



The *Solo Challenger*

Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society



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Fall/Winter 2005

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Tony Driza

The clock has counted down to the finish of an incredibly successful season of racing under the GLSS banner. The turnout for all of our events was excellent, and a new race, the Sault Ste. Marie to Duluth Solo Trans Superior was added to the slate of events. Thirteen entrants registered for the inaugural running, twelve started, ten finished, and we proudly welcome the first new members of the Society to gain admittance by virtue of finishing a Solo Trans Superior. On behalf of the entire Society, I wish to extend a warm welcome to new members:

*Tom Agerter
David Herring
Mike Labore*

The inaugural Sault to Duluth President's Challenge Cup will be awarded to Tom Agerter who turned in a stellar performance in his 23-foot Ranger – congratulations Tom!

The fall race slate consisting of the Lake Michigan Solo Scramble, the Lower Huron Solo, and the St. Clair Solo/Big Al's Steak Roast were well attended. Despite light air for the Lake Michigan Scramble and the Lower Huron Solo, a good time was had by all (maybe we ought to move these closer to the "gales of November"). Of note, the St. Clair Solo baton has been passed from previous years' co-chairs Dave Evans and Dan Pavlat to Steve Stoll. The Society owes Dave and Dan a huge debt of gratitude for running this event through the years; the Society is also most appreciative of the effort and hard work that Steve put into this year's event. It is in safe hands, and with one running under his belt, I'm sure that

Steve won't have to toil quite as hard next year! Additionally, "Big Al" Merrithew has turned over the reins of the Steak Roast to the very capable Julie Dembek. I didn't hear of anyone who wandered away hungry when all was said and done. Big Al supplied the steaks again, and numerous other volunteers from NSSC and GLSS ensured that it was a successful event. My profound

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thanks to all who had a hand in contributing to the success of all the events!

This issue also marks the final chapter in my tenure as President of the Society. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve in this capacity, and I am most appreciative of the help of my fellow Board of Directors for all of their hard work, and to the Membership for what has seemed to be an unending supply of advice. This year has seen a marked increase in paid up member dues to **over 90**, we successfully added a new race, we are welcoming a stunning total of **fifteen new Members** to our ranks, and financially, we are in great shape for 2006 and well beyond. Changes to our website are in the works, the 2006 Open Houses/Safety Seminars are set, and we will have a greater presence at Strictly Sail in February. Due to the efforts of past President Jim McLaren, in addition to our booth, the GLSS will be presenting a seminar covering singlehanded sailing. Plans are already underway to celebrate in style, the **10th**

Anniversary of the Chicago to Mackinac race. Other, perhaps less noticeable changes are underway within the Society, and your Board of Directors for 2006 will be just as aggressive in pursuing every opportunity to promote the GLSS, our members, and our races. There are only two Great Lakes remaining where we have no presence, and I hope that we can pursue thoughtful expansion to Lakes Erie and Ontario in the coming years.

I urge you all to contribute your time and thoughts, as you are able to do so. When all is said and done, it is the Membership who will make or break the Society. The laundry list is long, and typically, the list of “clothes washers” is much smaller. Be it simply paying dues, volunteering to help at an event, or serving on the Board, we can all do our part to ensure the viability of the organization.

I'll see you on the water!

Trans Superior – A few Impressions *by Bill Tucker*

The 2005 Singlehanded Trans Superior was my first sailing experience on Lake Superior. The following is a brief summary of my impressions of Lake Superior and this unique race:

- **Solo or Crewed:** Going through the McArthur Lock on the American side at Sault St. Marie was an interesting experience. Many of the crew members on the crewed boats seemed fascinated with the single handed boats and wanted to know how anyone could possibly sail this race with a crew of less than a half dozen. As we waited in the lock one of the crewmembers from a crewed boat climbed aboard the single-handed boat next to me to get a better look at how the boat was rigged and to talk about autopilots and sleeping.
- **Size:** Lake Superior is the largest freshwater lake in the world, yet as I sailed its length it seemed small, almost cozy compared to my sailing experience on lakes Huron and Erie. As I entered the western third of the lake, I could see the shore on both sides. At that point, I realized the difference was the beautiful mountains that surround Lake Superior. These mountains made the shore visible for much of the race.
- **Weather:** Lake Superior weather has a nasty, intimidating reputation; however, my three and a half day sail was very pleasant though the frequent wind shifts were certainly frustrating. The second night was the most memorable as the very light and shifty wind made it difficult to make forward progress. I did quite a few 360 degree turns that night. Winds never got over 20 knots. The day to night temperature change was dramatic. During the day, I wore a tee shirt and shorts but by about 3 AM I was wearing long underwear, a sweater, foul weather gear and drinking hot chocolate and soup to keep warm. It felt as though I got more exercise changing cloths then sailing the boat.
- **Duluth – by Night:** I had never been to the port of Duluth before, and as with any night-approach to a new port was a bit apprehensive. The chart showed an

impressive harbor that stretched from Duluth to Superior with a break wall in front that extended almost 10 miles. As I approached at night it was impossible to distinguish between the city lights and the navigation lights. GPS relieved my concern somewhat. The finish line was established so that one was headed directly toward the breakwater as one finished. There was only a tenth of a mile between the finish line and the breakwater. At 5 knots there was only a little more than a minute to confirm one had finished and turn around before going smack into the wall. Fortunately, the Race Committee had a representative to signal my finish even at 1 AM in the morning. As I had approached I had been particularly puzzled by a number of vertical flashing lights and wondered if they could be port cranes, or some sort of amusement park? The following day the mystery was solved. They were lights on radio antennas located on the mountain behind Duluth!

- **Duluth – by Day:** In my mind I had expected Duluth to be a rundown, industrial town. The city was a pleasant



Photo by Tony Driza

surprise, especially the waterfront where I took numerous walks. In the time I spent, I visited a Coast Guard Cutter, a freighter that had been converted to a museum, a whale back freighter, as well as the aquarium.

In summary, the Trans Superior race was a pleasant experience. I am glad that some of my preconceived notions turned out to be incorrect.

The Inaugural Trans Superior Solo *by Tony Driza*

“Pass me a line – you can raft off of us.” Welcome words indeed from Allistair Grant on board *Felucca*, competing in the crewed division of the Trans Superior. So began the inaugural Trans Superior Solo Challenge – with a little help from my friends. Locking through is an interesting experience regardless of the number of times it has been done, and this one was the most memorable of all as some of the 30 boats lined the lock wall and rafted the others off. Sights of the crew being hoisted to the spreaders for a photo op, and good natured kidding was in abundance for our locking through.



Locking up in the MacArthur Lock Photo by Tony Driza

From the locks, it is roughly an hour's motoring out to the starting line near the Gros Cap Light. Jim McLaren's son Justin on patrol with the USCG Station Sault not only gave us a proper Coastie welcome, but also kept the starting area clear of the many other boaters who wondered what so many sailboats were doing on such a windless day. And windless it remained through the start, as it took better than half an hour for all of the boats just to cross the starting line. Happily, the breeze began to fill in from the SW, and spirits rose considerably as the racers headed out into Whitefish Bay.

Dusk on the first night found *Whoa Nellie* NW of Whitefish Point Light on a nice reach, and making good speed. The singlehanders were all within radio range, and I found myself settling into my established routine of 25-minute naps, and thinking about fixing a hot meal that I could re-heat as necessary the rest of the night. I had prepared for cold, but it turned out to be quite pleasant – in fact wearing my standard foulies was usually *too* warm! I had been running a lot of electrical equipment that day, and my main bank monitor was showing the effects of my wanton electrical usage. With little else to do, I decided to fire up the Yanmar, and replace the spent electrons.

