

Our man on the Talisker Whisky Challenge

✘ Edinburgh film-maker, Gavin Turnbull, has sent us an update on his trip aboard the support boat Aurora. The 67 foot yacht has been trailing the entrants in [The Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge](#), rowing from La Gomera in the Canaries across the Atlantic. The race has now been won by Box Number 8 who rowed for 40 days 9 hours and 15 minutes to get to the finish line.

His diary entries have reached us by email which is of course a little intermittent as he has been sailing in the middle of the Atlantic...Gavin's job is to film the race and also to collect the SD cards from GoPro cameras attached to the 17 boats which started the race, edit the footage (yes on a yacht in the middle of the Atlantic) and eventually perhaps produce a documentary about the whole experience.

Here is one of the wee videos posted on the Talisker site:-

[TALISKER YACHT EN ROUTE TO AID ROW TO RECOVERY](#) from [Talisker Whisky](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Sunday 1 January 2012

After yet another VERY slow breakfast, this time due to missing staff at

the Mindelo cafe we leave Cape Verdes, glad to get away. Mark from Maisie

Rose passes, I'm the only one up I explain we were planning to leave at

10am, it was now 11am, he laughed and said it was a very relaxed boat. Ole

drops by to say hello, he hands over yet another large wad of

money!

Canadian dollars to be enjoyed once we're at Barbados.

Monday 2 January 2012

Day 2 of sailing 330 NNW to find GO commando. Sea has been continuously

lumpy and winds of 25 – 32 knots. I am so exhausted and enjoying spending

all my spare time in the bunk catching up on sleep and this diary. It's

coming up to dinner time.

Tuesday 3 January 2012

Great watches last night. The evening watch with Graham had a show of

Risso's dolphin, swimming alongside and jumping out of the larger waves.

The later watch had stars and phosphorescence, the waves and lights and the

clouds and stars create an almost mirror image. A flying fish landed in

the cockpit right in front of me. They are so wriggly with large scales

that come off very easily. I threw it back but found out later there was

already one on board trapped under the slats of the cockpit sole.

Spent so much time sleeping today. Getting back into boat routine. So glad

to have loads of fresh fruit and veg on board, beginning to feel normal

again. Imo (1st mate) has been ill.

Interviewed Graham regarding his plans for collecting the boats.

Photographed a tiny flying fish that was thrown onto deck by a wave.

Beautiful sunset as we hove to for the evening. We should be close to Go

Commando around 11am tomorrow.

Wednesday 4 January 2012

We find Go Commando. Come along side her and Jacko and Graham climb

aboard. They spend an hour on board removing and packing up spares and

food. Graham looks very at ease on board, Jacko is in the cabin most of

the time, it almost looks like Graham is about to take the oars and start

their watch. As GC has been adrift for weeks it now has its own

ecosystem, many dorado jump near by, a huge dorado can be seen just under

the hull. At once a huge dorado jumped out and onto GC, almost making it

on board but it bounced off the fore cabin.

A call comes from James and Bertie to Imogen, it sounds like they are in a

bad way, feeling very low, they had a roll after their oars got broken.

Evening brought a pod of common dolphins to the boat, fantastic. Spent

half an hour filming them. My turn to cook today, I have been voted the

best cook by the cooking 'crew'. Tonight I am making chicken stir fry. My

meals are always looked forward to and it's great to bask in the glow of

the crews appreciation for a while.

As I was preparing food the dolphins returned, it was now approaching sun

set, there is a light golden glow on the water. I spend another 15 minutes

on the bow filming them. THIS IS WHAT IT'S ABOUT.

Thursday 5 January 2012

On watch till 8am so stayed up. Had breakfast as the day warmed up. We

have company, a large Tuna has latched itself to Aurora, swimming on the shaded side of the boat I assume it is using the shadow to hide itself from it's prey. It stays with us.

Many flying fish again. We watch one fly what looked liked 100 yards, we shouted encouragement as it went.

James calls, I take the call as skipper is watching Jaws down below. James seems in good spirits and tells me they have some great footage. Good to here from him, they have had a roller coaster of a ride physically and mentally. We should be with them mid afternoon tomorrow. We will spend a few hours with them sorting out oars etc.

Spent a hour or more filming the tuna now joined by a second from the deck and in with a GoPro in the water. Torn between filming and fishing! Have some great footage and plan to use the technique again if they're still around tomorrow or when the dolphins are back.