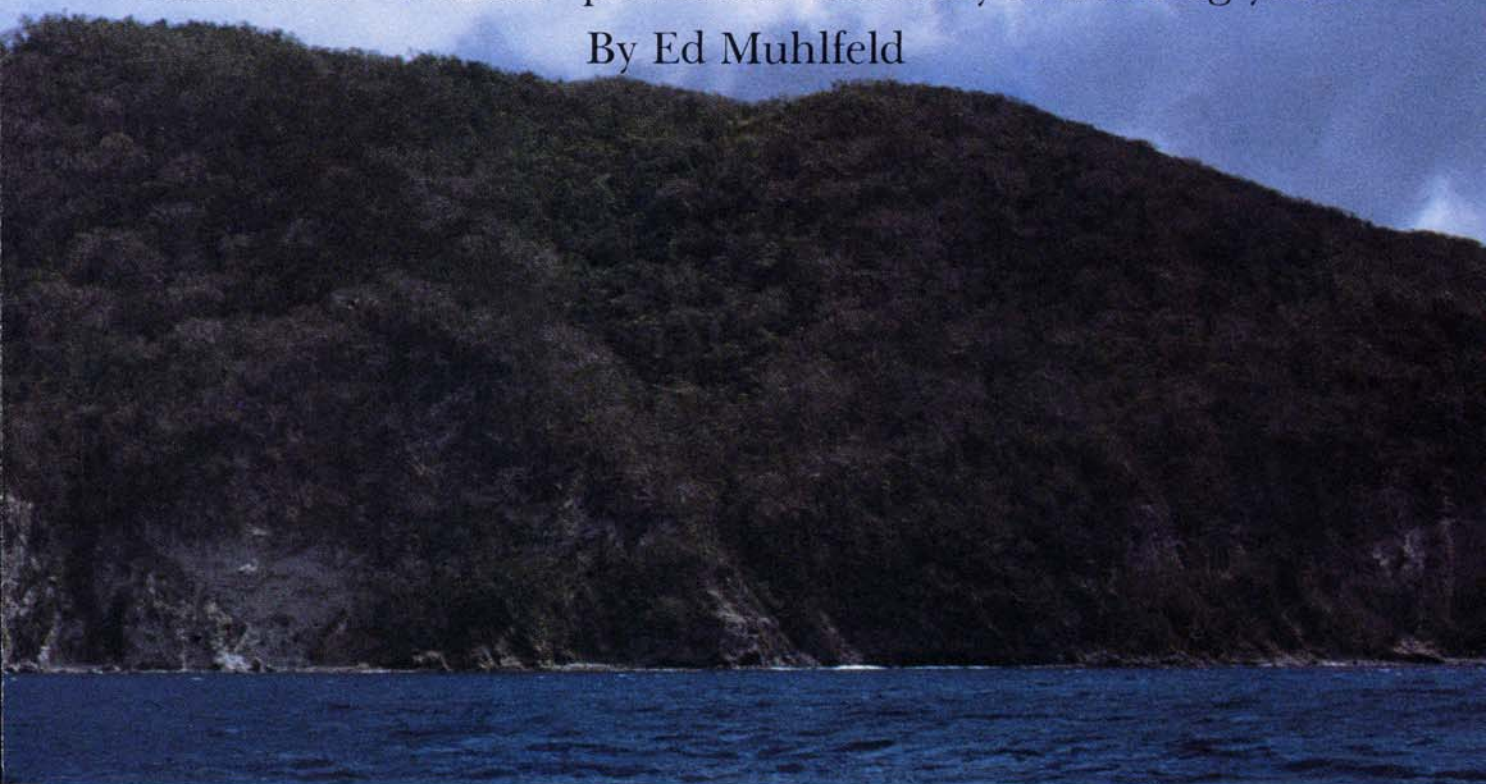


FIVE DAYS ON PORT TACK

During an idyllic cruise from Antigua to Martinique the Hatteras 65 "Dorado" proves her versatility as a sailing yacht.

