

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

WEEK

# 9 Midpoint

Race Online at **sitesALIVE.com**

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

The midpoint of the voyage, estimated by time or mileage or geography, offers a symbolic chance for reflection on what we have accomplished, or not, and what we have still to do.

Our goals are two: on land, to create a global school program off this global event; and at sea, to finish the Vendée Globe.

Internationally, we were not able to turn initial interest by Newspaper in Education (NIE) programs in 25 countries to their publishing this series. In the United States, however, we have a record 50 newspapers, from large to small, publishing our NIE series and distributing it to schools. Via personal teacher

networks, we have schools in over a dozen countries using the program, and in the United States via an online content partnership with Thinkfinity.org we have a broader reach on the web for sitesALIVE.com than ever before.

At sea, we are still in the race, although back in the pack. We knew this latter would occur, because *Great American III* is an older boat and she has an older skipper. We are not at all disappointed in our placement in the fleet. We have solved problems, and not, and we have made good and bad sail maneuvers and weather-routing decisions.

From the midpoint, emotionally, we'll be sailing home, but Cape Horn still lies ahead, and the Horn may be the real emotional midpoint.



## Women in the Maritime Industry

**By Laura Mirabella  
Shipping Broker**

The maritime industry can be a challenging and rewarding field for women.

Thirty years ago it was difficult for women to break into this industry. In today's world more and more women are moving into principal positions. As a female broker, while I see that many women work in this business, especially in Texas, I believe that the industry still has much to do to recruit and involve more women. If you are a woman and work in this industry, it is important to be tough and to understand the phrase "It's business; it's nothing personal." This business is a difficult, challenging, 24/7/365 profes-

sion. The hours are long, and you have to be available at any time—even during Christmas dinner.

Women in every industry are working hard to "make it to the top" and to be treated as equals regarding salary, responsibility, and career advancement, and the maritime industry is no exception. As Rich Wilson and the rest of the skippers are demonstrating in the Vendée Globe, it is important to not let people discourage you from pursuing your goals, even though they may seem scary and uncertain. It is good, and often important, to try a position that you know will be challenging. Just remember that your mind and body are strong, and persistence will pay off—just keep trying.

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