

Section 3 - Esbjerg (Denmark) to Rantzausminde, (Island of Fyn)

Sailed solo in June 2010

Time taken: 14 Days Distance covered: 360 mls



Looking around at the strong F6 North-easterly winds blowing in the harbour at Hvide Sande at 06.00, I thought perhaps it was just as well I was sailing single-handed, as no sane crew would likely set out with me in the prevailing conditions. I wouldn't have done so either, in normal circumstances!

I had been unable to find a Danish crew for this section of my passage . blissfully unaware as I was of the notoriety of this stretch of the very exposed Jutland coastline . and made the decision to sail this part of my London to Helsinki trip solo. There had been a choice of sailing south via the Kiel Canal, or north through the Limfjorden and into the Baltic. The sail north looked to be the rather more interesting of the two choices.



Preparing Spree Lady at the Ho Bugt Sailing Club for the sail North to Hvide Sande along the Jutland coast.



Being taken out to Spree Lady – my buoyancy aid and sailing gear having been left in the boat.

The only harbour between Esbjerg and Thyborøn and the entrance to the Limfjorden was at Hvide Sande. This was conveniently situated at around the halfway point of just over 50 Nm from Esbjerg. It was a considerable distance to sail a Wayfarer in a day, even with a crew and good wind conditions. Sailing solo would need ideal winds and weather. I had the good fortune to have a Danish Wayfarer friend, Jens Konge Rasmussen living in Esbjerg, who had kindly offered me the use of the facilities at his local Ho Bugt Sailing Club. Organising a such a trip would be far more problematical without this sort of logistical support. Launching and anchoring the boat at low tide in the afternoon, I was rowed out to the boat in the late evening, ready for an early morning start.

Day 1 - I had awoken early the next morning at around 04.00 to dull, grey, misty conditions. The light easterly breeze had been as forecast, with the prospect of it getting up to around F3/4 by mid-day. It took a couple of hours to get the boat fully prepared for the long trip, the thoroughness of the preparation being a far greater priority than the amount of time taken, particularly sailing single-handed. All the sand banks ahead were fully exposed, being Low Water, and it wasn't possible to make the slightest short cut to the first headland . as would have been possible nearer High Water. Any attempt to cut corners was quickly indicated by the centreboard grounding, and it was necessary to immediately find deeper water, since the last thing I needed was to get stuck on a lee shore at the very start of my trip. Finally clear of the Ho Bugt fjord, I turned north-west for the 11Nm sail to the headland of Blåvands Huk. I had calculated that ideally, I needed to arrive at this headland around 10.00, in order to catch the start of the strong tidal flow northwards for the 35Nm stretch of coastline to my destination of Hvide Sande.



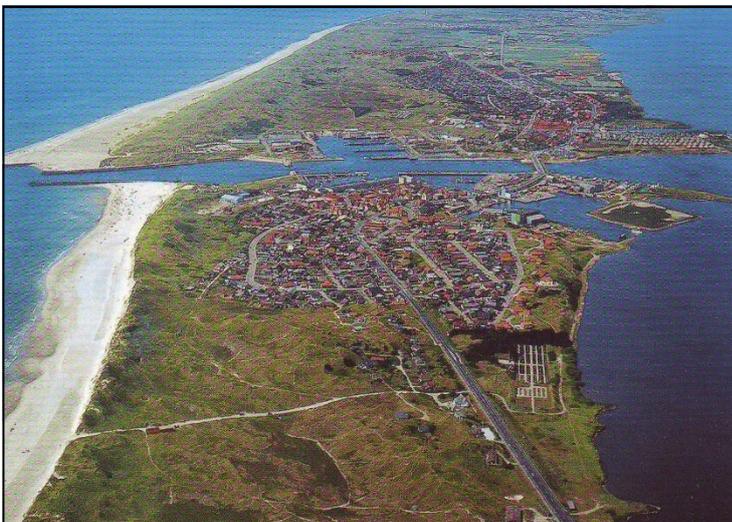
The continuous sand dune coastline to Hvide Sande.

The timing to reach Blåvands Huk could not have been more perfect. My GPS showed that I was making over 6kts as I was sucked into the eddy of deeper water to the south of the headland. It was apparent on reaching the point however that I had needed to make my approach much further out to sea, since there was a spit of shallow water a mile or more to the south, clearly marked by a line of breaking water. Most fortuitously, immediately ahead there was a small gap of calm water, barely wide enough to sail through, indicating an area of slightly deeper water. It seemed worth taking the chance to go for it to save the long detour around the end of the spit.