By Ed Muhlfeld



Photographs by the author

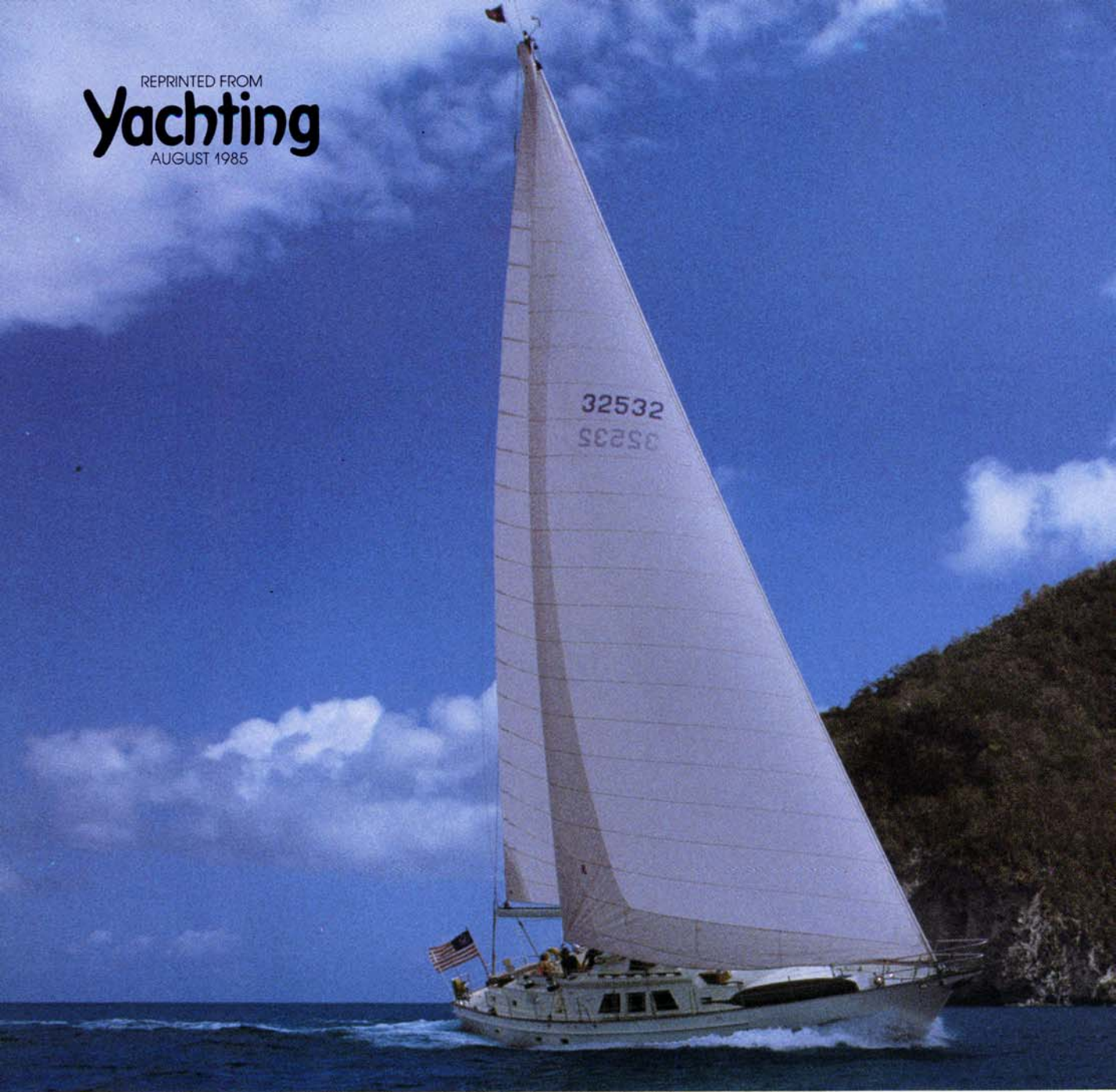
When one ponders the delights of the Caribbean, two islands that come immediately to mind are Antigua and Martinique. So when Ken Kranz of AMF Hatteras Yachts asked us to join him, his wife and 10-year-old son Matthew for a passage on the Hatteras 65 sail yacht from Antigua to Martinique, the chorused response from Diane, 9-year-old son Jamie and me was a resounding affirmative.

Flying into any Caribbean island in the late afternoon is always a treat, for

the sun plays tricks with the blues and greens and whites of the sea and the lush islands fringed with slashes of white beach. Our Pan American airline pilot dropped us onto the runway at Antigua with barely a squeak. The cab ride from the airport was an additional treat, for it took us around the west side of Falmouth Harbour where the Schaefer beer company's replica of the original schooner yacht *America*, now painted white, lay moored in the shadow of the magnificent new 187' three-masted schooner *Jessica*.

They were a wonderful sight to behold, as was *Dorado*, our gleaming white Hatteras 65 sail yacht, her gigantic Hood Stoway mast standing 88' above the water, and her profile unique among all the yachts from many nations that were moored in her vicinity.

Captain Chris Packard, tall, blonde, tanned and very English, had met us at the airport, and as he swung the Avon 13' inflatable up to the boarding ladder, *Dorado's* crew Jan Keig and Susan Hall were all smiles at



the sight of their guests in shorts, Topsiders and T-shirts, bearing nothing but soft duffels. For "these must be sailors and it will be an easy week."

