

Gold Country

September

2001

Members sail to Catalina

Story by

Frank Nin

Santa
Catalina
Island



Volume 20 Number 8





GoldCountry yacht club

Newsletter a little dinghy 2001

www.nccn.net/~gcycl

Commodore's Corner

Commodore's

Ahoy Mateys,

Well, we're starting the last quarter of 2001 and we have lots to do! I want first to bring everyone up to date on our clubhouse. We had our first work party at J&J Motor Sports (formerly RV Junction) to work on Phase III – the metal. Bill Litchfield (a local building contractor) donated the metal and now we are figuring out how to make a building out of it. We have to cut it up, weld it, paint it and then haul it over to our most beautiful concrete pad at Scott's Flat. It's a big job which is being coordinated by Doug Epperson, with a lot of help from other club members. We're hoping to work on it sometime during this week and then have a big work party on September 15th to cut metal and weld. Another project that got thrown into the mix was building another trailer. Wayne and Tish Buti donated their Catalina 22 trailer for the club's Capri 22, but it has to be modified to fit the Capri's fixed keel. Anyone who is interested in working on these projects, please call Doug or myself – we sure can use all the help we can get!



Next on the agenda is the flea market on September 30 at the Nevada County Fairgrounds. We have a few boxes of donated items already but we need more stuff! Now is the time to clean out your closets and garages – it goes to a very worthy cause! If you have items to donate, let me know. I'm asking for volunteers to help Kent Bennett and myself at the flea market. It's a lot of fun and you don't have to stay there for the whole day. We'll discuss logistics at the next meeting.

Now, let's talk sailboats. Lynn Buchanan has several small boats, which have been donated to our club that will be offered for sale at our next meeting. They will be sold by sealed bid, so if you are interested be sure to come to the meeting. (Talk to Lynn for further information on these boats.) Also, I have in my garage a classic 1963, 14' Flying Junior (FJ) with trailer and all equipment. You could sail this boat today. Everything works, it just needs a little TLC.

Minimum bid is \$250.

Thanks to Jeremy Gicker, Mike Brin-goff and Lynn Buchanan, the barge is out of the water. Come spring we will need to do some barge maintenance so we can be ready for the next racing season. The dinghy dock has been put on a mooring ball and will be ready for all those dinghies come next May.

The Catalina Cruise was a success. Everyone got there and back without incident and a lot of fun was had by all. See Frank Nin's article for a detailed account. Which brings me to the subject of articles ... if anyone has an idea for a story or article for the newsletter, don't hesitate to write one! I'm sure our Newsletter Editor would welcome your input. And thanks to all of you who have contributed to The Little Dinghy this year.

Which brings me to another request. At our last Board of Directors' Meeting, Janet Moyette, informed us that she was moving to Oregon and would have to resign as Treasurer. We are happy for Janet but distressed to be losing such

a capable Treasurer. Thanks, Janet, for your efforts. Now we must fill the office of Treasurer, a very important position in the club. We are looking for someone to take over for Janet, at least until the next elections. Give me a call if you are interested.

I don't want to harp on this subject, but this is a working club and we need help from all our members. As those of you who have held office know, being an officer is not always an easy job, but it is always a very important one. And we have fun in the process. So, with elections of officers just a few months away please give some thought to volunteering to help run the Gold Country Yacht Club. We welcome all you new members and hope to see some new faces on the 2002 Board of Directors.

And I hope to see all of you at Memorial Park on September 12. Lynn Buchanan and Tish Buti will be handing out the awards for the 2001 Jr. Sailing Program, and there are lots of tales to tell!

Anchors Aweigh,
Hugh

Catalina

a summer adventure

by Frank Nin



Day 0 (Thursday)

Twas' the night before Catalina
And all through the house,
No one was stirring,

Not even a mouse... the blinking colon in the alarm clock announced 3:30 am. We had a plan. It was time to execute it. Ken was knocking on my door before the pot of coffee had finish brewing. After a quick transfer of Ken's personal effects to the bed of the Ranger, off to San Pedro we went... The trip to San Pedro was uneventful. Two and one half tanks of petrol later and we where driving past the guardhouse for the Cabrillo Beach park's entrance. I was surprised how high the waterline on "Hola!", my Catalina 22, was after loading the boat with luggage, eight day's worth of staples, 16.5 gallons of water, fuel and toys for a skipper and crew. On bare poles we motored our little pocket cruiser around the breakwater and in to the Cabrillo Beach Yacht Club where we secured a guest slip for the night. There we flaked the main, rolled the jib and readied Hola! for crossing the San Pedro Channel.