Rather different sailing conditions were encountered once out into the more exposed North Sea. It soon became evident that a reef was required in the sails and it was to prove the last time I would be using a full set of sails for nearly another week. The sailing was relatively easy and largely uneventful with few variations in the monotonous sand dune shoreline. It was a relief in more ways than one to stop for a comfort break! The entrance to the harbour of Hvide Sande at last made a welcome appearance in the distance . at least, it was indicated as such by my GPS, otherwise I wouldn't have known that I was finally approaching my destination.



Under way on a full set of sails to Blåvands Huk.



The entrance to Hvide Sande and the Ringkøbing Fjord.

Entering the busy harbour area, I enquired where I could berth for the night and was directed to the lock-keepers offices a short distance away. The harbour-master was somewhat nonplussed by my effort to sail the coastline solo in such a small boat, asking me how old I was . and finding that I was even older than he had thought! However, he couldn't have been more helpful and kindly printed out the tidal flow times and weather forecast for me . rain and strong winds from the NE the next day, with the wind strength increasing and backing northerly and then north-westerly for the following days. Not great news!

I managed to tuck myself into the most sheltered spot I could find for the night behind a fishing boat. Whilst it offered the maximum protection from the northerly winds, it rather lacked a certain ambience . particularly as it appeared likely that I would be staying put for at least the next 3 or 4 days. I made the most of the opportunity to enjoy a meal at a local restaurant before getting back to my boat around 20.00. I decided to catch up on some sleep, tired from having sailed continuously for some 10 hours and being up since 04.00.



Spree Lady tucked into a sheltered spot at Hvide Sande.



Cruising stowage on Spree Lady.

I moved the boat to an adjacent jetty from where it would be easy to start out, and hoisted the main with 2 reefs. Just as I was making the final thorough check of the boat, I felt the first few spots of rain. Great, I thought, just what I needed at the start of a demanding day! I finally cast off at 06.45, with the outboard idling, just in case it was needed to get me out of any difficulty, but switched it off as soon as I was safely beyond the main channel.

Day 2 - Hvide Sande is a busy commercial fishing port, and the banging of crates and ship's diesel engines being started up went on all through the night, though being so tired, I had been able to lapse almost immediately back to sleep after being woken, and had therefore managed to get a decent enough rest. Stopping another night when I would be less tired didn't bear thinking about. So even with the rather iffy weather forecast, I decided to set sail. The strong winds could be heard even before emerging from my boat tent, and a quick visual check revealed that the wind was certainly as strong as forecast, at least F5, and more probably F6. It was at this point that the thought crossed my mind that if I had managed to find a crew, they might well have taken some persuading to venture out. The wind strength was not quite sufficient to dent my escape plan however, and I spent the next two hours carefully preparing the boat for the day's passage. I finally donned my safety harness, as well as my canoe crash hat before leaving my mooring.



Setting out from Hvide Sande with double reefed sails.

The strong ENE wind made sailing this stretch of the coastline a less than comfortable close reach, though I was able to alternate between sitting inboard during any lulls, to sitting on the side-deck for stronger gusts, without the need to lean out too much to balance the boat. I kept as close to the shoreline as possible to keep out of the tide, but deep enough to avoid the occasional breaking water. The garden kneelers I had added to the side-decks proved invaluable to reduce the ~~bum~~ soreness during the long day's sail. Around mid-day the wind increased somewhat, and feeling colder, I decided to stop to add the extra layer of my off-shore jacket.



War time bunkers still standing along the Jutland coast.

Taking a comfort break at the same time seemed a good idea, since a short rest was more than welcome, and I backed the reefed genoa to lie comfortably hove to. The light rain had increased to a steady drizzle by this time, so the added word ~~comfort~~ hardly seemed the best description of the break. I relaxed my watch rather too much during this stop, and found that I had been blown probably half a mile or more offshore, with the difference in wind strength and sea state being quite dramatic. Whilst the offshore sea state had looked fairly benign from the shore, once out there, I found myself completely surrounded by white horses, and an increased wind strength, making it certainly F.7 in the gusts. It proved a hard, 30-minute fight to sail close-hauled back to the protection of the lee shore, taking the utmost care not to capsize in the gusts, the consequences of which in the off-shore winds, could easily have proved fatal in a worst-case scenario.

A monotonous hour after hour passed by with virtually no change in the coastline. My GPS provided a welcome assurance that I was actually making progress towards my destination of Thyborøn. The last 10-mile of coastline lay slightly more East of North, and it was this section that was to prove the hardest part of the sail. Not only was I tired, cold, and wet . the rain having increased to a steady downpour . but I also needed to consistently sit out to keep the boat balanced, which made it even more exhausting. I saw just one other boat during the entire 53 mile length of the coastline, and there had been a few people walking along the beach in the rain. Should anything have gone seriously wrong, I had only a waterproof VHF and GPS on my Buoyancy Aid to seek assistance.



