

SINGLEHANDED

It's not Halloween, so just what the hell is going on here George Siegler? Maybe after testing your safety designs by drifting to Hawaii for 56 days you have spent too much time at sea. Maybe you've developed a better way to get stoned, to better survive the rigors of life ashore. Maybe it's your 'think tank'. Or is it just a subtle hint that you'd like to be left alone?

Actually, we think George is probably just meditating on the upcoming single-handed races of which he has been the instigator. The second annual around the Farallons Race starts at 0800 on March 25th, and the first Singlehanded TransPac starts on June 15, ending at the Club Med at Hanelei Bay, Kauai.

The 'natural inclination is to wonder why anyone would be crazy enough to suffer through one of these races. If we asked that question we would get the standard psychological excuses like: 'my Mother wouldn't let me have a boat when I was a kid', or 'I have saltwater running in my veins', or 'it's a chance to get away from the wife and kids'. Well, don't believe any of those explanations, the real reason is that the entrants have seen what happened to the top finishers after last year's race.

Look what happened to Bill Lee and Merlin after he won the race. He went on to destroy the TransPac record, place first in the La Paz race, and just recently take first-to-finish in the Manzanillo Race. Nobody has caught him yet.

Also consider what happened to second place finisher Paul Slivka on his 30-foot trimaran Harmony. If you've been reading Latitude 38 you know that Paul is now lolling about in the Marquesas with his wife Mary and daughter Amy.

People don't enter these singlehanded races because they're crazy, they're just catching on to what happens to those who do enter. We know what Bill Lee and Paul Slivka have done since last year, what have you done?

It's true we haven't done much of anything this year ourselves, and we would certainly have entered the Farallons Race this year if we didn't have prior plans to do our laundry that day.

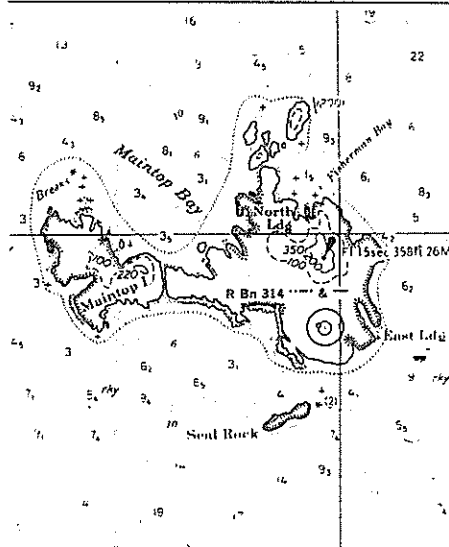
Michael Dobrin, who is handling the publicity for both races has given us the following information on the entrants:

Neil Moore, a structural engineer from Belmont is entering his Rawson 30,

Jamber, Palo Alto truck driver Robert Groff will race in his French built Regent 27, Arcane.

From the south bay, there are two entries from San Leandro, Harold Upham in his Columbia 8.7 Joshua H. and Cal State Hayward professor Robert Whitney on his Ranger 29, Gypsy. Whitney, a member of Island Yacht Club has extensive coastal cruising experience and has sailed Gypsy to Hawaii and back. Upham is also entering the singlehanded race to Hawaii, with his doctor's blessings despite two heart bypass operations.

The first multihull entry came from Paul Mazza and his 22' Tremolino, Rush. Paul is from Castro Valley. Bob Sammons from Union City, an insurance adjuster, is entering his classic 44' Stephens sloop, Pajara.



SOUTHEAST
FARALLON

San Jose entrants are Robert Sleeth, an electronics engineer, who will sail his Cal 2-30 Rampage; and Michael Mathiasen in his 25' Killerwhale Dulcinea.

Marin competitors include San Rafael electrician Michael Lingsch in Odyssey, his 30' Odyssey yawl; Sam Vahey, a Mill Valley contractor in his Ranger 37, Odysseus; Mill Valley investor Norton Smith, winner of the singlehanded race to Drake's Bay last year, will race in his Santa Cruz 27, Solitaire. Both Norton Smith and Sam Vahey will be taking the same boats on the Singlehanded TransPac, and Sam intends to keep on cruising in the south Pacific.

