

Hood River sailor finishes Pacific journey

By **EDWARD STRATTON**
EO Media Group

ASTORIA (AP) — The hull of Tracy Hollister’s boat, the Ingrid Princess, appeared around the breakwater at the West End Mooring Basin just before 2 p.m. Friday. A friend and fellow sailor, Brian Thom, waited on a paddleboard to greet him, while Hollister’s wife, Michelle, whooped and waved her hands on the docks, eager to see her husband for the first time in nearly three months.

Hollister, looking haggard, sidled his boat up to the dock, started tying up, hopped off and embraced his wife.

Hollister’s arrival in Astoria marked the end of 49 days sailing alone across the Pacific Ocean from Japan, and the culmination of a two-year, on-and-off journey around much of the Pacific Rim.

“It was an out-of-body experience,” Hollister said of first seeing the mouth of the Columbia River. “I felt like I was dreaming. All day (Friday) felt like a dream, until I woke up (Saturday) morning and realized I’m not dreaming.”

“I can relax now, finally. I have been on watch for the last 50 days and needing to be ready for anything. It’s got me worn out.”

Crossing the ocean

Hollister, 42, a carpenter and homebuilder from Hood River, left Chichijima, Japan, a small island about 600 miles south of Tokyo, Aug. 29 and headed east-northeast, following the clockwise winds and currents on the north Pacific toward the West Coast.

Hollister said he took a two-month supply of water and food, since the usual trip takes 36 to 40 days in fair weather. But Hollister found himself skirting about five different storm systems along the way, amid a record storm season driven by El Niño.

“At one point, I could have gotten stuck in a super-typhoon,” Hollister said. “Fortunately, that did not materialize. The worst I experienced was 50 knots of wind and 25-foot seas, and that wasn’t that bad.”

Hollister is the fifth owner of the Ingrid Princess.

Flanking him Saturday at the West End Mooring Basin were Skip Masters and David Rankin, two previous owners of the boat.



In this photo taken Oct. 16, Tracy Hollister, a carpenter and home builder from Hood River, raises his fist in celebration aboard the Ingrid Princess as he turns into the West End Mooring Basin in Astoria. Hollister’s arrival in Astoria marked the end of a 49-day solo journey sailing across the Pacific Ocean from Japan.

Rankin, who exchanged a duplex for the Ingrid in 1984, had already sailed the boat around the world with his wife, Diane, by the time they sold it to Masters, who had owned the vessel eight years and sailed it between Oregon and Alaska. Masters ran into Hollister at a hops fest in Hood River in 2008.

The owners all lauded the Ingrid 38 model, which was built by Blue Water Boats in Seattle in the 1970s and based on a Norwegian lifeboat. The boat is designed to ride well on the ocean, they said, while its steering system allows a single person to control the vessel over long distances. Hollister said his trip was 1 percent steering, 99 percent monitoring.

Keeping busy

While experiencing no major epiphanies or breakthroughs in the extreme isolation, Hollister said he kept himself motivated by constantly working on his boat, writing in his diary and even playing the smartphone game Candy Crush. “I read a lot of really good books. I read about 15 really good books.”

His lifeline for communication and weather reports on the ocean was his single-sideband radio,



In this photo taken Oct. 16, Tracy Hollister, a carpenter and home builder from Hood River, Ore., kisses his wife, Michelle Hollister, after arriving aboard the Ingrid Princess at the West End Mooring Basin in Astoria.

through which he could scramble radio waves into text known by sailors as SailMail, a radio form of email.

“That was my emotional link,”

he said. “That makes long-distance ocean sailing fun.”

But by the international date line, he said, his ability to send emails went down, as did his elec-

Crooked River popular with fly anglers

By **MARK MORICAL**
The Bulletin

PRINEVILLE (AP) — Prineville Reservoir resembled an enormous natural bathtub on its way to being completely drained. All of the boat ramps were closed, and still are, because the water is so low.

But below the reservoir, down along the Crooked River, anglers lined the grassy banks, casting away for their chance at landing some wild rainbow trout.

Even in low-water years, the Crooked remains one of the most popular fisheries in Central Oregon. And actually, fishing tends to improve at this time of year when water flows coming out of the reservoir are reduced by the Bureau of Reclamation. Flows below Bowman Dam dropped from 180 cubic feet per second to less than 60 cfs last week.

“You go from having the same density of fish, just now in a smaller area,” says Tim Porter, assistant district biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in Prineville. “So fishing usually picks up around that time of year just because it’s like fishing in a bucket.”

That is good for the anglers, but perhaps not so much for the fish, especially in a low water year.

“The more they’re caught, the more they’re handled and released, the more stress they’re under,” says Porter of the wild rainbows in the Crooked. “There’s obviously some hooking mortality involved, and catch-and-release mortality, where as the fish are being released some will die.”

