

INTRODUCING THE 20TH

In 1998, after completing his fifth Singlehanded TransPac, Moore 24 sailor Greg Morris commented, "The TransPac is a buglight for weirdos with boats." Oddly enough, the referenced "weirdos" didn't take offense, but rather embraced the description with a large measure of pride and good humor. As one of this year's racers told us, "That really resonated with me."

Ever since 1978, the Singlehanded Sailing Society has put on the Singlehanded TransPac Race in even-numbered years. Even if we hadn't seen the event poster, some quick counting on fingers and toes would tell us that makes this year's the 20th edition.

The 2016 Singlehanded TransPac will start off the deck of Corinthian Yacht Club in Tiburon on July 2 and sail out the Gate bound for the tropical paradise of Hanalei Bay on the rainy north shore of Kauai, the aptly-named Garden Isle.

On these pages we offer an introduction to the 27 soloists of 2016. We'll follow the race (though not literally of course) and let you know how it all worked out in the August issue of *Latitude 38*.

**Ad Astra — Pearson Ariel 26
Patrick Bryant, Pillar Point, CA**

NASA Ames Sailing Club
Previous SHTPs: none

With a PHRF of 258, *Ad Astra* is the slowest-rated boat in the class of 2016, and Patrick Bryant is concerned about overloading the Ariel. "The race rules require so much safety stuff (liferaft, etc.) that I may have no living space left once I cram all that stuff into my diminutive boat. The stores I have to carry comprise 20% of the boat's empty weight, which causes me concern over its effect on stability."



More of a cruiser than a racer, Patrick, a senior advisor for cyber-security at NASA, is making an exception in this case, as he appreciates the camaraderie of the fleet. His race strategy is of the "tortoise vs. hare" variety. He'll maintain a watch using AIS: "AIS is essential to sleep!"

**Althea — Cavalier 39
Brett Suwyn, San Francisco, CA**
Singlehanded Sailing Society
Previous SHTPs: none

Brett Suwyn, a self-described 'software dude', completed a 77-day, 4,000-mile solo sail to Alaska and back last summer.

His sleep plan calls for lots of naps, "length dictated by proximity to danger."



Althea's claim to fame is serving with the USCG Auxiliary at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. When we asked Brett why he chose *Althea* for the race, he replied, "She wouldn't let me go to Hawaii without her."

**Crazy Rhythm — Santa Cruz 27
John Simpson, Hayward, CA**
SSS

Previous SHTPs: none

"I've always been attracted to the peculiar challenge of singlehanded racing," says John Simpson, a software engineer. "I've been sailing in and around San Francisco Bay for more decades than an honest person would ever admit to."

His plans for sleeping and watch-



keeping include using a custom-made sleeping cushion that he designed for the cabin floor, and a very loud alarm. "I'm sure what actually happens will be different than planned."

He's continuing his normal cycling and workouts to be in shape for the race. In addition to dehydrated food, "I pre-pack snack bags. I'll probably bring enough for three snack bags per day for 15 days."

He's purchased a wire-luff 125% jib to be flown with the regular jib as twin headsails. And he'll bring "every spinaker I own. Hopefully one of them will make it to the finish."

**Dark Horse — Olson 30
Shad Lemke, Wilsall, MT**

SSS, South Flathead Yacht Club
Previous SHTPs: none

"I set the Singlehanded TransPac as a goal because of the adventure, freedom and independence, and to help me overcome a lot of adversity over the past few years," said Shad Lemke, an architect and general contractor.



To prepare, he has finished a full re-fit of his Olson 30, has taken several navigation courses, including celestial navigation, has been on a half-marathon training program, and lifts weights.

Modifications to the yellow Olson include updated cabinet work for more efficient storage. Shad added a "beam of destiny" between the chainplates.



In the Capri division, 'Fast Lane' and 'Jack' start the 2014 Singlehanded TransPac with shortened sail. 'Fast Lane' and Barry Bristol will be back this year.

"The Olson 30 was designed for this race," he said. "It's easy to singlehand and has been proven." A second Olson 30, *Kato*, will be sailed by Jiri Senkyrik.

**Dolphin — Pacific Seacraft 37
Bill Meanley, San Diego, CA**

San Diego YC
Previous SHTPs: none

A hardware store owner, long-distance cruiser, and three-time Baja Ha-Ha vet, Bill Meanley bought *Dolphin* in 1984. He spent a year and a half refitting her for the SHTP.

