



# The *Solo Challenger*

*Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society*



**Officers:**

President: Tony Driza  
Vice President: Paul Schloop  
Treasurer: Blair Arden  
Recording Secretary: Dan Pavlat  
Corresponding & Email Secretary: Jim McLaren

**Directors:**

Erik Johnson  
Al Merrithew  
Matt Scharl  
Bill Smith

**Spring 2005**

## **A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*Tony Driza*

2005 blasted out of the blocks on a high note, as the GLSS took to the Windy City of Chicago in a big way. It began with the first ever GLSS information booth at Strictly Sail in Navy Pier. GLSS volunteers manned the booth over the four day event, providing interested skippers with information on everything from how to manage sleep to finding us on the web. I'm certain that nearly every volunteer has a contact that they feel will be participating in one of our races this year, perhaps even a Mackinac Solo Challenge! Check out the article on page 3 for more detail on our first ever venture at Strictly Sail.

lifetime GLSS members. The Board of Directors was realigned by a member vote as well, dropping in number from twelve to nine. Lastly, the membership voted in new Director Bill Smith to a three-year term. Congratulations Bill!



Featured speaker Kip Stone of *Artforms*

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The highlight of the weekend occurred as members thoroughly enjoyed the inaugural Annual General Meeting held in Chicago. Former President Jim McLaren located the perfect venue for the gathering – Maggiano's Restaurant. Jim presided over his final AGM as GLSS president and tallied the votes which saw members approving a Constitutional amendment allowing for first time finishers of the Trans Superior Solo to become

Members and guests alike were then treated to heaping plates of some of the finest Italian cuisine to be found in Chicago. The pleasingly stuffed gathering subsequently settled back to listen to our feature speaker, Kip Stone, describe the journey he undertook to complete the dream of his life – to not only take part in, but finish first in the 2004 TransAt in his Open 50, *Artforms*. A fascinating presentation, made all the more remarkable by the fact that until competing in the TransAt, Kip had never raced solo before. Talk about a giant step! Member Jeff Urbina was instrumental in bringing Kip to Chicago in many ways, and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude!

New Officers were elected at the February Board of Directors meeting held in Kalamazoo. Your new Board consists of Tony Driza - President, Paul Schloop – Vice President, Blair Arden remains as Treasurer, Dan Pavlat, serving out what he swears is his last year, is Recording

Secretary, and Jim McLaren switches fedoras and will serve as Corresponding & Email Secretary. Newly elected Director Bill Smith rounds out the rest of the Board consisting of Erik Johnson, Al Merrithew, and Matt Scharl. Bill Dembek, who has put in many years serving the membership of the GLSS tendered his resignation at the meeting for personal reasons, and with great reluctance, it was accepted. Thanks Bill for all of your hard work and input! Bill won't be far from the action though as he and Julie Slack will be learning the ropes at Big Al's Steak Roast from the Big Guy himself.



Past-President Jim McLaren and *Sovereign*

This is going to be a *phenomenal* year for the GLSS. There is more than a hint of excitement in the air as the Mac Races, including the Super Macs, emerge from this wretched blanket of snow. With the passage of the Constitutional amendment to enable membership in the GLSS for first-time skippers who successfully complete the inaugural Trans Superior Singlehanded Challenge on August 6, there is yet another venue, every bit as testing as Lakes Huron and Michigan, to strengthen and enrich our ranks. I would like to offer my sincerest thanks to Dan Pavlat, Dick Lappin, and Eric Thomas for their tireless behind the scenes toiling to make this a reality. And to you, the membership of the GLSS, my profound gratitude for your vision in voting the Trans Superior into reality.

Our Society is incredibly vibrant, and our bottom line is healthy. Our dues paying members for 2005 show a nice increase over last year as of this writing, and that is very significant. We are doing everything feasible to get the word out about the GLSS. If you've paid your dues for 2005, thank you very much. If you just haven't gotten around to it for whatever reason please consider taking a minute or two, and writing out a check for eight cents a day, otherwise known as \$30.00 per year. It's got to be one of the best values in sailing! That \$30 buys a lot more than just fun, it keeps our Society operating.

See you on the water!

*Please keep the GLSS updated if you change your snail, email address, or phone number(s). Please send any corrections to: [jgmlindpub@aol.com](mailto:jgmlindpub@aol.com)  
Thanks!!*

## *Strictly Sail: Smashing Success!*

Abundant alliteration aside, our first-ever Strictly Sail booth was, by every measure, a top drawer event of the first order. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Eric Johnson, Tony Driza, and a wonderful group of volunteers who stepped up from five states and two countries (!), we had a well organized booth with LOTS of activity over the four day show.

