day Sunday at 15.00 we changed our watches two hours to 17.00 and at the same time we changed Sunday to Saturday, in order to have two Saturday nights for partying or two Sunday mornings for religious contemplation, whatever we choose!

This means that we are just now 11 hours behind London GMT time, 12 hours behind Sweden and Holland and only three hours behind LA.

Apart from the sunshine the most fantastic are the albatrosses. They are flying so close to us and very close to the water. Sometimes they dip the tip of one of their wings in the water in order to turn fast. They never flap their wings, just moving along like a glider plane. Someone said that they represent the souls of dead sailors. If that is true, I cannot think of a more wonderful life for a soul! I have taken hundreds of pictures of them and hardly anyone comes out the way I wished for. They move so fast that focusing with a large tele lens is very tricky. This probably proves that they actually are illusive spirits that you can feel and see but they appear only diffuse, when you try to catch them on camera (at least when I try to do it!).

Chris is great chef. Not the elegant Mediterranean salads, nor any fish (so far), but his meat dishes, pastas and soups keeps everyone very happy. And Andre is a cautious captain. We could sail faster, but we are very safe with Andre in charge. Just now he is taking down the mainsail for the night, as some squalls might pass by.

I have been able to keep in touch with my business via email. And we get daily news papers printed out. It feels good to be in touch with the outside world, but I have no longing to return to it yet. The routine is casting its spell over all of us, and the little world that is Adèle is safe and comfortable and we are all excited about the tougher days that will follow.

Lots of love to all of you,

JE

Mon 27 Nov

More news from a tough sailor

Dear Family and Friends,

Its two days since you received my last mail. Several of my judgements have turned out to be wrong. First I said we were taken down the mainsail just as I wrote the letter, but it turned out that we were just taking in the second reef, and we have been able to keep up the speed, reaching more than 300 miles a day. And I said that Chris didn't do any fish. But that dinner we had fish and shellfish in a coconut curry.

And to-day for lunch we had Tom Yang Goong! But Chris still excels with his meat and the lamb at yesterday's dinner was exactly so red as it should be. And everyone smelled of garlic all night!

And at last I mastered the albatross photography and got some decent shots. But soon most of the albatrosses disappeared. They have been fishing around an enormous sea ridge, where probably a lot of fish congregated and as we sailed away from the ridge the albatrosses were gone. But we still had two days of them and one was back to-day and kept us company.

Since the first sightings of whales, when we were within a few hundred miles of New Zealand, we haven't seen any more.

The sun is still shining, but this morning we had convection fog. The sun burned it away at midday, and now in the afternoon the sky is clear again. We have been riding on the side of a high pressure ridge to the north and surfing in front of the low-pressure to the south-east of us. But during the last day we have actually been sailing nearly as fast as the low pressure is moving and it is hardly catching up on us. And the forecast shows that it will probably weaken within a few days. So in order not to get caught in the high pressure belt (which may be sunny and warm but provides no wind) we have turned more south.

The barometer is increasing and the wind is actually dropping, which we don't want, as it is our engine bringing us around the world. So we are trying our best to rush southeast and hope that we still can "surf on the low-pressure" for a few more days.

To-day we were shaking out the last remaining reef in the mainsail in order to run for full sails towards the Cape, when suddenly the Cunningham broke with the noise of a gunshot (the Cunningham is the downhaul line that stretches the leach of the sail along the mast and sits at the bottom of the sail and goes into a hydraulic cylinder inside the boom). I was forward taking photos when it all happened. We had to take the sail back to the first reef, but are still doing around 12 knots. Now we are rigging up an external Cunningham to one of the winches around the mast and then we can set the full sail again. As soon as the sail is up, we can rig up a new Cunningham line instead of the one that broke and take it back to the cylinder.

Yesterday Mark became a little bit over-confident and jumped down from the boom and twisted his ankle. Luckily we have an orthopedic surgeon aboard, so he is well looked after. Otherwise we have had no accidents on people or material.

The temperature has dropped to 15 degrees and the sea temperature is down to 14 degrees as we sail further east and south. But I am still having my afternoon cigar on the outside bench on the port north side of the cockpit (towards the sun, but also towards the wind).

I read in to-days news that a coup in Fiji seems imminent. We were there just two months ago and met the Prime Minister, when he opened a new mobile phone relay station. We were astonished that he didn't have more important things to do, but to-day he is probably being worried about other things than kava ceremonies and mobile radio stations. So sad that such a beautiful country cannot live in peace! And it is the same problem that is a plague all around the world. A conflict between two cultures, here the progressive business-oriented and peace-loving Hindu Indians and the original Fijian inhabitants, once ferocious cannibals but now devoted Christians and bound to the earth, their families and their traditional villages.

But aboard Adèle we have no revolutions! The sailing is far too exciting, the food too good and the weather too glorious to invite any revolutionary thoughts. We continue to slave away on our watches knowing that you feel no pity at our fate.

Big hugs to all of you,
JE

Thu 30 Nov

The surfer that fell, or the storm that caught up with us

Dear Family and Friends,

It's night and the southerly wind has got a bite to it. I'm wearing gloves for the first time on this crossing. The stars are shining the way they only can, when you are sailing far away from the disturbing lights of civilization, the moon presented a silver path along which Adèle swept along, and on deck Nigel, Georgina and myself were drinking coffees and teas to keep us warm just a minute ago.

