



Great Lakes Singlehanded Society



GLSS

The GLSS Solo Challenger

The Official Newsletter of the Great Lakes Singlehanded Society
March 2019 – Ken Verhaeren(verhaerk@aol.com) editor

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From The Helm



Hello fellow solo sailors. As I write my first article as President, it is snowing, blustery and cold. Have you noticed that February is the shortest month, yet it feels like the longest? The good

news is with each passing day, the days are longer and we are one day closer to Spring and sailing season.

Thank you to everyone that attended the AGM at Bayview Yacht Club in Detroit, and special thanks to our keynote speaker John Lubimir for sharing his experience participating in the Round Ireland race. If you didn't attend, you missed a good time and we hope you will consider attending next year in Cleveland.

As I take the helm of this organization, I'd like to start by thanking outgoing President Rick Stage for his leadership last season and the entire board for their service. Also, Allan Belovarac has completed his three year term on the board. Thank you Allan for your service. I'd also like to welcome Noel Brockman to the 2019 board as our Recording Secretary. The success of this organization depends on the efforts and dedication of volunteers that are willing to devote their time and passion to support it. We should all remember to thank those that give their time and consider doing so yourself when the opportunity arises.

Some things looking forward...

Yacht Scoring - We successfully used it for the Mackinac and Erie challenges in 2018. I believe Yacht Scoring provides an efficient platform for race management and its use benefits GLSS, so I'd like to use it for our challenges going forward. We may even be able to find a generous donor to cover the \$10 boat administrative cost.

Registration is now open for the 2019 Mac Challenges. Information on how to register can be found on the GLSS Mac Challenges webpage at, <https://www.solosailors.org/mac>

Peace,
Joey Baker
GLSS President





AGM returned to Bayview Yacht Club

President Rick Stage hosted our recent return to the Bayview Yacht Club for our Annual General Membership meeting. Always the highlight of the year, the AGM allows us to honor the achievements of the past year and then look forward to the coming sailing season. Our Keynote speaker this year was one of our own, GLSS member John Lubimir. John's exploits are wide and varied and he told the gathering of his recent sail to Ireland to compete in the Volvo Around Ireland Race. But more on that later.

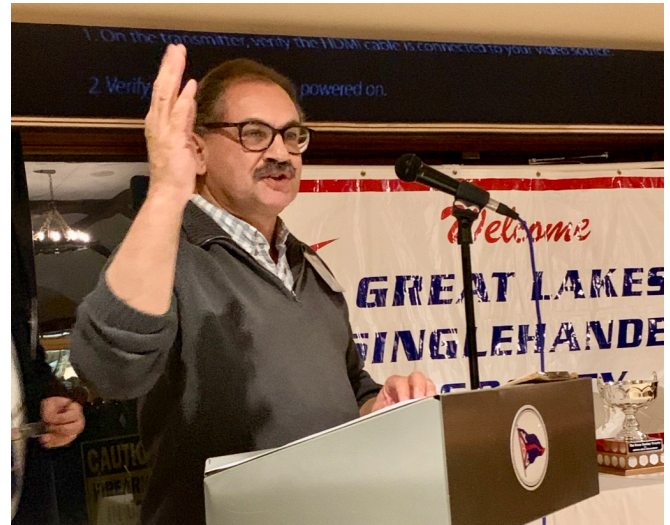
After the social hour started the AGM and friends met again, the business meeting started. Briefly the GLSS is doing very well. Additional new members were added. There were Solo Challenges that truly **were** challenges and tested our skills and many members earning awards for longevity all the way up to Dick Lappin's 35 completed challenges. Of course medallions were presented to those who completed a Solo Challenge on Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie or Lake Ontario

this year. New members present were honored with a GLSS Lapel pin along with their



medallion.

Also honored at the AGM was Kris Kimmons for his unbelievable efforts at saving 3 kayakers on Lake Michigan as a storm was building and night falling into darkness. This rescue took place as Kris was nearing the end of his Super Mac and Back Challenge in 2017. Kris was given the Eilberg Award for Outstanding Seaman-ship at the award luncheon after the 2018 Mack-inac Challenge. At the AGM he told everyone the full story.