It took just five minutes to dump the duffels below, grab Cokes and head back for shore in the dinghy, for one cannot visit Antigua without diverting to Shirley Heights and the ruins of one of the seven British forts that guarded English Harbour in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. We were reminded again why no French or Spanish fleet ever attempted to at-

tack British naval squadrons under Admirals Rodney, Nelson and others while they holed up in English Harbour for repairs, sustenance and "R&R."

Back aboard *Dorado* for drinks and a delicious dinner by candlelight, including crêpes suzette for dessert, we learned that *dorado* is the Spanish word for dolphin (the fish, not the mammal) and that long flights down to Antigua followed by sunset cocktails and candlelit dinners lead to early bedtime.

We had flipped a coin for choice of stateroom; somehow Ken Kranz "arranged" it so that Diane and I had the owner's stateroom aft, and what a treat *that* was. First of all, there's lots of room, both headroom and overall spaciousness. The head is as big as our bathroom at home; then there are two bunks—a double and a single, the latter serving as a convenient place to toss the stuff of the kind that accumulates on a pleasure cruise. Then there's a desk and huge bookcase and lots of stowage, both drawers and

hanging locker. Finally, there's air-conditioning and stereo. So if you can't be comfortable in the owner's stateroom on a Hatteras 65 sail yacht, you just can't be comfortable on a sailboat. What's more, it's very tastefully furnished and decorated.

Day Two brought towering cumulus in all quadrants just after dawn, a brief shower and a dazzling rainbow with one foot right between *Jessica* and the *America*, so a photo mission in the *Avon* was an absolute requirement.

Later, after bacon and eggs served on deck under the bimini top, we set sail for Green Island, off Antigua's northeast corner, as pretty a little cay as you'll see, with as comfortable an anchorage. It was dead to windward in 19-24 kn. apparent, with 6- to 10-foot seas, but *Dorado* handled these conditions well under full genoa and slightly furled main (ah, the beauty of the Hood Stoway mast system!). The 65's hydraulic steering system takes a bit of getting used to: you have to stay ahead of it and remember that the yacht does not return to her original course after a turn. But under those conditions of wind and sea we were steady at 6.5 kn. about 40 degrees off the wind.

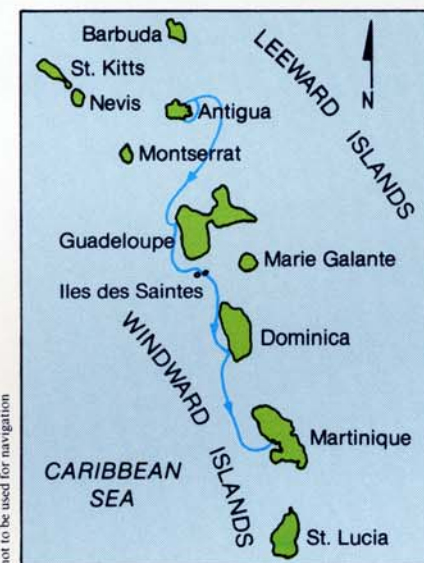
Parked for the evening and overnight in a beautiful lagoon off Green Island and northeast of Antigua's famous Mill Reef Club, in company with a Swan 48 and a Dufour 25, we swam, snorkeled and fished till sunset. Then, after a dinner of sweet-and-sour pork and white wine, four tired bodies tumbled into their bunks leaving Ken Kranz and me to ponder late over the reasons why more people don't sail, particularly when they can buy or charter a multi-purpose yacht as versatile and comfortable as this one. Cost, you say? Ah well, there's that.

Dawn on Day Three produced a squall with gusts to 28 kn. true and a vicious chop, but *Dorado* hardly moved and soon the sun chased the showers away so we yanked the hook and took off for Guadeloupe, 42 nautical miles to the south, in 20 kn. of southeast breeze.

Raising the anchor and unfurling the sails on this yacht is a cinch: everything is done by electric-powered windlass and self-tailing winches. Jan

and Sue, our lovely crew, did most of the work, including hoisting the *Avon* aboard the foredeck for the passage. (In fact, we kidded Captain Packard throughout the trip about his over-developed thumb muscles).

Six hours of close reaching on port tack brought us to the little fishing village of Anse Deshaies on Guadeloupe's northwest corner, where a lovely old church with a very tall steeple featuring a clock that could be read from our mooring, stands guard over a long row of shacks right on the beach. We dropped the hook next to a blue Sparkman & Stephens yawl called *Eleuthera* out of St. Thomas and flying a New York Yacht Club burgee. So we flew ours, and at sunset fired *Dorado's* race committee can-



non, struck the colors and hauled down our NYYC burgee, much to the delight and/or astonishment of Blue Yawl and the other 26 yachts in the harbour.

I promise not to mention food again for it was uniformly fabulous throughout the cruise, but on Day Three evening the crew produced yet another green-flash sunset accompanied by charcoal-broiled steaks and a mess of eggplant, tomatoes, zucchini, onions and garlic that even the 10-year-olds gobbled with relish, plus home-baked French pastry for dessert.