But now I'm down in my library trying to hammer out a message on the keyboard while we are heeling over fifteen degrees. It's a lot warmer under deck, although we haven't turned on the heating yet in order to preserve the vegetables, who are asleep together with Chris, our chef, in his cabin (the forward guest cabin). The gloves, woolly hat and foul weather gear are lying on the chair beside me. Outside the library the soft light from the floor lighting gives a glowing feeling to the mahogany in the otherwise dark saloon.

Two days ago, when I wrote the last email to you, we were surfing in front of a low pressure. Well, we are obviously not that experienced surfers! The low caught up with us, the wind increased to 40 knots and the wave height to 15 feet and we had to slow down under only staysail and reefed mizzen and were doing around 10 knots. But in these stormy conditions the albatrosses, my special friends, came back to impress us with their aerobatics around our yacht. They dived like an attack plane from the second war (but more elegantly), they turned by dipping the tip of one of their wings into the water and then fast move direction, they were flying with their wings vertically and they were gliding only a few centimeters above the waves and often disappeared behind a wave only to reappear a few seconds later at a different position.

And all the time being I sat mesmerized on the aft deck trying to take pictures of these illusive posers, while the stormy seas came rolling in. Each time a wave raised behind Adèle and threatened to crush on her aft deck, she gracefully raised her stern, and the wave rolled underneath her, with the sun reflecting from the foam that covered the top of each wave.. Lasse came and joined me aft, and he very sensibly had his life jacket on. I should have had that too, but in the excitement I had brought all camera gear, but didn't think of myself. OK, promise to rectify that, when we get the next gale! We changed course a little more downwind to adjust the sails, and the waves suddenly started breaking over the stern forcing me to run with my camera back into the protection of the aft cockpit.

Last night the low passed us and the squalls came with lots of rain giving Adèle a cleansing bath rinsing

away all the salt that covered her high up in the rigging. The wind direction shifted from northwest to south. Andre and I had previously kept Adèle on an east southeasterly course in order to get favourable wind behind the low, but on advice from Commanders, our weather forecasters and routers, we changed to an east northeasterly course, although we hesitated as it didn't look right. This morning we downloaded weather charts from Wellington University on the internet, which confirmed our earlier opinion, and we went back to a straight easterly course. And in the afternoon we got a new email from Commanders, confirming that they had misjudged the low and we were right in our new course.

We are still running the same easterly course now, but the high behind this low has now hugged us into its bosom, the skies cleared up again during midday, the wind dropped from 40 knots to 18 (just now) and the barometer has risen from 1010 to 1026. The high is expected to expand further and if we succeed to stay just south of it, we will have favourable winds and glorious skies for another couple of days. If we are caught up in the middle of the high or just above it, we will have very little wind and may have to resort to the engine. But so far so good! The wind has stayed southerly all day and night. If it had turned a little to the left it had indicated that we were on the wrong side of the high. We may be a little too far north, but we have plenty of fuel, if the wind would drop completely.

Yesterday afternoon was rough and it was difficult to sleep, when the wind shift and squalls came at night. To-day we were back to our normal luck, and everyone gathered for drinks in the cockpit before dinner. And every day (except yesterday) David and Gillian are out with their cameras taking photos of the sunset. As we have had sunshine every day except one, it must be a lot of pictures by now. They probably look all similar, but I, with all my albatross photos, shouldn't through stones in a glasshouse!

At our heeling angle it is sometimes quite difficult to connect via our satellite telephones, but the email system never fails. I have spent some time during the nights (daytime in Europe) doing business over telephone and email. Sometimes difficult, but often I have thanked our telephone system for providing an excuse for shortening my phone calls. To-night I have in between writing this mail also finished my business calls (thankfully made short by our bad connections!), and now it is time to go back up on deck and return to the watch. The sea and the wind is calling the sailor!

Lots of love to all of you,
Jan-Eric

Sat 2 Dec

Typhoons in the Philippines and High Pressure in the South Seas

Dear Family and Friends,

It's become colder. The gloves are on at night and yesterday, for the first time, we had dinner in the deckhouse, although it wasn't raining. We had dinner there once before, but then it was raining cats and dogs and the seas were breaking over Adèle. And the seas are building up as we get deeper and deeper south. To-day we have consistent sea of around 20 feet, 6 meters, and the big swell and waves are above 7 meters, 23 feet.

The sun is (as it has been nearly every day) out and it is glorious to see the breaking waves with the foam lit by the sun rays. I was running around deck taking photographs, but this time with my life jacket on.

New Zealanders are a different breed from the rest of us (at least those we took aboard in Auckland). Not only are they born upside down. While the rest of us are dressed in warm fleeces, long johns and foul weather gear, Kent and Chris are running around on deck in shorts and t-shirt. I have some pictures to prove it. Paul took one of me in full gear and Chris beside me in summer beach attire! And Kent was working on the mizzen boom to-day in harness and life jacket but in shorts! Both water and air temperature are now down to around 10 degrees.

