



The *SOLO CHALLENGER*



The Official Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society

Officers:

President: Rob Robins
Vice President: Jeff Urbina
Treasurer: Mike Mahar
Recording Secretary: Jon Jacobs
Corresponding & Email Secretary: Jo Buckingham

Directors:

Tony Driza
Matt Scharl – Safety Chair/Chicago Mac Vice Chair
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Newsletter Editors: Tony Driza & Jo Buckingham

Spring 2007

The 2007 Mackinac Solo Challenges Edition!



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Rob Robins

Fellow GLSS Members:

It is hard to believe it is still only spring with this crazy weather we have been getting. I am hoping that it has provided that little extra time to get those last projects done and the boat in the water ready to go for the Mac challenges. Speaking of which, we haven't heard from many of you that said you were aboard for this years challenge to Mackinac Island. Please take the time to drop your application in the mail (with a check!) so that have a better idea of how the challenges are coming together. Your Board and particularly our RC Blair Arden, have been

working hard to make this another great event and another great, and yes, historic year.

Look ahead on your calendars or log on to our webpage and check out the other great challenges scheduled for this year. Wally McMinn and Tom Munson are heading up a fine team for the inaugural Trans Erie Challenge this summer. Dick Lappin, Eric Thomas, David Herring, and Tony Driza have the Trans-Superior well in hand as well. Check out the details and send in your application for these membership granting events. Not ready for the big ones just yet? Pick a warm-up race for either side of the state from our list of shorter events.

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From our virtual Board Room I can tell you that your Board of Directors has been busy keeping the GLSS moving forward. We are finalizing the process to become a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. This will allow us to accept donations for things like the Tracker for the Mac Challenges as well as financial support and "in kind" donations for our Open Houses and Safety Seminars while allowing the

donor to receive a tax credit. We also avoid paying sales tax on our purchases for GLSS events. A good move all around. We'll keep you posted on the progress.

There is a lot more information in this fine issue put together by Jo Buckingham and Tony Driza, so I won't drone on further.

See ya on the water!
Rob

PS – The Ship's Store is up and running and the gear is quality stuff! I know - I bought some! ***Have you?***



2007 Solo Macs

Spring is solidly here – **at last!** Boats are floating, projects are underway, and hopefully, plans are being made for the event that is the centerpiece of the GLSS – the Solo Mackinac Challenges. Anticipation is building for the skippers who will be competing in the 2007 Challenges, and even for those that haven't done a Challenge in a while (come on, you old timers – there's no time like the present to enter another one!). Are you re-playing past Challenges in your mind to see where it might have unraveled, thinking about the course to figure out where you want to be when that new wind comes in? Why not??

We all know that the Port Huron and Chicago to Mackinac Solo Challenges are special in that we can look forward to great racing on two Great Lakes simultaneously, with the allure of Mackinac Island drawing us northward. There are the wrapped halyards and spinnakers, gear gone missing in the middle of the night, black flies, windless days, and I won't begin to recreate the really soul-searching times we've all encountered on the lakes. I don't know about you, but I remember all the rotten times during a Challenge, but even the bad times take on positive outlook of sorts when they are viewed in the rearview mirror. Have any one of us that have completed one of these Challenges ever forgotten that feeling of sailing across the finish line and hearing the words "Welcome to Mackinac Island!" and then having members of the Race Committee and your fellow competitors help you tie up? How about the sense of satisfaction of walking up the sidewalk into the Mackinac Island Yacht Club, turning in the paperwork, and starting to embellish your race with your fellow competitors? The awards luncheon has become legendary for the quality of

food offered the past couple of years and I'm sure that this year will be no different. To top it all off, is there anything better than receiving a medallion for a successful finish, or a place flag?