Day Four's mission was to visit Guadeloupe's famous Soufrière volcano, 4,869' above the beautiful town of Basse Terre, which involved a three-

hour port-tack reach down Guadeloupe's west coast to a shipping buoy off Basse Terre's municipal dock. Then a wild \$22.50 (each way) taxi ride up the narrow, steep, winding road through a rain forest to the steaming, brown, jagged, sulphurous crater—believe us, a sight worth seeing, as is the town itself.

Our destination for the evening was a quiet anchorage in Îles des Saintes, around the southeast corner of Guadeloupe, and that required a true motorsail just 30 degrees off the wind. In 25 kn. apparent, with half-furled main and 1/3-furled genoa, and with the leeward (starboard) engine at 1200 r.p.m., *Dorado* showed us 9.5 kn. of boat speed, steady as a rock, and we made our landfall with plenty to spare.

Day Five was Marathon Day: 85 nautical miles from des Saintes past Guadeloupe to Fort de France, Martinique, hard on the wind on—you guessed it—port tack. Ah yes: My left leg is shorter still. But the fascination of the wondrous, lush, green, tropical, rain-forested craggy west coast of Dominica—its coastal villages and towns calling to mind the Italian Riviera, and its 4,800' Mt. Diablotin looming out of the clouds—made the 0530 departure worth it.

Also intriguing was the northern part of Martinique, with its awesome sight of 5,000' Mt. Pele, which must have been much taller before it erupted in 1905, pouring rivers of lava down on St. Pierre below, killing every citizen save one who was in a jail cell on the side of a cliff. The eruption also killed many aboard ships in the harbour.

Our last evening in Fort de France was a gala affair, as the crew joined us ashore for our first restaurant meal since leaving the States, and many a glass was hoisted to the delights and success of our 182-nautical-mile cruise "atilt to the right" on a yacht that made it a real pleasure.

For charter information about *Dorado*, contact your favorite charter broker or Newport Yacht Services, 8 Fair St., Newport, R.I. 02840; (401) 846-7720. □

The Hatteras 65

Specifications

l.o.a.	65'4"
beam	17'2"
draft (centerboard up)	6'5"
draft (centerboard down)	14'5"
displ.	112,000 lb.
fuel	715 gal.
water	300 gal.



Writing in the October, 1983, issue of *YACHTING*, Associate Editor Jack A. Somer noted that "As to the 65's sailing characteristics, she is what one expects from the Hood design board, and from a heavily laden sloop: on the wind in light stuff, a bit sluggish; yet, crack her off a bit and let her accelerate at her own pace, and even in light air she reaches well."

That may be true, but the reason we had to reach back for Somer is that we rarely had less than 20 knots over the deck between Antigua and Martinique, and all of it was right on the nose.

So we spent a great deal of time rail-down (or almost down) showing seven knots or better on the steam gauge and, with a bit of an assist from the leeward engine when we needed it to make a heading, 8.5-9 knots.

And that is the real beauty of a big sail yacht with twin GM 4-71 diesel engines: whether you're motoring or merely giving the sails a bit of help, you can count on speeds of approximately nine kn., a great help in trip-planning.

The question that seems to be paramount in the minds of those contemplating the Hatteras 65 is whether or not she's a sailboat, a motorsailer, or a motor yacht with sails. At least that's what we've been told.

Having spent five full days and nights aboard *Dorado*, Hull No. 2, in a variety of conditions—albeit mostly sailing to windward in moderate to stiff breezes, and at rest in harbors with little or no ground swell—we'd have to say that the 65 is a very big, very comfortable, very powerful sailboat that combines the best of both worlds: in any kind of breeze she sails beautifully; with no breeze she motors swiftly; she's as comfortable below (and on deck) as a big power yacht and she has systems redundancy that will help the most fidgety among us sleep well.

The first three Hatteras 65s sold for prices that varied between \$780,000 and \$900,000, but Hatteras will not reveal future prices. There's talk of a less expensive version with some of the super amenities removed, but one would have to guess that the \$900,000 figure would be low for a 1986 delivery. And worth every penny.

For information, contact Ken Kranz, AMF Hatteras Yachts, Box 2690, High Pt., N.C. 27260. (919) 889-6621.



Riding on her hook at dawn in the harbour at Anse Deshaies, Guadeloupe, Dorado drew admiring looks from other yachts, passenger praise for sleeping comfort.



Main helmsman's station is at forward end of 65's center cockpit, protected by dodger when needed, and features full range of instruments, electronics from autopilot to radar.



Owner's stateroom aft has double to starboard, single berth to port, desk and bookshelves aft, massive drawers and hanging lockers for stowage. Head is aft of shelves.