Just enough space to squeeze my boat through the gap.

I finally reached the entrance to the Limfjorden at Thyborøn after almost 12 hours of the most demanding sailing I have ever experienced. It would have been an arduous trip for a crew of two, but single-handed, it was totally gruelling. I sailed into the harbour looking for somewhere . just anywhere . to stop for the night and noticed some sailors in a safety boat motoring back to base. I followed them and was granted permission to tie up inside their mooring pontoon. There was just sufficient room for me get through between the pontoon and the side of a pier. I tied up and quickly erected the tent to get my head down to rest.

Day 3 - I awoke to a wet, cold, and miserable day. I was however still far too tired to be too much concerned about the weather. There were men working ashore on fishing boats, who kindly allowed me to use their washroom facilities, and I then made a start sorting out the boat. I quickly felt sufficiently tired to rest again, and promptly fell asleep for another couple of hours. By afternoon the wind increased steadily from the NW to reach gale force and I needed to re-position the boat to face into it. I used four mooring lines, and lengths of 10mm shockcord on each to prevent the jerking and snatching that normally occur in strong wind conditions.



Moored up in Thyborøn in the NW gale force winds.



Leaving the Thyborøn harbour in the strong winds.

Day 4 - The wind and rain had continued during the night. A text from Jens Konge in the morning gave a forecast of winds increasing to F8. It made for an easy decision to stay put! I had stocked up with sufficient provisions for a week whilst in Esbjerg.

Day 5 - I had become restless to move on having recovered from my extreme tiredness and although the now Westerly winds were still very strong, their direction meant that I would be able to run on reefed genoa only to my next planned destination of Oddesund. I motored out of the harbour and set a direct compass course west.

The marked navigation channel went off in a large loop to the south, but with a wide open expanse of water ahead of me, there seemed little point in making such a long detour. Reaching about a third of the way across however, I noticed breaking water ahead of me and appreciated it was not quite as deep as it appeared, so made a slight detour to the south. The GPS gave my speed at 5 to 6 kts in the strong wind conditions, even sailing on only a reefed genoa and with a fully laden boat. It proved an easy sail across to Oddesund, and I only needed to keep to the navigation channel on the final approach to the nearby bridge.



Breaking water ahead indicating a shallow area.

It seemed just as easy to lower the mast to go under the bridge as to wait for it to be opened, and as I needed a comfort stop anyway, I took the safe option to anchor just off the shore to secure the mast, rather than try and shoot the bridge under sail. Continuing under motor to reach the harbour at Oddesund, it proved difficult to find a ideally sheltered spot that gave protection from the strong winds, but managed to squeeze the boat into the best space available. The harbour-master was keen for me to move to the completely exposed visitors moorings, but I eventually managed to persuade him to let me stay put.



Motoring from the road bridge to Oddesund harbour.



Moored up at Oddesund in the strong westerly winds.

Whilst the wind still blew very strongly from the West, it was somewhat reduced from the near gale conditions of the previous day and I was able to sail on full genoa only, rather than needing to reef it. My next intended stopping point was Nykobing, and ignoring the navigation channel once more, set the most direct course. Whilst it appeared to be a completely open expanse of water, a shallow area directly ahead was conveniently marked by a seagull appearing to stand on the water's surface! I passed by a north cardinal mark later, and was most surprised to see two yachts directly behind follow me into a clearly marked hazardous area.



Space enough to sail under the next road bridge.

Day 6 - For a small harbour, the facilities were outstanding and I made the best possible use of the spotless showers, as well as the cooking and eating facilities in the dining area. All this did come at a price however, and I was relieved of 100 Krona before I left. I was to discover that a 100 Krona fee was about the standard charge for a boat up to 10 metres, with any number of people on board. Sailing solo in a 5-metre boat, it was less value for me than a 10-metre boat with a crew, but the superb facilities were still well worth the cost. I made the boat ready for the day's sail, checked the weather forecast, and set off out the harbour.

With the still strong winds from the west, the most sheltered spot I could find in the marina harbour at Nykobing was beside a wall and row of trees. I moored the boat up immediately behind an expensive looking 15 metre yacht. I don't know whether the owners felt I was lowering the tone of that particular mooring area with my small dinghy and boat tent, but it appeared as though they might have gone off to stay in a hotel, as I never saw them again after rather grumpily telling me it was OK to moor there. I can't say I was overly concerned as I set about re-organising the boat and erecting my tent to let me get my head down for an early night.



