



OPPOSITE The 2018 Golden Globe Race honours the solo circumnavigation achievement of Sir Robin Knox-Johnston way back in 1968. If you aren't up for that, you can join Sir Robin at Clipper Ventures in a fully crewed race around the world! (pic © Clipper Ventures)

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Not a Volvo RTW racer but our Tradewind 35 is a solid Southern Ocean boat nonetheless. That keel will not fall off and will help her track steady in surfing conditions; Route of the 2018 Golden Globe Race; Jane and me happy to be sailing our T35 for the first time.

Green for Golden

IT'S OFFICIAL! THE SOLO ROUND-THE-WORLD 2018 GOLDEN GLOBE RACE IS A GOER ... SO WHAT'S STOPPING YOU FROM ENTERING?

When Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon in 1969, the world stood still. Just three months earlier, British sailor Sir Robin Knox-Johnston did the same. He stood still for the first time in 312 days, becoming the first person ever to sail singlehanded and non-stop

around the world in his little 32-foot ketch *Suhaili*. He was the only finisher in the 1968 *Sunday Times* Golden Globe Race, often referred to as *A Voyage for Madmen*, after the book of the same name. Have you ever dreamt of sailing in his footsteps or maybe those of Jessica Watson or Bernard Moitessier? Maybe you

just want to do a solo circumnavigation facing your own personal challenge and adventure. Maybe you want to race but cannot compete at the current elite level and their astronomical budgets. To date more astronauts have gone into space than solo sailors have circumnavigated the planet, so it is not for everyone. In a lifetime though, there

are only so many defining moments that present as opportunities for those who dare.

IT'S ON! Last month in this column, I couldn't reveal the details. Now I can and 2018 offers the ultimate challenge and a life-changing adventure for any sailor interested. Is that you?

On June 14, 2018, a fleet of up to 20 production yachts ranging in size from 32 to 36ft, each skippered by a unique individual, will follow Robin Knox-Johnston sailing *Suhaili* across the start line of the 2018 Golden Globe Race, in Falmouth, England. It will be exactly 50 years to the day since Robin set off, the yachts then racing *Suhaili*'s virtual times, nonstop around the world via the great capes and try to beat him. A perpetual trophy and £75,000 maybe up for grabs. Robin will return that night to steak and chips with a cool beer, the things he missed most for 312 days all those

years ago. He will follow the race online. This anniversary edition of the Golden Globe Race is for real sailors and adventurers who don't have \$1 million. They will have no computers on board, no electric autopilots, in fact no electronics at all, no GPS, no radar, no watermakers, no digital cameras or clocks, no iPod and no carbon fibre. They will have a sextant, a wind-up ship's chronometer, windvane self-steering, towed Walker ship's log, barograph, HF radios, film cameras, cassette tapes and move under Dacron sails just as Robin did. They will have modern safety gear

though, including satellite tracking and can talk to race headquarters on a satellite phone, but no-one else. Talking to family is by radio only! The fibreglass production yachts entered must be designed prior to 1988 with a minimum displacement of 6500kg and have a full keel with the rudder fitted to its trailing edge. A minimum series production of 20 yachts from the one builder is also required. Many may be surprised at this solo race around the world in such boats, not usually considered race yachts, but neither was *Suhaili*. Eight designs have currently been

approved for the race and others may be considered. I will enter this race in my 1993 Tradewind 35, purchased last year for \$58,000. I think a Biscay 36 is probably faster and has the advantage of a ketch rig to help balance the boat if windvanes are challenged. Certainly a Cape Dory 36 could be a wild card in the event as they are quite fast! I have told a few friends over the past months about this race and now they are looking for boats? Preliminary sailing instructions and race rules will be posted on July 1 this year. All the details are now at GoldenGlobeRace.com



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT With the engine back in the boat, we decided on an adjustment to the decompression lever, but a simple slip dropped a tiny Allen key past the cams down into the engine! Frank from Lacey Marine Engineering and I both looked at each other shocked ... we couldn't run the engine and feared having to pull it out again and strip it. He mucked around with a magnet and after 20 minutes, about to give up, he got it on the last try. We

laughed; *Ice*, my ultimate adventure ship is for sale; Sir Robin is excited about the anniversary Golden Globe Race and will sail the restored *Suhaili* across the start line in 2018; Having sailed with wire and quadrant, I really like solid-link steering; The beginning of a nightmare. Nothing had been opened for years and corroded solid. The grey mess behind the brake held important bearings, so we just smashed it to pieces and machined new housings to fit new bearings.

