



The
Solo
Challenger



The Official Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society

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Fall/Winter 2008

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jeff Urbina

Dear Fellow Sailors,

Well, the Holidays are upon us once again and as I sit on another plane sipping a beer, my thoughts go to sailing and the adventures and friends made over the last few years.

Clearly, 2008 turned out to be a year of both great success and tragedy. Another fine set of races completed and in the record books; one of the best summers in recent memory for hitting the water. Seems like long ago at this point, doesn't it? Don't worry, you'll be back in the boatyard before you know it. The loss of a friend at sea in October shocked many of us who had started to think of things other than boating.

In the plus column for the year were great Mac and Erie Challenges that welcomed eight new members to the society. Many thanks go out to those who contributed their time and efforts to the success of these and our other events and, in particular, the event chairs and co-chairs who made sure it all happened.

Congratulations to the few hardy souls who made the finish of the first Solo Mac and Back ... Walt Norris, Bill Tucker, Arch Van Meter and Ken Verhaeren! Quite a feat and a race that we hope will attract bigger fleets as time goes on.

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In 2009, we can look forward to our regular schedule of events in addition to the Solo Trans Superior Challenge, run every other year. Be sure to keep up with the latest developments by checking the web site kept spinning by the intrepid Tony Driza. For those who are looking for a spectacular (and cold) adventure in the North Country, I highly recommend the Trans Sup!

Sadly, our comrade Phil Rubright was lost at sea on October 28th, in a tragic accident while on a delivery trip from New England south. Phil was a highly accomplished sailor with six Atlantic crossings and numerous Solo Macs under his belt. I can only say at this point that Phil went out doing what he loved and that we all should be as fortunate. Our condolences go out to Phil's family and friends.

I hope that all of you have a happy and healthy Holiday season and I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on January 31st and on the water next season!

All the best,

Jeff



**BERMUDA HIGH...
II BODACIOUS RACES TO
BERMUDA
by Jeff Urbina**

It all started at the bar at the AGM of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society in January of 2006. I had become a member of this esteemed group several years previously having completed my first solo Chicago-Mackinac Race and had made some close friends along the way. As you might suspect, this is fundamentally a group of loners. My wife likes to say that there are good reasons why most of these people sail alone and, while that's true, she also says that we love to sail solo together...sounds strange, but equally true.

After the usual over-indulgence and talk of solo races past and future, the topic of the Bermuda 1-2 came up. This is a solo race from Newport to Bermuda and a double-handed race back, sort of a Mac Race on steroids, run in odd-numbered years. The crewed Newport-Bermuda Race runs in even-numbered years on the same course. Several of us had sailed to Bermuda in past lives and one, Alan Veenstra, had won the Bermuda 1-2 back in the days when canvas sails were in vogue. The crewed Bermuda Race is one of the oldest offshore races in the world, a real classic. With Bermuda lying 635 nautical

miles SE of Newport, the race has dished out both drifters and gales over the years and we discussed how the Gulf Stream crossing could make or break you in either race. One thing led to another and we decided that a bunch of us should get together and do the crewed race in 2008 in preparation for taking on the solo event. My long-suffering and gracious wife (and co-owner of *II Bodacious*) thought the idea was hilarious, as did the other wives and numerous members of the GLSS, thinking of a bunch of highly independent sailors trapped on a 40 foot boat for 4-5 days, all trying to run the show. Hey! Wasn't I running the show? Hmmmm....

So in June 2007, I raced *II Bodacious* to Mac. From there, it was up the DeTour Passage and St. Mary's River for the Solo Trans Superior Race from Sault St. Marie, MI to Duluth, MN in August. I had always thought it would be a royal pain to deliver *II Bo* back to Chicago, so the logical alternative was to haul the boat and truck her to Newport. After the cold, cold Lake Superior crossing, I could use a little tropical adventure. *II Bo* landed at the Hinckley yard in Portsmouth, RI in October where we would prepare her to make the trip south over the winter.

