

Bar Hoppin' With Hops

The Keep On Hoppin' Tour
Hops MacBarley's Ongoing
Key West Bar Boondoggle

Bar 226:

Sebago Marquesa

Key West Bight

Wednesday, September 3, 6:30 PM

Yuengling (draft) \$0.00

Yes, a boat. A freaking boat. A *bar* on a boat. We have 225 bars in the Hopper, so I gotta admit that I'm stretching things now. The parameters of the Tours have limited my/our hopping to bars "on the island of Key West." Stock island is out. Sunset Key is out. So how, oh how, can a boat count?? Because, ha, it is attached to the island by ropes. I guess. Yeah, Stock Island is attached by bridge, but Stock Island is its own *land*; the boats roost on KW.



Man, that is laaaame, even for me, but screw it, I was thirsty and this was a freebie.

Besides, most of the catamarans actually do have real bars on board. I was on a sunset sail on one of the schooners -- which was waaaay cool -- and their beverage dispersal procedure simply involved grabbing a cold can from the cooler. That's fine and all, but it dunna qualify as a barrrr, laddie.

I was invited on this Wednesday evening sunset cruise by Key West Southernmost Runners, a highly esteemed group for which I once served as President, and in whose name I have toiled many, many, many hours as a volunteer over the last decade. I quickly deduced that they invited me along with the tacit intent of talking me back onto the Board. Ha. Sly boots.

Anyway, we boarded the boat, and I headed immediately to the bar, figuring that procuring a beer before the lines were cast off would somehow justify the Hop as being "on land." Dumbass. But, hey, why wait? By the time we left the harbor, I was ready for #3.

Maybe 18-20 KWSRs attended. There was Dion's fried chicken aplenty, with the kind of cold veggie trays that you'd expect from a health conscious crowd. I was actually kinda surprised by the fried clucker, but it was devoured ravenously.

It was a bee-yoo-ti-ful night for a sunset cruise, with low humidity and light steady breeze, so I very soon went topside to enjoy it. There, I got



recruited by one of the crew to assist with the raising of the 80-foot sail. Our 4-man team hauled that thing up a yardarm and a barnacle and a starboard and all kinds of nautical shit, earning ourselves another cold beer. I was able to get one from crewman Jake through the front porthole, so I didn't even need to go below.

One extra reason for my wanting to come along tonight was to test out the brand new Lumix camera that I just got. With both a wide angle lens and a 60X optical zoom (100X digital), this thing is one coolo pic-clicker.

As the shore grew smaller and Old Sol sank lower, more people came up on deck. Be crazy not to, right?

There were clouds, but clouds often *enhance* a sunset, especially the afterglow. There was also a small rain event going on way to the north, which looked purdy cool.

So the sun went down. Seen it before, but I still dig it. I dig Mallory Square from time to time too. Many locals scorn the whole shindig and won't go near it. I hit it a few times a year. Plenty of good vibes there, and who can't use some good vibes now and then. (But I'll take Fort Zack for a mellow sunset.)



One of our fine crew this fine evening was Crazy Carol. I didn't really know-her-know-her, but our paths have crossed enough times at Lazy Gecko during Boston sports events that I knew I could strike up a convo with her. Obvious topic: Boston sports. The Patriots had not started their regular season yet, and the Red Sox were snuggled firmly in last place, so there was plenty to talk about. Always is with the Beantown teams.

Anyway, as passionate as all us Sox fans were about our remarkable Boston Strong season of 2013, many of us share just as strong an indifference about the First-to-Worst debacle of 2014. After the deflating collapse of 2011 and the flat-out depressing cellar-dweller experience of 2012, the baseball gods threw us The Ultimate Bone with a 2013 World Series Championship. I think I spoke for many of us when I said, "I don't care how we do in '14, I'm still delirious from '13." Well, the baseball gods took me up on that.

Leave it to the Red Sox, though. Worst-to-first had been done before, so *ehhhh*. First-to-worst was old news too, so *ehhhh*. But Worst-to-First-and-Back-Again, now that's historical. Go Sox!

So Carol and I swapped Red Sox, Patriots, Bruins and Celtics banter most of way back to shore. Then she had to get to work tucking away the sails and all that other boatly stuff. I calmly polished off my seventh and final Gling.

The Marquesa settled softly into the dock and the free ride was done. Back to paying for all my stuff. It was only after disembarking that M.A. brought up the Board Member thing. I do wish I had the time -- I know I could be a help -- but I just don't.

Can't really blame the Hoppin', though, for that. The Tour pace has definitely slowwwwwed.