Moored up in the most sheltered spot at Nykobing.

Day 7 - I awoke next morning to the commotion of a travelling fairground being set up on the waste ground immediately adjacent to my mooring. Thoughts of loud music and the antics of late night revellers brought back memories of the noise I had endured at Hvide Sande, and I made the decision to leave. Even in the unfavourable winds, which had veered round to the north. I took time out to visit the local supermarket and re-stock with a further week's provisions before packing up the boat. Motoring out of the harbour with the mainsail rigged, I shipped the outboard and started beating northwards to reach whatever destination I could find.

It proved a hard sail to clear the headland of the island of Fur opposite, and the wind conditions made it a continued demanding sail to the island of Livø. Though I had sailed only the relatively short distance of 12 Nm, it was more than sufficient for the day. Tucking in to a (fairly) sheltered shore behind the headland, I stepped ashore on the least rocky part of the shoreline I could find, or rather, I attempted to step ashore, since I had forgotten that I still had my lifeline attached. This spun me round as I stepped out of the boat and I ended up sitting in the water! Tying the boat to a convenient rock, I let the line off to drift offshore in order to drop a stern anchor line. Once moored fore and aft, I set up the boat tent and started making myself a meal.



Anchored off a rocky beach on the island of Livø.

Whilst making notes on the day's sail after finishing my meal, I noticed that it had got more difficult to write legibly, I looked out to find that the wind had backed westerly, to leave me considerably more exposed. Deciding that I had no option but to remain where I was, I laid a second anchor line, and released the shoreline, hoping that the combination of both anchors with lengths of shockcord would hold for the night, since I would be in serious trouble if I drifted onto the rocks along the beach. The wind increased in strength and backed south-westerly, leaving my anchorage fully exposed to the wind and waves. It proved an uncomfortable night, though better than all the noise of Nykobing. I hadn't realised at the time, but had I sailed only a few more miles further along the coast, there was a convenient marina that would have afforded me a much more comfortable stopover for the night.

Day 8 - I had made a point of checking the anchors were holding whenever I had woken during the night, and decided to get up around 04.30. The wind was at last a more reasonable F.3 from the west to provide me with a much easier days sail and I was ready to weigh anchor by 06.30. I beat my way back to the headland I had sought for shelter the previous night and set a course for Aggersund, finally shaking out the reefs for the first time since leaving Esbjerg. The bridge at Aggersund could easily be seen in the distance, and made navigation simple. I had noticed a yacht behind, so waited for it to arrive to get the bridge raised.



Sailing toward the road bridge at Aggersund.



Keeping pace with a yacht sailing on genoa only.

I followed the yacht, motor sailing on a full genoa, through the bridge and kept pace with it on a full main and furled genoa on the 35Km run to Aalborg. There were a number of yachts motoring west, with one of the helms even making the rather grand gesture of doffing his cap to me, which I took to indicate that he appreciated the fact I was actually sailing rather than motoring. Or he could have been indicating that he was taking his hat off to a totally mad Englishman! The channel through the Limfjorden was well buoyed, though I rarely took much notice of the marks. I did however get caught out near Aalborg, where the shortest route became rather too shallow.

Aalborg YC appeared ahead and I decided to stop for a break and make use of the Club's facilities, since I been sailing continuously for some 6½ hours. Rounding the next bend after setting off, 2 low rail and road bridges came into view and I almost regretted making a stop to lose the assistance of the bridge opening yacht ahead of me. I tied up to the pontoon of a rowing club and a club member kindly phoned the bridge keeper to report that the bridge would be opened in 5 minutes. It seemed worth waiting, though with some delay of the next bridge opening, it would have been easier and quicker to have lowered the mast to pass beneath them.



Under motor beyond the rail bridge at Aalborg.

The riverside past Aalborg was very industrialised and it was a pleasure to clear this area and pass into more open countryside. I sailed on for another few hours to reach a point at which the Baltic could be seen in the far distance. It seemed an ideal time to stop for the night, having covered another 50 miles in the ideal winds.

Berthed in a convenient spot too shallow for most other boats.