Not only will this be his first SHTP, it will also be his first race. To prepare himself physically, he's running and doing cross-training. He plans to bring "easy-to-prepare food because I'm a lousy cook."



**Domino — Wilderness 30
David Harrigel, Oakland, CA**
SSS

Previous SHTPs: 2014 (DNF)
"Nothing is stock," said David Harrigel about *Domino*. Glenn Hansen of Hansen Rigging performed a refit and

SWARM OF BUGLIGHTERS



LATITUDE / ROSS

installed floating headsail leads below-decks. "She has a shorter than stock rig," commented David, "which is in fact an early-generation Olson 30 deck-stepped mast."

To prepare for the race, David runs and works out daily. He's lost 20 pounds. He plans to provision with "boil-in-bag Trader Joe's-type food; I'm trying not to shock my system with a radical diet change."

He plans to sleep mostly in spurts for the first night or two, working up to longer sleep periods as he moves into less congested waters, gradually shifting his sleep cycle toward the daytime hours to prepare for the nighttime squalls in the last portion of the course.

David's desire to do the Singlehanded TransPac started back in the '80s, when he read about it while growing up a sailing-obsessed kid in Seattle.

Domino and David started the SHTP in 2014. "I was leading the race when I lost my rudder about 180 miles west of Monterey."

After this race, he plans to ship the

boat back home to the Bay Area.

Elizabeth Ann — Westsail 32 Gary Burton, Brookings, OR

Previous SHTPs: 2014

Gary Burton had such a great time last year, he's going again.

"The chance to sail with some of my friends to Hawaii is a big part of why I'm doing the race. And I want to enjoy Hanalei with my family this time."

This year he plans to sail a straighter course and minimize the distance sailed. "Last time my track was pretty erratic." He'll stock the Westsail with lots of varied ingredients because he likes to cook.

After about two weeks in Hawaii, he'll sail *Elizabeth Ann* back to Brookings, either solo or with crew. Gary is sponsored by GCB Automation and Marine, LLC.

Fast Lane — Catalina Capri 30 Barry Bristol, Escondido, CA

San Diego Catalina Association
Previous SHTPs: 1986, 1988, 1996, 2014

Barry Bristol also hopes to do better than he did in 2014. "In the past, I

finished the SHTP faster in a slower boat." Besides his previous Hawaii crossings, he's cruised and raced in the Northwest, sailed to and from Mexico, and raced in Southern California.

"I have tried a number of different regulated sleep patterns," he said, "For me, regulated sleep doesn't work. I tend to sleep for two to three hours without interruption (assuming the boat is doing well), but after that every time I turn over I get up and take a look around."

He takes only food that he likes. "Treats are good. It's nice to know that no matter how bad the day/night went, I know one good thing will happen: I get a treat. Otherwise, I have hot dishes, soups, stews, canned chicken and tuna, eggs, pancakes, Twinkies, apples..."

After each of his four previous SHTPs, he sailed back to the West Coast, and he'll do the same this year.

Foxxfyre — Yamaha 33 Doug Soderstrom, Placerville, CA

SSS

Previous SHTPs: none

"Ever since I first read about the SSS TransPac when I was 17 or 18, I've wanted to do the sail," said Doug Soderstrom. So far, his ocean racing experience is limited to near-shore events, but he's done coastal deliveries and worked in the offshore fishing industry in Washington and Alaska. "I've spent months with little sleep when fishing."

Foxxfyre is a SHTP vet, having carried Mike Jefferson to Hanalei three times. Doug says she's a fun boat to sail.

Hauhani — Catalina 34 Margie Woods, Venice, CA

Del Rey YC,

Pacific Singlehanded Sailing Association
Previous SHTPs: none

Originally from the Big Island of Hawaii, Margie (with a hard 'g') Woods is a photographer, artist and teacher who's been sailing all her life. "I never got to do any of my father's crossings with him. I have wanted to sail to Hawaii on my own and have him greet me there as I did him so many times."

She confesses that she is "secretly not a racer," but has friends from PSSA who are also signed up for this race.



INTRODUCING THE 20TH

Jacqueline — Freedom 30

Mike Cunningham
Discovery Bay, CA
SSS

Previous SHTPs: none

"I went to summer school in Kauai when I was 17," said Mike Cunningham. "I always wanted to go back. Now I can do it without paying for an airline ticket and spending an agonizing five hours on an airplane."

