



NOAA Teacher at Sea
Eric Heltzel
Onboard NOAA Ship RONALD H. BROWN
September 26 – October 22, 2005

Log 2

Teacher At Sea, Monday, September 26, 2005, Eric Heltzel.

As I sit to write this entry I realize I've been on the ship just over 24 hours. It's interesting how perceptions change. I can now find my way to my berth without difficulty. I've had three excellent meals and can remember the first names of all the Scientists on the Stratus Project team. It is odd how I can hear sounds of moving water through my wall, intermittent sloshing. We are under way now so I can only assume that this noise is normal. I hope so!

Today was a very busy day. We had a lot of equipment that still needed to be loaded onto the ship and then secured. They have these really neat threaded holes all over the decks and in the science labs that you can put eye bolts into. These are attachment points for come-along straps that are used to keep objects from moving around. Much of the equipment was loaded on board with cranes that are mounted on the rear deck. We then use dollies and pallet jacks to move heavy objects around. There is stuff galore. I helped the Deck-Hands move and secure equipment this morning and helped the Science team to move equipment into the Labs. It was quite hot and humid and fairly heavy work. I felt good to help get the ship ready to go.

When we were two miles offshore we started doing safety drills. There are three, man overboard, fire, and abandon ship. Every person is assigned a mustering station where an officer (in my case, the Lead Scientist) checks to make sure we are all there. Hopefully we will not have to follow any of these procedures for real. (Sorry kids, I'm really not planning on falling overboard) There were inspectors checking that we did things correctly. We even had to put on our survival suits to see how they fit. These are a lovely red with built in gloves, booties, and a hood. Very becoming, perhaps a good school uniform?



Eric on deck of the RON BROWN

We finally got under way about 19:00 and are traveling in a southerly direction. I went on deck to watch the sun go down behind a

cumulus cloudbank. The skyline of Miami was backlit with a rosy glow. I even saw a Dolphin racing along beside us. It has been a full day and a great start to my adventure on board the RONALD H. BROWN.

Eric Heltzel