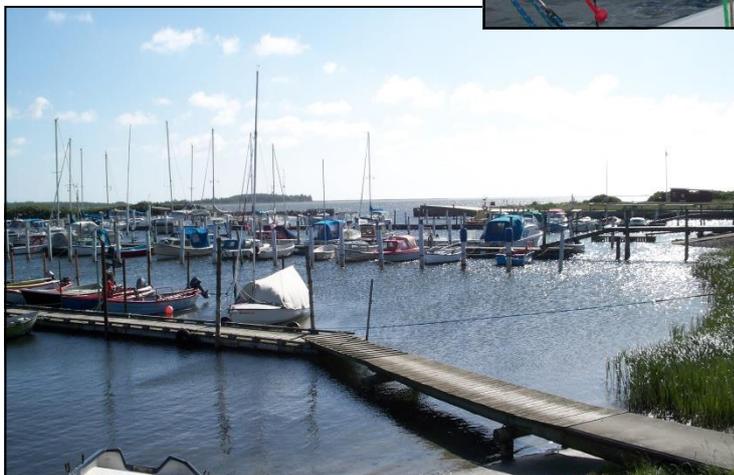


Arriving at Mou Yacht Club and motoring to a suitable berth.

Mou Yacht Club appeared directly ahead and I sailed in to moor up at a vacant berth before motoring to a convenient sheltered spot to put the tent up for the night. I made good use of the club's excellent facilities for a shower, cooked myself a meal, and feeling exhausted from another long day's sail, retired to bed for yet another early night.

Day 8 - Still feeling the effects of the previous day's long sail, I spent an easy morning sorting the boat out before setting off in the early afternoon. It was a short sail out into the Baltic before turning south to any convenient landing spot along the coast. The depth of water quickly got too shallow to continue however, even for a Wayfarer.

Tied up at Eganse in a less than ideal spot in the strong winds.



Heading out of the Limfjorden and into the Baltic.

It was evident I would need to sail much further out to sea and it seemed more prudent, in my still tired state, to turn back rather than continue in the strong offshore wind conditions along the shallow and unknown shoreline. I sailed back to the small Yacht Club harbour at Eganse, and tied up in the most sheltered spot I could find.

There was little shelter anywhere in the harbour from the strong winds, and the best I could do was to tie up in a shallow area and face the boat into the wind. On the positive side, the facilities at the Club were even more immaculate than other places I had stopped at. It had been undoubtedly the right decision to return and I set the boat tent up for the night.

Sailing to Als Odde under reefed genoa only in the strong winds.



The superb kitchen facilities of the sailing club at Eganse.



Day 9 - A text the previous day had given a forecast of westerly F.7 winds and conditions were as bad as forecast. It abated to around a F.6 by the early afternoon, and on seeing 2 yachts venturing out into the Baltic, I made the decision to set sail. Like setting out from Hvide Sande, I can't say it was one of the wisest decisions I have ever made.

I set sail on reefed genoa only for ~~the~~ Salt and Pepper Potqisland . as I had been told it was called, due to its two marker beacons . to reach deeper water and then south to the entrance to the Mariager Fjord at Als Odde. It was largely uneventful except for the entrance to the Fjord, where a very shallow area needed to be negotiated.

Spree Lady just visible between the two parked cars.



Tied up to a pontoon used by the local water-ski club.



The only landing facility was a jetty built for water-skiing run by the nearby cafeteria. Calling in for a meal and a request to berth for the night, it initially seemed that I might be refused, but after the owners saw my small boat, I was allowed to stay. I had yet again been very relieved to arrive safely, as I would have been in serious trouble had anything on the boat had failed.



Sailing in strong winds under full main and genoa to Grenaa.

Day 10 - I set sail the under reefed mainsail in the strong westerly winds, though much reduced in strength from the previous day. Feeling comfortable in the conditions, I first took out the reef in the main, and subsequently poled out the genoa . being able to do so by an expanding tiller extension, which allowed me to control the helm whilst at the front of the boat. The wind dropped as I approached the next headland and progress was slow to the marina at Grenaa. It proved to be the most expensive of the marinas visited, with the lowest quality of facilities and the most unfriendly of harbourmasters ever encountered!



Moored up at Grenaa in the only harbour en route that I wouldn't recommend to anybody for a night's stop.

Day 11 - The wind started out an ideal F.3 the next day, and I set out with high hopes that I might at last complete my trip in favourable weather conditions. Unfortunately the wind gradually decreased to a virtual dead calm during the day, and I needed to use the outboard to reach my next planned destination of the island of Hjelm.

The shoreline of Hjelm, covered with a nesting colony of birds.



Sailing in light winds towards Hjelm in the far distance.



I sailed into a small bay and chose to anchor off, since nesting birds covered the shoreline and made their dislike to my presence very apparent. Once anchored, the wind backed northerly and increased in strength so that by late evening I was again anchored off a lee shore, this time with only one anchor set. I was thankful that it held securely.

Day 11 - The wind had reduced by morning though the sea was still very lumpy and I managed to break the boom crutch by being thrown off balance whilst taking down the boat tent. Having set off, I passed the next headland to discover a sheltered bay with a house and jetty, where I could have spent a much more comfortable night. In compensation, I had an easy sail to the next island of Samsø.



