

The final Chapter

Cleared out of Noumea Monday afternoon, ready to go Tuesday...theres a "weather window"...NE 15 to 20 knots for the next 4 days...should get us on our way to NZ...

Tuesday, sailing out to the Passe de Bourail and off again into the ocean....NE 15 to 20 knots no problems...looks like it could be the rhumb line all the way. Second day the windward control line pulley mount broke on the wind vane...we repaired it with a shackle but the pulley alignment meant the control line is chafing on the vane arm.

Over the next few days, the wind increased to 25 to 30 knots and the seas became about 3 to 4 m with a cross swell that made things very uncomfortable...the NE became more E and pushed us W of the Rhumb line which meant we couldn't lay North Cape on one board. In the meantime the coreflute vane broke and disappeared in the night which meant using the auto pilot.

As we approached North Cape the breeze went further south...we're now battling a head sea and 30-35 from the SE....motor sailing...to have enough sail up to sail puts us well off course, so reduced sail and the motor is the only way.

Tacking across North Cape and then down to Cape Karekare, the autopilot started to play up...the last 60 miles were hand steered

Finally on Monday afternoon into the Bay of Islands and delightful sail across the bay from the Ninepin all the way to Opuia.

Tied up at the Q dock at Opuia at 1800 Monday...BUT, in doing so hit a semi-detached mooring cleat on the dock which carved a 4 inch hole in the hull !!!!!
Temporarily repaired it by banging in a piece of wood and filling the gaps with epoxy...it should hold 'til we get back to Gulf Harbour early next week.

Cleared quarantine, immigration and customs by 0930 and now on a pay berth in Opuia Marina 35deg19'S, 174deg 07'E

So crew, Helen, has departed and I'm on my own again in New Zealand....it's a bit cool here after 5 months in the tropics, but at least the sun is shining !