I had expected to see somewhere in the neighborhood of 120 amps going back into the bank, but instead of charging, I was still seeing a discharge which reflected my current (no pun intended) use. Not a good thing, as I estimated that I would be on the lake another two days minimum and my onboard electrical system didn't have enough left to see me through it if I maintained the same usage. I thought back to Apollo 13 and the famous "Houston, we have a problem..." phrase. It seemed as though either my alternator or voltage regulator was shot. It didn't matter much to me which one it was, as I didn't have a spare of either on board. I had a separate battery, which I vowed to keep only for starting and last minute electrical use when I was assured of finishing the race. My concern was simple – how could I make it to that point with what I had left in the main bank. The choices were pretty straightforward – I could either retire from the race or do everything I could to save what was left, and

see if I couldn't finish what I had started. Figuring that I didn't come 400 miles to quit, I opted for the latter.

I went into the true economy cruise mode, and started shutting down all the goodies that make racing aboard an Island Packet a pretty luxurious affair. If the item drew any type of load, I shut it off unless it was absolutely necessary. I made a call to Wally McMinn on *Odyssey* and let him know I wouldn't be doing much in the way of transmitting on my VHF, or anything else for that matter. One of the bigger draws on the boat is the autopilot, so I stocked up on food and water at the helm, and settled in for what would be roughly 48 hours of hand steering. The plan was simply to steer until I couldn't keep my eyes open, and then use the autopilot for a nap. Repeat as necessary. Out came the back-up nav lights, and a bin of batteries to power them up. I had never replaced my cabin lighting with efficient LED devices, and the others drew too much, so a flashlight was going to have to suffice there. So much for the microwave, and I was happy that I hadn't prepared a bunch of frozen, microwaveable meals like I usually do, or it would have been tough dining. I could use the stove for as long as there was power to hold the propane shut-off solenoid open, so I wasn't relegated to cold meals, which would have added considerably to the misery level.

While I gave up on using my VHF to transmit, I did monitor it enough to learn of a rigging failure on Mike Hanson's *Solar Express*, and a halyard problem on Lease Schock's Pearson 36 *Phoenix* that unfortunately caused them to withdraw from the race, and return to the Sault. I know disappointment levels were running high on board those boats, but there didn't appear to be anything either could do to rectify their respective problems. We learned later they both made it back safely to the Sault

Strangely, the race seemed to go by pretty quickly, and whether or not I was more focused because of my



Chase is On... Photo by Wally McMinn

situation, I couldn't really say. I came to thoroughly appreciate the few moments that I fired up the autopilot to take a break, grab some sleep, make a position report, or put up a chute. Mostly, I was eternally thankful that I had installed an electronic usage monitor that allowed me to catch the problem early on. Had I just gone through a

couple of charging scenarios without realizing I wasn't actually doing anything, the situation would have been much worse, as I could have been left with no way to get the engine started if I had to.

To say that finally seeing the western shore of Superior was a relief is probably the understatement of all time, but like most races, there were still a few unexpected events to deal with. After a great afternoon and evening of close reaching, I was within 50 miles of finishing. The early morning skies near Two Harbors, Minnesota were being continuously lit with wicked looking bolts of lightning, and weather advisories were being broadcast that matched what I could see. The thought of hand steering in a thunderstorm with driving rain was less than appealing, but the finish line beckoned. I was certain I would have to deal with that weather sooner rather than later. I didn't factor in *never* having to deal with it, but that turned out to be the case. As the line of weather crossed, the fair wind that I had been enjoying left the lake, and I began seeing speeds less than 3 knots. Then two, one, .5 and the inevitable 0.00. Listening to reporting stations along the western Superior coast didn't fill me with any sort of hope either as they were reporting light and variable or calm. If there was a silver lining to the moment, I didn't have to worry much about the helm, with the sails hanging limp. I had been close to John Ayres on *Rip Tide* and Wally McMinn on *Odyssey*, but true to my prior racing experience, I got just close enough to watch them hang on to the last of the breeze and move SW while I began to sit. Is there anything worse than that especially after hundreds of miles of racing?

