

**Ocean Challenge Live!—The Vendée Globe**  
Solo, non-stop, around-the-world race

WEEK

# 8 Teamwork & Perseverance

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**By Rich Wilson, Skipper**  
**Aboard *Great American III***

The day before the start of the Vendée Globe I saw Yann Eliès riding on his bike, standing on the pedals, with his young daughter on the seat behind him. Kind and cordial as always, he introduced me to her.

A few days ago, the physicality of this race came home to the fleet in a horrible way when Yann was swept down the foredeck of *Generali* by a wall of water, fetched up on some piece of equipment, and broke his thighbone. Somehow he crawled back into the cabin and alerted race officials and the race doctor.

Race officials alerted Australian Rescue Services. They immediately detailed a frigate to depart Perth for Yann's position with a medical team aboard. Race officials also alerted *Safran*/Marc Guillemot and *Roxy*/Samantha Davies, both competitors, to divert

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Because of Yann Eliès' serious injury and remarkable rescue by the skippers of *Safran*, *Roxy* and the Australian Navy, we've decided to make this week's topic Teamwork & Perseverance and next week's topic Midpoint.

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from the race and to head for Yann's position. They diverted immediately, as it is the unquestioned tradition of the sea to go to the aid of a mariner in distress.

Marc arrived first, circling *Generali*, trying to throw water and medicine down the hatch, and talking constantly with his friend Yann by VHF. The race doctor had specifically detailed the purpose of Marc's proximity to be emotional support.

Two days later, the frigate arrived and within hours had Yann stabilized, off *Generali*, and onto the frigate where the medical team awaited. All the players worked together, fulfilled their roles, and a good outcome was achieved.



## Overcoming Physical Limitations

**By Marti Shea, Select Fitness**

When Rich started the race, he had a fitness plan in place to maintain his physical strength. When he broke his rib early in the race that plan evaporated. Instead, it was replaced by a plan to limit Rich's movement to allow the rib to heal quickly. Will the residual affects of the broken rib be a loss in overall strength and compromise his performance on the boat? The answer to this question, I believe, is no.

High-level athletic achievers like Rich Wilson have certain traits that make them successful. These traits include tenacity, perseverance, focus, dedication and the ability to make sacrifices to reach their goals. Rich has endured excruciating rib and back

pain. He has not quit. He has not given up in the face of immense adversity.

The lesson we can all learn from Rich is that success can be achieved by having a dream, setting goals, working hard to achieve those goals, being confident, and not giving up. He has prepared himself for the race mentally, physically and emotionally. When his body broke down, his mind took over.

As the race continues, Rich will find the physical strength to continue on because of his mental and emotional strength. Rich is enjoying this remarkable voyage, and he is equally enjoying sharing with all of us his dream. Rich now is leading by example, and this example will give others the courage and faith to strive to achieve their dreams.

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