



The

SOLO CHALLENGER



The Official Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society

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Spring 2008

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jeff Urbina

Well, it's that time of year again with boatyard season in high gear and the sailing season just a couple of months away. Hopefully you got a chance to get away from the tough mid-western winter this year to get in some sailing somewhere in warmer climes!

The fun filled AGM in Detroit was also action packed with the membership voting on a few important changes to the Mac Challenge requirements and rules. First, a current (defined as being issued within the last three years) PHRF Certificate is now required for participating in the Challenges, so there is no time like the present to either apply for or renew your PHRF Certificate. Second, no credits on ratings for roller furlers will be allowed for any of the Challenges. Lastly, the use of power winches will now be allowed in all GLSS races.

During this cold, snowy winter GLSS stalwarts managed to staff the booth and spread the word at Strictly Sail, in addition to having a few drinks to fend off the cold. Thanks to all who participated. Also many thanks to Mike Mahar, Bill Smith, Wally McMinn and Tom Munson who, once again, managed to organize our safety seminars in Detroit, Chicago, and Toledo Beach in March.

Starting on June 21, the Port Huron and Chicago Mac Challenges will head to the island. This year we are running additional, concurrent events, the Super Macs and the inaugural Super Mac and Backs for those who just can't stop! Get your applications into Bill Dembek for all the Mac Challenges and be sure to contact Matt Scharl if you are interested in participating in either the Super Mac or the Mac and Back Challenges. The Super Mac and Back is a major distance race and there are some specific equipment and reporting requirements that you will need to address if you are interested in bypassing Mac not only once, but twice!

We are continuing our efforts this year to improve the Mac Tracker. Jim McDonnell is hard at work trying to figure out which system makes the most sense and is the most cost effective. Hopefully, we will have a system this year that is automated, negating the need to have a shore party entering positions into the web site. Participation will be voluntary, but everyone is encouraged to do so as it is great PR, as well as an additional safety net. For those of you that are in need of updating your flare inventory, please head to the web site for a deal with West Marine, coordinated by Jon Jacobs.

So, get your application in for the Mac as soon as possible and then head back to the boatyard!

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“One sailor, one boat and the sea...”

This has been the call to sailors ever since the first single-handed race across the Atlantic on June 10, 1960.

Are you planning your first Solo Challenge or planning on experiencing a different challenge in a new Great Lake this year? The GLSS welcomes first time Solo Challenge participants. This year's entry deadline for the Lake Huron and Michigan Solo Challenge is: **June 1, 2008.**

The Lake Erie Solo Challenge entry deadline is: **August 1, 2008.**

Please visit www.solosailor.org for entry requirements.

If you are planning and preparing for these races for the first time, the GLSS encourages you to learn as much as you can about this race in advance. Consult with one or more of the GLSS Members which have already completed the challenge in which you plan to participate. For first time sailors, Membership into the GLSS is approved after successful completion of one of the Great Lakes Solo Challenges and after approval from the Board of Directors. The Solo Challenges take place in all the Great Lakes except Lake Ontario (scheduled as early as 2009).

We have a great time organizing our single-handed events and helping other sailors successfully manage completing the Solo Challenge. Just taking part of this race is a tremendous personal accomplishment and captures the imagination of other sailors. Having similar interests, I would like to welcome you to participate in an up-coming Solo Challenge.



2008 Notice of Race Postings

All Solo Challenge forms can be downloaded by visiting our website www.solosailor.org

- Port Huron to Mackinac
- Chicago to Mackinac
- Port Huron to Chicago Super Mac
- Chicago to Port Huron Super Mac
- Port Huron – Chicago - Port Huron Super Mac and Back
- Chicago-Port Huron - Chicago Super Mac and Back

30th Port Huron to Mackinac Island Solo Challenge
12th Chicago to Mackinac Island Solo Challenge

