

SOCAL TA-TA IV

If you missed last month's Fourth SoCal 'Reggae 'Pon da Ocean' Ta-Ta, you missed some fine sailing and some wonderful folks. Mind you, neither the weather nor the people were absolutely perfect, but they were close.

The Ta-Ta is the Southern California version of the Baja Ha-Ha cruisers rally to Mexico. It starts in Santa Barbara with a kick-off party on the beach, spends two nights at Santa Cruz Island, one night at Channel Islands Harbor, one night at Paradise Cove, and two nights at Two Harbors, Catalina. There was lots of close reaching in flatish water, which is fun, but no beating, because that's not as much fun.



Is it rolling, Bob?

The Ta-Ta attracted 34 entries — 10 of them from Northern California or otherwise far from Southern California. This was about the perfect number of boats, because it meant that everybody got a reserved slip in Santa Barbara, and all but a couple got a free — yes, free! — berth in Channel Islands courtesy of Channel Islands Marina and Vintage Marina.

There were just under 100 sailors in the event. That was a sweet number, because after the three BBQs, the two sundowner parties aboard *Profligate*, and the unofficial free Buffalo Milk Party aboard the Deerfoot 74 *Interlude*, everyone pretty much got to know one another. Compared to the 500 or so folks on a Ha-Ha, it was positively intimate.

After the on-the-beach kick-off party at the Santa Barbara YC, the first day of sailing dawned — and stayed — damp and gray. The saving grace was that a 5-10 knot southwesterly breeze joined the fleet for the 11 a.m. start, providing the necessary energy for a number of boats to sail the 22 miles to Santa Cruz Island. *Profligate* made it all the way

Petra, formerly of Vallarta and now of Ensenada, leads the mandatory reggae conga line parade on the 'lip' before the Santa Barbara YC BBQ.



Jim Hood of Reno 'Far Reached' for a big burger.



Two sloops and Anacapa at sunrise.



Gerald and Margaret of 'Aeolian'.

PHOTOS BY LATITUDE & VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE TA-TA FLEET



It was an uncharacteristically gloomy Monday, and Tuesday, at Santa Cruz Island.

from the Santa Barbara buoy to the east end of Santa Cruz, thanks to an ever-increasing lift, carrying her big screacher the whole way. She still wasn't able to overtake longtime competitors Chuck and Elaine Vanderboom's *Boomerang*, an extremely light F-31 trimaran that couldn't be more different from the 63-ft *Profligate*.

The seas were nearly calm at Smugglers anchorage for the night; nonetheless one boat set their flopper stopper — and had it go to the bottom. No worries, as 'Aquaman' from the Nevada City-based Pearson 385 *Daydreams* dove down 53 feet the next day to retrieve it. That's the Ta-Ta spirit.

A young female National Park Ranger did not, however, have the Ta-Ta spirit. *Profligate* dragged

four dinghies and about 20 crew around the southeast tip of Santa Cruz to Prisoners Cove so everybody could have a short dinghy ride ashore and use the pier to get onto the island — just as in years past. When the Ta-Ta'ers got to the pier, there was a big sign that said "Area Closed". Obviously this meant it was just closed to the people on the Island Packet tourist tubs coming over from the mainland, right?

"Wrong!" said the young female ranger, flush with the authority of a badge and maybe even a pistol. She just didn't have a sense of humor about it. By this time most of the Ta-Ta'ers had been ashore and enjoyed their hike, so it was no big deal.

While ashore, some of the gals fiddled around with some of the old farm equipment, and soon entertained the idea of dropping out of the real world and taking up organic farming on the island. At least until they realized there are no stores or viable Internet service.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL



Jill of 'Santana' with a neon rasta wig.



'Jacquot-Bateau' tow.



John West's C&C 121 'Road Trip' from Emeryville.



The Ta-Ta Women's Farm Project.



High above Prisoners with Anacapa in the distance.



Jim Holsberger's San Pedro-based Baba 30 'Silk Purse' spinnaker-reaches to Catalina.



Pat McCormick's 'St. Somewhere' sailed all the second leg.