We have around 25 to 30 knots of wind (just now 29) from west and are going a south-easterly course. We carry only the yankee and mizzen. Very convenient. When you roll in high seas, you are always afraid the boom would hit the waves and break, but in our case the main boom is tied up amidships and the mizzen boom is so small (still 10 meters long) that we don't face the same risk. If the wind would increase we can easily take in a reef in the mizzen or reef or furl the yankee. I think this is the sail combination we will carry for most of the remaining time until we reach the Horn. We are presently doing between 12 to 13 knots, but if the wind increases, we will slow down a little to preserve both Adèle and the crew.

In my last email I described the weather and the high that had enveloped us. We were hoping to stay south of it and have favourable winds, but unfortunately we ended up just north of it with weak winds against us (around 6 knots for a while). So we decided to start the engine and run the washing machines, which we hadn't been able to do for a while, as Adèle was healing over too much. But last night the wind came back from the right direction and the sails were up again. And now the wind has built to 25 – 30 knots and the swell is larger than I have seen before during this crossing. And more is to come. We have two gigantic lows to the south of us and according to Commanders' they are going to merge into a "monster storm" in one or two days time. They are too far away to threaten us, but the swell will be very noticeable.

Above this "monster storm" a smaller low will develop and move eastwards just north of the monster. We in turn are trying to end up just north of that low and ride with it to the Cape. But it is far too early to say if that is possible. We are trying, if possible, to avoid sustained winds beyond 50 knots, but in reality we may of course have to face much stronger winds than that. If we are too late to "catch a ride" on that low, we may slow down and wait until the next gap opens up and then shoot down around the Cape. And if there aren't any reasonable gaps between the lows, we may have to go into the Chilean channels. But enough for now about our weather strategy!

We are not the only ones, who are facing big storms. I was just reading in our news that the super typhoon, Durian, had hit the Philippines and specially Bicol, the area where Jennifer is staying and Legaspi, the town she is flying to and from, when she is visiting her home in the Philippines. More than 500 people dead from mud slides after the typhoon. And while I have been enjoying sunshine and high pressure on the South Seas, Jennifer has been close to an enormous disaster! That wasn't what we thought would happen, when Jennifer waved me good-bye in Auckland!

I spoke to Jennifer after the typhoon and know she is safe and so are her family and their home. She travelled to an area, where she could get to a telephone, because all mobile antennas nearby had been taken out by Durian, and told me before I was aware of the terrible typhoon.

And northeast of us, Fiji is coming closer and closer to a military coup. The Prime Minister, Laisenia Quarase, is working hard to avoid a coup. After having been part of a kava ceremony with him in Lau, we now regard ourselves as blood brothers, and we contemplated turning Adèle around to come to his

support, but we decided that the armament that we carry wouldn't be able to turn the table for the Fijian people or its beleaguered Prime Minister, so we are pursuing our fight with the South Seas instead.

Our vegetables are coming to an end and those remaining have seen better days. Chris says they are only good for soup. I'm eating Vitamin C supplement. Just like Captain Cook, we have to make sure we don't get scurvy! But at least it has one advantage that the vegetables are gone: We can switch on the heating instead of running the aircon!

The next few days we are expecting bigger seas and more wind and it may become more difficult to keep the computer on (I risk that the hard drive will get damaged). Our navigation computers are specially built to handle a storm, but mine isn't designed with Cape Horn in mind, so I may shut it down for a couple of days. Don't worry, you will hear from me again in the lulls between the gales!

Lots of love,
JE

Sun 3 Dec

Gentle Giants

I woke up to another glorious day. Gigantic waves were chasing each other in the sunshine with a few black terns sailing behind us (but no albatrosses!). Adèle was lifted high up the crest and surfed down into an abyss where we could only see the blue sky and the sun above us. It's blowing around 25 knots from southwest and we are on an easterly course. But the big seas come of course not from that wind, but from the "monster storm" in the south. I don't think I ever seen sea as big as this.

The temperature has dropped to 8 degrees, both in the air and the sea, and it has come down to 16 degrees inside Adèle. So this morning Chris moved the few remaining pathetic-looking vegetables into the refrigerator and into my aft cockpit, and Paul started up the heating. I hope we will notice the effect this afternoon.

Just after I was up in the morning we received a new forecast from Commanders. I am quoting it below, as it explains how a professional meteorologist sees the situation:

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"Summary: Rough conditions for the next few days. Suggest not getting any further south through Wednesday!

- 1) The current weather map features a monster gale center well to the south near 65s/86w.
- 2) A ridge of high pressure is located to the north, oriented from mainly west to east between 90-105w, but then from 90w southeast to near 45s/75w along the Chilean coastline.
- 3) In between these two weather systems, we have a strong SW wind flow which will continue at speeds of 20-30 knots with gusts to 40 knots into tonight.
- 4) There will be a bit of a break later tonight and into Monday, but it looks to be short lived as the next storm begins approaching.
- 5) This next storm is forecast to track mainly west to east along 55s and it

is also forecast to be a very intense low!

a) With a track like this and with its strength, very rough conditions will develop, especially down near

50s with winds increasing up to 40-50 knots with higher gusts!

b) Suggest changing course right now and staying further north for not so rough conditions, but even

along 45s it will become very rough.