As the sun rose, wind started to return, but it wasn't steady and served to only rise, then dash hopes of a daytime finish in Duluth. Speeds of eight knots came and went, only to be replaced by indications of less than one,



*Slip Number Two in Duluth - Perfect for Listening to Jazzfest!
Photo by Tony Driza*

or the dreaded triple zeros. As the large lift bridge near the finish came into view, the winds really tapered off, and as the afternoon wore on, the winds wore out. I somehow managed to keep moving although I couldn't see any indication of wind actually reaching the water. I

could catch just enough aloft to manage a knot or so, but no more. It seemed like a finish in daylight would occur, but then I heard from Mike Labore on *Integrity*, a Nassau 45. He had been parked within feet of the finish for hours, and pleaded for me to drag him in some wind. I must have, because I watched him slowly slide across the finish line, about the same time I took his place in the parking lot. From about 400 yards short of the finish, I watched the race committee on the breakwall, and could hear the sounds of Duluth. Flags were moving ashore, but there wasn't a breath of air stirring on the lake. I asked the race committee if they could perform any sort of wind dance, but thinking I'd be on the lake for a good long while, I thought it best to grab something to eat and figure out how I was going to manage the frustration of sitting that close to the finish for another night. Someone, somewhere must have heard my pleas for a bit of breeze because the sails slowly filled, and I slid across the line at a blistering 1.7 knots and received a congratulatory call from RC on the pier. It didn't take long to clean things up, wait for the lift bridge to open and motor over to a welcoming committee at the Aquarium, including my wife Joanie, who had just flown into Duluth and had seen me sitting near the finish as the sun was setting. Alas, no camera...



Back row, left to right: David Herring, Tony Driza, Dick Lappin, Dan Pavlat, Bill Tucker, Eric Thomas, Tom Agerter, Mike Labore **Front row left to right:** John Ayres, Wally McMinn

I can't say enough about the efforts of Dan Pavlat, Dick Lappin and Eric Thomas to get this race up and running. Eric singlehandedly saved the day by getting me a new alternator in record time, which allowed us a wonderful cruise home. The crewed Trans Superior folks bent over backwards to help us every way they could, and the efforts of Paula Hall and her staff were greatly appreciated by all of us. This is one race that you simply must make the time to do – it is unlike anything else on our slate. The next one will be **July 28, 2007** – mark your calendars now, it is well worth the effort!

Lake Michigan Solo Scramble

By Dave Rearick

Once again, as the summer comes to an end and September weather takes over, Lake Michigan's singlehanded sailors gathered in the ports of Racine, WI and Holland, MI to take on what has become known as a very challenging singlehanded race: The Solo Scramble. Because of the weather patterns on the Great Lakes at the end of the summer, and the warmer water temperatures, thermal patterns develop that confound the most seasoned sailors. This year proved no different.

While the race began as usual on a Southerly wind for the Wisconsin Start, a Lacklusterly wind for the Michigan Start, sailing into the 15-mile zone on the southern end of the lake began the difficult and often arduous voyage to the finish at Michigan City. While most boats enjoyed the start and (eventually) the sail to the lower lake weather buoy for the turn, only half the fleet actually made it to the finish under sail. Sailors had to patiently work the winds back and forth to get to within 5 miles of the shore in order to get the shore breeze and make the finish. Time commitments and the thought of missing the Scotch toast created enough distractions for some of the boats to fire up and head on in.

The entry list of 21 boats was a great thing this year. Holland, Michigan started six boats thanks to Joe Turns and his organization at the Macatawa Yacht Club. Racine Yacht Club, and Bill Erdmann, hosted 12 starters. New this year, in an attempt to make the finish times logistically more palatable, the start was moved up to 2 pm. The hope, and proven now, was that the boats would be in by the middle of the afternoon in time for the shore activities better known as "Dave's Do": Beer, Brats, Burgers, tall tales, lies, half truths, some truths, and occasionally the real truth disguised as all of the above finish off with the awards and the traditional opening of a scotch bottle and the tossing of the cork for a toast to all those that can't sail with us any longer, don't sail with us, and those that we are all thankful for helping out around the world with the disasters of today. This years toast went out to all those helping with the troubles caused by the Hurricane Katrina.

In ascending order of finish from the Michigan Side, 3rd went to Paul "Skip" Schloop on *Blue Max*, 2nd to John "To be or not to be" Toben aboard *Dream Catcher* and 1st once again, to Joe "Wash" Turns on *Renaissance*. *Renaissance* was also the first to cross the finish line of all the entrants.