Boat prep for the race includes new steering, mast work, gun-mount spin-naker, solar power, e-rudder, storm sails, liferaft, and so on. "I don't want to think about it anymore," he says.

Personal prep includes his usual cardio combined with a minor reduction in beer consumption. "It's not going well."

When provisioning, "I'm going to put some big ice blocks in the cooler to see how long I can keep the beer — I mean water — cold."

The Freedom 30 is "one of the first boats with a carbon, unstayed mast which is built like a tank." Mike calls her a "jewel box," and she is lovely below, with a lot of teak.

Jacqueline's bow number, 1010, is not random. Rather '10' stands for the letter 'J' — his granddaughter's initials are JJ.

After the race, he plans to sail home in time for his daughter's wedding in September.

Kato — Olson 30

Jiri Senkyrik, San Francisco, CA
Previous SHTPs: none

"Rebuilding an awesome boat and sailing it to Hawaii is a great adventure for someone in their late 20s," says Jiri Senkyrik. To prepare himself physically, he rides his bike to work at a tech company in San Francisco. Like her fleet sistership, *Dark Horse*, Kato has had a complete refit, but Jiri has kept her within Olson 30 one-design specs. "Everything about the boat is optimized for singlehanded sailing," says Jiri. "My girlfriend and I spent over a year rebuilding Kato."

Jiri is hoping to find an adventurous soul to sail Kato back to San Francisco after the race.

Libra — Pogo 2

Grégory Saramite, Sausalito, CA
SSS, Seven Seas Cruising Association,
Cercle de la Voile d'Arcachon, Les Glénans

Previous SHTPs: none

Grégory Saramite is racing to Hawaii for "the challenge, the learning experience, and two weeks of into-the-wild therapy with a good dose of adrenaline!" He's also motivated by raising awareness and funds for the Terry Wahls Foundation, supporting clinical trials of an integrative approach to treating multiple sclerosis.

Grégory has been trying to get to the start of the SHTP or Pacific Cup for the past few years. "I am getting more luck toward the Singlehanded TransPac with Skout's support as my main sponsor and the tremendous help of my friend Przemyslaw Karwasiecki." He's an engineer for the networking app and site Skout, and Przemyslaw sailed *Libra* in the 2014 SHTP.

A Frenchman from Bordeaux, Grégory's ocean sailing has mostly consisted of coastal races up to 100 miles offshore in France's Bay of Biscay. As a teenager, he cruised the Med on his family's boat. More recently, he's been training as bowman on the San Francisco-based Farr 52

Zamazaan. "Time spent on the water counts the most," he says.

The 21-ft Mini is short on space and amenities. "No oven or ice cream on board — water and a good source of food should be enough. The rest is safety and foul weather gear. Protection from the sun is going to be important too."

After the race he's "considering sailing the boat... Oops — I meant selling the boat!"

Minibar — Mini Transat 6.50

Yves Vergnolle
Manhattan Beach, CA
PSSA

Previous SHTPs: 2012

Yves Vergnolle, the CEO of a consulting company, chose this boat because "Mini Transats are designed specifically for singlehanded offshore racing — safe, fast for their size, very fun to sail... and hopefully reliable."

He described his race strategy: "Not lose too much time during the first part (close to the wind) vs. the longer boats, and try to sail close to my polars for the rest of the race (more downwind)."

As for sleep, the length of his naps will depend on the conditions and the ability of the autopilot to drive efficiently.

After the race, he hopes to sail around

the world — on a bigger boat.

Mouton Noir — Garcia Passoa 47
Michael Jefferson, San Jose, CA
SSS

Previous SHTPs: 1992, 1996, 2000, 2012

With 30,000 shorthanded bluewater miles and four previous SHTPs under his keel, Michael Jefferson is looking forward to connecting with friends and being alone at sea again. That would sound like a contradiction in any other context.

He's tried to make the French-built *Mouton Noir* — the largest boat in this year's fleet — as bulletproof as possible. The aluminum expedition boat has internal ballast, a non-ballasted centerboard and a daggerboard aft, and draws 3.5 feet with the boards up. Major mods include a "massive solar farm," wind generator and charging engine.

A retired physicist, Michael plans to sail from Hawaii to the Pacific Northwest and cruise British Columbia before returning to San Francisco Bay in September.