6) Winds will clock to westerly on Tuesday and increase up to 25-35 knots with gusts to 45 knots as the gale makes its closest pass.

7) These rough conditions look to persist into Tuesday night, then some improvement Wednesday and Thursday, but still windy.

8) General weather will remain very unsettled with scattered showers and squalls, most numerous Tuesday and into Tuesday night.

9) Seas will be huge today, easing a bit Monday as SW swell diminishes some, but then they will become very choppy Tuesday into Wednesday.

Routing: Suggest heading E along 45s to avoid rougher conditions further south Tuesday and Wednesday, then you can resume more of a SE heading toward Cape Horn, waypoints listed below.

Wind Forecast

Wind direction TRUE, speed in kts, and Time is UTC

Sun, December 3

18: 220-240/20-30 g40

Weather: Mostly cloudy with squally conditions Seas 20-27 feet, large SW swell and extremely choppy

.... (then it continues with details for the other days)

Based on this and weather charts that we download on the internet, both from Wellington University in New Zealand and from the Chilean Marine, we decided not to go any further south. We are already at 46 degrees south and may have to jibe to-morrow in more westerly winds to take a north-westerly course a little bit further away from the low. However, although the swell is big, it isn't really unpleasant. It is more like gentle giants passing by. The worry is of course, as Andre has pointed out, that they (the giants) don't remain gentle, when the storm comes nearer and the wind increases further.

We changed time again yesterday afternoon. We have 8 hours time difference between NZ and Argentina, and we are doing 3 time changes, each of two hours, during our sailing. The last change we will do, when we arrive into Ushuaia. That means that longitude wise, our sailing spans over one third of the globe (8 hours out of 24 hours). In distance it is 5000 miles from Auckland to Cape Horn and we have now done around 3,000 of those miles. In comparison it is around 2,500 miles from New York to Europe or from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean. This part of the South Pacific is the only place on earth, where you can be more than 2,000 miles away from any land. But we have already passed that area and Easter Island, with its huge stone statues of long-eared men, is now no more than a thousand miles away.

Tue 5 Dec

Yes, this is definitely the way to Cape Horn

Yesterday morning started with sunshine again. The temperature was down to 7 degrees, so I put on layers of thermals under the foul weather gear, but also sun-lotion on my face. The depletion of the ozone layer in this part of the world makes the sun-lotion as important (nearly) as the life jacket and harness! Then I spent the morning watch on the bench outside the cockpit in the sunshine and lee reading a book.

And after lunch we celebrated Kent's birthday. He turned 30 and the chef had prepared a chocolate cake in the cockpit.

But the idyll was deceptive. In the afternoon the wind increased to 35 knots and we decided to take in a reef in the mizzen, when a car that guides the sail and its batten got stuck. We sent Kent up the mast to try to sort it out. He swung violently but although he was up twice, we didn't get the car to move. And the mizzen was sitting there flogging furiously, as Nigel tried to motor into the wind, while Kent worked on the car.

In the end we had to take the decision to cut down the sail, that is cutting off the sail from all the cars above the car that was stuck in the track two thirds up the mast. Georgina went up, in helmet and with lots of lines trying to diminish her swings as the boat heeled from side to side. The wind had increased to 40 knots and the top of the mizzen mast moved erratically, while George held on to the mast or a shroud with one hand and tried to cut down the sail with the other.

In the end she succeeded and we got both George and the mizzen down. We all through ourselves at the mizzen to tie her down on the boom except Sigge, who is an orthopedic surgeon and he took care of Georgina and Kent. George had got a nasty bruise from banging her head against the mast, while swinging in the gale and Kent had a cut on his leg from a shackle. But both will be fine according to Sigge.

We were finished at eight in the evening, just before darkness set in, and although everyone was on deck helping, Chris and the stewardesses had dinner ready 30 minutes later. It's difficult to eat, when Adèle is moving so violently. Soups and stew are popular courses. Gone is the time when we had a civilized drink in the aft cockpit before dinner. Now it is only potatoes and carrots in that cockpit!

During the night the wind increased further and at five o'clock this morning, when I came up on watch again, the wind was between 40 to 50 knots and the seas quite violent. The barometer had fallen further and we were broad reaching with only a staysail set, but still doing just above 10 knots. Kent was fine, just a little bit stiff in his leg, but George had been asleep all night, so we will have to wait to hear more from and about her.

The mizzen will take one to two days to mend, and I doubt that we will have days calm enough to do that before we reach Ushuaia.

Andre and I had a talk this morning about the sailing plan. Without the mizzen we are planning a slightly slower approach to the Horn and if we get southerly winds, it will be more difficult to keep her up into the wind, so we have to plan the approach more carefully. But I don't foresee any problems. The weather charts and our forecasts indicate winds between 40 to 50 knots most of the time.

Adèle is handling it very well, surfing elegantly on the waves. She is swinging and dancing on the ways, waving her masts from side to side. The seas are now breaking over the deck and occasionally green water is coming into the cockpit. Although now the water looks more grey than green. Occasionally she is pooped and the carrots will probably not need any extra salt in my cockpit aft.