The Challenges will once again be viewable on-line thanks to the Tracker application developed by member David Herring. There will be skipper bio information available (if you take the time to send it in to us, and a photo if you wish), and positions will be updated approximately every 6 hours. We will be using satellite phones throughout the fleets and cell phones when coverage is available to phone in the coordinates to a land based data updater (President Rob Robins). It's purely for entertainment purposes, and to help publicize the Mac Challenges. If the response is anything at all like that generated last year, we'll see a lot of interest in our events via the website.

There's no better time than this year's event to re-kindle those feelings that have lain dormant for a year, or longer. Last year's windless event on Lake Michigan has many, including the editor, looking for a measure of redemption. My entry is in for the 2007 Chicago to Mackinac – ***is yours?*** [Download your forms today](#) and send them in!



***Don't forget to make your
slip reservations for the
Mackinac Challenges!***

If the marina is run by the State of Michigan (**Port Huron** and **Mackinac Island**), you can make [reservations on-line](#) by visiting the State of Michigan DNR website. It's a good idea to have a slip reserved in advance, using your best guess as to when you will actually get into Mackinac Island. There are restrictions when making a reservation and it is possible to lose both your slip and money if you don't let the marina know you'll be running late. All of the details are available on-line; take the time to read them carefully. If by some chance you don't get a slip at Mackinac Island, consider St. Ignace or Mackinac City and simply take the ferry over. If you're in need of fuel in the Straights, St. Ignace and Mackinac City are the only two choices anyway... In Chicago, slips are available at **DuSable Marina (312.742.3577)**, and **Columbia Yacht Club (312.938.3625)**. Moorings are usually available by contacting **Monroe Harbor (312.742.7643)**. Monroe Harbor and DuSable Harbor begin taking reservations after May 15th.

A Mackinac Island Tradition

So you've just finished your Mackinac Solo Challenge, and the boat is secure in the slip. You've made the trek up to Race Headquarters to turn in all of your paperwork within the four hour period (you did get it in, right?). For those that don't have showers on board, that first one ashore feels mighty nice, even if you do have to keep hitting the button for more water. What's next -maybe grab a bite to eat, then catch up on some much needed sleep, and wait for the rest of the fleet to come in. When they finally all make it, a tradition which is steeped in GLSS history is just waiting to happen. I'm talking about the infamous **Pub Crawl** of course!

The logical sequence would be to walk up to the French Outpost for starters, and from there it's steady crawl or stagger back down the hill, hitting places like the Mustang, and Horn's Irish Pub before winding up at the Pink Pony for the grand finale. It would be there that the winner would be crowned, undoubtedly left to wander the streets till closing time while his fellow skippers gave up, and went back to bed.

The past few years have seen a marked decrease in the **Pub Crawl** attendance. It would seem that there are a few members who have in the past been the lead instigators to said crawling, and they have at best been derelict in the performance of their duties. That simply has to change! To proffer an excuse or two, Super Macs have kept a few of those ringleaders off the island, and windless days caused dropouts - injuries on the course may have kept a few at bay as well.

You veteran crawlers know who you are, and it is squarely upon your shoulders to train the next generation. Let's have a little fun on the Island this year, and bring back that grandest of traditions, the venerable **Pub Crawl!**



Have you Entered the Solo Mac Challenges Yet?

by Jo Buckingham

The Solo Challenges are at the forefront and we have not received your entry form yet - mine included. Wow, the economy sucks here in Detroit, I am buried in work and I have not had a chance to fare the keel in before I launched her once again. So I'm thinking maybe I'll cut this year.

I consider every reason I can, not to enter this challenge every year. I actually manifested one a couple of years ago and have since made the challenge the absolute #1 holiday priority for myself. Why???

1. The Opportunity / The incredible luck of the draw that I CAN.
2. Quiet!!! The absolute bliss of the silence of Nature.
3. The peeks into Phil and Dave's radio conversation when the Bliss is more than I can take.
4. THE MILKY WAY, THE MILKY WAY, and THE MILKY WAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
5. Appreciation for the guys that came up with this bull-shit idea to begin with.
6. Time for Introspection and Forgiveness
7. The Northern Lights, they are so overwhelming they need no caps.
8. The CHALLENGE
9. Personal ACCOMPLISHMENT
10. Gerylann and crew at the dock with the Rum

Please be sure to add back your roller furling credit upon submitting your rating.



