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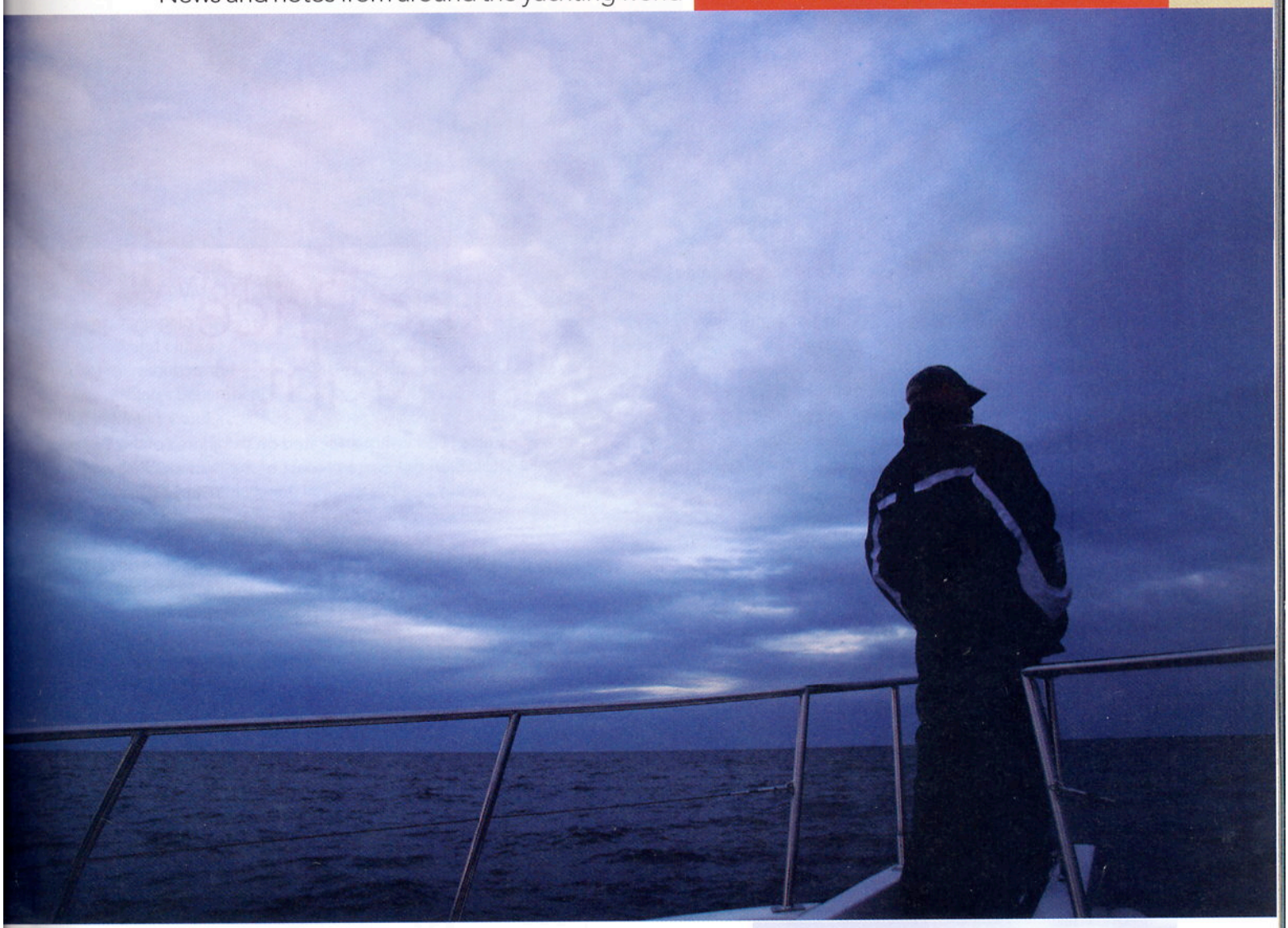
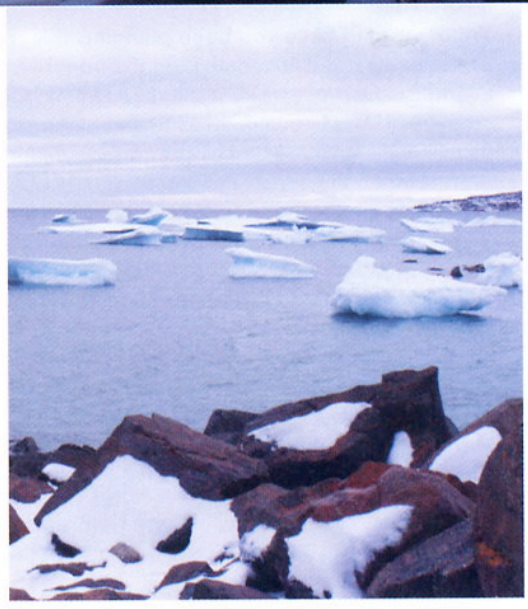