It's cold grim and windy on deck, but warm and snug below. The seas are like snow covered mountains racing behind Adèle and catching up with her in a cascade of spray over her deck. And in the storm my favourite, the albatross, is back. But as of this morning only one of them, gliding effortlessly behind Adèle just above the waves.

Lots of love,
JE

Thu 7 Dec

Grey is the colour

Dear Family and Friends,

It isn't easy to send these messages to all the recipients. Andre is complaining that he has to spend half an hour connecting us on the satellite because I have so many recipients. I have tried to rationalize by not sending everything to everyone and by only sending it to husband or wife, but life is hard. I have got complaints and wives have threatened to sue me for sexual discrimination, because they have to get the message second hand from their husbands. This is a far greater risk than any storm looming in the Roaring Forties or Furious Fifties, so I have a plan:

I am sending one message only to my daughter Susanne and have asked her to distribute it to everyone on the list. For those that haven't got all parts of my "story", I have included a full version as an attachment. And don't forget to see where we are as we are approaching the Horn. Look at our website, www.syadele.com.

And now to my grey story!

Because it is grey! All around! The seas are dark grey towering up behind us and running passed us. The sky is covered in a mist of lighter grey. It's raining and as it is from behind, it enters the cockpit and everything feels wet. Even Adèle looks less colourful. Her warm teak has taken on a more subdued colour tone and the gleaming white sails with the striking carbon fibers are just dull (yes, you guessed it) grey!

We have a northwesterly gale blowing at around 30 to 35 knots. It is seven degrees warm (or rather cold). The barometer, which was briefly giving us hope yesterday has today fallen again.

Chris, our chef, was just up on deck dressed in shorts and barefoot (remember, he is a Kiwi!), when a sea drenched Adèle and came rushing into the cockpit. He just wasn't fast enough when he jumped up on a bench. The kiwis apart we are dressed in foul weather gear and layers of fleece or other warm clothing underneath. Gloves and a hat complete the picture.

Georgina and Kent have recovered. George still carries her big bruise around the eye with pride (and rightly so after her heroic fight with the mizzen) and Kent has a wound in his leg, but it will all heal according to our doctor. Sigge is still eagerly waiting for a message from his son that he has become grandfather. It is now a week overdue, which isn't unusual, when it is the first child. The champagne is waiting for the occasion, chilled in the refrigerator. Maybe we can combine it with the champagne for Cape Horn (and save some money!). Otherwise we don't need refrigeration for the drinks any more. We have turned off the fridge in the cockpit, as it is cold enough anyway. Two days ago I opened a water bottle and found that the water was frozen! That's when we turned it off.

I wrote the last message the fifth in the morning. That day was also grey, cold and very windy. We had between 40 to 50 knots all day. Still a little bit shocked after the calamity with the mizzen, we carried only the staysail and had very gentle cruising in a speed of around 10 knots. The sea built up to colossal heights, but Adèle rode very comfortably. Her stern gradually lifts up until the deck is just above the wave as it rolls passed us. The crew members that have sailed on other more conventional superyachts say that Adèle cuts through the waves instead of slamming down on them and the ride forward is very nice. And her stern keeps her very dry with the seas rolling down on us like express trains.

Yesterday was very different. We thought we would be having this weather all the time to the Horn, but woke up to a rising barometer and at 10.00 in the morning the sky had cleared. Lasse and I set on the bench outside the cockpit in the sun and told each other stories of our lives. It was like a "ljugarbänk" in a Swedish village. A "ljugarbänk" literally means a liars' bench, and was a bench where the old villagers set and told each other stories about past times. I smoked a cigar, which it for several days had been to cold to do. And I don't think I have seen my very good friend Lasse as calm and relaxed during any time I have known him. And in the evening we had happy hour and the wind had dropped from 45 to 15 knots.

First the washing machines started as the wind dropped and the rolling and heeling diminished, and then we heard the humming of the engine, when Paul felt it took too long time to reach the Horn. But as the night approached the wind was up again, and now we are sailing with the two foresails, one reef in the yankee and the full staysail and doing around 12 knots towards Cape Horn.

We have three four-hour watches at day time and four three-hour watches at night time. Because of that we have 7 watches in total during a day, and with three watch teams that means we rotate the watches every day. And we also rotate between the different teams. Now I'm working with Guy (as watch leader) and Kent, although this morning, I have spent most of the time deserting my team and doing my emails and writing this letter. Which is a pity because Guy has a well developed dry humour, which I cannot be privy to in my library. He talks a lot, while Kent seldom says anything. But both are very experienced sailors. Just the crew that are needed on a long voyage like this. And the atmosphere among the fourteen of us is very good. We are all looking forward to seeing the Horn.

We normally start the night watches with tea or coffee and some snack. Due to my diabetes I have to be a little bit careful with the snacks, but Guy helped me to raid the galley and found some exquisite venison salami with garlic. Unfortunately everyone seemed to like it a lot. On our next trip to Antarctica, I'm going to hide some salami in our own fridge in the aft deck house!

Nigel arranged a sail maker from Denmark (who has done the sails) to come down to mend the mizzen. He does it free of charge, but we are paying the ticket for him and his girl friend. They are coming immediately after Christmas and will stay until New Year. It is great to have it done professionally and it

is a good deal both for us and hopefully for them as well. They will stay in a cabin aboard.

