

# Nor'Sea27 Owners' Newslines

## #1 March 1996

Welcome, to the first Newslines, an exchange of information among Nor'Sea 27 Owners. We were thrilled last summer, during our 2 week sail around the lower end of Lake Michigan, to see several other Nor'Seas anchored in the harbor on Lake Macatawa. We spent a short hour on board Tom & JJ Scotts' "Karma", and then and there decided it was time to get serious about this owners newsletter that everyone would love to receive.

To date, there are only several hundred Nor'Sea 27s and the owners are all special people with a willingness to help each other out, if they only knew their problems or questions.

The Newslines will plan to include articles submitted by owners, as well as discussion of questions and specific problems you submit.

Please share this first issue with other owners in your area. In the near future, you should see letters to the editors of some of the major sailing magazines, looking for more owners.

Thanks for your cooperation. Nancy & Gale Saint - "No News" - #76, aft cockpit built in 1978 - brown hull with a full teak sheer

## SINGLE HANDED TO HAWAII.....

with a Lot of Help

by John Lewis #44

In June of 1994 I sailed our Nor'Sea 27 "Proper Motion" from San Francisco to Hanalei Bay, Kauai in the Single Handed TransPac race. This article was written for the Oakland Yacht Club newsletter "Seascape" and was in the September issue of 1994.

The 1994 Single Handed TransPac race offered me the opportunity to satisfy a long-standing ambition to sail our Nor'Sea 27 across an ocean. The race provided many of the critical elements of the adventure. The seminar series, sponsored by the Single Handed Sailing Society, provided a wealth of technical information and practical know-how. But, the most important thing the race provided was a deadline. It started on June 25th and Proper Motion and I had to be there and be ready for the 2,120 mile crossing.

I had not raced a sailboat since learning to sail 35 years ago, and the thought of a dramatic start within sight of the Corinthian Yacht Club was a little intimidating. I should not have worried. At the moment Proper Motion crossed the starting line, a strong flood swept many of the boats in her class backwards up Raccoon Strait. (I felt compelled to point out that we were not taken back as far as many of the boats in the fleet.)

Eventually the tide turned, the wind picked up and we made it out the golden gate.

The night before the start, the race committee arranged for a weather expert to brief the skippers on the conditions that we would expect during the race. He predicted brutal weather for the first 200 miles until we cleared the California coastal conditions. After that our expert predicted a strong and stable Pacific high that should allow the

fleet to take a rhumb line course to the finish. He was right on both counts.

The first two days of the race were some of the roughest sailing I have ever done. Everything on the boat was wet. It was not until day three that I was able to shake the third reef out of the main. I heard a Navy ship offering assistance to other boats in our fleet. It was apparently inconceivable to the captain that boats the size of ours could be out in that kind of weather and not be in trouble.

Proper Motion was wet, but otherwise appeared to have escaped the wild weather unscathed. The damage she suffered during those first two days did not become apparent until halfway to Hawaii.

Once we broke free of the California coast we were immediately in the trades. Warm breezes from astern and 6-8 foot rolling seas were a welcome relief. But there wasn't any sun. I would have been halfway to Hawaii without a reliable fix if it weren't for GPS.

About an hour after the morning check-in on the single-sideband, I noticed that the halyard holding the radar reflector to Proper Motion's port spreader was slack and that the radar reflector was swinging around and hitting the rigging. When I started to tighten it up, the entire spreader came down. The cast aluminum socket that attached the spreader to the mast had cracked. It had probably been damaged during the rough going in the first two days.

I wasted a couple of days slowly increasing the amount of sail I carried on the damaged rig. Eventually it was obvious that the missing spreader was not a critical element of the rig when sailing down wind. I just tightened up the cap shroud and kept going. I actually carried the big cruising chute for a couple of days. Prior to the spreader failure, I was doing well, but the lost time was never made up. We crossed the finish line as the last boat to finish before the deadline.

Crossing the Pacific was not what you expect. After breaking free of the coast it was day after day of idyllic trade wind sailing. I read six novels and two month's worth of "New Yorker" magazine. And I slept more than I ever do at home. The most exciting event most days was seeing how many flying fish had landed on the deck during the night.

Luck plays a large part in ocean racing and some might think that luck was not with Proper Motion this time (broken spreader and all). Nothing could be further from the truth. Luck was really with her on a very important aspect of the race. She was one of only two boats to finish during daylight hours while the "Latitude 38" magazine photographer was in Hanalei Bay. Proper Motion finished early on a beautiful morning so plenty of photos were shot from the chase boat at the finish. Many boats have to be campaigned hard (and successfully) for years before they get a spread in "Latitude". Proper Motion got there in one race. That's OK, she deserved it.

John has offered to write up the details of the preparations and comment on the successes and failures in a future issue of the Nor'Sea Newline. Let us know any specific questions.

Have you tried the drink "Smooth Sailing" as a motion sickness cure? It is sold here in Chicago at West Marine and some people really believe it works. It's a lightly carbonated fruit (ginger, and several other fruits) drink. The great thing is that you can drink it once you are beginning to feel bad and it even works then.

At the "Strictly Sail" show, Doris Colgate told us of another cure, and that is to SING. Don't ask why it works, just try it.

We have the icebox with the top load and front load. The top closing was a very heavy wood cutting board, about 16" x 28". We cut it in half and added a piano hinge across the middle. Now you can open the front area, or the back, just like the old ice cream freezers. This does make life a little easier. My big complaint is that some of the water from

the ice gathers down at the bottom in the front. We are trying to figure how to put in some kind of drain, but the insulation makes it difficult to get at. Please share any great upgrades you have done to your Nor'Sea.

Our Founder has been found!! We have just received a reply from Dean Wixom, in Plantersville Texas who still has his Nor'Sea and would be delighted to answer questions and write of the early days. "Please do call on me. I have long hoped someone would organize a Nor'Sea newsletter."

In order to make up a data base of Nor'Sea boats, their location, and their equipment, a questionnaire will be included with the next Newsline. Let me know what information you would like included in addition to the usual...

> year

> aft cabin or aft cockpit

> home port, home waters

> engine

What other information would be interesting to you? Perhaps how many batteries do you carry and what size? What size alternator? Ú