Meanwhile, a crew was coming together, all solo sailing veterans and members of the GLSS. Dave Rearick was responsible for getting all the planning and paperwork done and was indispensable in getting us to the starting line. Alan Veenstra and John Hoskins would focus on tactics and navigating the Gulf Stream, which on a boat this size, was going to be the key to winning the race. Jim McLaren would play foredeck monkey and cigar master and John Ayres took on the galley challenge with a vengeance. Last but not least, Gaye took on logistics in getting everything and everybody in Newport and Bermuda sorted out. Me? I played ringmaster and overall visionary to see if we could make this fun. In addition, we all came to win but most everyone thought it improbable given that we had never sailed together before and were new to the race. People race this race for years without ever winning.

January-April 2008. Hinckley gets the new Iridium phone installed that will be critical for our getting weather information offshore and works on integrating the new Maxsea routing

and performance software on the laptop. I get the application process started by supplying crew resumes so we can get an invitation. John Hoskins starts compiling Gulf Stream data to see if a pattern is developing. Dave works on providing the seemingly endless forms and information required by the Bermuda Race Committee. North makes us a new #3, new chute and storm sails. John Ayres starts putting together menus and making sure there are M&Ms on board. The preparation required makes going to Mac look like heading out for a day sail.

May . *II Bodacious* splashes and heads to the harbor in Jamestown, RI across Narragansett Bay from Newport and about a mile from the starting line. Since I'm the only one that has actually sailed on *II Bo*, we decide at least a day of practice might be appropriate! We came together for a training day (and drinking night) and completed all of our pre-race safety checks for the Bermuda Race on May 18. We'll hit the starting line having sailed together for a total of about 6 hours. Nonetheless, this is one of the best crews I've ever sailed with. Everyone knows how to do all the jobs on the boat if required and I'm confident that we will all find our respective niches.



June 20, 2008. Race Day. Dave has been out in Jamestown for several days getting the boat ready and, after a great crew dinner in Newport the night before, Gaye and Jan McLaren cast us off for the start line. What a sight! Most of the top boats in the world are here...*Speedboat, Numbers, Moneypenny, Blue Yankee, the Volvo 70 Puma* on a training run...and us! We are one of the smallest boats in the fleet and are in Class 13, racing in the Cruising Division where we are

restricted to one asymmetric chute but can use the autopilot. The starting area is jammed with a 198-boat fleet and hundreds of spectator boats on an absolutely brilliant afternoon. The breeze filled in for our start blowing 10-15 out of the SW. OK, I have to be honest. I've only started solo races for years and I pretty much stink. John Hoskins volunteered to give it a go and put us right at the front of the pack at the gun. We tacked to get on the inside of the Class and headed south toward the Stream.

We had all been studying the Gulf Stream for months to see if an "eddy" would appear, as it often does. The Stream runs NE 100-miles or so offshore and heads across the Atlantic as it clears the New England coast. South of Newport, chunks break off from time-to-time and swirl clockwise north of the stream and counterclockwise south of the Stream. Running at 4-6 knots, this will obviously make a significant difference in speed over the ground if you can hit the right (or wrong) current. We, along with almost everyone else, attended weather and Gulf Stream seminars to see what this year would hold. The weather was predicted to be fair all the way to Bermuda as a high pressure area had settled-in east of Bermuda. This is known as the Bermuda High and, as long as it stayed parked east of the island, we would keep enough wind pressure to keep us moving. More importantly, there was an eddy that had appeared about 30-40 miles to the west of the rumb line and our pre-race strategy was to head for the south flowing edge. More miles sailed but, hopefully, the boost we would get from the current would more than make up the difference. We went for it.

It was all adrenaline at the start but now it was time to settle in for a long trip. After a number of long discussions in May, we had decided on two-man watches, unless we needed to do a sail change, and go two-hours on and four-off during the night and four and eight during the day (which we ultimately changed to three and six during the day as we got bored). After the start and the helicopters had taken their photos, we hand-steered or let the autopilot drive, depending on our mood. We got updated weather and stream data via the Iridium every few hours and the Maxsea program was dead accurate in heading us into the eddy. You know you've hit the Stream when the water temperature

hits 73 degrees! The boost was 3-4 knots and for several hours we were doing 8-10 knots over the ground. McLaren yelling at the wheel in the middle of the night will be a lasting memory. Exiting the Stream, we found an area of weak current and threw in a tack to fetch the island.