While the lower flows are typical at this time of year on the Crooked, this fall they could be extremely low due to the meager snowpack from a mild winter. In exceptionally low water years, Porter says, flows can trickle all the way down to 30 cfs, which he says is likely this year.

“There’s always some concern,” Porter says. “We’ve been pretty fortunate



In this photo taken on Sept. 23, a fly fisherman wades out into the middle of the Crooked River, south of Prineville.

the last few years — we’ve had good winter flows.”

Porter adds that fishing has picked up the last couple of weeks on the Crooked River below Bowman Dam, with decent bug hatches and anglers catching “quite a few fish.”

I drove the 35 miles from Bend to Prineville Reservoir earlier this month, and I was struck by the low level of water in the reservoir. As I crossed the bridge over Bowman Dam, I could see fly anglers wading in the middle of the Crooked River, hoping to hook some of the wild rainbows that make the desert stream their home.

The river in that area is lined by numerous campgrounds that give anglers easy access to the water. At Poison Butte Campground, I parked and walked the short distance to the shallow river. I tied on a pheasant tail nymph with a strike indicator and cast out into a small riffle.

The rugged canyon rose above me as I continued casting and watching my yellow strike indicator. When it finally sank below the surface, I raised the rod tip and reeled a 12-inch rainbow

trout to hand.

Nymphing (using wet flies below the water surface) is always popular among fly anglers on the Crooked, but during the fall they can find success by dry-fly fishing as well, according to Porter. Bait is allowed on the Crooked River until Oct. 31, but the fishermen seem to be almost exclusively fly anglers.

The ODFW performed a population survey on the Crooked this past June, electroshocking fish, a procedure that temporarily stuns them so they float to the surface and can be counted.

Porter and other biologists estimate that there were about 2,500 rainbows per mile that were 8 inches or longer in the stretch below Bowman Dam. Porter says those are good numbers, although in 2014, the number was about 6,300 fish per mile.

“A lot of it has to do with natural mortality,” Porter explains of the decline. “We had some good water years in 2010, 2011 and 2012, so we saw a good year class from 2010. Trout, on average, live about four to six years. Lower water years affected the population a little bit.

We’re not seeing as big of a size class coming in behind them to keep the numbers up high. But 2,500 fish per mile is still a good density of fish.

“And in all reality, 6,000 is probably too many. The Crooked River is very productive, but that’s still a lot of (fish) mouths to feed.”

Porter says that the fish are well-dispersed throughout the 8-mile stretch. While most of the angler effort is closer to the dam, the catch rate is fairly similar throughout the river, the biologist notes.

Most of the rainbows in the Crooked River are in the 13- to 14-inch range, although they can grow as large as 18 inches, according to Porter, who adds that fishing should only improve as fall continues. When the whitefish spawn later this month and into November, the trout key on the whitefish eggs.

“You can use an egg fly,” Porter suggests. “The trout will hang out below the spawning whitefish and pick off the eggs. The peak is usually in November. But fishing can stay good throughout the entire winter.”

Recreation report highlights

Walleye fishing continues to be excellent on the Columbia River from McNary dam downstream to Boardman.

- Good numbers of fall chinook and coho are available in the lower Umatilla River and anglers are using a variety of techniques, bobbers and jigs/bait, casting spinners/plugs. This fishery should continue to improve as flows increase and water temperatures decrease.

Umatilla River:

Salmon catch rates are picking up on the lower Umatilla, for the week of October 5-11 salmon anglers averaged 10 hours per salmon caught and steelhead anglers averaged 5.4 hours per steelhead landed. Fishing should continue to be good, as salmon and steelhead return numbers to Threemile Dam continue to increase.

Grande Ronde steelhead: Season opened Sept.

1. Steelhead are currently being caught in modest numbers. A bump in flow will prompt fish to migrate up the Grande Ronde and produce better fishing. The outlook for steelhead is currently very good for 2015-16 with nearly 21,000 Wallowa/Imnaha fish to pass Bonneville Dam, much higher than the average of 14,000.

Wallowa Lake:

Trout fishing has slowed at Wallowa Lake. However, the pressure has dropped off with the end of the summer season. During the fall stocked trout have been in the lake long enough they start to learn to eat natural food. Try fishing with flies and other more natural baits. The lake has received additional rainbow trout stockin due to other area water bodies being too hot to receive fish. This means the lake has been heavily stocked with both legal-size and trophy trout.

— **Welcome** —

Dr. Robert Johnson is pleased to announce Dr. Graham McEntire will be joining his practice.

Dr. Robert Johnson

Dr. Graham McEntire

Dr. McEntire specializes in general dentistry for patients of all ages and will be extending our services to include oral surgery and dental implants. We will continue to provide the same great dental care. New patients and same day emergencies are always welcome.

809 SW Court Ave. • Pendleton 541.276.3241