

Escondido, Jan. 3



We awoke to one of my favorite sites, the Sierra Gigantes illuminated by the rising sun. The protected bay was almost glassy, though that didn't last very long. We started the day cleaning and straightening the boat. I took a look with binoculars at the mast head, and decided there was only one solution. We do not carry the mast raising (and lowering) system when we are cruising as it adds weight and takes up too much room. Besides, why would we ever want to take the mast down? So since the masthead can't come to me, I have to come to the masthead. Don offered the use of his mast ascenders and help with the process. These are self-locking rope clamps that allow the user to climb up the halyard (or in my case

a thicker rope raised to the mast head by the halyard). The system had what is called a bos'n chair and slings for each foot. As you raise one clamp, your leg rises. Then you raise the other clamp and your other leg rises. Eventually you reach the top.



It was agreed that the best method to fix the sail would be to go to a restaurant and have a nice meal and only one cerveza while we planned out the best way to handle the problem. Also the seas were supposed to be calmer in the afternoon. Don, Linde, Alice and I walked up a short mile to the

Tripui hotel and RV resort which had a good restaurant and beautiful grounds. The food was good and reasonably priced. It made for a nice way to procrastinate.



With a pleasant walk back to the boat I couldn't avoid the task any longer. After rigging up the ascender, I went up the mast while Alice would act as a bit of a mobile ballast to avoid the catapult effect. The plan was to fix the problem if possible and if not then get the information and measurements so we could come up with a solution. It was necessary to unfurl the sail which required me at the top pulling up the sail while Alice pulled on the outhaul, the line that pulls the sail taught at the back of the boom, so that I could figure out what was broken. Indeed there was no way to fix the sail that day but I had a couple of ideas and needed to match them up with the available tools and materials. We then reversed the process and furled the sail. So, no fix this day but it was a bit of a thrill being up at the top of the mast. It was only 29 feet tall but that was enough to raise the anxiety level for me and Alice. Quite the experience. Tomorrow will be devoted to a trip into Loreto so the fix would have to wait.