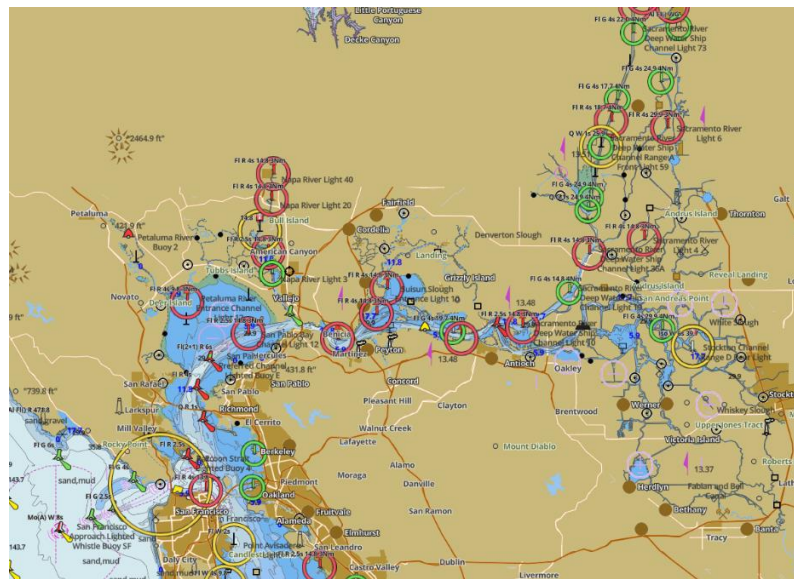


**Marti's Mission** is to deliver her 36' Scarab offshore speedboat from Sacramento to Sierra Point marina on Aug 8-9, 2020.

It was a 24-hour mission, severely testing her confidence and fortitude as a new Captain, and gaining new awe and respect from this writer-Captan!



Marti launches the boat Saturday morning and I arrive to depart with her at 1pm from the Riverbank Marina in Sacramento. We'll scream down the Sacramento river to Brisbane Marina, from the upper right of the chart to the lower left, with many challenging alternative routes and nautical decisions as we seek shortcuts through the unmarked marshy Delta channels.



A "sage"-heron solemnly witnesses our departure.



We pass a 49-er era paddlewheel boat, and under the first of many bridges!



New Captain Marti smiles, and is blissfully unaware but totally adrenalized as she powers up the twin Chevy blocks and launches into high drama and adventure!



We rocket past a few other boats as Marti winds up the twin IO powerplants to almost full power at 0' HG manifold pressure and 4100 rpm! We fly past a riverboat cargo building and other boats, meeting no equal! Jetskis surf the wake in glee, and all is perfect as we sink into the standing g-force cushions.





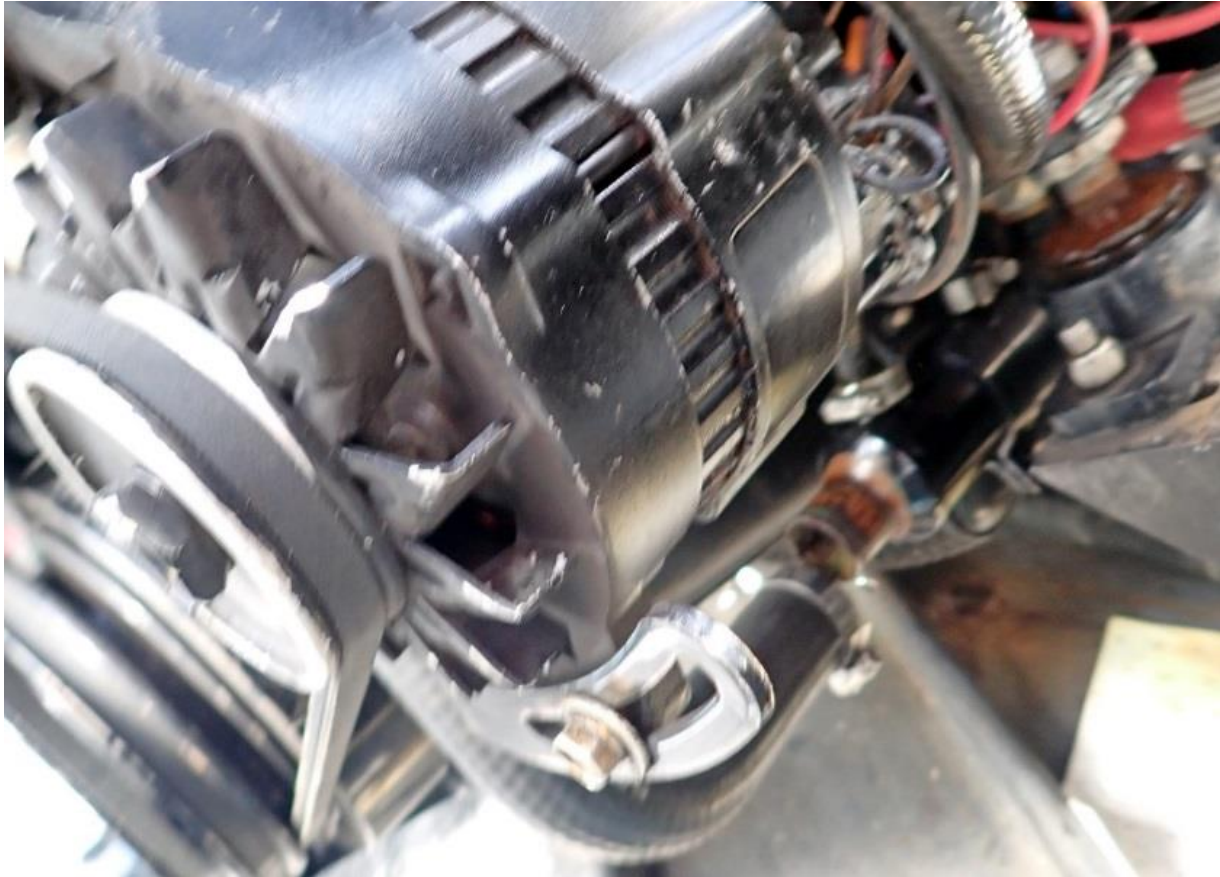
We cruise in such full power bliss for 20 minutes before the Banshees shriek with terror and sound the alarms and cabin smoke is now pouring out the hatch of a boat with 200 gallons of explosive gasoline, shattering the hypnotic bliss in a most violent way! The bilge is rapidly filling with water, and the sounds of a broken starboard engine are crying out to poor Marti.