Nina — Olson 29

Robert MacDonald, Mill Valley, CA
SSS

Previous SHTPs: none

A contractor, Robert MacDonald has been racing since 1980. He sailed in the 2000 and 2004 Pacific Cups, the 2007 Transpac, and the 2003 Osaka Cup.

To prepare for the race he's been sailing more and working less. Provisioning will be minimal, mostly freeze-dried. Robert hopes to sleep mostly during the day and stay up at night.

After the race, he plans to ship his stock Olson 29 home via Matson — and catch up on his sleep.

Owl — Pacific Seacraft 37

John Woodworth, Richmond, CA
SSS, Ballena Bay YC,
Tradewinds Sailing School and Club
Previous SHTPs: none

Owl is one of two William Crealock-designed Pacific Seacraft 37 double-ended cruising cutters signed up this year (Bill Meanley's *Dolfin* is the other). She'll carry three self-steering systems: a Monitor windvane, a Pelagic autopilot, and a B&G



SWARM OF BUGLIGHTERS

belowdecks autopilot. Skipper John Woodworth will have the option of communicating via SSB and/or satellite.

Pakala — Express 37
Joe Barry, Dana Point, CA
 PSSA

Previous SHTPs: none

A television staging supervisor, Joe Barry has wanted to race solo across an ocean since watching OSTAR transatlantic boats arrive in Newport, RI. "I don't live on the East Coast anymore, so the SHTP is the one," he says.

He sailed his qualifier in 20- to 35-knot winds with gusts to 42. He called that the "best sail training I could have gotten."

Joe's provisions will include freeze-dried food, snacks, fresh fruit ("similar to how Vendée sailors do it"), a minimum of one gallon of water a day, "and, in honor of Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, maybe some wine, but a 'daily tot of rum' of course.

"Pakala and I are promoting the work of Surfers Healing, which takes autistic kids surfing around the world," he adds.



Patience — Westsail 32
Lee Perry, Brookings, OR

Previous SHTPs: none

"I'm a cruiser and thought it might be fun to try this thing called 'racing'," said Lee Perry. He prefers to go singlehanded because "I don't like worrying about others on the boat."

To prepare for the race, he's doing sit-ups and push-ups, running and biking. His strategy for the race is to "push hard for as long as possible," and he intends to eat well to keep his energy level up.

Among important equipment for the passage to Hawaii he cites sunglasses and sunscreen.

Patience is one of three Oregon-based Westsail 32s racing this year; a fourth is recidivist Randy Leasure's *Tortuga* from San Francisco.



Saraband — Westsail 32
David King, Portland, OR

Previous SHTPs: 2010

Besides placing second overall in the 2010 SHTP, David King and *Saraband* scored first overall in the 1988 Pac Cup and third overall in the 1990 Pac Cup. The semi-retired, self-employed delivery skipper and yacht-repair consultant has sailed 180,000 miles. David says

that *Saraband* "has allowed me to do everything I have wanted to do under sail."

David's strategy for this race is to "steer the minimum distance allowed by the conditions." His provisioning philosophy is "anything and any quantity I want."

He likes the SHTP because of the welcoming nature of the competitors and the high level of camaraderie. After the race he'll return *Saraband* to a pure cruising boat, "the boat she was designed to be."



Seazed Asset — Cal 40
Vance Sprock, Cupertino, CA

Previous SHTPs: none

Vance Sprock may not have raced to Hawaii before, but, like many of her breed, his Cal 40 certainly has. She sailed the L.A. to Honolulu Transpac in 1975, '77 and '79. Vance has wanted to sail to Hawaii for a long time and spent two years rebuilding the boat.

His previous experience includes two years of racing in MORA (the now-defunct Midget Ocean Racing Association), a lot of cruising, and three years of crewing professionally.



He plans to eat frozen gourmet meals (hopefully he'll thaw them first),

then canned or freeze-dried food after the meals run out. "I'll try to catch a fish or two," he says.

After the race he plans to sail *Seazed Asset* back to the mainland.

Shaman — Cal 40
Tom Burden, Capitola, CA

SSS, Richmond YC

Previous SHTPs: none

An editor for West Marine, Tom Burden says he's watched too many videos about the Vendée Globe. "I love the romance and the purity of singlehanded sailing," he explains, "and I have an unusual sleeping pattern that works for this kind of race." He's planning to quit caffeine before the start.