3rd Super Mac Challenge

1st Super Mac and Back Challenge

The [2008 Mac Solo Challenge Documents](#) are now available for downloading to your computer. This will be a Super Mac Year which will feature an entirely new Challenge, the Super Mac and Back! You may start any of the Challenges in either Chicago or Port Huron - check the Notice of Race for all the details! ***At just under 1,200 statute miles, the Super Mac and Back is by far the longest freshwater sailing race in the world!***

Non-member skippers who successfully complete either of the Mackinac Solo Challenges, and have their finish approved by the Board of Directors will be granted membership in the GLSS. Both the Port Huron and Chicago starts are on the same day, with all successful sailors finishing at Mackinac Island for the awards luncheon, held on Wednesday following the starts at the Mackinac Island Yacht Club.

2nd Lake Erie Solo Challenge

Congratulations to all new GLSS Members who participated in the 1st Lake Erie Solo Challenge in 2007. The [2008 Lake Erie Solo Challenge Documents](#) are now available for downloading! Additionally, feel free to check out and print a copy of the [2008 Lake Erie Solo Challenger Flyer](#) for posting!

Non-member skippers who successfully complete the Lake Erie Solo Challenge, and have their finish approved by the Board of Directors will be granted membership in the GLSS.

Earning a place in Single-Handed History

Alford Johnson sailed his 20 ft dory from Newfoundland to Liverpool in 1876. Fortunately for us, his ordeal out-weighed any offence. At age 51, Joshua Slocum departed Boston 1895 to become the first person to sail around the world and had written a book that was to become the Solo Sailors Bible (do you know the book?). June 10, 1960 Blondie Hasler, David Lewis, Val Howells and Francis Chichester finished the first Observer (British Newspaper) Single-handed Transatlantic Race (OSTAR). Just six years later at age 65, Francis Chichester set off to be the fastest man to sail around the world (solo). After departing August 27, 1966 Chichester returned 226 days later and was the first person awarded Knighthood by Queen Elizabeth.



Future Events in 2008

<i>June 21</i>	<i>Mac Solo Challenges</i>
<i>August 23</i>	<i>Lake Erie Solo Challenge</i>
<i>September 5</i>	<i>Lake Michigan Solo Scramble</i>
<i>September 6</i>	<i>Lower Huron Solo</i>
<i>September 27</i>	<i>St. Clair Solo & Big Al's Steak Roast</i>

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

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

Mackinac Island Municipal Marina Up-Date

Plans are to have a new floating Pier System completed by June 15. Please be advised of the new slippage arrangements on the Island. Reservations may be made by visiting the State of Michigan DNR website:

<https://www.midnrreservations.com/harbors/>

Did you know?

With Earth Day upon us and conservation in mind for the Great Lakes, several facts have been publicized in the recent weeks:

- 1) Farmers (and Home-Owners) need 26,000 gallons of water to deliver 1 inch of water over an acre of land.
- 2) Lake Superior contains enough water to hold all of the Great Lakes + 3 additional Lake Erie's.
- 3) States drawing water from the Great Lakes are considering an agreement to return the amount of water to the Great Lakes that has been taken for utilities and commercial needs.
- 4) Lake Michigan/Huron water levels have risen significantly this spring (3 inches through March) and is trending to beat the Army Core of Engineers predicted spring water level rise. (Please note that water levels are back at Chart Datum)



Summer Solo Challenger articles and Pictures needed from this season's events. If you wish to contribute to this publication, please contact John Ayres:

John.Ayres@Navistar.com



Website Update *By Tony Driza*

The GLSS website continues to evolve into what is hoped will be a more useful tool for members and visitors alike. Ideally, it will reach the point where everything regarding the Society, the events and membership can be accessed quickly, with a minimum of fuss.

In order for that to happen, it is necessary that the website feature security measures to ensure that data sent to and from the server is used only for its intended purposes, and that the forms themselves are not used by spambots for nefarious endeavors as well. Secure Socket Layer technology (SSL) has been incorporated into the web pages that feature a form completion. That takes care of the data sent from a computer, and to make it totally secure, all data sent back from the server forms to the users is encrypted as well. While it may be overkill at this point, it does allow for future secure transactions such as credit cards and the like.