I grab a fire extinguisher and Marti lifts the engine compartment covers to a wave of smoke, but no flame!!! Time dialates as we slowwwwwly power to a private dock while I'm barking at Marti for "more speed cause she's gonna blow, Captain", even as I watch the bilge rapidly filling with water and the engine crackling and smoking.



All smoke, no obvious fire, and so we wait 30 minutes to cool both the engine,,, and Marti's sad disappointment in hurting her new boat during a moment of primal ecstasy.

But all turns out well when Marti, with my selfish encouragement <whatta guy>, crawls under the still very warm starboard engine, with gloves and towels to prevent burns, and reattaches a hot raw water pump hose to the heat exchanger in 97 degree temperatures!



Marti found the parts and repaired her own boat under challenging conditions, and that is so important for a newbie Captain of a boat surely to break often in future, haha! Totally impresses this Captain and so he decides not to jump ship and remains aboard for the duration of the cruise!







The engine repaired and the crew properly composed after an hour of hot sweaty work, we power off in search of a right turn off the river and into Steamboat Slough, passing under our second bridge!







We note many small patches of homes, some appear off the grid, many tiny hidden marinas, and boats of all sizes tied to branches in the river or on the small marina docks, some for many months/years, and boats partially sunken. We see a few large homes with 4-6 smaller short term rental “cabins”.





This house is directly adjacent to a channel marker as we approach the Sacramento River and into the first bay.





We power on down the river while watching for floating debris and boats tied to trees.



After hours of meandering, we happen upon 1 of 3 cable ferries transporting cars across the river. Their red lights demand compliance until dropping their cable and allowing boaters to cross without shearing off their propellers!



Suddenly, we've lost the port engine, the one that didn't overheat!!! Dang, now we are motoring at 20 mph but, at least, we can wear hats in the hot sun! We have an electrical problem and a time to sunset problem, and so we keep running in search of shelter before sunset in the bogs and Delta marsh!

Limping on one engine, we're searching for shortcuts as we enter the Delta maze 5 hours later, and notice a very low bridge on a dog's leg narrow shortcut. Looks dangerous and we give it a pass until noticing 2 speedboats passing beneath, and so we lowered the boat's antenna and followed the leader.



We entered the delta region, with mud bars, bogs, reeds, sea grass, and small openings everywhere for miles and miles, but no markers! So many choices to turn left or right as the depth sounder indicates only a few feet of water beneath the props.

And so we meander and navigate by asking for directions from hunters and fishermen along the way.









We meandered with NOAA charts and Google Earth through the reeds and small ponds and past mud bars and debris. We pass our third cable-ferry and have been underway for 6 hours by the time we finally spy a line of marinas along Bethel Island.



Lots of hand waving and shouting regarding wakes introduces Marti to the community as she powers through the aquatic hamlet. We suspect many people, families even, sit down with a beer on their boats just to curse at anyone passing in the morning and evening boat rush, as if it were a local sport!



Gypsy was abandoned at a dock when her Captain moved ashore, and now curses passing boats.



Six hours without a toilet break, Marti secures the docklines as we tie up at the Sugar Barge restaurant!



We overnight in Antioch and then repair an electrical problem the following morning, enabling the second engine to run. We depart at 8am, amid even more no-wake sport-cursing by hungover boaters, for a 4-hour flight to SF, passing industrial eras of eons past and operating skeletons of present.



We pass under bridges and more bridges and past light-industrial areas with tiny towns in tiny bays until we arrive at the mouth of the delta. Both of us are pilots, and so we cast caution to the wind and follow other boats successfully speeding through unmarked 5 feet deep channels.









We pass a small isolated hamlet, nestled in the hills along Suisun bay.





We pass the C&H sugar ship offloading and storage facility.



We finally sight the foggy Gate and Sutra Tower while still in 90-degree weather!



We pass the Two Brothers BnB on a small island in San Pablo Bay, and another bridge!



Raccoon straits on the right, as we rocket around Angel Island and across the Slot at 40mph in 4' chop north of Alcatraz, initially airborne until hull violence is acknowledged and speed lowered, haha.



Instruments are looking good as we dock "Between the Sheets" at Gas House Cove! Most impressive that we needed 137 gallons for 175 miles of fun and adventure!!!



We fuel up, power up the Chevy blocks, and zoom past South beach Marina, home of Cetacea, a Military port, and the new Chase Center Stadium!





We arrive at Sierra Point marina, Marti's boat's new home, exactly 24 hours after our departure from Riverbank Marina in Sacramento on such an adventure!