Day 1 (Friday)

I plotted my course on a chart from the second to the last channel marker to just south east of Ship Rock. The course line clipped the south-bound shipping channel southernmost corner.



We did not sight any large vessels on the way out. We left the CBYC at 10:36. The winds were calm as we left San Pedro and fog did not allow us to see the Santa Catalina Island. We were just headed west out into the Pacific. It was kind of scary and kind of cool, totally trusting your navigation equipment, the GPS, the compass, and the charts. We ended motoring about 1/2 way. By then, the winds had picked up enough to drive "Hola!" at about 4.5 kn. under full sail. We were on a beam reach all the way! Within a 1/2 hr "Hola!" was at hull speed (5.89 kn). Top speed logged was 6.8 kn, sea state was 3-4' waves with a hand full of whitecaps. Did not have to reef the main but near the end of the crossing, I spilled some air from the main and jib. What I found interesting was that once the sails went up, the ride became very smooth. Along the way, we encountered a school of Dolphins, got a hit from an unknown fish that snapped a 40 pound test line and had a

first landed behind my partner's seat, then on his fishing pole, on a life line and finally on top of my hat. What a Kodak moment! The little bird was totally fearless. While on boat it captured and ate a stowaway fly. It then hopped to the bow and flew off into the open sea...

A week earlier Don and Sioux Wight had "Flipper" keeping them company during the crossing. He observed a large group of dolphins. Don estimated about 25 or 30. They swam along with "Morning Glory" for a while then suddenly left. He also sighted a four-foot shark that came along Morning Glory probably hoping to get some food thrown overboard. Jeff and Pat Lund spotted a flying fish. Only for a moment while it hovered from crest to crest.



While sailing across the San Pedro Channel, we could hear boaters calling the Isthmus Harbor Master on channel 9 and requesting mooring balls. The Harbor Master committed one ball after another, soon there where none and they where diverting boaters north to Fourth of July Cove and Emerald Bay. Shortly as we approached Ship Rock, we requested a space on the line up front... It was granted. Ken and I dropped sail and secured the boat for entering the crowded harbor.

My first impression of Isthmus was... a bustling metropolis of boaters! If there ever was a congested commute of boater traffic, this was it. I could not believe the number of boats moving about in all directions. The channels where narrow and the wind and current strong. We had our space, string 15, but finding it was another thing. After a few searches up and down the rows, we finally we found our space and secured the boat to the line. Turned out that 15-buoy marker was lying on its side. My boater neighbors where so close that we struck up some conversations between boats like we where sharing the same cockpit. To port, I met a really nice gut on his Cal 25 built in 1968. He had just completed a solo crossing and was waiting for his crew that was scheduled to arrive on the ferry that was to arrive later same evening. On the starboard side there was a retired captain in a Santana 25... another solo sailor.



Ken and I were visiting with the rest of the group and were told stories of kayaking to Fisherman's Cove, and sailing to Black Point which is about 1 nm of the west end point. We grew tired from a long day, so it was early to bed. Fell asleep listening to marina noises and distant tropical resort music that drifted from the bar...

Day 2 (Saturday)

Woke up to the sound of a sleeping bag being stuffed back into its sack, my crew member is an early to bed and early to wake kind of guy, everything was wet, the outside windows where covered with water as if someone hosed off the boat just minutes ago. Outside the bay was busy with boaters buzzing about in their motorized dinghies. Coffee called so Ken and I boarded our dinghy and started to paddle. The dinghy dock was three deep in boats of all types colors and shapes. We landed on the beach. After coffee, Ken and I decided to explore the island. Made a nice hike over a small hill to Catalina Harbor (the locals call it Cat Harbor) and picked up the Silver Trail and started to climb to 1875' where it peaks. The views of Cat Harbor, Isthmus and Emerald Bay from Silver Trail where spectacular; along the way there was an old rusted steel tank with a hand painted sign on it, "Fire fighting water tank, Please don't shoot... Violators will be hung". After making the peak, the return trip was more of a trial and error. The trail was not marked and at one point we took a wrong branch that led us to a dead end. As we descended from the hill the trail became narrow to a point that looked more like a wildlife trail than a hiking trail. The brush was heavy and close. Once we hit the road, we had to do the "check legs for ticks" thing. The journey back was long and arduous along the winding road that brought us back to Isthmus. We had a close and personal look at each small harbor between Emerald Bay and Isthmus. On arrival we celebrated with an ice-cold bottle of water. The hike was about 12.5 mi. Round trip.