For the north bay: Barry Parkinson, a

lawyer from Petaluma with his 30' trimaran, Chac; Novato entrant and Indian Valley College art instructor Kent Rupp with his 29' Triton, Nereid; Sebastopol's Rick Gio will sail his Island 32, Tai Ping II.

East Bay and Contra Costa: U.S. Army Master Sergeant John Robinson in the 28' Hawkfarm, Courageous; Alameda resident Mike Barret in Islander 30, Misty II; Orinda real estate executive Roger Hall in Elysium, a Columbia 36, and Lafayette's Paul Boehmke will race in his Columbia 24 Contender. Roger Hall finished 4th in last year's very rough race, and described changing headsails during the race as "a bitch, one of the hardest things I've ever had to do in my life". Roger was one of only 15 in a fleet of 63 who finished, and the only one to fetch the Farallons in just one tack.

From Pacifica, Jim Bellan is entering his Santa Cruz 27, Anklebiter. Anklebiter finished 8th last year under the helm of Cliff Stagg who earned the respect of fellow sailors who could see daylight at times between the bottom of Anklebiter's keel and the rumbling ocean.

Other recent entries include Hans Vielhauer from Penngrove in Mach Schnell a Scampi 29; Al Moglich, Benicia in Islander 30, Prevail; John Sander, Saratoga, Ericson 23, Skua; Harold Nelson, Alameda in the 50-foot Axel-Heyst — Harold was one of many who were turned back by the rough weather last year.

Also entered are Melvin Richards of Alameda in Gossip, a 46' Kettenberg PCC, Andy Marken, Sunnyvale in Sybaris, a Challenger 32; Robert Hovey, San Rafael in Margaret, a 40-foot Concordia yawl; Clarence Nelson, San Francisco is the marvelously named Cal 40 Green Buffalo, and Dick Mitchell, Alameda in Blithe Spirit, a Pearson 36. Last year Dick finished 7th, only 20 minutes out of second place.

So far five of the 15 who finished last year's event are back, including John Robinson and Mike Mathiasen. Others like Bill Lee, Don Carlson, Hall Palmer are either in Manzanillo or returning from the race there and may or may not make the race again this year. The entry deadline is not over, so it is expected that a number of the Santa Cruz sailing mafia, who dominated the event last year, will still be entering. Despite extremely rough weather last year, it was the ultra-light