Frankly, once we got the boat in the groove, there wasn't much for us to do as the wind was fairly constant at about 30-35 degrees apparent for the entire trip. The velocity varied from 10 knots to 25 knots and for most of the trip we had the #2 or #3 up and simply took or shook a reef or two. Four days and 600 miles on starboard tack. Traveler up or down a few inches, a little jib ease or trim, reef in or out. Whale sighting, shark basking on the surface, the obligatory flying fish and, the last day, a marvelous school of dolphin that played in our bow wave for half an hour that made all of us act like 10-year olds and run to the bow. Alan decided to throw out a fishing line and we were sorely depressed that we didn't have a fish hanging off the stern at the finish!

The seas were 4-8 feet and rolled over us occasionally but II Bo handled it like a champ and the on-watch mostly hid behind her big dodger and stayed dry. No sitting on the rail for this crew! The boat was closed up and it was bloody hot down below, especially for John Ayres while he was putting together one of his masterpiece meals. The sirloin hash was pure genius! We ate well, got loads of sleep and waited to see other boats to try and see how we had fared as we approached Bermuda. The first indication that we were doing well came during the last day when boats from the racing fleet started to pass us with crews wet and miserable on the rail. They were all bigger, faster and had started 3-4 hours ahead of us! We knew that we had done well and got that confirmation when people called home just after our finish after sunset on Tuesday. We had won in a Class of 14 boats, but corrected to third in the Cruising Division of 43 - two boats that had jib and main ratings (cheaters!) won the day.

We got a spot at the wall in Hamilton as the fleet poured in and we all headed to the bar for Dark & Stormies until 3 or 4 in the morning. Everybody had a great time and Gaye, Dave and John Ayres accompanied me to the awards ceremony at the Governor's

mansion. Shorts, sandals and a lime green jacket (sorry, no way was I going to wear a blue blazer) that we found in a shop was definitely the ticket. As in most things, preparation in addition to execution was the key to our success. It's not that we had sailed miles together but we knew HOW to sail miles together. Ultimately, the team gelled because we all respected each other's abilities. It was an experience of a lifetime and a real high. All that from sailing together alone.



Earning a place in Single-Handed History – Part II

So what has happened after Joshua Slocum's three year solo circumnavigation in 1898, Francis Chicester 226 day solo circumnavigation in 1967 and Alec Rose's 318 day solo circumnavigation in 1968? Other than lots of great books and press, these solo sailors may have started the first solo sailor reality series. With not a moment to loose, the Sunday Times (British Newspaper) organized and put up a challenge for the first person to sail non-stop solo around the world. In 1968 the Golden Globe Trophy was promised to the first solo sailor who returned to their respective British port after completing a global circumnavigation. After 313 days at Sea and with one of the slowest of 9 boats to enter the challenge, *Suhaili* – a 32 foot double-ender finished with its skipper Robin Knox-Johnson. Following this extraordinary achievement, Robin Knox-Johnson was knighted by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth of England.



Lessons Learned: Steer Clear of this One! *By Sheldon Dummer*

Editor's note: The following makes for some interesting reflection – how would you have handled this situation? Since we'll never live long enough to make all the common mistakes ourselves, it's nice to be able to benefit from a situation that ultimately turned out all right!

Celerity's Steering Problem June 23, 2008

Location: 11 miles SW of Point Betsie. Shipping lanes were within a couple miles both East and West of my location.

Wind: 15-18 apparent from ENE, building

Waves: 1-2 feet

Visibility: Shortly before the steering problem could see Pt. Betsie. At the time of the problem it was becoming foggy, and continued to deteriorate to a very dense fog.

Skipper: Very short of sleep—I was just beginning to get some twenty minute naps and was occasionally dozing involuntarily.

Events as they happened:

I had been steering *Celerity* by hand due to the building wind. I decided to partially furl the jib so I engaged the autopilot while I furled the jib. Next I selected standby on the autopilot so I could manually bring *Celerity* to course. When I turned the wheel it spun without resistance. Looking at the head of the rudder post, the rudder was not moving. I switched back to the autopilot but got no response. So now I have neither manual nor autopilot steering.

