

# Trailer Sailing Trip to Milford, Kansas

More trips are documented at [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1htHXQ\\_FYEIqUH6ASLFQtZ\\_KNjWCtuvON/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1htHXQ_FYEIqUH6ASLFQtZ_KNjWCtuvON/view?usp=sharing)

My friend Nate and I took my Rhodes 22, Zephyr, to Milford Lake in Kansas over a long labor day weekend. Milford Lake is a big lake for the Midwest. At over 15,000 acres, it's roughly 10 times as large as Lake Manawa where I normally sail.

We drove down on Saturday, September 4 and got the boat setup at Thunderbird Marina on the southeast part of the lake near the damn. We stayed the first night at a slip and got moving on Sunday morning. Wind was light the next morning so we did some motoring to explore some of the narrow shallows before we set sail as the wind picked up. We wandered our way north and eventually anchored out in a cove just north of the town of Milford. There were some powerboats rafted up for a bit but they left as it got dark. We towed an inflatable kayak as a dinghy and used this to make it from Zephyr over to a small dock which led to an overgrown golf cart path into town. Apparently golf carts are a common mode of transportation within the small towns and RV parks around the lake. We walked into down that evening and again the next morning.

On Monday morning, we met up with Nick, a fellow Rhodes 22 sailor. Nick's parents are also Rhodes 22 sailors and their family has been on a number of legendary adventures (including [an adventure currently underway in Greece!](#)) on a Rhodes 22. Nick, Nate, and I had a great time hanging out and also comparing boats and swapping ideas. We plan to meet up for future trips such as trailering our R22s to Lake McConaughy in Nebraska next summer.

The winds were out of the south and already lively by the time we set sail after lunch to head back. The wind continued to build to as we headed south and we got to sail in some white caps. We could have reefed for a calmer sail, but we were enjoying the lively sailing conditions and keeping up with bigger sailboats headed in the same direction. Since we had to start preparing for the trip back the next morning, we motored the last stretch. We took down the mast that evening and headed back to Omaha on Tuesday morning.

We had beautiful weather and Milford is a great place to sail. This was a training trip for bigger adventures to come. Last summer I took my first road trip with Zephyr to Rathbun Lake in Iowa with my friends Terry and Jim. We took Jim's truck then and I learned a lot about trailering and camping on the boat. Since then, I had gotten a tow vehicle, completed many boat projects and got a Sea Eagle 370 inflatable kayak as a dinghy so this was the first time to tryout the whole system and it worked well. I have a few ideas for next year. We're definitely going to squeeze another day of sailing in between travel days next year to make all the setup, teardown, and travel all worthwhile.

For electronic navigation, I use Navionics loaded on an iPod touch, which is paired via bluetooth with a Bad Elf GPS receiver. I download the charts on while on WiFi. The iPod is in a waterproof case and I use a fitness band to mount it to my arm so it is close at hand and I don't have to worry about my phone going overboard. I also have Navionics loaded on my phone and tablet as well and it all runs off of one account. According to Navionics, we had a max speed of 6.4 knots the first day (which was mainly downwind sailing) and 5.4 knots the second day (which was upwind sailing). I don't recall seeing anything above 5 on the knot meter so I'm *not* quite sure what to make of those *knots*.

Towing info for fellow trailer sailors: my tow vehicle is a 2018 Jeep Grand Cherokee. It is 4x4 3.6L V6 with 295 HP and 260 pound-feet of torque. It has the factory installed tow package which comes with a class IV hitch, heavy duty engine cooling, and rear load level suspension. It is rated to tow a max of 6200 lbs, with a max tongue weight of 620lbs. The GVWR is 6500 lbs. The Jeep did a great job towing the boat on both highway and interstate. Mileage came out to be 12.8 MPG for the trip. I used 4LO on the ramp since it was steep. We used the tongue extension on the trailer for launch and recovery and we were able to get the boat all the way back up against the bow stop for the trip back. To keep weight on the tongue, I remove the rudder and store it in the v-berth. I had a custom cover made for the rudder so that I can slip it on, and then put the weight on the tip of the rudder (while partially in its cover) while removing it from the boat, before lifting it up and moving it into the boat. I remove the tiller and motor tiller connector first. On the way down, I stowed the dinghy in the cabin, but I put that in the v-berth for the way back. Before I left, I put a piece of plywood on a bathroom scale and a jack on top of that to measure the tongue weight and it came out to be a little over 400 lb. On the trip down we stopped at a CAT certified scale and got the following weights: steer axle: 2560 lb, drive axle: 3560 lb, trailer axle: 4580 lb, for a total of 10,700. The Jeep axle weight total of 6,120 came in under the GVWR of 6500lbs. The loaded trailer was a little heavier than I expected but still well under the 6,200 lb tow rating for the Jeep. My single axle Triad trailer has surge brakes to help with stopping.

### Day 1



### Day 2



Video clip from dinghy dock by where we anchored just north of Milford: <https://youtu.be/DOfZfsI9FC8>

Video showing the view from the leeward rail: <https://youtu.be/c6CPO1CPOWw>



























Custom rudder cover