The organizers of Strictly Sail make available, to organizations such as ours, 10 x 10 "table" booths at a nominal charge. Throw in a dash of GLSS *extreme makeover* ingenuity and PRESTO, a palace replete with the Show's Tallest Banner, a "refreshment" bar, and a "Big Screen" TV...yup, a 32" monitor playing a continuous loop video compiled by Tony *IfICan'tFlyI'llPlayGeorgeLucas* Driza!! Many thanks to all who responded to our call for pictures, and double to Tony who earned an Oscar Meyer creating an informative and captivating video of the GLSS! (While we're patting him on the back for taking 6 months sabbatical to assure the communication within and outside the GLSS reached unparalleled heights, Tony *IlikeGutenbergToo* Driza also whipped up a GLSS color brochure which, if you've not seen it, you should...drop me a line and I'll sail one, or more, out to you!)

How was our traffic at the Show? As a neighboring exhibitor observed late Sunday, "Between your own members ('the folks in the green vests'), friends, and interested visitors, you had the busiest booth at the show!" That says it all: We filled four pages with names and e-mail addresses and had many more visitors than that; most may never complete a Solo Mac/Superior, but it is *very clear* that more sailors than ever are focusing on single/shorthanded sailing, safety techniques, and procedures...to the extent that we are in discussion with Strictly Sail regarding a GLSS seminar at the Show next year! Many thanks go to our 'corporate' sponsors for the late afternoon GLSS Happy Hours which, no doubt, contributed to the "busiest booth" effect: Alan Veenstra (Chicago Sailing), Tim Kent (Harken), and Peter Karl (Dr. Detroit). Thank you for furnishing well deserved refreshments!

*Was it worth exhibiting?* Absolutely. Certainly it is easier for more people to "find" us now; more importantly, we were able to provide some much needed guidance out there, and we need to continue to do so.

*Should we exhibit again?* I would love to, if we can all do it together so we'll have as much fun as we did this year!

## Some views from Strictly Sail 2005



Tallest banner at the Show! Tom Munson and Julie Slack compare notes...Bill Dembek headed for the bar, and Dan Pavlat...?



Dan Pavlat selling the GLSS (or swampland in LA.) while Lease Shock, Matt Scharl, and Blair Arden standby to rescue..

## Faraday Mill OSTAR Update

By Tony Driza



While most of us are still thinking about getting out to the boatyard to take stock of what lurks beneath the winter cover, one of our ranks has been toiling away for months, preparing for the 2005 Faraday Mill OSTAR Trans Atlantic Singlehanded Race. Not the easiest of tasks, as Phil Rubright first had to *find* the right boat for the race, before he could start to *prep* it.

Phil is one of 41 skippers, only four of which are competing from the United States. No stranger to the Atlantic, this will be Phil's third OSTAR, and coincidentally, third birthday celebrated crossing the Atlantic. On his bio page for the race, Phil put it best – *"I will turn 66 at sea on the delivery voyage from Charleston, SC to Plymouth as I turned 57 and 61 at sea on the delivery voyages from the East Coast of the US to Plymouth in 1996 and 2000. There is no better way to celebrate a birthday than being at sea in the North Atlantic heading for the Royal Western Yacht Club with*

*the anticipation of the start of the Singlehanded Transatlantic race and all activities that go on before the start!"* Hard to argue with that!

Phil is sailing a new-to-him boat, a one-off 45, christened *Echo-Zulu* (EZ, although I don't know how *easy* it will be...). The boat has been in Charleston, SC undergoing the makeover to outfit her for ocean racing. If boats are a hole in the water that you pour money into, *Echo-Zulu* is canyon-like; fortunately for Phil, he has perfected the long lost art of alchemy –however, instead of turning lead into gold, Phil has become quite adept at turning plastic into boat gear. To date, there are new sails, a Raymarine 7000 autopilot, a backup pilot, 3 GPS units, a 3200 GPH bilge pump, two smaller bilge backup pumps, a satellite telephone, radar, and countless smaller but nonetheless expensive items. As Phil said, "It's only money!"