In ascending order of finish from the Wisconsin Side....and I promise I'll get it right Mark.....Todd Scott on *Celebration* not only finished 7th this year but also earned the James McLaren award for his 8 hours of continuous calling in just a couple of miles out from the finish with no one in sight. 6th went to John "Fumes" Ayres on *Rip Tide*, 5th to "Wild" Bill Erdmann on *Harbour Haze*, 4th to Eric Hoogcarspel on *Paragon*, 3rd

to Mike "Anyonehaveanicknamehere" Smith on *Accord*, 2nd to Fred "River water" Stritt on *Hasten* and 1st, yes 1st to Mark "Fix the Results" Veenstra on *Monitor*.

Rounding out the competitor list from the Michigan Side, Bob Earndt on *Far Niente*, Gary Hirsch on *Blue Belle* and from the Wisconsin side Bob Graves on *Eleuthera*, Jeff Stack on *Compensable*, Rick "Bro" McLaren on *Dulcinea*, Jim McLaren on *Sovereign*, Stan Foltz on *Our Little Amusement*, Bob Wooden on *Rhapsody*, and Dave Collette on *Hard Tack*.

Once I was straightened out on my misreading of the results by Mark Veenstra, we all resigned to the beer, brats, boats, burgers, boldfaced lies, and half-truths and whiled the night away. The heartiest of solo sailors made it to the upper deck at *Matey's* for last call.

Yours truly,

RD Whattimeisitanyways
Dave Rearick

2006 AGM is Coming...

As 2005 winds down, we are just over a month away from the 2006 Annual General Membership Meeting. The 2006 version will take place on January 28, 2006 beginning at 3:00 PM, at the familiar setting of Bayview Yacht Club in Detroit.

There will be plenty on the Agenda for the evening – recaps of all the season's race's including Super Macs and the inaugural Trans Superior Solo Challenge. **We will be welcoming fifteen new lifetime Members to the Society**, far and away the largest number in recent years. Food and drink will be in abundance, and our keynote speaker for the evening, **Derek Hatfield of Spirit of Canada**, is worth the price of admission alone.

The invitations to the AGM will be mailed out the day after Christmas to the address on record with the GLSS. Please ensure that it is current – we don't want you to miss what is shaping up to be a memorable evening. This one is sure to fill up fast, and space is somewhat limited. Please return your RSVP ASAP as dinner reservations at the door cannot be guaranteed.

See you there!

The Need for Speed Gets the Weight Out

Building the fastest sailboat to race around the world means getting every bit of unnecessary weight out of the boat. Derek Hatfield has a passion for getting that extra weight out of his new boat, the *Spirit of Canada*, which is currently under construction in Cobourg, Canada. In 2002 / 2003, Derek sailed around the world in the Around Alone race in an Open 40. In that race, he took everything off the boat that wasn't needed, including some things others might consider necessities. He carried no recreational reading material or CDs to listen to, as these would add extra weight and distract him from the primary mission of making the boat go fast. His provisions were primarily freeze-dried food that he cooked on a single burner stove. Many items you or I might have considered backups or spares, Derek would just consider extra weight. Before the race, he went through the boat cutting off the extra bit of bolts that extended beyond the nuts. He even cut off the handles of his eating utensils!

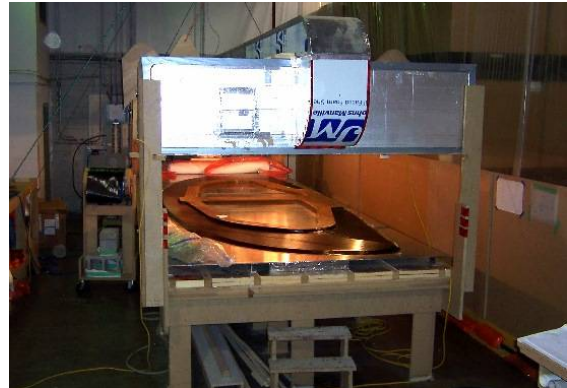
Derek's new *Spirit of Canada* is an Open 60 being built to the Open 60 class design standards. Unlike other class standards, this one is very loose or should we say, open. The primary constraints deal with overall boat dimensions and required safety features. Even with this very free design, most recent, state of the art Open 60s look very similar and incorporate many similar design features. Each new boat is built with the goal of incorporating some new features that the skipper hopes will give him an edge. In the case of the *Spirit of Canada*, the hull will incorporate some new materials that are being used for the first time in an Open 60. These will reduce the hull weight by several hundred pounds.