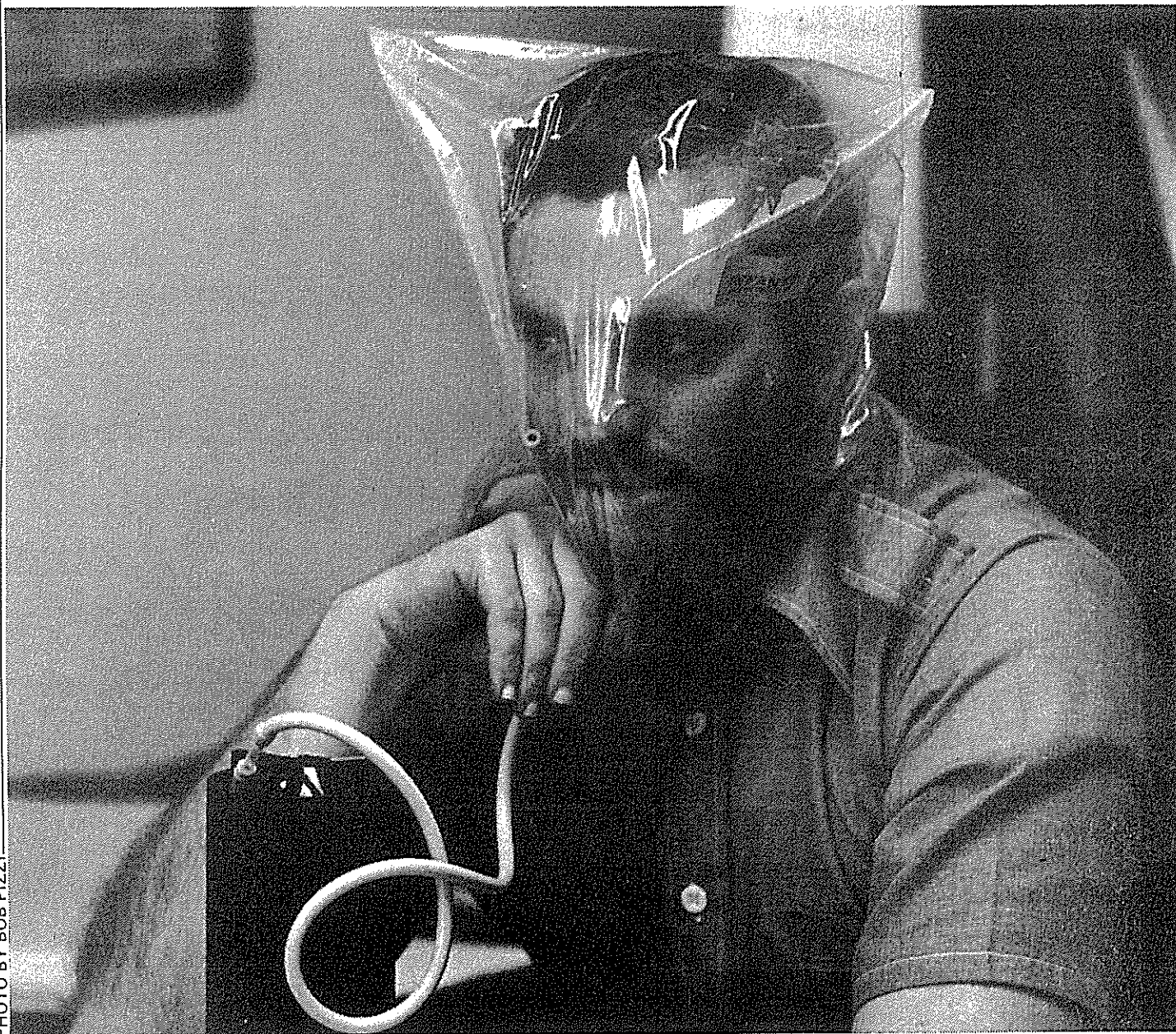


PHOTO BY BOB PIZZI

We just learned that Jocelyn Carrick has entered in the Around the Farallons Race. No wonder George is doing whatever it is he is doing.

boats that did the best.

Several changes have been made in the race according to recommendations from those who raced last year. The start will be at the Golden Gate Bridge rather than Alcatraz, the reason being that last year it was howling at the bridge, but almost dead calm at Alcatraz and took the boats a long time to get good wind. The start will be at 0800, several hours earlier, hoping to get the fleet going before the expected heavy wind builds up, giving them a better chance to round the

Farallons in daylight. The finish will be at Aquatic Park, in response to the several boats who managed to round the Farallons, satisfy their conscience, and then abandon the race during the last several miles when the winds in the bay and Oakland Estuary were so light that the tide was pulling them back out.

A wine and cheese party for entrants and their guests will be held aboard the committee boat Friday nite, March 24 at 7:30 at Aquatic Park — the nite before the race. Shore boat service will be

provided by the Singlehanded Sailing Society who sponsors the event.

Last year the Society held two races — the one to Drakes Bay was a drifter, the one to the Farallons was so rough that many sailors literally pissed in their pants because they couldn't take leave of the helm. Ultra heavy weather and drifters are both pissers in their own right, so Latitude 38 is ordering up 15 knot winds, 2 to 3 foot seas, and clear skies. We'll soon find out if we have any influence around here.

—Latitude 38

SINGLEHANDED

Espial — Jim Gannon



We think Liebnitz was the guy who claimed that this was "the most perfect of all worlds". If Liebnitz can get away with saying stuff like that, we feel free to assert, that in its own way, the Singlehanded Race around the Farallons is the most perfect of all yacht races.