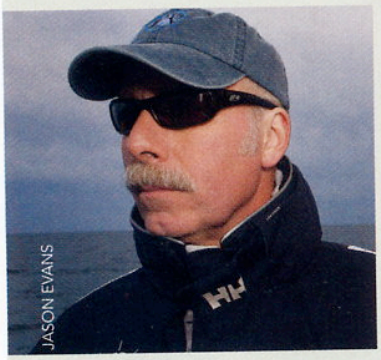
Passage to Adventure

In June, Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker Sprague Theobald departed from Newport, Rhode Island, on his Nordhavn 57 *Bagan* bound for Seattle, Washington…via the Northwest Passage. The Northwest Passage is an almost mythical route, dangling elusively across the top of the North American continent, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, dancing the line between an inhabitable world and a frozen tundra. It has claimed 300 lives and ten boats since yachtsmen and sailors first tried to brave its frigid, icy waters, but the Northwest Passage has, in recent years, become passable. Due to rising water temperatures, the massive fields of pack ice that covered these waters have begun to recede, leaving the Passage navigable (in the summer). Sprague will make the expedition with camera in hand to gather footage for his next documentary, entitled *The Northwest Passage*. We caught up with Sprague right before he set out for the great north, and discussed the nature of the trip. Turn to "Adventure Bound" on page 20 to see what he had to say. *www.northwestpassagefilm.com*



JASON EVANS

Adventure Bound


JASON EVANS

Sprague Theobald set out for the adventure of a lifetime through the Northwest Passage aboard his Nordhavn 57 *Bagan*. YACHTING Associate Editor Christopher White had a chance to chat with Sprague before he left the docks. This is what he had to say.

YACHTING Magazine: Have you always been interested in boating and the water?
Sprague Theobald: I have. I grew up spending my summers in Maine sailing. About the only thing that's ever really made sense to me is being on the water. In the past few years I've found that...I could combine my production work with the boating. It's hopefully a melding of the two worlds.

YM: How did you end up with a long-range power cruiser?
ST: I'd done a lot of sailing, a lot of professional crewing, and after my second back surgery I just realized I could not work on the foredeck anymore. That was around '92. I was living in L.A. at the time, but I was back in Newport visiting, and I just wandered into the boat show and that's when I saw the Nordhavn 46 and just...it was love at first sight.

YM: So, why the Northwest Passage?
ST: It has always intrigued me, always...for so long, it was fabled. It's there but it's not there. I've always been a person who's been attracted to nature against man, so I watched it from afar, I read about it. I was up there last fall on an icebreaker for a few weeks...and it was even more than I hoped for it to be, it's just remarkable. It is the most pristine place I have ever, ever seen. It's so fragile, it's so incredible, and we're really standing at a crossroads. So...the fact that I had a Nordhavn and the fact that the passage was open, it was just a perfect combination.

YM: Did you make any special preparations to the Nordhavn?
ST: We upgraded a lot of the systems. One of the things we put on was the forward-looking sonar. Even on the delivery up from Connecticut that was really a great instrument. And the icebergs don't always show up on radar.

YM: How long have you been planning this trip?
ST: It's been about 18 months...on the front burner for the last year. I got a terrific crew in place...I got them to commit. I had just finished a major project and I hadn't committed to another one yet. You've probably had that in your own life, when all of a sudden things are falling into place without you doing much and you think, "I'd be crazy not to do this."

YM: What do you hope to take away from your trip?
ST: I'd just like to know that I set out to do something and I did it. I also saw an extraordinary part of the world that very few get to see. It's not a documentary from a global warming and an ecology point of view. I think the facts about the ecology, the environment, the politics, those are going to speak for themselves. [With] any of the films that I make, really my main goal at the end is to have an audience member just sort of sit there and just sort of shake their head, and say "I never knew." Maybe one will come from this.

PORTO MONTENEGRO

The Price Is Right

Porto Montenegro, located on the shores of the Bay of Kotor, on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, will be offering free berths until June of 2010. The first stage of Porto Montenegro's state-of-the-art marina facilities opened this June, and free slips will be available to boaters while the construction on land continues. Slips will include water, electricity, and duty-free fuel with prior agreement. *www.portomontenegro.com*

"I don't know who named them *swells*. There's nothing *swell* about them. They should have named them *awfuls*."

– HUGO VIHLEN, AUTHOR OF *THE STORMY VOYAGE OF FATHER'S DAY*

The fall boat show season will be here before you know it. Check the dates, plan ahead, and get on the docks. **Cannes International Southampton Boat Show, Sept.11-20,** Southampton, United Kingdom; **Newport International Boat Show, Sept. 17-20,** Newport, **24-27,** Norwalk, Connecticut; **Genoa International Boat Show, Oct. 3-11,** Genoa, Italy; **United States International Powerboat**