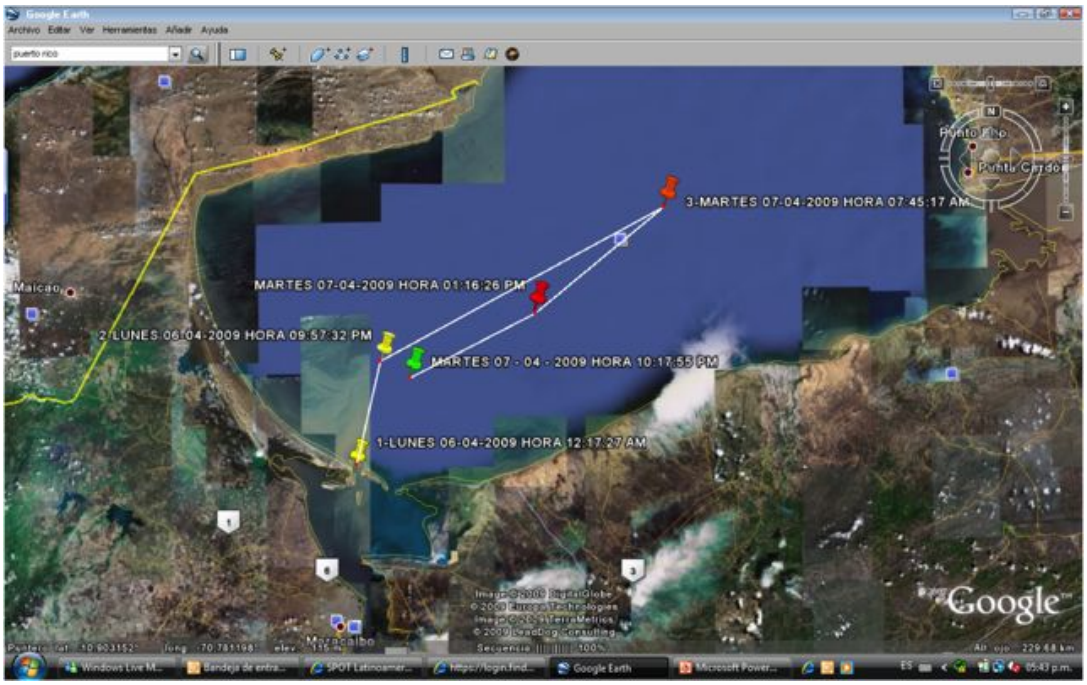
On April 5, 2009, at 11:00 AM, we left the Losandres Yacht Club in Maracaibo, Venezuela heading to Tucacas, Port Cabello, with intermediary stops in San Carlos and Punto Fijo. The Captain of our sailboat was Alejandro González Molina, who officially is a Second Class Captain. The passengers were Owner Carlos Serrano Pérez and Socartes Cisneros. All on-board were Venezuelans.

On the night of Sunday, April 5, 2009, we anchored in the San Bernardo/San Carlos Bay where we spent the night. On the morning of April 6, 2009, we continued our route via Punto Fijo at 10:30 AM and sailed the entire day of the 6th and the night and early morning of the 7th without a hitch. At approximately 3 AM, winds came up with speeds of 40 to 60 knots with waves between 4 and 8 meters in height. (Possibly as a result of recent tremors in the area or possibly Atlantic coastal winds.) The result of the situation was that one of the mast shrouds suffered physical damage at the base, which we repaired half of the night using tools and extra parts that we brought on board. We made it through the windstorm and by sunrise we evaluated the damages suffered during the windstorm and decided to return to the Port of Maracaibo at about 6:30 AM.

Now returning headed toward the entrance canal to the Lake of Maracaibo at approximately 1:17 PM on April 7, 2009, the rudder tiller broke leaving the sailboat Lissett unable to steer and complicating a safe entrance into the canal. In virtue of the situation, we activated the security device that we brought on board, SPOT, which emits an emergency HELP signal via satellites to my sons, who acted immediately to contact the relevant authorities (The Captain’s Office in Maracaibo, Coast Guard and Marine Firefighters of San Carlos) giving them our exact coordinates, with which the Coast Guard ship Alcatraz used to carry out our rescue at 1:30 AM on April 8, 2009. They towed us for 8 hours to the Port of Maracaibo and we arrived on solid ground at around 9 AM on April 8 with the 3 members aboard alive and well.

Thanks to God, my children, SPOT and the Venezuelan Coast Guard with their ship Alcatraz from the command from Maracaibo, Zulia State, they rescued us alive and healthy.

-Carlos Serrano, Venezuela



The red coordinates were when we activated the SPOT and the green coordinate signals the instant that we saw the rescue ship.