After a well-deserved rest, and hardy dinner, we met with Jeff and Pat Lund and Don and Sioux for drinks at the local watering hole. Late that night, Don sighted a heard of party animals in their natural habitat. The way he tells it, it was quite a sight to see.



Day 3 (Sunday)

Sunday morning was a day of exploration. Woke up again to the sound of a sleeping bag being stuffed back into its sack. The boat was dripping with morning dew. After coffee and a nice breakfast, we motored out of Isthmus harbor north to Cherry Cove and Emerald Harbor. We dropped a hook at Cherry Cove depth of 32 feet and dressed up in wet suits. There where two other boats nearby at anchor. The water was cold. Upon entering the water I checked out the summered part of the hull, found nothing interesting. Ken motioned me to check out a Bat Ray swimming below. The marine life was not as impressive as you might expect for Southern California. We saw a few red Garibaldi fish, a school of Pacific Anchovies and the Bat Ray.

After a while we boarded the boat and headed northwest to Emerald Harbor. There we found a big commercial boat full of SCUBA divers. It seemed like an excellent place to drop the anchor and snorkel. The fish finder was going nuts. The depth was 28 feet and you could see the bottom clearly.. On close inspection we found out that there was a school of 1 to 1.5 inch fish below the boat. Ken spent a 1/2 hour snorkeling over to Indian Rock, I opted to stay on board and make lunch. By mid afternoon the wind had picked up enough to deploy the main and jib. We had a nice sail back to Isthmus.



Late Sunday afternoon the rest of the group arrived Isthmus. Wayne and Tish Buti caravanned to San Pedro with the Talmans and the Kents, their trip down was swift and uneventful. Wayne was looking forward to enjoying his daily ration of grog, Buffalo Milk.

Hugh and Nicole Talman, where traveling with their son Hugh Jr., a friend Jeremy, daughter Carly and her fiancé Jared. Hugh Jr. was camping with his friend Jeremy in a small campground on a bluff overlooking Isthmus Harbor. They took advantage of the hiking and snorkeling opportunities that the island had to offer. We ran into them several times throughout the course of the week.

They where followed by the Samuelsons, who where running about three hours behind the main group crossing the San Pedro Channel. The Samuelsons had traveled the farthest to make the Catalina Island cruise. Their journey began in Maui, Hawaii and went pretty much non-stop until they arrive Isthmus Harbor in Catalina Island. While towing their Catalina 25, "Pau Hana", they encountered a minor problem with the trailer breaks. The group motor sailed almost all the way across for the winds where too calm to sail until late afternoon.

On arrival to Isthmus from Emerald Harbor "Hola!" was greeted by the remaining four boats that made the voyage, Island Girl, Ariel II, Pau Hana, Fiesta Con Dios, Brooke, and Morning Glory

Day 4 (Monday)

Monday while the crew that arrived Sunday afternoon was getting oriented, "Brooke", "Morning Glory" and "Hola!" Where getting ready to sail to Avalon. Avalon is about 11.5 nm South east of Isthmus. The winds where calm and sea state was 1-2 foot waves. After coffee, breakfast and the NOAA forecast, "Hola!" was the first to motor out of Isthmus harbor on a 049° course

past Bird Rock and Harbor Reef. "Brooke" and "Morning Glory" followed about ten minutes behind. The morning sun was shining upon Catalina Island in such a manner that the dark green shadow parts where in contrast with brightly lit sections that were bathed in a blazing golden morning light. A few wispy fog banks still hovered over the highest peaks of the island and were quickly retreating to the western side where they were still protected from the sun. Add to that view the deep, dark blue ocean water... What contrast!