At this point I called GLSS racers to alert them of my plight and was able to contact *Black Pearl*. I explained the situation and decided that I should call the Coast Guard (CG) to alert shipping that *Celerity* had no steerage and was drifting in the fog by the shipping lanes off of Point Betsie.

I called the Coast Guard to alert them to my non-emergency situation. They acknowledged and began calling me every 15 minutes. This required that I stay on channel 22A and kept me from getting too involved with anything away from my radio.

I retrieved the emergency tiller that fits over the square shank of the rudder post. It would not fit. It seems that the marina that re-sleeved my rudder post last year had to hit the top of the rudder post with a hammer and mushroomed the square shank. I next tried a large 12" adjustable wrench on the square shank of the rudder post. I could not turn the rudder. The rudder was hard over to starboard. I answered the CG that I still hadn't resolved the problem, but would continue to evaluate the situation.

To get at the linear autopilot drive unit I had to climb into the cockpit lazarette. I tied the lazarette hatch open (If it closes while I am below it can lock), emptied the lazarette and climbed below. It was hard to see the quadrant end of the drive well. It may have been wedged against the bottom of the cockpit sole. To see better I released the pin which held the forward end of the drive and lowered that end of the drive unit. I still could not tell if the quadrant end was jammed but figured it didn't hurt to leave the forward end disconnected. I answered the CG that I still hadn't resolved the problem, but would continue to evaluate the situation.

I tried the wrench again on the rudder post and still could not turn the shaft. When the CG called next, I told them that I couldn't fix the steering and needed a tow. At this point the fog was extremely dense and I was drifting at about 0.5 knots at 270 degrees. I called *Black Pearl* and told him that the CG was arranging for a tow in to Frankfort. The CG called shortly after and said their boat was being dispatched.

While waiting for the tow, I noticed that I was turning slow circles as I drifted. This highlighted the fact that the rudder was hard over, it would not be possible to tow *Celerity* like that, and I had to get the rudder centered and aligned with the keel. I decided I had to check out the quadrant and somehow free it up so I could move the rudder. To do this I had to remove the steering wheel, 8 screws holding the helm seat and 36 screws holding the access plate at the stern of the cockpit. Between CG calls and concern when ship's fog horns blasted within what seemed like feet from *Celerity* I got everything dismantled.

I grabbed the quadrant with both hands and heaved the quadrant clockwise. The quadrant turned. I was able to turn it until centered. I next checked out everything in the steering gear that I could see and what I could see looked okay. I still had the autopilot disconnected and now had to respond to the radio almost constantly as the CG was zeroing in on my position. They could not see me and I had to send radio transmissions so they could use their radio signal direction finder. Finally I saw red and blue flashing lights and shortly after the boat, UTM 301290, a 31 foot inflatable from Frankfort.

UTM 301290 had a crew of four. They placed their engineer on board *Celerity* to see if he could help me fix the steering. I first reattached the forward end of the autopilot. I thought that maybe I could get it working to steer us now that the quadrant was free. The ST8002 control head has a knob on it for steering. I put it in standby and tried rotating the knob. I could not get it working. I tried resetting it but no luck. The engineer found a 1.5 inch long square key on the cockpit sole. It was the key from the steering wheel. I must have knocked it loose when I removed the wheel. I was able to keep *Celerity's* rudder straight by putting the adjustable wrench around the square top of the rudderpost and sliding a pipe over the handle for leverage.

Initially the CG passed me 2 lines for a bow tow. It didn't work because, like a water skier setting edges behind a boat, *Celerity* headed off to the side of the CG boat. The coxswain next decided to do a parallel tow. *Celerity* is a C&C 40, an IOR design, so has a very rounded waist. Even so, they were able to get me cinched tight to them with bow, stern and 2 spring lines. *Celerity* weighs about 2 times more than the CG boat so I was told to steer to bring my stern slightly towards the CG boat to hold us tightly together. We were rocking and rolling pretty well and water was blasting into the air between us. Everyone was pretty drenched. A couple of times we got up to 10 knots speed but most of the time we were at about 5 knots. The lines were 1 inch diameter and we broke 4 during the two hours it took to get in.