First the hull and deck core material will be primarily Nomex ® which is made from Kevlar ® in the form of a honeycomb. The Nomex ® material looks very much like corrugated cardboard. It is much lighter than the closed cell foam that has typically been used for custom boat construction.



Cutaway of a test sample similar to a bulkhead showing Nomex sandwiched between layers of prepreg carbon fiber.

A second material used for weight reduction will be prepreg carbon fiber cloth made by SP Systems. The term "prepreg" means that the carbon fiber cloth comes from the factory with both the resin and the catalyst pre-impregnated into the cloth. Compared to the more



A bulkhead is being prepared in the oven. The black is the prepreg carbon. The brown wood plant in the center will be removed when the layup is complete. A roll of carbon is on the stand to the left of the oven.

conventional materials of liquid resin and catalyst the prepreg materials significantly reduce the weight of the resin in the final composite structure. The application process is a bit more complex. Because the catalyst is already mixed with the resin and impregnated into the carbon fiber cloth the cloth must be stored in a refrigerator until it is ready to be used. Once removed from the refrigerator one has several days to use it. When the lay-up process is completed, the structure must be cooked in an oven for several hours to cure the resin and bond the carbon fiber cloth to the honeycomb. The result is a very strong, very light composite structure. This process will be used to construct the hull, deck, and bulkheads. I can lift the forward bulkhead on my thumb! The bulkheads and smaller parts are being built and cooked in a special oven with a large flat deck that measures 21 by 7 feet. The oven for the hull has been constructed around the 60-foot long hull mold. You can get a look at the shop where the *Spirit of Canada* is being constructed on the web site at www.spiritofcanada.net.

Just go to the web site home page and click on the "SPIRITCAM" link. (Hint: Although they do work at night when cooking things usually the lights are turned off after normal working hours.) This is a very simplified description of the lay-up and construction process. Proper material handling, humidity, and temperature control, and vacuum bagging all must be done with great care and attention to detail to insure a strong boat.

This will be the first Open 60 that has been built with these materials and hopefully this will give Derek an edge. Before the boat is ready to depart, I am sure that Derek will find many more ways to reduce the weight of his boat. He may even decide to build eating utensils out of prepreg carbon fiber. Or he may just leave the utensils at home and use a long forgotten technique perfected on sailing vessels thousands of years ago of drinking directly from the bowl and eating with one's fingers!

I always enjoy a good salty nautical yarn about ship wreck, rough seas, and survival. At the 2005 Trans Superior Race Banquet, Derek told just such a story. During the 2002 / 2003 Around Alone Race, Derek was pitch poled and demasted off Cape Horn. He managed to replace his mast and sails and complete the race with a 3rd place finish in Class 2. His new boat will let him do it again in 2006, hopefully with one less stop. On January 28, 2006, Derek will tell his story at the GLSS Annual Meeting. So be sure to mark your calendar and bring all your sailing buddies, (even those who never seem to make it to sea), to hear Derek's yarn.

© by Spirit of Canada
Written by Bill Tucker

Survey Says...

My thanks to all who took the time to respond to the computer/website survey a few weeks back. The input received will go a long way towards developing a better website, with a few more features, and one that the membership will find more user friendly. New member by way of the Trans Superior Solo Challenge, David Herring, will be working with Blair and me to put the new and improved website together as soon as possible. David has an extensive background in website design and comes with a degree in computer science – an excellent example of members getting involved to help the Society! Thanks again to David for jumpstarting the web project, and to the members for responding!