We are still finding out why a car on the mizzen track got stuck. We know that a screw broke and that it probably got stuck in the track and prevented us from getting it down. We are in contact with Harken, who manufactured the cars, trying to see how we can rebuild them to avoid it happening again. If it had happened to the main sail instead of the mizzen, it would have been a great problem. Andre came up with a good idea about changing the screws for all the cars, which we are discussing with Harken just now. It should all be done in time for the Antarctica crossing in beginning January.

The weather looks good for the final run to Cape Horn. The wind will increase to-morrow and maybe Sunday, but on Tuesday 12th, when we plan to reach the Horn, the winds should be quite benign, and we want of course to go close and be able to get some pictures. But the rain from the constant low pressures riding around the Antarctic continent will probably be with us the rest of our voyage. But God has already given us more than our part of sunshine and blue sky on this unforgettable adventure.

Lots of love to all of you and specially Jen and my children,
Jan-Eric

Sat 9 Dec

The Old Men and the Sea

Dear Family and Friends,

The wind has dropped to between 40 and 50 knots (!) but the seas are still building. Huge giants that are racing up from behind and overtaking and occasionally breaking over the deck. It is difficult for the helmsman to avoid turning around and watch the waves instead of looking forward at the sail(s).

This morning we had more than 60 knots and were running under a reefed staysail. God decided to send hail and sleet our way and Chris was up (in his shorts and barefoot as usual) and danced in the snow that covered the deck. But only yesterday afternoon the wind was down to 15 knots briefly and we started the engine for a while. Not very comfortable, as Adèle was rolling a lot without the stabilizing sails and wind, but we are eager to reach Cape Horn, and if we had sailed, it would have been at an angle that would have taken us far away from our goal. And yesterday at lunch time the sun was out again and I had a cigar on the "liars' bench" but reading the news rather than telling stories for Lasse.

Lasse has got a cough that sounds quite bad. He has got antibiotics from our doctor, Sigge, who was worried it could turned into pneumonia and was forbidden from taking any watches for a while. But Lasse isn't a very obedient sailor, and Mark who is the watch leader of his team said that he had no authority over him either. So he asked me if I could make sure that Lasse stayed away from the watches for a couple of days.

Anyway Lasse has now obeyed and is running around the deck-houses taking pictures through the windows of the enormous waves, when they brake around us. And eating cakes: Lasse is our "kakmonster", cake monster. He looks embarrassed every time he has taken something sweet, but he successfully works his charm on the stewardesses and gets something new for his palate the next afternoon. Anyway, I hope my good friend soon is back on his watches and his cough disappears.

And Lasse isn't the only guy suffering! I was cleaning my camera this morning in my cabin, when a huge wave caught Adèle and lifted me up and through me on the other side of the cabin, where I fell and fractured a rib. So Sigge has taken me out of duty as well for a while. Not a very heroic way to get hurt, when you think of George's and Kent's bravado up in the mizzen mast a couple of days ago!

Nigel loves this kind of weather. He is standing at the wheel with a big smile on his face. When the next watch arrives he has to be torn away from his position and this morning was probably his best watch ever on Adèle. Otherwise he entertains all of us with his stories from his sailing life. I'm not quite sure to what extent they are true. But they certainly are entertaining.

The same wave that through me out of balance in my cabin rolled over Adèle just as the watch had lifted the hatch to the leeward captive yankee winch to fix something with the feeder. In a second the wave filled the locker, where the winches are, with several tonnes of water, and Nigel, Sigge and George got drenched up to the waist in cold water.

At lunch time it was still blowing 55 to 60 knots, but after the hail and sleet the sunshine came back. The sea was totally white covered in foam that reflected the sun. We have all tried to photograph the gigantic seas, but it is difficult to catch it in the camera. Maybe Rick knows the trick, when he comes aboard in January. David came up to take some photos and he brought up his camera in its underwater housing. Definitely the right way to go about it, in this kind of weather.

After lunch I took a nap in one of the saloon sofas, tired by the pain-killers that Sigge had given me, when another wave covered Adèle. I woke up of the thunder when it broke over the deck, looked up through the skylight in the saloon and it looked like I was aboard a submarine. Judging from the noise and comments in the galley, our dinner may have suffered as well.

We are running with a reefed staysail. If the wind drops to 35 knots we will set the yankee as well. The mizzen is unfortunately out of play for the rest of our voyage. With the yankee we are doing 12 knots, but with only the staysail it is around 10 knots. That is a very comfortable speed. It is fast enough to have good control over Adèle and the waves don't come on too fast, but so slow we don't run down into the troughs and berry the bow in the water. Better safe than sorry, although this strategy will not let us break any records .

Adèle behaves beautifully. Her rudder and autopilot can handle the biggest waves without problem. We have never seen the bow buried in water and the stern lifts gracefully as each wave comes from behind, even if they have the height of sky scrapers and the speed of an express train. The crew members with experience of other super yachts have been impressed and pointed both at her slim foreship that cuts through the waves and her stern, which lifts her up as they approach from behind. It is only when a wave is irregular and hit the side of Adèle that it breaks. And she is comfortable to sleep in for everyone aboard, which is an important safety factor on such a long voyage.

