

Seagate and Wild Blue Alaska Cruise – Monday, June 9, 2008



Today we shopped Petersburg, filled the water tanks, then de-slipped the marina at 10:30AM. The sun was out and as soon as we turned north a few miles out of Petersburg, we noticed several shiny white boats in the distance.

(← *First “bergie bit” of cruise.*)

They were of various sizes but two were quite large yachts, or so we thought. As we studied these “boats” using the binoculars we realized they were small icebergs, or as the locals call them “bergie bits”. So now, besides trees, logs, rocks, crab trap floats, gill-net floats, floating ice was now added to the list of objects we needed to avoid.



(*Spectacular view of Seagate with snow covered Alaska peaks.*)



We had wonderful views of the mountains and ocean as the sun continued to shine on our course.

(← *The boats at anchor in Fanshaw*)

At around 3PM we approached Fanshaw anchorage and noticed a *yak attack* (fish speak for group of kayakers) who loaded their *yaks* and promptly departed. We had the bay to ourselves, anchored, and rigged for fishing. Instead of launching their tender, the Seagate crew launched the kayaks and became *yakers*. Bob and Gerard launched the Wild Blue tender to add to their fishing *TOW* (time on the water). They fished up and around Witney Island just off Fanshaw near Bull Point. Both Wild Blue, Seagate and their tender boats monitor VHF 68, so Alex checked on the fisherman about 6PM. “Wild Blue Tender, this is Wild Blue calling. How many *in the box*? How many *farmed*? How many bites?” In all cases zero was the answer. It seemed like Fanshaw would be a bust for fishing. So the WB crew started margaritas while the Seagaters, aka grape stompers, sampled Pinot Noir. The boys kept fishing.

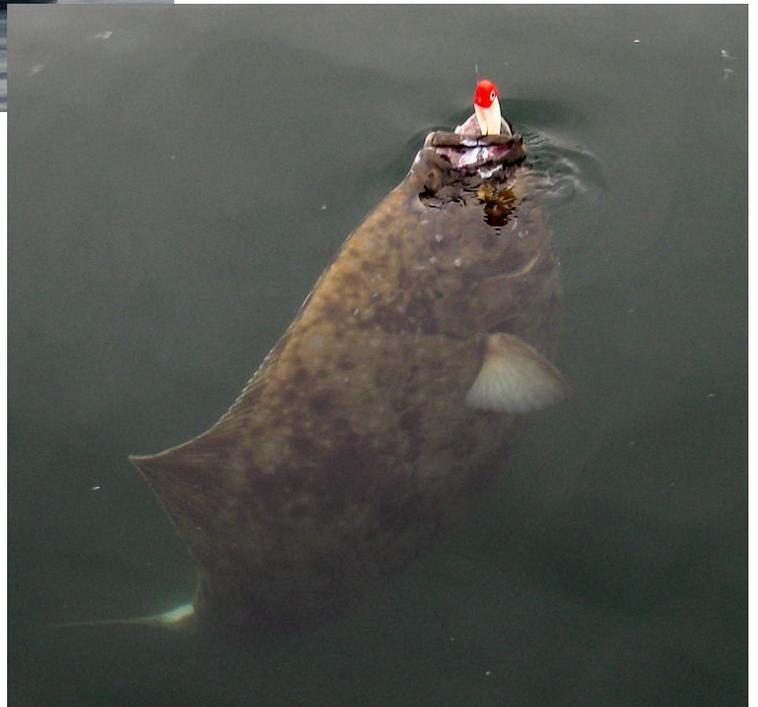


Around 7PM an excited Gerard calls over the VHF. “Wild Blue, this is Tender, we have a huge *flattie* that we can’t land.” So .....after no bites all day they now have a huge halibut? Come on...we didn’t quite buy it!

(← Gerard babies the huge halibut to the surface while Bob readies the gaff as the Seagate tender arrives on scene.)

Then Bob gets on the radio, “ Wild Blue, it is really big and won’t fit in the net!” Bob usually doesn’t expand or embellish, so we decided to take this seriously. Dick calls and says he will put down his Pinot and launch the Seagate tender. Alex grabs the hammer, a long piece of sturdy line, and the camera, and jumps on Seagate tender.

(Yes it was a huge fish, about 5 or 6 feet in length, and Willie’s record would easily fall, except we farmed it!→)



Dick, Dave and Alex arrive to the aid of the tired fisherman who have been dragged around by the fish. The fish has been gaffed three times, and just throws off the gaffer. Finally, with Gerard holding the halibut’s head just out of the water, Alex threads a strong line through the big lip bone of the fish. The fish continues to

fight, easily dragging around the 13-foot, 600 pound tender. Then all at once the fish pushes free as its lip bone separates. We farmed it! Actually we were quite relieved, because we just didn't know how we were going to land the beast. Maybe fisherman Jay Field has some BIG fish landing suggestions?

Now that's just a lot of excitement for one day. We needed a stiff drink and while we visited Margaritaville, we planned tomorrow's halibut assault. Tomorrow, after our 6AM fishing expedition, we move onto Tracy Arm to view the Sawyer Glaciers up close. If you've been following the news, a small cruise ship ran aground there just last week, on June 4<sup>th</sup>. We're not looking for a repeat. See you manana.



*(Spirit Of Alaska aground in Tracy Arm, our next stop, on June 4<sup>th</sup>.)*