Leaving Florida late April, John related his passage to Bermuda, the Azores and on to Ireland for the June 30th start. Each leg had its own challenges and left John needing some repairs prior to the start of his Ireland adventure. The Volvo Around Ireland course covers approximately 704 nautical miles and runs clockwise around the island. John's Patriot was the only American boat in the race. John's story held everyone attention particularly when discussing the de-masting of Patriot and the clearing of the

damages.

John's great adventure brought the AGM to the final social hour as everyone gathered around the friends to laugh, tell more stories and talk about the Challenges they were going to enter in 2019.

BY THE WAY!

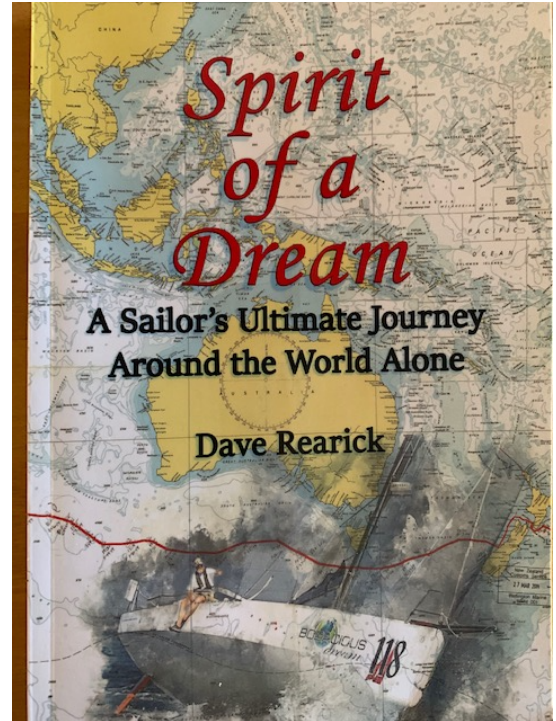
It was announced that the 2020 AGM will be held in Cleveland



Ohio. Vice President Rob Burger is heading the committee planning the event.

Spirit of a Dream is here. This is the story we all have been waiting for and the wait was worth it. Many of the members of the GLSS know Dave Rearick personally and if not they know his name. A longtime member of the GLSS, Dave has also been one of our most enjoyable guest speakers at the AGM. At last year's AGM the "when will the book be out" questions were asked many times and Dave would always say "soon". Soon has arrived. I got my copy not too long after it came out. Although it can be had at other places, Dave signed copies at this year's AGM. I picked mine up from Amazon. Yes, he will still autograph it if you get it that way.

I am certainly not a book reviewer but this is a wonderful book on many different levels. I took my time reading it and often went back to previous passages. I would read passages to my wife as I moved through the chapters. As Dave told of walking on a glacier in New Zealand, the image of that glacier losing its glory as it receded made me sad. Other stories made me laugh.



A week or so ago, Dave was on WGN radio with John Williams talking about his story. You can hear that interview by going to the John Williams podcast on the WGN radio website. But remember when you order this book to buy 2, you may lose one to a friend.

Speaking of Podcasts!

What are your favorite podcast? Are they sailing or other types? Humor, history, comedy podcasts come in all varieties. Judy and I often share our favorites on long car rides and avoid the static of the radio. I am only going to mention 3 but hope you will send me your favorite podcast so that we can share them. I get mine over my phone by clicking on my Podcast app.

1. The Moth

Since its launch in 1997, The Moth has presented thousands of true stories told live and without notes to standing room only crowds worldwide. The Moth storytellers stand alone, under a spotlight, with only a microphone and a roomful of strangers. The storyteller and the

audience embark on a high-wire act of shared experience which is both terrifying and exhilarating.

2. The Thomas Jefferson Hour

The Thomas Jefferson Hour features conversations with Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, as portrayed by the award winning humanities scholar and author, Clay Jenkinson. The weekly discussion features Mr. Jefferson's views on events of his time, contemporary issues facing America and answers to questions submitted by his many listeners.

3. On the Wind Sailing. 59 North

"On the Wind" is the podcast about offshore sailing, where professional sailor & journalist Andy Schell interviews sailors from around the world to discover what inspires them in an effort to inspire you! Andy has interviewed everyone from legends like Sir Robin Knox-Johnson to tech gurus like Nigel Calder, boat builders like Magnus Rassy and inspirational family sailors.