Soon after departing Isthmus, the wind picked up to 9 knots. All three of us deployed a jib. "Morning Glory" and "Brooke" were quickly catching up. By 1250 there were force 5 winds "Hola!" was doing 6.4 kn. Shortly after we sailed around Long Point and with the wind in our backs, we sighted the round Casino building in Avalon.



We radio ahead on the VHF channel 12 for a mooring ball. The Harbor Patrol promptly notified us that they had no mooring balls available. On Arrival to the Avalon Harbor, the story about the mooring buoys mysteriously changed and we were able to secure two balls for the three boats. Immediately we radioed "Brooke" and "Morning Glory" to pass the mooring ball information and the harbor patrol quietly said to us, "I would appreciate if you did not broadcast this information on your radio."

Immediately after securing the boats to the mooring balls, Jeff jumped overboard and swam over to "Morning Glory" and "Hola!", Don, Ken and I followed suit.

Avalon was a picture perfect resort town. We wandered around town, checking out the sights. Found a grocery store, a post office and many small shops for clothing, gifts, jewelry, artwork, etc... Avalon has numerous restaurants offering all sorts of American, Ethnic and California cuisine. Many recreational opportunities, from camping to hiking, from golf to SCUBA diving to fishing, etc, in short everything you would expect from a small resort town. Splitting the harbor is the main pier, with black pillions that contrast with the brightly painted green buildings sitting on top. On the pier you could find more seafood restaurants, bait shop



and harbor office buildings. To the southeastern end of the harbor, the Holly Hill house a charming Queen Anne style cottage on the bluff over looking Avalon Bay stands majestically displaying a beautiful white round room with a contrasting red striped roof. To the northwest end the harbor one can easily see the historical the Casino Ballroom, Museum building. Along

the harbor's palm tree lined promenade, one could find many sandy beaches with rock walls. The harbor water was so clear; it was easily to see ample sea life moving in and out of the rocks.

That night after dinner we all retired to our boats... but it was not going to be a good nights sleep. The waves were entering the harbor from the west and hitting the boat broadside (broaching). All night long the boat was oscillating port and starboard, port and starboard, port and starboard... you get the drift.



Day 5 (Tuesday)

After the morning routine, coffee, garbage, Ab-fast, and one last thing ICE. We let go of the mooring lines and motored out of the Avalon Harbor and into the open sea. On the return trip we encountered 17-18 knot winds. Sailing back from Avalon to Isthmus was an exceptional sail. At one point late in the afternoon, the wind was going strong, "Morning Glory" was beating into the wind at hull speed, suddenly the wind quit, like someone turned off the switch to a gigantic fan that was churning the whole thing up. That was when Don "dropped" his motor in the water and started motoring back to Isthmus...

Don Samuelson's daughter, Kindra, rented a kayak and paddled to Fisherman's Cove where she toured the lab, the SCUBA diving facilities de-compression chamber and snorkeled with the sharks. She met a new friend from Thailand. For lunch the Samuelson's, and the Butis hiked over to Catalina Harbor past Ballast point to a little bench with a view of Cat Harbor and the Pacific Ocean. There they enjoyed a nice picnic lunch while Tish flew her square-rigger kite.



Day 6 (Wednesday)

The Talmans, the Butis and the Samuelsons made their trip to Avalon on Wednesday. On arrival they were intercepted by the harbor patrol and instructed to anchor and wait for a mooring ball to become available. Don Samuelson was able to set the hook at 150-foot depth on the first try. When a ball became available, the harbor patrol approached "Island Girl" first to offer it to them. Hughe declined the ball and as a nice gesture, he asked the harbor patrol to give it to "Pau Hana". The Butis and the Talmans returned to Isthmus the same day. For Wayne, the defining moment of the cruise was the sail from Avalon to Isthmus. At long point, the winds picked up to 15-20 kn. with 4-5' seas and overall whitecaps. Under Tish's recommendation, they hove to and reefed one point on "Ariel II's" main and dropped their 150% Genoa. The little Catalina

22 was close hauled on a windward tack doing 7 knots (as reported by their GPS unit.) To find these sailing stimulating conditions Wayne and Tish had to sail about 1 1/2 nm from shore into the San Pedro Channel.