It Takes a Pair....

As anyone who has completed a membership granting solo challenge will tell you, it can be a tough ordeal. There are any number who will also be quick to say in the same breath that in comparison to getting the boat to the starting line, the Challenge was the easy part!

This year in particular, time to work on the boat outdoors on the weekends has been hard to come by. If I hadn't stored indoors last winter, there is no way the boat would be ready for this year's event. Even so, without the help of my bride Joanie, I'd be watching the event unfold on the computer via the Tracker application.

I don't think I'm unique when it comes to having a significant other or some shore crew spend a lot of time working on the boat, helping to deliver the boat, or just being happy to let me go off for a couple of weeks and do some solo sailing. They need not actually wield the paint brush to help make your solo sailing dream a reality; just being there to have you bounce thoughts off of, or perhaps lend a hand with your meal planning and packing allows you to devote more time to other areas. Without the support and assistance of the shore crew team, a lot

of us wouldn't be competing in the events year in and year out.

So for all of you who help make sailing in one of the Challenges a reality, Thank You!



A Skipper from the Past Returns

It's not every year that a skipper who hasn't competed in a Solo Mac Challenge in 21 years decides to make a return to Great Lakes Solo Racing. It's even more of an oddity that this skipper now calls Florida home and will be trucking his boat north – if nothing else, **Steve Pettengill** will have the distinction of coming the farthest distance to compete in the Port Huron to Mackinac Solo Challenge.

Covering great distances is nothing new to Steve, setting a record for the fastest time between New York and San Francisco in 1989, just three years after his last Port Huron to Mackinac Challenge. Not content to sit still for long, Steve was on board *Great American* again as he along with Rich Wilson were attempting to break the record between San Francisco and Boston, via Cape Horn. It was during that attempt at 40 degrees south latitude, 400 miles west of Cape Horn that *Great American* capsized in 65 foot waves, while surfing under bare poles at 16-18 knots. Plucked from the sea by the *New Zealand Pacific*, Steve and Rich were saved, but the boat lost. Not wishing to call it a career just yet, Steve mounted a very successful campaign on *Hunter's Child* in the 1994 Around Alone Challenge, finishing a respectable second to the French winner, Christophe Auguin. Steve's time of 128 days was just 7 behind that of Auguin, and just one ahead of the third place finisher, Jean Luc van den Heede – exciting racing to be sure!

Since then, Steve has been the Director of Hunter Marine's Offshore Testing department, and has been responsible for a good deal of the improvements to the Hunter fleet. Steve was awarded the Ralph Eilberg Trophy for Outstanding Seamanship twice, the first in 1990, and again in 1993.

As of this writing, who knows what boat Steve will be sailing, but you can bet he will out there enjoying it to the max. If you're on the fence about doing this year's Port Huron to Mac, this will be a great year to jump into the fray, as current entrants include others with significant ocean miles beneath their keels as well: G. David Evans, Cheryl

Cameron, and likely, but not official yet, Phil Rubright.

Most notably, Dick Lappin is entered in the Mac and his successful completion will give him the distinction of being the **only member in GLSS history to complete 25 Solo Mac Challenges!**



2007 Solo Trans Superior

It's an odd-numbered year, which means that 2007 will once again feature the running of the Trans Superior International Yacht Race. The GLSS will once again have a singlehanded division within the race, and interest is running at a very high level this year. It is still early, but if the actual entries match the "I'm going to get my application in soon" intent, there will be approximately **25 skippers participating in the event!** If those numbers hold true to form, the Singlehanded Division would have outnumbered the entries received in the 2005 crewed division. The spirit of singlehanded sailing is alive and well on the waters of Lake Superior!