We hope to reach the Horn on the 12th. The following day we should be in Ushuaia, if everything goes to plan. As Sigge and Nigel have tickets out from Ushuaia on the 14th, let us hope it does.

Lots of love to all of you,

Jan-Eric

Mon 11 Dec

Land o'hoy

It's Monday evening around 10 o'clock. Around dinner time Mark and I saw the first land on the radar since leaving New Zealand 20 days ago. Some outlying islands on Chile's southwest coast about 40 miles away showed up as a faint echo. Another 40 miles or 80 miles in total we got another group of echoes from mountains north of Beagle's Channel in the Darwin Cordillera.

Just now, when I was up on deck we saw the first lights from another vessel that we had seen since leaving New Zealand. A fishing boat of some kind going in the same direction as we but further in towards land.

Since my previous mail the wind has been blowing hard, between 30 and 50 knots and the sea has been very impressive. But this is normal down here. In the South Sea nothing stops the low pressures as the sweep around the Antarctic Continent. Australia and Africa are far to the north and only South America come far enough south to nearly meet The South Shetland Islands sticking out north from Antarctica. In between is the infamous Drake's Passage, where we will enter later tonight. This is also where all the wind and seas and all the low pressures will be compressed and pass through on their relentless they around the globe.

In the northern hemisphere, we have Europe and Siberia, Greenland and Canada to stop both wind and sea from dancing around the pole, but in the southern nothing stops the lows on their endless travels from west to east and it is only Drake's Passage that provides a bottleneck for them. Just around the area we are sailing in now the bottom goes up fast from a depth of more than 4,000 meters to less than 100 meters, and at this continental shelf the sea is very disturbed. And so is Adèle! She is thrown one way and another as the waves come from every possible direction and move sometimes her bow, sometimes her stern in an amusing dance. But not so amusing if you are trying to sleep, and especially not if you just have fractured a rib! Every movement of Adèle can be felt, and I feel better being up and writing this letter than trying to catch some sleep. The previous two nights I have been sleeping on a sofa in the saloon, as that is the calmest place aboard.

I'm not the only one who is still up. Apart from Mark and David and Paul on deck I hear laughter and the music from a movie from the crew mess. Everyone is excited to see Cape Horn and to put their feet on dry land again after a long time at sea, and it is difficult to sleep this last evening at sea.

Yesterday Sigge got the call, all of us (yes, not just Sigge) had been waiting for. Sigge had become grandpa! A little boy had been born and we celebrated in the cockpit with champagne at drinks time. And just as we toasted the child and his parents and grandpa, a school of dolphins passed by and jumped up to salute as well.

Otherwise yesterday was a miserable cold, windy, wet day. And it was wet from above as well as below. But in the late afternoon the weather improved and today we have had sunshine but it is still cold. Only around 3 degrees centigrade and it feels much colder due to the wind and the humidity.

Now I will try to catch some sleep on the sofa in order to meet Cape Horn to-morrow with white sails, cameras and more champagne! We expect to round Cape Horn around 08.00 to-morrow morning.

Tue 12 Dec

Around Cape Horn

Cape Horn that all the old sailors dreaded. There it was! A big rock rising 400 meters above the sea and with a flatter part to the east on which two tiny lighthouses were placed. The relentless sea pounding the rocks and the grey mist surrounding the coast. But as we came closer the clouds broke up and the eastern morning sun lit up the Horn and the sea spray.

Here Captain Bligh (of the Mutiny on the Bounty fame) had tried for six months to get around (in the other more difficult direction) before giving up and turning around all the way south of Australia before coming up to Tahiti to get his breadfruits. Here Cook had sailed trying to find the Southern Continent. At that time people believed it must be a large continent on the southern hemisphere balancing all the land masses on the northern hemisphere, and Cook was sent out to try to find it. He found New Zealand and proved beyond doubt that apart from Australia and New Zealand there was no other large continent. But of course Antarctica itself is enormous although not very inhabitable.

Joshua Slocum was the first man to circumnavigate the globe alone and in so doing he passed the famous cape. Recently Peter Blake took in year 2000 the same route as we were taking now. He started in Auckland and went to Ushuaia and Beagle Channel before continuing to Antarctica, just as we are doing next year. And he did it at the same time of the year arriving a few days later in December to Ushuaia. Sir Peter Blake was then unfortunately murdered in the Amazonas, when his yacht was attacked by robbers.

The first one to actually pass through the area was Magellan in the late 15th century on his way to find the Spice Islands (in present day Indonesia) and sail around the world. He found the spices but was killed by a Philippine chieftain on the island of Cebu and the rest of his crew had to limp home without him. Magellan didn't actually sail around the Horn, but found a channel north of the Horn, Magellan's Sound. The same did Darwin on his research trip. "His" ship, the Beagle, went through another channel south of Magellan's Sound but still north of Cape Horn, now called the Beagle Channel.