The island of Hjelm, just visible in the centre far distance.



Berthed on Samsø, with the yacht moorings seen behind.

I managed to find a reasonably sheltered jetty to tie up to, rather than use the very exposed mooring for visiting yachts, and called up Bjarne Manstrup, a local Wayfarer sailor whose contact details I had been given. This proved to be one of the most pleasurable parts of the trip, as Bjarne took me on a tour of the north of the island to reveal Samsø's rich Viking history.

Day 12 - I had managed to effect a good repair to the boom crutch after arriving the previous day, so had been able to erect my boat tent without any difficulty. Stopping overnight in a harbour with wash-room facilities always trumps lying at an exposed anchorage, so after a comfortable night's sleep, I made the boat ready for the day's sail.



Under full sail in a good breeze with the island of Fyn ahead.



Bjarne returned the following morning to see me set sail.

The next leg of the trip was an open sea crossing to Fyn, being the second largest island of Denmark. The winds were strong, though I was able to sail on a broad reach without being overpowered, and needing to reef. I enjoyed the most exhilarating of sails to reach the north-easterly headland of Fyn.

Arriving at the north-easterly point of Fyn, I continued along the shore hoping a landing place might soon appear. Nothing suitable transpired so continued south until I reached a bay that offered me reasonable protection from the offshore winds. The shoreline was strewn with rocks, so there was little alternative but to anchor off the rocks and drop back to get ashore.

Sailing off from the overnight anchorage in perfect conditions.



Anchored off the shoreline along the north-east of Fyn.



Day 13 - The day began with glorious sunshine and ideal winds. I set out in high hopes that I might well reach my planned destination in two weeks, rather than the three I had allowed for the trip. I headed out for the 10 mile road bridge that connects Fyn with Sjælland. The wind dropped dramatically on my approach to the bridge, and I made slow progress for the next hour.

My speed slowed sufficiently to consider using the outboard, on looking around though, I noticed a number of yachts sailing in a fine breeze along the shore. A land breeze had obviously started to develop and I was way too far out in the Store Bælt (Great Belt) to benefit. I used the outboard to get inshore and pick up the fine breeze.

Tied up in Lundeborg, a quaint harbour with great character.



Approaching the road bridge connecting Fyn with Sjælland.



Bridges always appear to be much lower than they actually are, and by choosing to sail under at a point much closer inshore than the well marked small boat channel, I had some concern that I wouldn't make it. However there proved to be more than sufficient space, and once clear of the bridge area, I sailed on to Lundeborg to find a well sheltered spot in the marina.

Day 14 - For a pleasant change, the harbour master was actually a lady, who kindly offered to reduce my mooring fee, being such a small boat. I set out in good winds for my final day's sail, which dropped to nothing after a short while and I motored to the channel between Fyn and the small island of Thurø By. A following wind got up to make this a relatively easy passage.

Tying up to a jetty allowed the mast to be easily lowered.



Sailing in a narrowing channel between Fyn and Thurø By.

A low road bridge needed to be negotiated into Svendborg Sound, which is no problem for a Wayfarer. I tied up to a convenient jetty and lowered the mast onto the boom crutch. Another jetty on the other side of the bridge was used to prepare the boat for sailing again, though I made a real pig's ear of getting away again. I just hoped that no-one was watching!

The last 6 Nm. was a hard beat into an increasing wind. Just what I could have done without at the end of my first . and at the age of 67, undoubtedly my very last . major solo cruise. I finally reached my destination of Rantzausminde around mid-afternoon, completely exhausted, both mentally and physically. The achievement of having completed the trip however, more than made up for any hardships endured during the passage.