Each of the 3 I've recommended to you is very different and reflect some of the podcasts that I enjoy listening to while sailing. Please send your recommendations to me so that I can share them. Send to verhaerk@gmail.com

Meet Noel Brockman

Noel is new to the GLSS board and prior to the AGM answered here question for the Boards nomination committee. We thought you would enjoy learning more about him. It has been my pleasure to meet Norm not only at Mackinac Island but also in Chicago when he sailed the Chicago Mac. KV

Name: Noel Brockman

GLSS Board Title: Director

Boat Manufacturer, Model & Year: Mid 80's Olson 30

Boat Name: Quick & Dirty

How did you name your boat: (believe it or not it was based on anything to do with sex, it was an operating mode I used during my entire career as a manufacturing engineer, others would study problems to death and never make a decision, my studies and recommendations were based on 'Quick & Dirty' studies.

How did you learn to sail: Still learning, but started on a Mistral 404 in Lake St. Clair then on to a Siren 17 that we used to cross Lake Erie then bought my first keel boat in 1989 a Viking 28 which I love to this day. Raised my kids on this boat and sailed in over 25,000NM in the 22 years I owned her.

Where is your home port: Belle River Ontario on Lake St. Clair

How did you get into single handed sailing: Did my first Lake St. Clair Solo in the early 2000s and said NEVER AGAIN. First Huron challenge in 2006 (or 7?) then continued from there

Which challenge did you do as your first and what year: See above

How many GLSS Single Handed Challenges Have you completed and in which lakes: Started in 13 and completed 12. One in Lake Ontario, four in Lake Erie, one in Lake Ontario and six in Lake Huron. I couldn't complete the Chicago-Mac due to equipment failure

What other GLSS awards have you received and in what year: Best looking sailor (still pending), last year a 10 event plaque

What GLSS jobs have you undertaken (race committee, etc.): None to date

As a Board Member what are your primary areas of interest: Increase participation thru ought the sailing community and giving back to the organization

Any other comments of information about your sailing experience you wish to pass on: With my son (Luke Brockman) who owns an identical boat it is also a family affair. Luke did his first solo challenge in 2007 on a 24 foot Shark in just under 80 hours

IT IS CALLED A LIFESLING FOR A REASON!

This is not a commercial; rather it's a lesson learned the hard way.

Those of us that work at UK Sailmakers are keenly aware of the importance of safety-at-sea, and particularly the need to understand, practice, and perfect the art of man overboard recovery.

The Chicago Yacht Club just released a 60-page report with its findings and recommendations following the death of a sailor who fell overboard in the 2018 Chicago Mackinac race. As a Safety At Sea instructor for the Storm Trysail Club, I would like to give you my takeaway from the report.

On July 21, 2018, about a half hour after the start of the 330-mile Chicago Mackinac Race, Jon Santarelli, an excellent swimmer, slipped overboard from the cockpit of the TP 52 IMEDI. The wind was blowing 18-25 knots and the waves were 6-8 feet in height. There was an all-hands effort to get Jon back on board; unfortunately, after three passes, Jon slipped under the water.

His inflatable PFD was set to auto-inflate...but it didn't, and he didn't manually inflate it. The boat executed a Quick Stop maneuver, and then circled around but the boat had too much speed to stop near Jon. On the second attempt as they got close to Jon, a wave forced the boat up and over Jon and he went under the boat from starboard to port. IMEDI circled a third

time, and this time they were able to stop the boat very close to Jon, but as they tossed Jon a line and he raised his arms, he slipped below the water and was not seen again.

Rewind to the headline and the opening paragraphs about how the STC helps teach and train MOB recovery with a Lifesling. The Lifesling, with its floating collar at the end of a 150-foot floating yellow polypropylene line, removes the need for pinpoint accuracy in returning to a MOB and helps recover the person on the first attempt.

There's no argument that it's hard to stop a sailboat at a specific place in ideal conditions, let alone hitting a specific mark in high winds and waves. It's even harder...nearly impossible...to do so when adrenaline is pumping and the crew is anxious because a friend is in peril.