"Have you ever dreamt of sailing in his footsteps *or maybe those of Jessica Watson or Bernard Moitessier?*"

So if you have ever had that dream ... don't listen to the people who tell you that you cannot do it or should not do it or can't afford to do it ... just maybe you should consider this as something you can't afford not to do, because you may not be here in another 50 years?

I will give Sir Robin the last word on the subject: "The world is full of those who'd hate you to achieve, because they've done nothing and they'll try and put you off. If you believe in yourself, do it. I did believe in myself as a small boy, it wasn't obvious to everyone, but I had that inner self-confidence."

I'M IN THE RACE!

Okay, so I have the boat and

have circumnavigated once before in 1990, which gives me the 8000 miles sailing and at least 2000 miles solo-sailing experience required to enter. I now have more than three years to prepare me and the boat and get us to England. This should be plenty of time, but I already feel rushed. There are plenty of "other" things going on in my life right now, so I am already dreaming of those long months at sea in 2018, without internet or distraction, able to face the challenge and enjoy my innermost thoughts while sailing in the vast blue wilderness once again.

It seems ironic that my Tradewind 35 bought sight-unseen in Australia came from Falmouth and now

I have to refit and get her back there to start this new solo adventure. She is in excellent condition and was built well by the designer-builder John Rock, as his own personal dream boat. Returning from Antarctica this summer I managed to spend three weeks on board in Pittwater-NSW cleaning, sorting and getting to know her. She is a "keeper".

On this sort of adventure I need to know everything about anything on board the boat I will sail 28,000 miles over nine months, so decided to start with the Bukh DV24 ME. It was running strong, other than some leaking oil seals on the engine and gearbox. Waterpump and engine mounts had just been

replaced, along with all hoses, so as precautions we fitted new HP and LP fuel lines, fuel lift pump, control cables, engine hour meter and checked everything, repainted and refitted the lot - \$5000! Will I use it for the race or fit a new one? I think it will be fine.

The steering was next. It is a Whitlock solid-link system, very strong and simple. The pedestal had not been opened in years and had corroded shut, so required serious heat, a big hammer, drilling out bolts, smashing bearing housings then having to re-machine new ones, fit new bearings and buy spares for the future. The shaft and rudder bearings, below-deck links and connectors were all

perfect. We refitted the lot covered in Denso tape - \$2500. Will it do the race? Very definitely, especially when using a Hydrovane self-steering system which requires the main steering gear and rudder to be locked.

The 22-year-old Proctor mast and boom are in perfect condition, something that really surprised me. It is also built to a Southern Ocean spec with great engineering and components, so to my great surprise I feel it will be okay for the race once everything is serviced and rigging replaced. I have some improvements in mind, including extra chainplates and rigging etc., but I will utilise all that is on the boat for now. Happy!

Slipping confirmed my thoughts about how strong these types of long-keel yachts are. Their encapsulated lead keels will never fall off and the rudder is well supported with three separate bearings. They are known to track well during ocean crossings. When we replaced a section of damaged teak cap on the bulwark, I was again blown away by the heavy build quality. When displacements hit 8.6t, they have no need to skimp on materials. There is also plenty of wetted surface area underwater, so eight litres of paint just gave me two coats!

So far my Golden Globe Race budget has hit \$65,000. I estimated total boat cost ready-to-race will be about

\$100,000 (sans entry fees and other logistics), a far cry from the \$750,000 we spent competing in the 1990 BOC Challenge solo around-the-world yacht race. I'll use the Walker towing log from my first boat *Skye* in 1975, the sextant I got for my 21st birthday and the ham radio used in my BOC entry. I reckon this race will be as much fun, if not more than my last.

The fleet should be closely matched, though maybe a Westsail 32 will be challenged by *Suhaili*? I wonder how many women will turn up and what the age demographic will be? The radio chat sessions are sure to be fun ... bring it on! Tomorrow I sail my entry in the 2018 Golden Globe for

the very first time. Wowow!

GOODBYE/BUY ICE
The decision is made! Our 15.2m expedition support vessel *Ice* is now officially up for sale. There is no other boat in the world quite like her. It was a hard decision but in a few years we have new plans and I don't want to see her sit doing nothing.

We are on the hunt for someone who understands and needs the special features only *Ice* can offer and the adventures she can deliver. She is insured for \$US930,000 and would cost at least \$US1.2m to replace. Open to offers for delivery in Fiji, November 2015 after this season in Tonga. All details and specs are at McIntyre50MS.com ■