We finally got to Frankfort about 7:00 and docked at Jacobson Marina about 7:30. There was a quick CG safety inspection which I passed. The CG crew was fantastic through this whole event! All of them had been awakened to come to my aid, yet none had a problem with that. They love what they do and do it well. It had been a long night/morning for us all. After a few hours sleep I thoroughly checked out the steering.

Cause of the Steering Problem:

The spinning of the wheel without resistance was because the key had fallen out of the slot between the shaft and the wheel. Normally the key is trapped in the slot between the

shaft and wheel and the wheel is held in place by the wheel nut. It is impossible for the key to fall out when properly in place, which is why I initially dismissed it as a cause. When I reassembled the wheel at my slip in Waukegan the key must have been pushed forward and held in place by friction or just the tip of the key in the slot. As I sailed it loosened and finally fell out.

Because the rudder was all the way to starboard, the autopilot was in a programmed dead zone, set during calibration. The pilot will not work until the quadrant is brought further to center and into the active control zone.

The reason it wouldn't work after reassembly and centering prior to towing was that I tried to control it from standby (where it is always disengaged) instead of auto. Had I tried to control it from auto, it would have worked and I could have motored and steered myself in.

Nothing else was wrong.

Lessons Learned:

Must get sleep. I went too long without sleep. When sleep deprived one doesn't think well and mistakes are easily made.

No matter how difficult the situation, you must relax and think things through.

I called the CG too soon. I felt it was necessary to warn other boats and commercial shipping because of the fog. This started the CG calling me every 15 minutes, which added pressure to me to get my boat going again. It made it harder for me to concentrate and focus on the situation. At the time of the event I was between and still out of the shipping lanes. If I would have methodically stepped through the clues, I may have resolved the issue and been able to continue the race.

Be sure there is adequate time to become familiar with new equipment. I had just finished installing the linear drive autopilot the week before the race. The only time I had used it was for the sea trial when I set it up. It was not familiar to me and operation wasn't automatic.

Check all safety equipment and, when possible, be sure it all functions correctly. Had I tried the emergency tiller prior to the race I would have known that it wouldn't fit the rudder post and could have fixed it.

One needs to practice handling system failures alone. This is different than with a full crew. Do you have the equipment to

handle the failure and is it stowed in the right place? Maybe a decision tree can be devised to help with the thought process.



Sailed West – Phil Rubright

Former GLSS President, and veteran solo sailor Phil Rubright was lost in a tragic sailing accident on October 28 off the coast of New Jersey. Phil was crewing on a Swan 44 *Freefall* along with fellow GLSS member Kevin Hogan and Kevin's friend Teresa Garvie. The purpose of the trip was to deliver Kevin's new boat from Newport to Charleston – during the voyage, the weather deteriorated beyond anything originally forecast, and *Freefall* was rolled and dismasted. All the crew suffered some degree of injury during the dismasting, with Phil's being the most serious. To make matters worse, the boat took on a substantial amount of water through the dorades, which resulted in electrical problems caused by salt water saturation. Most of the water had to be bailed by hand as the bilge pump intake became blocked with debris, and rendered unusable. It subsequently lost power as the electrical system failed.

The US Coast Guard responded to the distress call and sent an initial helicopter from Elizabeth City, NC to retrieve the crew. With 40-50 foot waves and winds gusting into the 50s, the USCG was unable to pluck the stricken sailors directly from the deck of *Freefall* – they would have to get into the water with a USCG rescue swimmer. Phil was the first in the water, but while being loaded in the rescue basket, a large wave hit, damaging both the basket and hoist cable, rendering them unusable. A raft was dropped from the helicopter, and Phil was placed in the raft. Shortly thereafter, another wave flipped the raft, tossing Phil back into the sea and injuring the rescue swimmer. The swimmer was retrieved using an emergency procedure, and the helicopter had to depart for Atlantic City, with fuel critically low.