The beauty of the Farallons event, it surely is more an 'event' than it is a race, is that it is so human. The race committee for example, was no 'crazy crew', but they got the job done with their limited resources and their heads were sure as hell in the right places. As the racers themselves — they were able to experience all the human emotions that make life such a roller coaster ride. There was fear that had been lingering for weeks, what if the weather was as bad as it was last year, what if something went wrong and they could only look to themselves for help, what if they could not make it? And during the race there was frustration, some pain, and a little anxiety. But when it was all over, there were the soothing feelings of satisfaction and achievement. Yes, it was a race full of good old basic human emotions, and when you run through the whole bundle of them in just one day, well then you know you're really living.

There was some humor too, the best of which occurred when the first prize trip to Club Med at Hanaelei Bay on Kauai, was announced. Silence fell when George Siegler proclaimed that Michael Lingsch was the overall winner. The silence was finally broken by Michael himself who said crustily, "No, you've made some kind of mistake, that's impossible." "There's no mistake," George insisted, "you won the trip."

Michael Lingsch didn't take too well to this announcement in the beginning, no doubt feeling that he was the subject of some horrible mathematical mistake that would make him look foolish when the error was discovered. "If I won the trip," Michael asked, "what's the point of buying a hot new boat?" Michael had sailed the race in his full keel 30-foot Odyssey yawl, but regularly crews on a Santa Cruz 27. The point of it was, though since the race was being raced under PHRF, there was no need or benefit in having a hot new boat, an old one was just fine.

Even as he was leaving the award picnic, Michael was probably the on-

FARALLONS

one left who wasn't convinced he had won the trip. It seems that he hadn't taken the racing part of the event too seriously. As he pointed out, after the winds picked up off Bonita to undo the log-jam of boats, he had just set his vane, popped open a can of suds, took off his shirt and lay down in the cockpit for some sunbathing. He apparently thought such an effort was not worthy of winning the trip to Hawaii — but then he was probably just being modest.

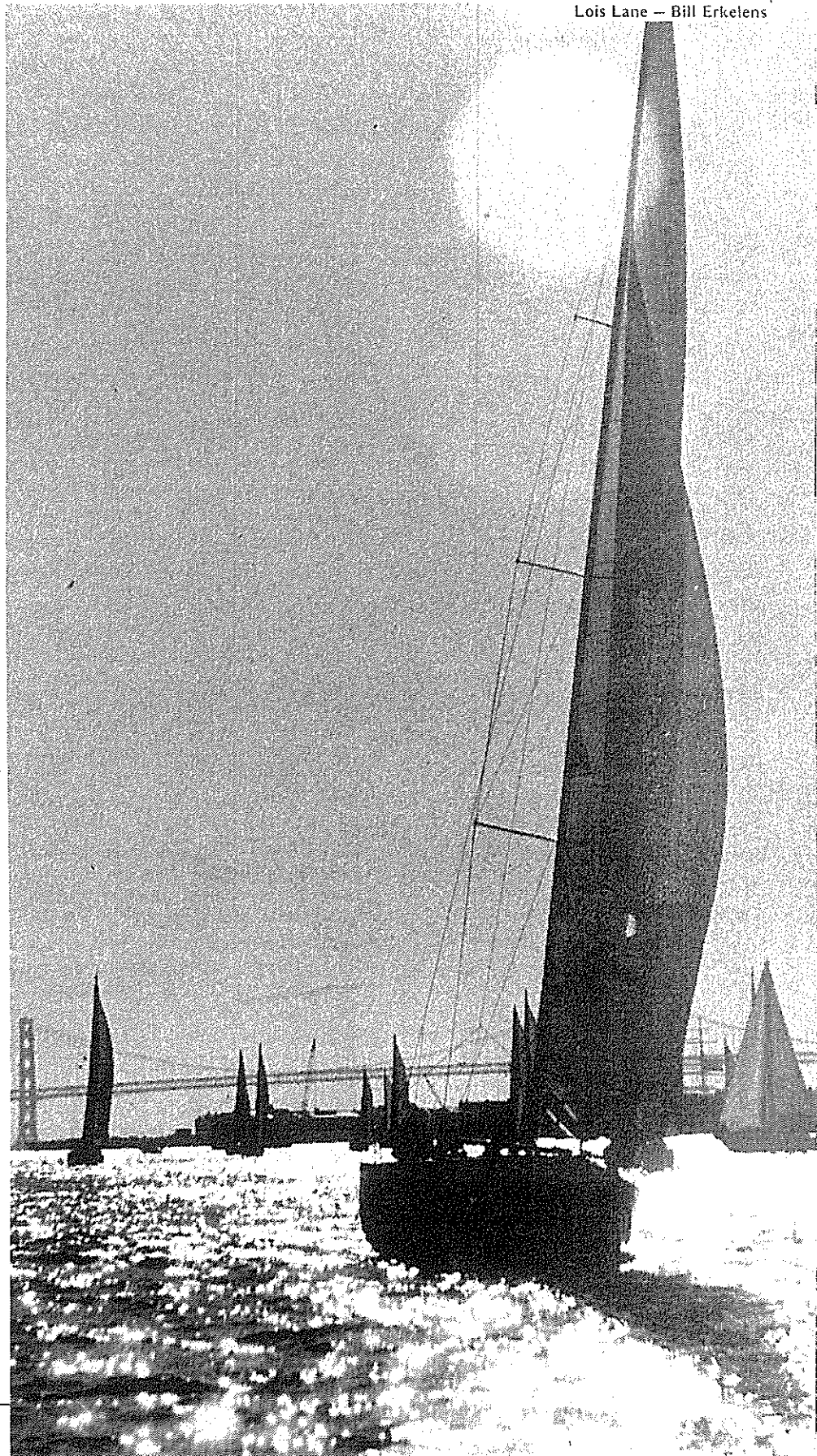
The race started off Aquatic Park at 8:00 in superb weather conditions, conditions that gave Sam Vahey in his Ranger 37 what he called "the most enjoyable hour of sailing I've had in my life." Bill Erkelens on Lois Lane (a night before the race entry) and Norton Smith in Solitaire jumped off the early leads, with Mike Mazza hot on their heels with his Hobie Cat converted to a trimaran, Rush. With the pleasant light breeze out of the east, Jack Adam popped his chute on Runrunner right at the starting line, and it wasn't long before the horizon was dotted with spinnakers.