Joining Phil in Charleston for the delivery to Plymouth, England, are fellow GLSS members *George Bergh* and *Lynn Hulber*. They will be arriving on April 13<sup>th</sup>, with an anticipated cast off for their first stop, Horta, on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Sixteen days have been allotted for the 2,600-mile crossing, allowing for a few windless encounters. They have built in a 4-day layover in Horta to allow for a good weather window for the final push to Plymouth England, and the Royal Western Yacht Club. It is 1,400 miles from Horta to Plymouth, slightly more back-to-back Super Macs. That should allow for plenty of time to prepare for the race, scheduled to start on May 29<sup>th</sup>, and to partake of the pre-race festivities.

GLSS members can keep track of Phil and the rest of the skippers competing in the race by checking the OSTAR website:

<http://www.faradaymillostar2005.co.uk/>

Phil will have email capability while at sea, and has promised to keep us updated, as he is able. It should be quite an adventure that we can all do a bit of vicarious sailing through!

***Good luck from all of your GLSS family!***

## ***Solo Scramble 2004***

The Solo Scramble is unique in its simultaneous start format: The East Division start from Holland, Michigan is synchronized with a West Division start across Lake Michigan in Racine, Wisconsin. The NOAA mid-Lake weather buoy is the turning mark for both Divisions, followed by a "run" (ha!) down the Lake to finish in Michigan City. This late season event never fails to serve up some surprises, and last Fall's was no exception!

By 1800 h on Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, the West Division was underway with spectacular close reaching conditions...SSE winds bouncing between 10-20knots. Newcomer **Chris Peterson** in his Farr 40 *Program*, took full advantage of the conditions and did a speedy "horizon job" on most of us within an hour or two! Aboard *Sovereign* a different kind of horizon job arose early in the event: While settling into some minor trimming tasks and preparing for the night's run, I was stunned to realize that the chatter coming across Channel 72 was none other than **Joe Turns, Paul Schloop, Bill Smith**, and others from the East Shore Division, and they were bemoaning totally windless conditions! Well, being the loquacious sort, I gave them a hail and, much to everyone's surprise, there we were chirping at each other some 60 miles apart...me with 15 knots abeam and them doing doughnuts!

The wind gradually built throughout the night (filling in at last for our East Division compatriots) so that, once 'round the weather buoy, the "run" down to Michigan City became a tough slog to windward till the early morning when, you guessed it my friends, the wind virtually shut off! Chris (*Program*), **Jeff Urbina** on his new Sabre 40 *Bodacious* and , as I recall, that sly fox **John Ayres** (*Riptide*) managed to sneak into Michigan City on the dying wind Saturday morning. The East Division, beset by light air much of Friday night, were again left with no wind and little overall progress. By mid-afternoon, with no relief in sight, it was clear that only the few boats close enough to drift the last few miles would finish at a "reasonable" hour.

I am pleased to report that, having reached the decision to fire up the iron genny, most of the East Division pressed on to Michigan City and our traditional Saturday night Dock Party, hosted so graciously by the indefatigable **Dave (Whattimeisitanyway?) Rearick!** **Joe Turns**, the only East Division finisher, arrived while we could still tie him up, the grills were ablaze with brats and steaks (thanks again, Dave!), we passed the bottle (as we do every year since 9/11) in a toast to absent comrades, nobody crippled themselves navigating across Mike Hanson's (Contour 34 *Solar Express*) nets, and another rowdy, fun and memorable Solo Scramble went into the record books!

## ***2005 Mackinac Races***

The Solo Mackinac/SuperMac events for this year are shaping up to be some of the best ever: We have quite a number of new entries, a strong showing from the "old" guard (yes, that would include me, thanks), and the SuperMac contingent promises to be big! It appears at this point as though the monohulls are SuperMacking East-to-West starting in Port Huron, and the multis are (no great surprise) doing the opposite! And the best news is that we have every assurance that the weather will be favorable...somewhere!

The deadlines are coming up quickly so take a break, wash off the bottom paint, and shoot an application in so your plaque will be waiting for you in Mackinac...or Chicago...or Port Huron! I hope everyone is having a Super Spring, and look forward to a great June 18<sup>th</sup>!

### ***Calendar of Events***

***April 12, 2005 – Open House CYC Chicago***

***April 19, 2005 – Open House NSSC***

***June 18, 2005- 27<sup>th</sup> Port Huron - Mac  
9<sup>th</sup> Chicago – Mac***

***Note: This will also be a Super Mac Year!***

***August 6, 2005 - Trans Superior Solo***

***Sept. 9, 2005 Lake Michigan Scramble***

***Sept. 10, 2005 Lower Huron Solo***

***Oct. 1, 2005 St. Clair Solo & Big Al's  
Steak Roast***

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

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