Additional units were dispatched from Atlantic City and Cape Cod, along with three USCG cutters. Phil was recovered around 0500 the following morning and flown to Atlantic City, where he was pronounced dead by the Atlantic County Medical Examiner. The

remainder of the crew was ultimately rescued and taken to Atlantic City, suffering from mild hypothermia, cuts and bruises.

There is some additional information posted on the GLSS website:

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

A memorial page to Phil is presently being constructed on the GLSS website – when it is finished, a blast email will be sent out notifying those who have signed up for the lists.

Phil departed this world doing what he loved and lived for – sailing. The world is a richer place for his presence, and he will be sorely missed. The GLSS extends their condolences to Phil's family in this time of sorrow.



The 2008 Vendee Globe

The 2008-2009 edition of the venerable Vendee Globe is underway, with the fleet now in the Southern Ocean. Bathing suits and 'au naturel' have been replaced with winter foulies, and frostbite is more of a concern than sunburn. The skippers have been battered pretty much from the get-go, as a late season storm lashed the Bay of Biscay, resulting in several skippers making a return to Les Sables d'Olonne. One of those was Canadian skipper Derrick Hatfield on board *Spirit of Canada* – he re-started, and is now past the first gate. As of this writing, six skippers have retired for various reasons – it's a grueling 24, 275 mile non-stop event, and to complete it, skippers must be not only skilled sailors, but have a great boat under them, be resourceful beyond belief, and catch a bit of luck along the way.

Although the race is out of sight of land most of the way around, the internet brings it right into your living room. Check out the official Vendee Globe website:

<http://www.vendeeglobe.org/en/>

Once on the website, you'll find some interesting features such as tracking, and you can also subscribe to the newsletter by mousing over 'In the Race' in the navigation bar, and selecting 'Newsletter.'

I suppose that if you want to experience just a bit of what the skippers are going through now, you could dress up in your foulies, head out into the yard for the nearest snow bank, and have someone spray you with the garden hose (if it's not frozen solid by now...). Come to think of it, the internet version is just fine by me.



Coming to the AGM?

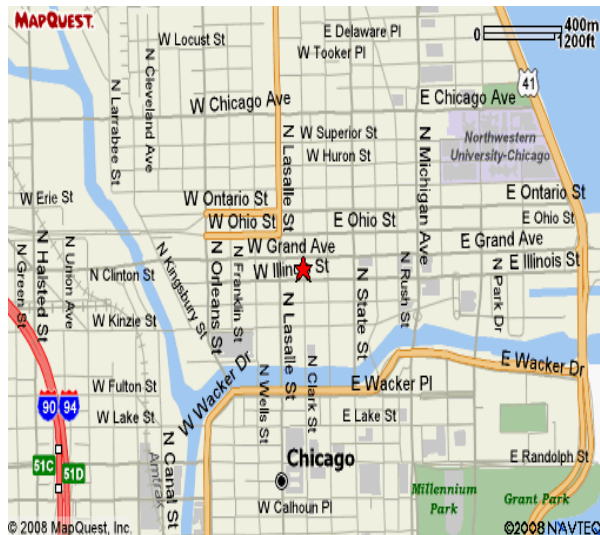
The **Annual General Membership Meeting** will take place in Chicago, Illinois on **January 31, 2009**. As in the previous two AGMs held in Chicago, it will be held at Maggiano's Restaurant – here are some directions to get you pointed in the right direction!

Coming from Detroit or Milwaukee on the Dan Ryan 90/94 Expressway:

Take the EAST OHIO ST exit, EXIT 50B. > Stay STRAIGHT to go onto W OHIO ST > Turn RIGHT onto CLARK ST. > Go to the Corner of Clark St. & Grand Ave > Maggiano's is located at **516 North Clark St**

Directions from Navy Pier:

Exit Navy Pier & Stay STRAIGHT to go onto Grand Ave. > Go West 1 nautical mile to the corner of **Grand Ave. & Clark St** > Maggiano's is located at **516 North Clark St**



****GLSS Dining Room and Bar is located downstairs in the Wine Cellar of Maggiano's****

Note: The AGM invitations will be mailed out in late December to all members who have an address on file with the GLSS. **If you need to update your address (both US Mail and email), you may do so on the secure website:**

https://www.solosailor.org/contact_updateinfo.php

Updating is easy, secure, and will ensure that you receive timely information from the GLSS.