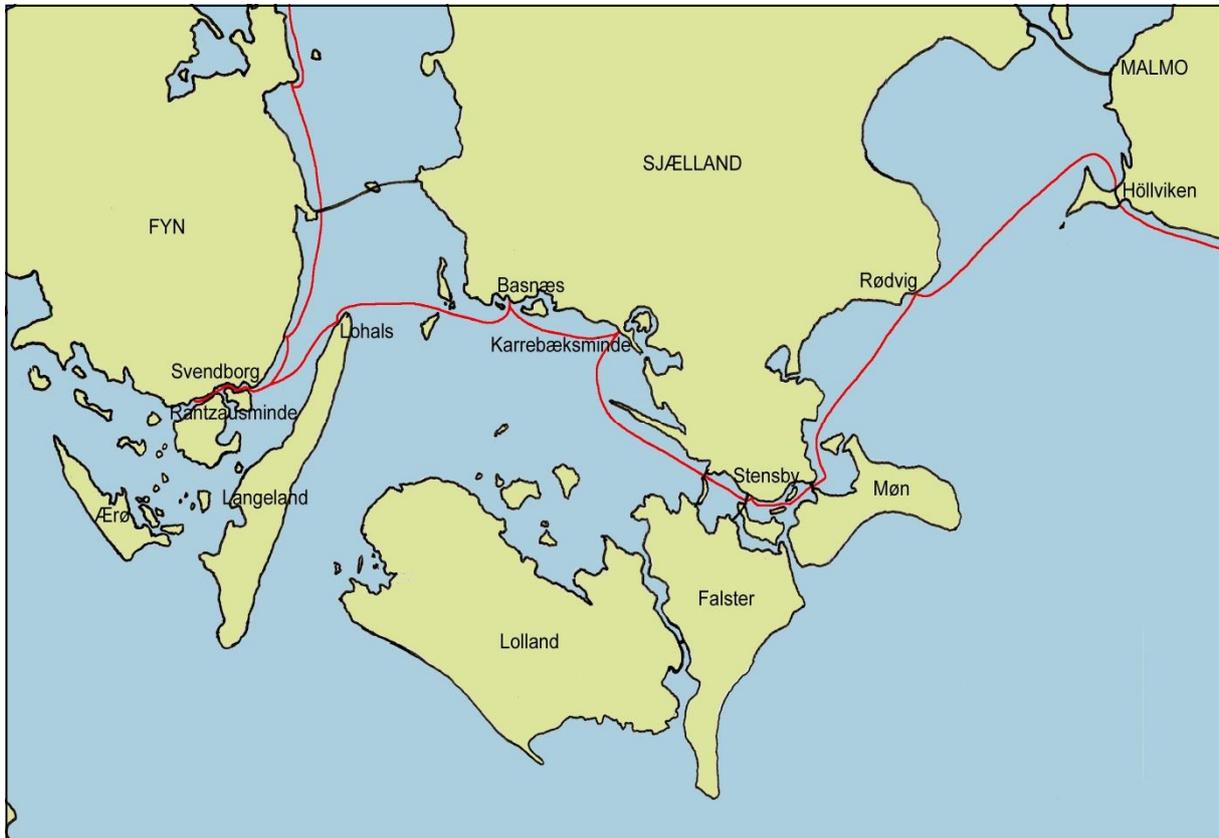
Moored up at the Rantzausminde campsite, where the Scandinavian Wayfarer Assn. hold their annual rally.

The normally packed campsite was rather vacant, as I arrived a week earlier than the start date for rally. I had pressed on whenever possible, even when conditions had been less than favourable and would readily admit to three or four of my decisions to set sail being less than good seamanship. I was very aware though that I could easily be stormbound somewhere for a week due to adverse weather conditions . as I would have been at Hvide Sande, had I not set out when I did . and with the return ferry from Esbjerg booked, there was some pressure to complete the trip within the time span allowed. I had prepared the boat thoroughly during the previous winter, and this was undoubtedly a significant factor in ensuring that no part failed to cause possible catastrophic problems on any of the more demanding stages of the trip.

Section 4 - Malmo, Sweden to Rantzausminde, Denmark

Sailed in June 2000 with Duco Pulle (Netherlands) as crew

Time taken: 7 Days Distance covered: 125 mls



I had volunteered to be Duco's crew for his planned Wayfarer trip to the annual Danish rally at Rantzausminde, on the Island of Fyn. Duco, a professor at Malmo University, specialised in control technology, and had adapted a yacht's self-steering mechanism for his Wayfarer. It proved possible to give it a significant test during the trip, when the outboard was used in light wind conditions.

Day 1 - Our starting point for the cruise had been Höllviken, south of Malmo, where Duco lived with his wife and daughter. I had arrived in Malmo by ferry and train and was met by Duco at the station. The boat was launched in ideal conditions for Duco's first long distance Wayfarer cruise and we made it ready for the crossing over to Rødvig on the Danish island of Sjælland. It took a while to pack all our gear and get the boat prepared for our departure. Being Duco's first trip, not everything was in an entirely orderly state when we eventually cast off for the relatively easy sail to Rødvig.



Duco's wife and daughter seeing us off at Höllviken.

It took only a few hours to sail the 20 miles to Rødvig, where we found a convenient spot to moor up in the marina. An adjacent yacht \pounds Elisaq owned by a wonderful Danish couple were so impressed by our planned trip that they afforded us the most generous hospitality.

Berthed next to 'Elisa' with Duco organising the boat.



The harbour of Rødvig, with its charming little town behind.