Tony Driza

First Timer Thoughts

Ed. Note: Races such as the crewed Trans Superior, the Lake Michigan Solo Scramble, Lower Huron Solo, and the St. Clair Solo are often the initial step a skipper will take prior to competing in a Mac Challenge or the Trans Superior Solo Challenge. Following are a few thoughts put together by skippers who competed in some of the aforementioned races. My hope is that they'll take part in one of the Mac Solo Challenges in 2006!

From the Trans Superior...

August 31, 2005
Grand Marais, MN

I've been living aboard *Shanti* with my two cats Phoenix and Callie since July 2. In July, I cruised Lake Michigan and the North Channel of Lake Huron, arriving in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario in early August for the start of the Trans-Superior race on the sixth. The weekend before the race, two crewmembers informed me that they had changed their minds about doing the race, saying they didn't feel they had enough experience. Fortunately,

word got around the marina that I was shorthanded and another skipper gave me two of his crew as twelve people showed up but he only had room for nine. *Aerie*, my former boat, was also short a crewmember, so they took the other one.

Thirty boats started the race, eighteen with crew, and twelve, which were skippered by members of the **Great Lakes Singlehanded Society**. *Shanti* and *Aerie* were entered in the cruising division, which meant we could motor-sail when the wind died. We had to keep an engine log so the race committee could calculate the motoring penalty. Essentially, the penalty was cancelled out if we were unable to make at least 3 knots under sail. *Aerie* was our only competition, and we were evenly matched with PHRF ratings of 144 (spinnaker) and 147 (non-spinnaker.) The cruising class allows the use of spinnakers, as long as the tack is fixed (i.e. no pole.) There are no spinnakers in *Shanti's* sail inventory, so I was hoping that *Aerie* wouldn't be able to fly hers very often.

Lake Superior is a pretty big lake, and as a safety measure, the race committee requires that boats call in their position every eight hours. The Coast Guard denied a request to provide radio relay assistance as they had done in previous years, so several boats were issued a satellite phone for communicating with the race committee. *Shanti* was one of the communication vessels and often we were relaying position reports for half the fleet!

Saturday morning after the fleet locked through the MacArthur lock, we motored three hours to the starting line at Gros Cap Light. The wind was so light at the start, it took nearly half an hour for everyone to cross the line. We weren't making any progress sailing wing-and-wing, so 37 minutes after the start, we fired up the engine and took the early lead! The wind finally filled in an hour later and it didn't take long for the two Santa Cruz 70's, their spinnakers flying, to catch up with us. We had a nice run up to Whitefish Point, where we sailed into another hole and fired up the iron genny again for an hour and a half. By Saturday night, we had plenty of wind for sailing, and I was pleased to see that we were keeping pace with several of the other boats. The wind died again Sunday evening as we were rounding the Keweenaw Peninsula, and with an adverse current of 1.4 knots, we were in danger of sailing backwards. I was very thankful for the motoring allowance!

On Monday, we were close reaching or close-hauled all day, but basically on the rhumb line for Duluth. Monday night around 2300, we were treated to an amazing light show from a thunderstorm to the southeast. The next morning at 0700, the off-watch crew was rudely awakened by a weather alert warning of a thunderstorm packing 60-knot gusts just south of Two Harbors. Our position was south of Two Harbors, about 20 miles from the finish. That thunderstorm must have taken all the wind with it as it passed well south of us, because our wind was less than 5 knots the rest of the way to Duluth.

We did have enough pride to take the engine out of gear half a mile from the finish line just so we could say we sailed across the line. We covered the 337 miles in 3 days with an elapsed time of 70:37:41. We motored almost 9 hours, and after correcting the elapsed time to PHRF 0 and adding the motoring penalty, our corrected time was 60:47:11, which was good enough for 11th in fleet. Unfortunately for us, *Aerie* had a fantastic race, finishing third in fleet and giving us a second place finish in the cruising division. Fleet statistics are posted on the web site <http://www.transsuperior.com>.