Hotel Discount for the AGM

The Annual General Membership Meeting on January 31, 2009 will fall into the same time frame as Strictly Sail Chicago (Thursday, January 29 through Sunday, February 1). This will be the third AGM held in Chicago, and if previous meetings are a harbinger of things to come, the 2009 version will be an event you don't want to miss!

Once again, the GLSS has secured a discounted block of rooms (including discounted parking) from the Amalfi Hotel:

<http://www.amalfihotelchicago.com>

The discounts are as follows:

- **Single night room rate: \$119**
- **Multiple night rate: \$109**
- **Valet parking: \$22**

The above rates are per night, and represent some significant savings over booking a room through the host hotel for Strictly Sail, the Fairmont.

To book your package, please click on the Amalfi link above, and proceed to their website. On the home page, you'll see a 'Reserve' section – simply type in the desired dates, and then enter the GLSS Group ID in the box: **000041866**. You'll see the details of the package – click the 'View Rates' button on the bottom of the page. On the next page select either the King Bed at the above quoted rates, or two Queen beds at a \$20/night higher rate. *Although the room rate will show \$119 even if you book for more*

than one night, it will be adjusted at check-in to reflect the \$109 rate. Once you've selected the rate, you'll move to a summary page – accept the cancellation policy by checking the box, and click the 'Enter Guest Information' button on the bottom. Fill in the pertinent details, and click the 'Complete Reservation' button to make your reservation. Be assured that it took me far longer to type this than it will for you to make the actual reservation. If you don't care for the music playing on the website, simply click the 'Speaker' icon on the homepage of the Amalfi site....

Upcoming Events

Jan.29 – Feb. 1	Strictly Sail Chicago
Jan. 31	AGM – Chicago
March	Open House – Chicago
March	Open House – Detroit
Apr. 25	Safety at Sea Seminar – Toledo
Jun. 20	Solo Mac Challenges
Aug. 8	Trans Superior Solo
Aug. 25	Lake Erie Solo

The rates include a complementary continental breakfast on each floor, and the daily cocktail party in the Ravello Lounge from 5:30 – 7:30 PM – enjoy an 'Amalfitini' or anything else you wish along with Italian hors d'oeuvres as you unwind from a day at Strictly Sail....

The number of rooms available under this block is limited, and when they are gone, there won't be an extension – make your reservation soon and save some money. The Amalfi is a walkable distance to Navy Pier in good weather, or you may take the free trolley which runs along Illinois Avenue, a couple of blocks north of the hotel. A cab is just a few bucks, and all the above options are better than springing for parking at Navy Pier. It's also an easy walk to Maggiano's, the location once again of the AGM.



**US SAILING's
Safety at Sea Seminar**

For years, US SAILING has been conducting their renowned Safety at Sea Seminar which encompasses all aspects of keeping yourself safe, particularly on offshore passages. The information presented is of considerable value in participating in the GLSS sponsored events as well.

It isn't often that one of the seminars is held in the Great Lakes area, but we are fortunate enough to have one scheduled in Toledo, Ohio. The Sailing School at North Cape Yacht Club will be hosting the seminar at the OneSeaGate Building Auditorium, dockside along the Maumee River on April 25, 2009. The program will be moderated by John Rousmaniere and John Bonds. Additional speakers with ties to the GLSS will participate as well.

These seminars tend to fill up quickly and space is limited. An online informational flyer and registration form has been posted on the GLSS website:

http://www.solosailor.org/pdfs/sas_ncyc.pdf

This is a great opportunity to expand your offshore sailing knowledge, learn from those that have been there before, and take that newfound information with you on your next Solo Challenge. Don't delay in submitting your registration – do it today!



There is always a need for articles for the *Solo Challenger* – the publication is only as good as the content we receive. If you have an article that you'd like to submit for a future edition, please send it to:

tdriza@comcast.net

Thanks!

See you at the AGM!