Day 2 - We had woken to near gale force winds whistling through the rigging and decided that it was a day best suited for shopping and museum viewing. Our very kind neighbours on \pounds Elisaq took such pity on us that we were invited aboard to share a most impressive evening meal with them.

Day 3 - The wind had abated somewhat the next day, but was still blowing strongly at around F5. Having previously sailed in this sort of wind quite comfortably, I was keen to set sail. Duco was far less sure about the situation, with only the prospect of having to spend yet another day kicking our heels in Rødvig finally convincing him that it would be worth taking up my suggestion to set sail.

I think we ought to turn back, + was Duco's reaction to actually being out in the strong wind conditions, after emerging from the protection of the harbour. Duco, being more used to the stability of his 36ft yacht had felt somewhat vulnerable in his small Wayfarer. Being at the helm, I pointed out that the sail back against the wind would be more difficult than continuing to the next harbour. After 5 minutes of coping easily in the conditions with his reefed down sails, Duco relaxed and even began to enjoy the quite exhilarating sailing.



The bridge linking Denmark's main island of Sjælland to its much smaller neighbouring island of Møn

We crossed the open water of the Fakse Bugt (Bay) and into the more sheltered waters of the strait between the islands of Møn, Falster and Lolland that mark the beginning of the Smaalandsfarvandet, or \pounds the water of the little islandsq and sailed on to the harbour of Stensby.

Day 4 - Our sail the next day consisted mostly of motoring. The wind was only a modest F.2, making progress somewhat slow, but for me, quite acceptable. Duco on the other hand seemed keen to apply the 4 to 5 knot base speed yacht rule, where anything less than this rate of progress required starting the engine to either assist the sails, or take over completely.

Duco, able to relax whilst using his self-steering mechanism.



The battery operated steering arm in action whilst motoring.



It appeared he was also keen to use the opportunity to test out his self-steering mechanism, which he had converted from use on a yacht to his dinghy by adding a magic box dampening system to the control mechanism, to compensate for the dinghy's much lighter weight. It seemed hardly worth all the effort and expense, though it did allow for a rather more relaxed meal break.

We motored out beyond the long sand spit of Knudshoved Odde and then turned north to find the nearest stopping point. We reached Karrabæksminde before finding a suitable place to moor up, with Duco setting off for the nearest fuel station, whilst I made the boat ready for our overnight stay.



Sailing past us out to sea in all its grand splendour, the Royal Danish Yacht, KDM Dannebrog

Day 5 - The day started with a breeze which died after an hour, forcing us to use the motor once more. The water of the little islands proved an intriguing place to cruise with its small islands and sand bars, and Duco certainly appreciated not having the keel of his yacht to worry about in the shallower areas of water. We finally moored up for the night at Basnæs.

Duco standing on the foredeck of his Wayfarer - perhaps imagining he was the Captain of the Danneborg!



Day 6 - We set out from Basnæs in overcast conditions and light winds, With Duco's self-steering control mechanism having failed to live up to expectations, we were allowed to sail, rather than motor to our next planned stop on the north-eastern tip of Langeland. Progress was somewhat slower than using the motor, but infinitely quieter, and all the more enjoyable because of it.



Tied up at a convenient spot at Basnæs after motoring in.



Moored in the marina at Lohals with boat tent up.

We negotiated the sandbar around the tip of Langeland, with the 10 mile road bridge across the Store Bælt (Great Belt) being a prominent feature to the north. Continuing our sail to the next suitable landing place at Lohals, we opted to moor up in the marina for the night to make use of their facilities. My suggestion of sailing in to the harbour was overruled by Duco's preference to motor.

Day 7 - Setting out on our final day in a good breeze, we headed south towards Svendborg on the island of Fyn. We chose the much shorter, shallower route around the adjoining island of Thurø By, which needed to be negotiated by lowering the mast.

Duco's Wayfarer being taken out to a mooring post in the bay.



The bridge to be negotiated between Fyn and Thurø By.



Our destination of Rantzausminde and the venue the Scandinavian Wayfarer Assn. held their annual rally was reached after only another hour's sail, and we were warmly welcomed on our arrival by the gathering of Wayfarer enthusiasts.

A typical Day at the annual SWS (Scandinavian Wayfarer Assn.) Rally held at Rantzausminde, on the island of Fyn.

Morning briefing for the day's planned sailing activity – held around the main gathering point at the campsite.



Preparing the boats for the day's sail, each boat setting off when ready.

Wayfarers beached at Æroskobing for a visit to this popular and scenic town.



An evening gathering at the marquee especially erected for the rally event.

Evening entertainment is provided by the participating Wayfarer sailors who form 'The Danish Wayfarer Stompers' group and who give the most highly accomplished of performances.