The superb conditions prevailed for about an hour when the winds died and the contrary tide bundled the fleet up in the morning heat off Point Bonita. Almost the entire fleet of almost 60 boats mingled together in the slop, bobbing about trying to keep sails and chutes drawing, but nobody having much luck. It was very frustrating sailing, and soon it looked like Bill Erkelens was going to be the first drop-out, perhaps deciding that it would be wiser to save his boat for the Challenge Cup and the Danforth Series rather than having the sails and rigging beat themselves to death. But it wasn't that at all, Bill was just the first of many skippers who didn't have enough way on to keep headed in the right direction.

While it looked like the entire fleet would spend the day slopping off Bonita, Skip Allan made a nice move, working his Hawkfarm, Wildflower dangerously close to the cliffs and surf of Bonita in an attempt to ride a back eddy out around the point. It worked, but only for a short while, and he too, was pulled back into the pack. At this point, probably half the fleet had been in first place for at least a few seconds.

Finally the winds filled in, making it a close reach, not a hard beat, to the

Lois Lane — Bill Erkelens





Rampage and Solitaire have differing ideas of the way to the Farallons. So do Blith Spirit and Courageous in the background.

Farallons in generally calm seas with winds never exceeding 20 knots. Even in these ideal conditions there was suffering, Jack Adam could not reach his supply of suds from the helm without making a long arduous stretch.

The worst incident of the race took place near the light bucket where two boats, Prevail and Sugar & Spice collided for reasons we have not been able to learn. Prevail suffered an elongated headstay and decided to drop-out; William Swift's Sugar & Spice was holed, but he patched it up and continued around the islands and finished in a nice display of seamanship. Everyone has been saddened to learn the William Swift, who had planned to make the Singlehanded Race to Hawaii, tragically died in a small plane crash just a few days later.

The return leg back from the Farallons was a beam reach, and Bill Erkelens brought Lois Lane back to the finish line under the Golden Gate first about 6:00 or about 10 hours after the start. Not far behind him was the gutty Mike Mazza in his Tremelino conversion of a Hobie Cat.