The Lifesling, used by circling the victim as if you were picking up a downed water skier, doesn't require that you to sail so close to the swimmer that you risk hitting the MOB. And, once the MOB puts the collar under their shoulders, they are mechanically attached to the boat and you are not depending on someone's grip to hold on. Also you have the advantage of a powerful halyard winch to bring them back aboard. Even a small person can lift a soaking wet 250-pound person out of the water using a winch.

Had the Lifesling been deployed when Jon still had the strength to swim to it, there may not have been no need for a third attempt or perhaps even a second attempt. Once the person in the water gets hold of any part of the line, the boat can be stopped by luffing into the wind or by using the engine.

It's easy for us to sit here in our office and proclaim these concepts, but we do speak from experience. I was on Andrew Weiss's Sydney 43 CHRISTOPHER DRAGON in 2014 when a crewman went overboard on a cold spring day just after the five-minute warning for a race. The story about the recovery was published in November 2014 and it is reprinted in the next article. Thanks to crew practice and training exercises, Weiss was able to maneuver his boat to effectively and efficiently recover the MOB with the Lifesling, and still start the race on time. Weiss had learned through his training exercises that, like the TP 52 IMEDI, having a small profile fin keel makes the boat handle differently than a more traditionally designed boat, because they go into "irons" at slow speeds if the jib is lowered.

So, what does all mean? Simply that you can't practice MOB recoveries enough. The most instructive practice sessions are when you can put a person in the water, so use those warm summer days. You should not be afraid to use all your MOB gear: Lifesling, MOM, Dan Buoy, Man Overboard Pole, etc. And don't be afraid to throw anything over the side that will float. Give the person in the water every chance possible to grab one. Another benefit of a lot of floating items is that it is easier to see the person in the water marked with a "debris field." And, finally, make sure your inflatable PFDs work.

We, like the rest of the sailing community, were deeply saddened by the loss of Jon Santarelli; yet we know that such tragedies are possible regardless of how much training we all undergo. That said, we must all continue diligently to be aware of conditions around us. We must anticipate the worst-case scenario. We must do whatever we can to prevent this from happening again. In reality, that is a tall order from the "wish doctor;" but take the time to read this report from the Chicago Yacht Club. Share it, digest it, practice its recommendations. Most of all, sail safely.

**I feel it is important to note that many if not all of these sailors were not clipped as can be seen by reading the incident report. The GLSS has strict rules about being clipped in and possibly because we are solo sailors not having anyone to help we feel the need more than crewed sailors. KV

To read the full Chicago Yacht Club incident report, click here https://www.cyrace-tomackinac.com/assets/1/7/25Feb19_Imedi_Incident_Report.pdf

Cold year on the Lakes?

We've all experienced it, the POLAR Plunge that dropped our temperatures this year. Check out what Rick McLaren sent me from AccuWeather.

Cross your fingers the Lake is above 40 degrees on 6/23. Cheers!

<https://www.accuweather.com/en/weather-news/great-lakes-has-most-extensive-ice-coverage-since-2014-following-polar-vortex-intrusion/70007345>

The Cold Facts About Hypothermia

Know the warning signs — and what steps to take — when the temperature starts to fall.



May on a Minnesota lake. Three men are in two canoes bracketed together in such a way as to make a catamaran. Two are in back and one is in front. They have spent the day camping and fishing. So far, the trip has been relaxing and fun. And then they paddled around a bend into a headwind. Water started splashing between the canoes, settling in one of them to the point all onboard were concerned. The bailing bucket they usually carried had burned up the night before in a campfire and all that remained were a few sponges. The water was getting higher in the canoe. A decision was made for one of them to move to the higher side but the man who was to make the move froze. The canoe swamped and within a minute, all three were in the 50 degree water.

"I look back at that moment, and the moments leading up to it," all the time says one of the survivors of this accident (who asked his name not be used). "But I never felt like I wasn't in control or that we weren't going to make it."