Inspired by Ronnie Simpson's Warriors Wish voyage and Nathalie Criou's work with Beat Sarcoma, Tom will be sailing for Jacob's Heart, which works to improve the quality of life for children with cancer, and WomanCARE, a safe haven for women with cancer. He plans to have



the names of cancer survivors and casualties displayed on his sails.

Taz!! — Express 27
George Lythcott, Oakland, CA

Island YC

Previous SHTPs: 2010, 2012

"My first sail was with my brother on a Sunfish off Craigsville Beach in Hyannis, MA, in 1975, and I loved it," writes George Lythcott. "I have been sailing ever since. In the past 15 years I've averaged 100 days per year on the water."

George met SHTP vet Bruce Schwab in 2005 soon after Bruce had completed the Vendée Globe. "He told me that if you want to do the SHTP, sailing to the Farallones should be like walking down your driveway to get the morning paper."

Although he doesn't look it, George is pushing 70. "For the past year I've been working out three to four days per week. It's important to be fit." *Taz!!* remains a class-legal Express 27, but she has received new lithium-ion batteries, a new e-rudder cassette and new wiring. "Leave no stone unturned," says George, who's also been studying El Niño/La Niña.



Provisions will include instant oatmeal, lots of oranges ("no scurvy for me"), ginger cookies (for seasickness) and a gallon of water per day. He'll take a satphone but no SSB this time — he lent that to his friend John Simpson on *Crazy Rhythm*.

After the race and a week's vacation in Kauai, he'll ship *Taz!!* back to Oakland via Matson.

Temerity — Olson 34
David Nabors, Sunnyvale, CA

SSS

Previous SHTPs: none

David Nabors bought his Olson 34 with the long-term goal of ocean sailing, "after reading about the Doublehanded Farallones, Pac Cup and SHTP in *Latitude 38* for years." He and his daughter sailed the Pac Cup doublehanded in 2012. "I enjoy the sensation of an empty horizon!"

An engineer, David has "gone to some effort to reduce noise, and rigged instruments so that I can see a lot more and control the autopilot without leaving the bunk.

"I put in a new fridge so I can have pre-grilled chicken and other dishes that can be pan-fried the first week." He's also added a wireless instru-



THE 20TH SWARM OF BUGLIGHTERS

ment feed to his iPad and "a massive number of audiobooks."

Since David needs to get back to work after the race, a delivery skipper will return *Temerity* to the Bay Area.

Tortuga — Westsail 32
Randy Leasure, San Francisco, CA
 SSS

Previous SHTPs: 2012

"It's more about the journey than the destination for me," says Randy Leasure. "There was a real sense of accomplishment the first time I completed it. Hanalei Bay is an incredible destination." Randy thinks that racing



to Hawaii singlehanded is more challenging. "You are ultimately responsible for every little thing."

He's trying to rest up for the race, but says it's hard trying to finish all the looming project lists. His sail inventory consists of "white ones and some puffy

ones with colors."

Chocolate is an important part of his shopping list. "I cook a lot and try to eat well. Nothing freeze-dried on *Tortuga*."

Ventus — J/88
Chris Cartwright, Palo Alto, CA
 SSS

Previous SHTPs: none

"I turned 50 this year and wanted a new sailing adventure," says Chris Cartwright, a physician. "The prep alone has been an adventure."

His J/88 is a one-design racer, so he's keeping it stock. "I added a real bunk to help with naps and I've done a lot of fiddling with the reefing set-up and line management for singlehanding." He feels that *Ventus* balances nicely in lots of wind.



Regarding race strategy, he says: "I'm in it for the fun and would rather sail a little extra distance to stay in good wind."

Provisioning will consist of "anything that can be eaten with one hand or made into food with the addition of hot water."

Watermark — Pacific Seacraft 31
Michael Thomson, Irvine, CA
 SSS

Previous SHTPs: none

The Singlehanded TransPac is a bucket-list item for jet pilot Mike Thomson, who's been sailing for 38 years. "I've been working like a madman for the last six months since purchasing the boat to get it ready," he confesses. He chose the Pacific Seacraft because "It is very easy to sail and has a pleasant motion. The cutter rig is easy for one person to manage."



To prepare for the race, he's been bicycling, swimming and lifting weights. Food will be fresh for the first part of the trip, then canned and packaged, with an emphasis on protein.

Since *Watermark* is a heavy-displacement boat, Michael plans to sail a rumbline course. "If the wind is light, veer left; if heavy, veer right."

— **latitude** / *chris*

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