Wednesday was the next to the last day for "Hola!" so Ken and I performed the now routine morning ritual, you know, stuff the bag in the sack, dinghy in, get the coffee and breakfast. Late morning we motored back to a little place called Howland Landing that Ken wanted to check out, just north of Cherry Cove. We could hear the Butis and the Talmans on the VHF radio as they approached Long Point. We motored past the harbor and decided to go to Emerald Harbor for one last snorkeling adventure. On arrival the Harbor Master greeted us and granted a mooring ball on the lee side of Indian Rock for a few hours. We were immediately greeted by a neighboring sailboat mooring next to ours.



I tried to do some bottom fishing but my new neighbor warned me that he thought Emerald Bay was a restricted fishing area. I did not argue and retrieved the line from the water. I retired below to read my California State Fishing Regulations manual and could not find where it prohibited fishing in Emerald Harbor. Still I think you need a law degree to correctly understand and interpret the California fishing regulations so I stowed the pole and broke out a beer. This would be our last day in the island so we threw the rest of bait overboard hoping that it would bring some sea life closer to "Hola!". Don Wight and Jeff were onboard "Brooke" and they beat to Emerald Bay to join us. On arrival, "Brooke" was unable to procure a mooring ball for the day so they sailed back to Isthmus harbor. Ken and I enjoyed snorkeling and a nice steak sandwich while we watched long branches of kelp drifting by.

Early afternoon "Hola!" departed Emerald bay en-route back to Isthmus. Ken still wanted to check out Howland Landing so we sailed there and dropped a hook in about 15 feet of water. For a moment, the anchorage was desolated. Ken readied himself for snorkeling. No sooner than he entered the ocean, two other boaters motor in to check out the cove. As it turns out, they were not checking out the cove, instead they were checking out something flying above. It was a Bald Headed Eagle! LOP 199° to Shore Building, 61° to Ship Rock and 93° to Bird Rock.

Ken observed a sign on the beach just in front of a grass-roofed hut. He swam to the beach where he read the sign. The nicely crafted wood sign on shore said "No Trespassing".

That night we met with the Lunds and the Wights for "ours to devour" AKA hors d'oeuvre, peach cobbler, wine and beer on board "Morning Glory". Afterwards we were off to see the

tavern master and sample some exotic spirits and Buffalo Milk. At evening's end, while rowing the dinghy in the dark back to "Hola!" I noticed photoluminescence radiating from where paddles disturbed the water.

The Samuelsons remained in Avalon and toured the town on a rented golf cart. In just one hour, they saw the Catalina Yacht Club where Hugh's grandfather was one of the founding members, the Wiggly Mansion and the Horse Stables among other attractions.



Day 7 (Thursday)

On the return trip, we set the auto tiller again and set a course about 30° east. The day was sunny and the fog had retreated. It was a beautiful day. The wind picked up after motoring a few miles. We set sail, ran a beam reach, auto tiller at the helm and we did hull speed all the way to San Pedro; it was the easiest sail we did all week. Along the way we sighted 2 whales one was blowing its spout. By the time we were within view of the lighthouse we had overall white caps, and 20-22 kn winds.

"Brooke" and "Fiesta con Dios" made a round trip to Avalon, they tried to anchor at White Cove to wait for a mooring ball but were unable to set the hook at 150 foot depth.

Ron and Marcia and Jeff and Pat received similar treatment as the Butis when returning from Avalon to Isthmus. They encountered the big seas and the 20-knot winds. The waves breaking over the bow of "Fiesta Con Dios", their Catalina 25 cruiser, and "Brooke" a San Juan 26 kept them nice and wet in the cockpit. The return leg was challenging. Pat called it a spirited sail... she loved it.

The Samuelsons departed Avalon and made a course to San Pedro. On their return trip they picked up a radio call from Ron and Marcia and spotted a 75-100 lbs sunfish.

Day 8 (Friday)

The Kents, the Butis and the Talmans enjoyed each other's company during an afternoon of snorkeling at Emerald Bay. They had a wonderful lunch. Tish had a great time trying on her new wet suit for the first time.

The best time for Don Wight was the awesome sailing, first experienced during the sail crossing from San Pedro to Isthmus. The Wights and the Lunds returned to San Pedro on Friday. The sail back was uneventful. Jeff only regret was that he fished all week without a single bite (what a difference El Niño makes).