New for 2007 will be the addition of satellite based boat tracking, developed by FIS. All boats will be equipped with a transponder device which will automatically relay the boat's position when polled by the satellite. The positions will be updated at regular intervals on the web, and those not participating in the event can follow the progress of the fleets as they race between Sault Ste. Marie and Duluth. The link to the race tracking viewer is:

<http://www.fistracking.com/transsup/2007/>

Thanks to some significant sponsors, the TSRC is able to offer this benefit at a modest entry fee increase, and it will surely result in a tremendous increase in singlehanded sailing in the Great Lakes region. Feel free to post the link at your yacht club or marina so that your fellow skippers can follow the race in near real time!

For those that haven't sent in the entry form yet, the clock is ticking down. All of the required forms are available on the GLSS website for downloading, and printing. Point the web browser of your choice to:

<http://www.solosailor.org/transup.php>

All entrants in the singlehanded division have the opportunity to order either a sweater or polo shirt (or both...) commemorating the event and successful finishers will receive a medallion at the

2008 AGM. Most importantly, those finishers who are non-members will be granted lifetime membership in the Society. Of the entries received to date, over half are from first-timers – we should see many new members joining the ranks in 2007. Get your application in soon, and join your fellow singlehanders on the starting line near the Gros Cap light at the entrance to the St. Mary's River on **August 4, 2007!**

Raising Awareness on Lake Erie *by Wally McMinn*

Lake Erie sailors are beginning to hear about GLSS and our Challenge events as Wally McMinn, Tom Munson, and Erik Johnson make the rounds along the south shore. Very few sailors and yacht clubs



A Good Crowd at NCYC With Tom Munson Overseeing

are aware of GLSS and on the Lake, but are very receptive to our message of safe, challenging singlehanded sailing. The Sailing School at North Cape Yacht Club (our start host club), and The Sandusky Sailing Club both hosted presentations of our "Basic Seamanship Skills Applied to Singlehanded Sailing" seminars. They and the Erie Yacht Club (our finish host club) have invited articles about GLSS and the 2007 Lake Erie Solo Challenge for their club publications. Interest in our Society and all of the Challenge events is growing on the Lake.

The start of the Lake Erie Solo Challenge just off of North Cape Yacht Club is expected to draw singlehanders from not only the large Cleveland/Toledo areas, but the Detroit area as well. There are even rumors floating about that a few of the skippers participating in this year's Trans Superior may be bringing their boats southward for

the inaugural. It is shaping up to be a well attended event – you can certainly help make that a reality by visiting the GLSS website, and [downloading your forms!](#)



Revisiting the GLSS Website

If you haven't been to the GLSS website lately, take a few minutes to [peruse the updated contents](#). For starters, you'll find all of the entry forms and related race documents posted. You can download them to your computer, or simply print them directly off the site using the print function of your browser. Check out the calendar – don't miss any upcoming events simply because you might have missed an email or snail mailing. On the main pages for the Macs, Trans Superior, or Lake Erie Solo Challenges, you'll find a countdown calculator to tell you how little time you have left to get your race application sent in!

If you have any old gear to sell, send [me](#) a description of the item, a picture if you wish, and I'll put it in the classifieds – no charge to dues paying members. I'll be putting some of my gear up there shortly, which includes a complete set of Autohelm ST-50 instruments, and an Autohelm Pathfinder 4kw radar with NavPod mount.

Take some time as well to take a gander at the Ship's Store – there are numerous items for sale or pre-ordering. In stock and ready for shipment are GLSS caps, featuring either the Chicago to Mackinac logo, or the Port Huron to Mackinac logo (available in khaki or navy). If you have an idea for a new item, please let me know, and we'll consider it.