Now it was our turn to round Cape Horn. We came quite close, only a mile away. The Chilean Armada, who runs the lighthouses, called us up on VHF. The first outside people we had spoken to in three weeks (apart from telephone calls). They had all information about us from the AIS, the Automatic Information System, that gives out all information about our destination speed, direction and other things on their chart and radar screen as we pass by, just like we can see all information about other larger ships, which have the same system. So we suddenly got a call to Adèle in Spanish. Luckily Mark speaks some Spanish, so he came rushing to answer the call.

After the rounding we toasted in champagne. I thanked the crew for their effort and their good spirit and Andre specially addressed George and Kent, who had been fighting with the mizzen up in the mast. And we toasted to Adèle and the Horn. And afterwards we had a breakfast of bacon and egg and more champagne!

Just as we toasted in the champagne the bottle-nosed dolphins reappeared and jumped at our side. This is the second time they appear and always, when we are drinking champagne. Very sensible creatures!

Now we have turned north. At four o'clock in the afternoon we are meeting our pilot, who will take us into Ushuaia, where we plan to arrive late to-night. For the first time in our more than 5,000 mile long

voyage are we beating into the wind and the waves. But it is only for another four hours before we come into the sheltered canals. Otherwise the last night turned out to be calm. As soon as we came on to the continental shelf the waves settled down and I could sleep in my own cabin without my rib causing me any problems.

You will get a final report, when we have arrived

Lots of love to all of you,
Jan-Eric

Thu 14 Dec

Along the quay in Ushuaia

The sun is shining again (I think it has done that nearly all this time from New Zealand). I'm sitting on the liar's bench between two grandfathers (Lasse and Sigge)! Above us the white clad mountains tower over Ushuaia, reflecting in very still water. A lone albatross is sailing in the sky and several gulls are adding their own lies to our stories. The sun is reflecting in the snow and shining on us from every direction.

Sigge is soon leaving and Nigel has already left. Close friendships are forged during such a voyage as we have undertaken, and it isn't easy to part, but Sigge is longing to see his grandchild and Lasse and I are longing for our ladies that we soon are going to meet in Copenhagen.

As soon as we rounded the Horn two days ago, the weather changed drastically and we got 45 knots against us as we sailed northeast to Ushuaia. We took down the sails and went by engine to keep the appointment with the pilot. Adèle was still healing over in the strong wind so it felt like we were still sailing.

At the outer end of the channel dividing Chile and Argentina, the Beagle Channel, the pilot came out and met us. To have a pilot is obligatory if you are above a certain size. This was the first day we had seen land (apart from the radar echo we got the day before) and everyone was up on deck admiring the views, the crisp clear air making everything a lot closer than it was. Everywhere mountaintops shot up with snow covering the tops.

While we were approaching landfall Lasse pointed out to me what Hal Roth wrote in 1978 in "Two against Cape Horn":

"Year after year the Cape Horn notion persisted. It pulsed through my head like the penetrating clang of a church bell. Just as mountaineers dream of climbing in the Himalayas, sailors muse about Cape Horn. Some small ship sailors are horrified of the thought of going around Cape Horn in a tiny vessel. Others are fascinated by the idea. For them the cape of capes is a kind of altar, a Mecca, a place where a man is blooded, a symbol of adversity and achievement, of hardship and conquest."

As I was reading it I felt a sense of achievement. I had also done it and I was surrounded by friends who had shared in our adventure and success.

We were tied up alongside the quay at ten o'clock in the evening and together with the pilot we all went out for a late dinner (that is everyone except Anne, who was babysitting Adèle). And late it became. Lasse and I came home at three in the morning, and we were the first ones. Lasse stayed up late and observed the others coming home and said that the very wide commercial quay didn't look wide enough when the crew came back in not quite straight paths.

Arne Mårtensson, the former head of Handelsbanken, is here with wife Helène. They are sailing around the world in a 62 foot Rassy. We visited them yesterday, and I became quite impressed how the two of them are taking care of a 62 foot yacht alone. To-night we have invited them for dinner aboard Adèle. We are starting with snaps and beer to make them feel at home! Amazing how close you can feel to people you haven't met before just because we share the same cultural background.

And to-morrow we are planning to visit the first farmstead in the Tierra del Fuego and see the historic buildings. We have chartered a bus with a guide and nearly all the crew, Lasse and I are going to experience a little bit of history from this part of the world.

The albatross makes a mock attack at Adèle as I'm sitting at the bench, and I am thinking of a poem that Sara Vial wrote in 1992:

*"I am the albatross waiting for you
at the end of the world.
I am the forgotten soul of dead sailors.
Those who sailed through Cape Horn
from all oceans in the World.
But they have not died
In the furious waves;
In my wings they fly today
To the Eternity
In the last crevice
Of Antarctic winds".*

Nor will the memory of what we have experienced ever die. I am forever thankful of the experiences we have had: the furious winds; the breaking waves with green water washing over our deck; the dolphins happily breaking through the waves with the popping of our champagne corks; the friendship with a crew fighting to bring Adèle to its destiny; the sun reflecting on the white foam covering the ocean; the stars twinkling in a night becoming shorter and shorter as we came further south and the love for Jennifer and my children that I carried in my heart from the beginning to the end of this voyage and every voyage I will ever undertake.

I bid you farewell and a Merry Christmas,

With all my love,
Jan-Eric