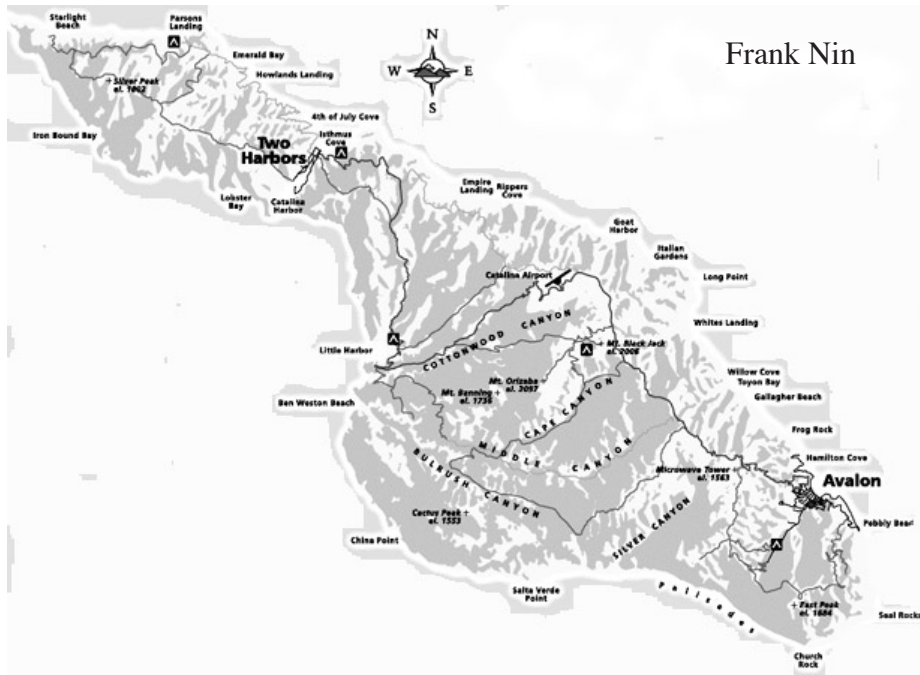
Day 9 (Saturday)

On the return leg, Ron and Marcia's boat, "Fiesta Con Dios" implemented Murphy's Law. They suffered a broken batten and a failed Main Halyard. , "Fiesta Con Dios" was able to sail back to San Pedro and maintain hull speed while using only her working jib. On arrival the Honda outboard was so tight in its mount that they had to use tools to remove it from the boat. Still Ron, had his high point watching Marcia at the helm of their Catalina 25.

For Hugh Sr., the defining moment of the cruise was the times spent with his family and friends in an island that shares so much of the Talman history. The Talman's new boat "Island Girl" performed flawlessly, in her maiden voyage enabling Hugh and his family to trek across the San Pedro Channel and down the Catalina Island shore to Avalon.

Wayne and Tish boat Ariel II also performed in perfect form. Especially during the return trip from Avalon to Isthmus when Ariel II encountered over 20 knot winds and 4-5 foot waves.

All of the boats sailed back to San Pedro at hull speed.



Club House

Cement Pour

Photos by Paul Butts



At Our Helm

At Our Helm

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Vice Commodore

Tish Buti

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Calendar of Events

September

1-3 Delta Cruise

10 PICYA Meeting – Benicia Yacht Club

8 *Race #1 Fall Series

12 General Meeting – Memorial Park

16 FLYC Centerboard Regatta

23. Folsom Lake Fall Regatta

23 *Race #2 Fall Series

30 Flea Market – Fair Grounds

October

1 .PICYA Meeting

6-8 Fleet Week – Cruise

6 Shock Invitational - Bay

6 Woman's Sailing Seminar

10 General Meeting – Lena & Larry's

13 *Race #3 Fall Series

21 *Race #4 Fall Series

24. Folsom Lake Fall Regatta

27 *Fun Race "D" Fall Awards Banquet

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The Next General Meeting

September 12

At

MEMORIAL Park

6:00 p.m. to eat 7:00 p.m. to meet

Coals will be hot at 6:00 p.m.

VISIT US ON The Web

www.nccn.net/~gcyc/

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