By 8:00 the race was a gorgeous sight from every vantage point. Looking west from Fort Point, the horizon was dotted with the running light of almost the entire fleet, most of whom were slowly bucking the ebbing tide in the light winds. The view available to those racing

was even more spectacular, San Francisco was a magnificent bejeweled city on the perfectly clear and unusually warm night. To top it all off, a moon of stupendous proportions rose over the bay. It was at this point that several racers heard Jocelyn Carrick, who was to be the first woman to finish the race, howling at the moon. Jocelyn was later to claim that she was merely using a old trick Jim Warfield had taught her — if you don't know if you are too close to the cliffs in the darkness, holler and see if you can hear an echo.

After some searching, we found the land-based finish line committee, located high above the Golden Gate Bridge on the Marin side. From that vantage point the view was even more spectacular, but all was not well. George Siegler and Bill Huber were having some minor problems. One racer had tired after nearing the light bucket and needed an escort back in, and the finish line committee boat had gone out to search. This in itself wouldn't have been so bad, except that George Sigler has incredible paternal feelings for all who participate in his races, and he was helpless since the radio he brought along stopped transmitting. If anything, George is a man of action, and there was nothing he could do but take the name of the radio manufacturer in vain and curse at himself for only bringing one radio along.

Bill Huber had worked Search and Rescue for the Coast Guard for twenty years and was taking it in stride. George however only found solace in giving clear,



Paul Mazza in his Hobie Cat conversion

calm, precise, instructions over his radio to the disabled entry — even though he knew damn well it wasn't working and he couldn't be heard more than five feet away. It was a strange sort of placebo, but seemed to work for George.

Finally the committee boat had reached the ailing entry by Mile Rock and was escorting the boat back in. But by this time a number of boats were coming under the Gate trying to find or contact the race committee to let them know they had finished. Although George's radio would not put out transmissions, it could still receive them — and the messages kept pouring in. "I'm passing under the bridge race committee, please acknowledge. Do you hear me race committee? Where are you race committee? I'm passing under too, race committee, do you hear me too? Where are you race committee?"

It went on and on, and George would calmly talk into his stupid microphone, "yes, we've got you, take your time and place of finish as we told you at the skipper's meeting." Finally the placebo of talking into the useless microphone wore off and George ran to the edge of the cliff and screamed "I hear you, we see

you". George was fit to be tied, and it took all the willpower he had to keep from making a 500-foot leap into the water and swim out and check in the boats as they passed under the bridge. George may not be perfect, but he sure as hell cares.

It was sunny and bright again the next day for the chili feed (Dennison's) and alcoholic consumption (many varieties) party. Everything was hunky-dory, all the boats had returned safely, the woman who had to be escorted in the night before was hale and hearty and Jim Gannon took it upon himself to make sure nobody went thirsty.