No need to fear when Aquaman of 'Daydreamer' is near.

For many, the highlight of the two evenings at Santa Cruz Island were the sundowner parties aboard *Profligate*, as they were the perfect opportunities for people to get to know one another. Among others, we met the skippers of two boats — the Mason 44 *Juliet*, and the Irwin 38 *Jacquot-Bateau* — who were overjoyed when the Wanderer promised

them, both vets of previous Ha-Ha's, the top spots in the 25th Ha-Ha — even though it's not for another two years. We also got to renew our friendship with Adam and Jessica from the Catalina 440 *Volare*, both of whom flew Blackhawk helicopters in Iraq. Adam still flies them, up to 200 miles off the California coast in search of smugglers.

But maybe our favorite was Rudy Pel

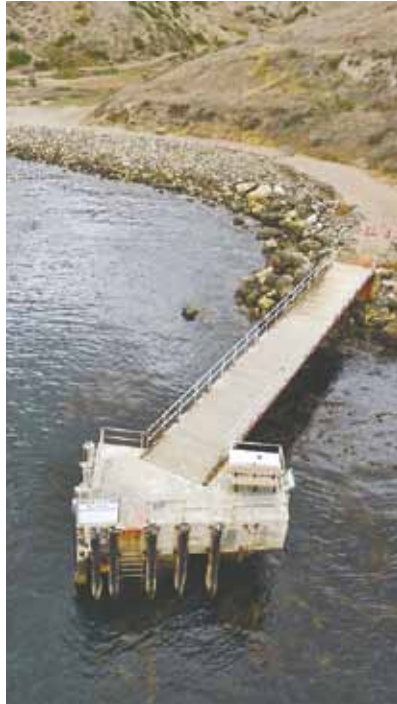
of the Marina del Rey-based Catalina 34 *Pinda*. Rudy is 81 years young and belongs to the Sunday Sailors Club out of Marina del Rey. That group meets every second Sunday and pretty much takes everybody over 21 sailing for a small fee.

Without Rudy's knowledge, members of the group had signed him up for the Ta-Ta. And he had a great time. When one boat reported engine problems, Rudy

SOCAL TA-TA IV



Light air was the order of the week.



This pier is a 'Closed Area'.



Greg and Leslie Olson's Searunner 40 'Doggone'.



It looks like sundowner hour aboard 'Profligate'.



Elaine and Chuck from 'Boomerang'.



The last BBQ at Two Harbors' Buffalo Park.



The Paradise Cove anchorage near the Malibu Riviera.

PHOTOS BY LATITUDE & VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE TA-TA FLEET

got onto the radio, identified himself as a diesel mechanic, and offered to get up early the next morning to see if he could help. While it turned out that his help wasn't needed, it was a nice Ta-Ta gesture. And after the awards party in Catalina, Rudy was observed as one of the last hanging around the pool table in the bar at Two Harbors. Living life to the fullest!

The second leg from Santa Cruz to Channel Islands was sunny, but there wasn't much of a favorable breeze. That was soon forgotten, however, thanks to the fabulous hospitality — and yes, free berths — extended by Dan the Man and Michelle of Channel Islands Marina and Vintage Marina. They were again as hospitable as the guys at the public dock facility across the way have historically been inhospitable.

The third leg from Channel Islands



The floating BBQ at Channel Islands Harbor.

to Paradise Cove was even sunnier, but there was even less wind. Only Pat McCormick of the Beneteau 440 *St. Somewhere* managed to sail the entire way. Norb and Kim Szczurek of the Tiburon-based Catalina 38 *Lucky Star* took their dinghy through the surf to get drinks at the Paradise Cove Beach Cafe, where drinks were priced the same as dinners at Île St-Louis in Paris.



Two Harbors, the ultimate Ta-Ta destination.

All's well that ends well, however, and the final 33-mile leg from Paradise to Catalina couldn't have been any better. It was again sunny and warm, the sea was flat, but there was also 10 to 12 knots on the beam. This afforded hull speed-pleasure sailing at its finest.

We wish you could have been there. And Bob, too. Maybe next year.

— **latitude**/richard