The water was 90-100 feet deep in the lake. The winds were hitting 15 mph and the seas were building. After a few minutes in the water, the brackets holding the canoes together came off. They knew there was a boat within a half mile of their location but attempts to signal with a canoe paddle weren't successful. They tried standing one canoe on its end to attract attention but the wind kept blowing it back into the water. It was becoming increasingly clear, these three boaters were in trouble and the longer they were in the cold water, the more trouble they were going to face.

"We were in there for almost an hour," the survivor says, "and I knew maintaining some degree of composure was going to get us through this. When panic sets in, that's when all the

mistakes are made. So I kept saying 'hey now, this is a bad thing but we can overcome this.' I sensed one of the group was starting to panic so I made it a point to keep talking to him." He told the others he was going to swim to shore and get help, but the idea was quickly dismissed by the group. To do so would have been a fatal mistake because once out of the water, hypothermia was going to take hold faster than it already was doing. The three stuck together and they are alive today because of this decision. Wearing a lifejacket is another reason.

"My vest kept me alive, even though it kept coming unzipped as I tried to grab things that were floating past. After a while, I decided it was best to just hang on to the canoe. It also seemed that a lot of bright colors floating around would get someone's attention if we couldn't. When I look back I can tell you the mind is amazing. You are able to wheel through a lot of thoughts-actions-possibilities. I knew the day was still young and I knew more people would be out in canoes."

That's exactly how they were saved. Another canoe party came upon the three in the water and pulled them to shore. A nearby ranger station boat was called to the scene and took the wet and freezing boaters to a warm shelter. Each was suffering from various degrees of hypothermia. A series of good decisions after a single bad decision to paddle into some heavy weather is why they are alive today. That, and some luck.

"A few weeks later we received a voice mail from the rescue crew regarding the cost for the time to use the boat and the cost of food and so on. The total bill was \$260. We talked about it and realized it cost about \$90 a piece to stay alive that day. That's not too bad. I've saved that message and after a bad day at the office, I always replay it. One keeps a good perspective that way.

Signs of Hypothermia: Hypothermia occurs when the body temperature (also called core temperature) drops from the normal 98.7F as a result of prolonged exposure to cold water, wind or a combination of both. Once the body temperature drops, shivering naturally occurs as the body attempts to generate its own heat. As the temperature decreases, the victim becomes more disoriented. At 82 degrees F, unconsciousness occurs.

Mild: Body temperature is 98-96 degrees F. Shivering is involuntary. Can walk and talk but motor functions are difficult.

Moderate: Body temperature is 95-93 degrees F. The "umbles" begin with moderate hypothermia: stumble, mumble, fumble and grumble. On the latter, the victim can become violent. There is an attitude of "I don't care" and in some instances, victims have taken their hats off or tried to remove shoes and socks.

Severe: Body temperature is 92-86 degrees F. Shivering comes in waves. Then there is a pause before shivering begins again. The body is beginning to shut down as blood moves away from extremities and into the vital organs. The victim is drowsy and eventually falls asleep.

Things To Do (And Not Do): Make sure you have a personal flotation device. If you don't, find it in the overturned boat. If someone has fallen in and isn't wearing one, throw one to them. **Don't try and swim to shore.** The more activity you engage in, the more energy you are taking from your body. If hypothermia has begun, your body is going to become colder with increased activity. Stay where you are in the water. If alone, use the HELP posture (heat escape lessening position) in which you hold your knees to the chest with clasped arms. If you are with others, try and huddle together.

Treatment: Once out of the water have the victim lie on their back or side. If possible, get them out of the wind and in a dry environment. Lay them on a blanket or some kind of insulated material. If dry clothing is available, now is the time to get them into it.

Apply heating pads or hot water bottles under the blanket to head, neck, chest or groin. But be careful not to burn the victim's skin. Hypothermia will make a person's skin more sensitive to temperature than normal.

Do not apply heat to arms or legs. This forces cold blood in the arms and legs back toward the heart, lungs and brain and lowers the body temperature. This is called "after drop" and it can be fatal.

Apply your own warmth to the victim through direct body-to-body contact. Wrap a blanket around you and the victim. Remember the best kind of warm up is done slowly. **If conscious, give them warm-not hot-liquids with sugar.** Avoid caffeine and alcohol. This article was originally published in October/November 2001 issue of *Trailer Magazine* and updated February 2014.