And now here is the post-script to my Trans-Superior report. After meeting some Great Lakes Singlehanded Society members at Strictly Sail Chicago in February and attending the GLSS open house and seminar in March, I had been considering doing the Solo Lake Michigan Scramble on September 9th, but since I have decided to leave *Shanti* on Lake Superior this winter, that race is out of the question this year. After talking to several of the single-handed sailors who had completed the Trans-Superior, I was inspired to do a 100-mile solo sail as an alternative qualifier for entry in a future GLSS event (<http://www.solosailor.org>). Therefore, on Monday, August 29th, my friend Steve Burns on *Calico* and I on *Shanti* kept each other company on a solo 26-hour passage from Bayfield, WI to Grand Marais, MN leaving the western Lake Superior weather buoy to port. We checked in with one another by radio every hour, and were never more than 3 miles apart. We had wind from zero to 17 knots, and very flat seas. There was a very brief period of mist/fog/drizzle, but then the cloud curtain opened up over the star-filled sky and we saw a beautiful crescent moonrise at 0130. I was able to catch short catnaps, with a kitchen timer to startle me awake if I didn't get up to scan the horizon and trim the sails at least every 15 minutes. I arrived in Grand Marais with a great feeling of accomplishment, and feeling ready to do it again! Am I ready for a three-day event? Perhaps. They run the solo race to Mackinac every year....

Capt. Gail Bowdish
s/v *Shanti*

From the Lower Huron Solo...

Mark,

I really enjoyed the challenge on Saturday in spite of my less than stellar placing. All and all, the experience was a blast. For me, the event was high in exhilaration and self-satisfaction in spite of my really bad start, dying wind on the first leg and the light wind I ran into near the finish line. Thank goodness for the current that pulled [me] over the finish line! Thanks again for putting on the event.

Could you e-mail me the race results if you have them in a format you can e-mail? I got about 10 seconds to look over the results Saturday in the dimly lit pavilion. I still need to do the Monday morning after "what if" analysis. Like...what if I would not have sailed away from the

fleet along a certain wind line only to find myself completely out of wind 45 minutes before the rest of the fleet lost what little air they were enjoying? According to my log, I was windless for 1 hour and 45 minutes while I could see the fleet on the other side of an active wind line with sails mostly filled and slowly moving away from me. Mean while, my windex and boat just drifted in 360 degree circles in a direction away from the the first mark. Ugh! The water was so smooth I could observe the rocks on the bottom in 26 feet of water! I was about ready to go for a swim when the wind finally started to fill in and I was able to overtake a couple of boats, including my friend Terry's boat "Whitecap" shortly after the Blue Point mark. I am really glad I stuck it out...what an experience.

thanks,
Bryan Whitfield
Steadfast
S2 9.2a

From the Lake Michigan Scramble...

Hi Jim, Jeff Stack here.

Well it's been over a week since the Racine to Michigan City race. Since then I've thought about everything I did wrong. I should have reefed the main sooner, I should have used my tri-radial jib instead of the one I did, I should have had longer East tacks, I should have put on my wet suit instead of my foul weather gear.

My wife reminded me that I should not just think about everything I did wrong, but also think about what I did right. The jacklines perfectly set up, the way I move on the deck in eight footers, the sail handling, the way I kept my head on while being sick - wet - cold - and tired.

This past Saturday we took out *Compensable* and I sailed her differently then I did before the race. The best way to describe it is more "tactfully". I flew the spinnaker - solo - for the third time ever. This time was different, it was thought out and executed. Like a man working a "sailing" machine rather than a man sailing a boat. You know what I mean?

I am really looking forward to next year's Solo Scramble. I'm not ready for the Mac solo, not even close. I must first nail a 110 mile race before I try a 330+ mile race. Thanks for all of your communication before the race. I really enjoyed getting to know you, your brother (and his wonderful *Swan*), and all the guys in the race. The cook out was a fantastic end to my very sleepy Saturday. I think it was your brother who woke me up at 5:30, please extend a thank you to him for me (I would have slept right on through all the way to Sunday).

See you at the harbor & thanks again. There is always next year!

Jeffrey Stack