Changes on the web feature:

- Ability to update contact information
- Volunteer for the Mackinac Island Finish Committee
- Purchase discounted flares
- Contact Board members, Race Chairs and requests for general information

Take the time to check out the website – it's updated frequently and to make it easy to find the changes, they are listed by simply clicking the *'Updated on...date'*. Plans are underway to simplify and automate mass mailings such as the *Solo Challenger* and other noteworthy items and events directly from the website, making it far easier on the Board to pass along timely information without worrying about various private email lists, or how to transfer them easily as Board members come and go.

Look for that feature in the very near future.

Additionally, any changes to the sailing instructions, required equipment or last minute changes in the events themselves will be posted on the website. Please be sure to have a valid email address on file so that you can receive this and other information to help you plan your season with the GLSS!

Visit our website:

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

Here is your God card....

Planning on pushing-on after the Solo Mac Challenge? If you want to store up some dopamine for your next racing adrenalin rush consider cruising back from the Solo Challenge or cruise the North Channel after the race. I know there are some cruiser want-a-bees in the group who need to make time and drop anchor for awhile. So, in light of race preparations and the stress of arriving ahead of the clock, I would like to offer these cruisers notes from Lake Huron's North Channel. (Brace yourselves race fans - this is poetry...)

*I have cruised from Tobermory
to Killarney across the Bay
And I marveled at the beauty
of the lovely summer day
In the quiet of the evening,
Collins inlet was my goal
And the narrow awesome passage
sparkled a joy within my soul*

*I could feel the calm and stillness
as the birds in many flocks
Took refuge in the cedars
growing in solid rocks
I cruised along the Landsdown
into the gorgeous Bay of Finn
Along Killarney mountains
where angels must have been*

*I climbed up those mountains
on the paths where braves once stood
And when I looked around me
All I really saw was God
When he finally calls me to him
I can only hope and pray
From somewhere in the heavens
I can see Killarney Bay*

Editors note: Seeing the North Channel is "believing". I found the poem on a message board in the North Channel many years ago. -Author Unknown (Sounds a bit Canadian)

Hold the Presses

There is a new requirement for those doing either the Super Macs, or the Super Mac and Back to have a satellite phone on board to facilitate communications as the fleets spread out. These may be rented from a variety of sources to comply with the requirement – a Google search on the web will provide all the options you need.

Additionally, automated race tracking is being considered for not only the Solo Macs, by the Lake Erie Solo Challenge as well. If a suitable provider, at a reasonable cost can be employed, this would eliminate the need for the shore side, manual entry of GPS positions. If implemented, the devices would not mandatory, but **strongly suggested** that all skippers participate in the program. These devices do provide a certain level of backup safety, however they do **not** replace the required VHF call-ins. Skipper positions would be updated every 15-20 minutes, and provide an unprecedented opportunity for family and friends to watch the challenges unfold.

There is a catch, and that would be the expense of renting the units, and who would pay for the devices. In order to help determine how serious the membership and participating skippers are about availing

themselves of tracking, a brief survey has been put up on the website to solicit your opinions. The Board of Directors would greatly appreciate your participation. You can find the survey form here:

<https://www.solosailor.org/trackingsurvey.php>

If there are any updates or changes to the Solo Mac Challenges, they will be posted on the following web page:

<http://www.solosailor.org/mac-update.php>

Again, thanks for taking the time to participate in the tracking survey. If implemented, tracking will go a long way in providing the exposure that is necessary to attract new members to the Society.

The Last Word...

Have you ever wondered what solo sailors do with all the flags they've accumulated over the years? The following photo, submitted by Founding Member and past President **Larry Rotta** shows one way of displaying them...

Must indicate that it's commissioning time in North Carolina...

Thanks, Larry!