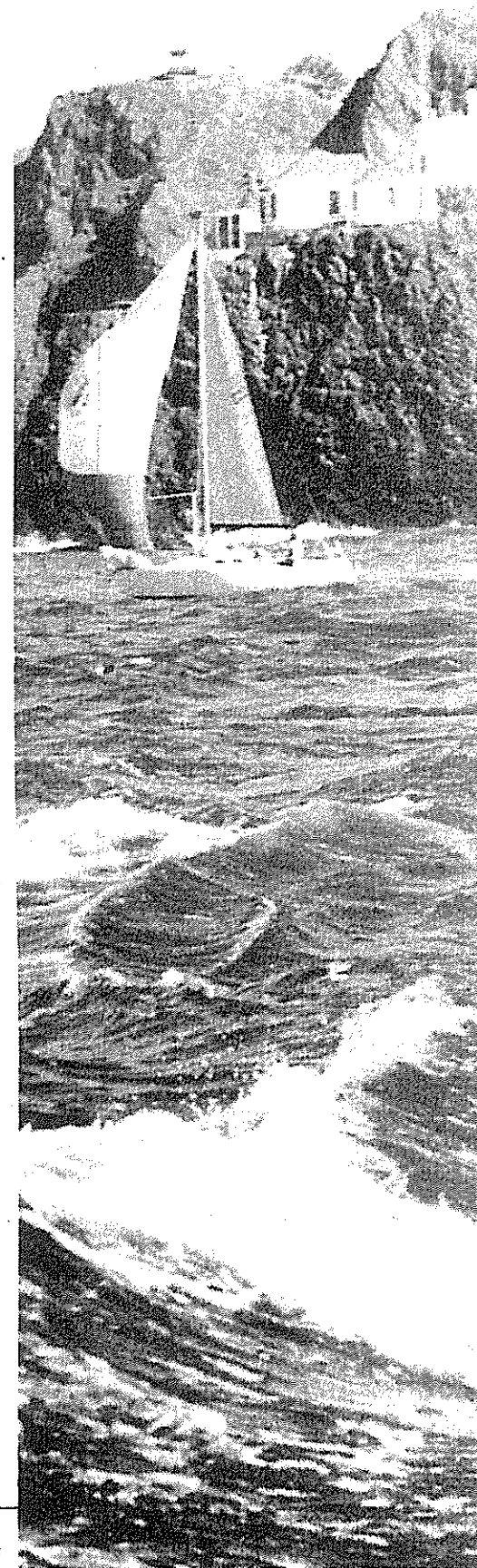
After much drinking and munching the winners were announced: Div. I, Phillip Bohm in Abuglita, a Santana 22; Div. II, Michael Lingsch, Odyssey, and Odyssey 30 yawl; Div. III, Kent Rupp, Nereid, a Triton; Div. IV, Fred Freid, Cheoy Lee Lion, Dithyramb; Div. V, Bill Erkelens, Lois Lane, a custom Wylie; Div. VI, Bill Vaughn, the Herreshoff, Evening Star; Trimaran Div., Paul Mazza in the Tremelino, Rush.

This year almost everyone finished, 51 out of about 58. Seven who finished last year also made it this year: Roger Hall, Skip Allan, Norton Smith, Dick Mitchell, Don Carlson, John Robinson, and Mike Mathiasen. Among yacht clubs represented, the Island Yacht Club cleaned up with 11 finishers, there were 5 from Richmond YC which was the next closest. But it was an individuals race as many had no yacht club affiliation and others hailed from smaller clubs like Benicia and Point San Pablo. The variety of boats was incredible, of the 51 that finished, three were Hawkfarms, two were Santa Cruz 27s, and the other 46 were all different.

The race had its minor faults, but everyone loves things and people for their faults so it was a happy crowd. George Siegler muffed it slightly when he was awarding the two women sweaters for "completing four miles" - Jocelyn Carrick who finished the race didn't think this was the most complimentary thing for George to say, and we think we saw her give him 'the finger'. George rambled on a bit, saying he hoped more women would enter next year, and he really meant it. Jocelyn said they would, and she meant it, too. Little faults and good intentions make a great race, and that's what it was.

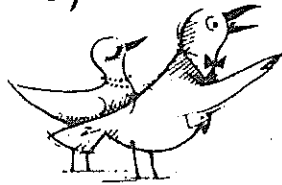
— Latitude 38

Skip Allan tries to sneak by Bonita



Paul was second to finish to Lois Lane

LOOK!
*Another
 Lancer
 Special!*

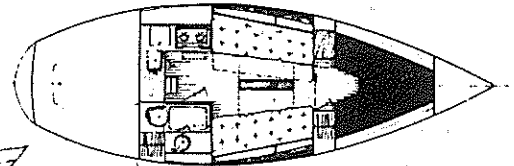
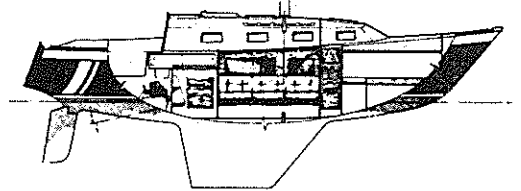
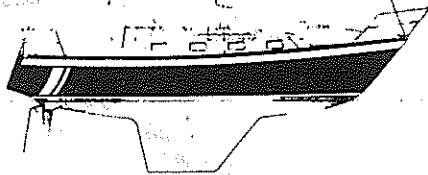


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