If you have any suggestions for improving the website, send them to [me](#) and I'll see what can be done. Future improvements hope to include an expanded photo gallery, and videos of singlehanded sailing. Keep your camera handy during this year's events, and if you have captured an image that you feel is a one-of-a-kind, feel free to send it to me.

Lastly, if you have any member views on topics related to singlehanded sailing, please feel free to submit them as well. It keeps the website fresh, and puts new information out where fellow skippers can readily get to it.

Still a bargain – 2007 Member dues remain unchanged at \$30. Use PayPal on the web – cash and checks are always cheerfully accepted too!

The 2008 GLSS Yearbook

In a departure from all previous yearbooks (which in reality has mostly been a Mac Challenge booklet), the Board is in the process of doing a complete makeover for the 2008 version. It's very early in the planning process, but in keeping with the "Yearbook" theme, we'd like it to be a recap of all GLSS activities in 2007, not just the Macs.

We certainly don't have a monopoly on ideas to give this a fresh look, and towards that end (and since it is *your* yearbook, we'd appreciate your input in how to effectively accomplish this makeover. Specifically, we're looking for:

- Recaps of **all** GLSS events, from the 2007 AGM, the Open Houses, Challenges, Fall Race Slate, Big Al's Steak Roast
- Pictures from any of the above. These will likely wind up printed in black & white...
- Individual accounts of participation in other sailing events, such as a Bermuda One-Two or a look back on an OSTAR or similar
- Ideas/suggestions

The thought is that this would be available by the 2008 AGM, to be held in Detroit, so there is a lot of work to do to avoid the look of a publication that was just cut & pasted together at the last minute. Your early input will help avoid that!



Jib Notes

by Jo Buckingham

Considering how busy everyone is for the next 5 months and staying compliant with the current environmental initiatives, I would prefer to only send out a hard copy of the newsletter and all other correspondence to those of you that contact me at (586) 779-2530. If email is more to your liking, jocelyn.buckingham@sbcglobal.net is the email address to use. If you can't wait to add a two cent stamp to the pile of \$.39 ones you have, please send the request to me via the USPS: Jo Buckingham, 20534 Yale, Saint Clair Shores, MI, 48081. Thank you, jo.

Please do not forget to remove your roller-furling credit from the rating you submit for the challenges.

Ahoy Neptune's, a **friendly reminder for your participation in this fine letter of correspondence.** Especially from the charter members who have the best stories, the most

knowledge and the gift of time. Surely there are plenty of memories of Charlie Eno's voyage in the J24.



Carolina on My Mind....

by Bob Verhaeghe

Hello Skippers,

I think the weather Gods have it in for us. We were promised N/W winds @ 7 to 9 KTS for the race time. It was that way when we arrived but then filled in with more wind, even before we got set-up. Guess I should have known better when that cloud came in over us !!! (See attached picture)



We had winds at 15 with gusts at 20 kts. most of the day. The races were fast and fun.



The results again show that we are also having some close finishes. Henry, with Rana, and Rod, with On-Line Marine had some close quarter sailing with the other boats too.

RACE RESULTS

POINTS

First- Coastal-Frank Dunnebacke 10

Second-Yellow Bird- Bob Verhaeghe 14

Third - On Line Marine - Rod Jordan 21

Fourth -Rana - Henry Van Gamper 24

Fifth - Windward - Lloyd Giegle 30



We're nearing the end of the 2007 Spring Series.....maybe only one or two more weekends. After that it's questionable as to whether we will be racing on a regular basis, due to the usual heat and lack of wind. We'll play it by ear.

See you next week, weather permitting and the wind Gods willing...

Bob V

Upcoming Events in 2007

June 23	Solo Mac Challenges
August 4	Trans-Superior Solo
August 25	Lake Erie Solo
September 7	L. Michigan Scramble
September 8	Lower Huron Solo
September 29	St. Clair Solo & Big Al's Steak Roast

Be sure to check the website often for details on these events!

<http://www.solosailor.org/>