



Three Weeks Ahead of Schedule Confront Cancer Ocean Row Across the Atlantic

July 25, 2016, Calgary, Alta. — His cockpit is mildewy, as are his clothes and sleeping bag, “Even my hats have mildew growing on them,” says Laval St. Germain, a Calgary-based adventurer who is rowing at an incredible speed – well past the halfway mark — on his 4500 km solo ocean row across the Atlantic Ocean. St. Germain shoved off from Halifax’s Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron June 15 on his Confront Cancer Ocean Row – aiming to make landfall in Brest, France. He’s currently three weeks ahead of schedule in his purpose-built solo ocean rowing boat (the Rannoch R10 - constructed by Rannoch Adventure of the UK), affectionately known as True Blue.

St. Germain says, “It is a long serious journey for sure, but as I’ve always done in all my journeys, top of that next hill on the road, that next boulder on the ridge, the next five steps in the snow, the next bend in the river, then the next, the next, the next...until you are at the goal. Big journeys require me to break them down into small bits to make it manageable.”

But this journey isn’t just about the adventure. St. Germain has set a goal of raising \$200,000 to support the Alberta Cancer Foundation’s clinical trials and the Tom Baker Cancer Centre. Nicola O’Carroll from [The Alberta Cancer Foundation](#) says, “The Alberta Cancer Foundation has committed \$10 million over the next 5 years to push our provincial clinical trials program to make a transformational impact on Albertans. Alberta has a higher clinical trial enrolment rate than the national average and the goal next year is to increase the number of patients who take part in these studies. With your help, we can accelerate change for those 43 Albertans each day who hear the words, “You have cancer.”

Through all the powerful west winds, sometimes pushing him at breakneck speed, St. Germain says, “Neptune and Mother Nature are giving me a helping hand, after a few slaps early in the trip with fast, rough, seas.” Keeping True Blue on track and St. Germain aware of the weather are James (Jim) Redeker and his team of Steve Challacombe and Rick Slater. St. Germain says, “Jim is the Manager, Dispatch, at the airline (Canadian North Inc.) we work for, and is a weather guru who knows me, my habits and above all he knows weather and now waves. He has made himself an expert. Jim also did my weather when I was in Tibet, on Everest. I trust him with my life.” Redeker has been at the helm of the Confront Cancer Ocean Row Mission Control and says St. Germain has been doing: “Amazingly well. He was geographically half way, but in only 35 days. He is maintaining an impressive pace thus far. Sometimes he even surprises me.”

[FLYHT Aerospace Solutions Ltd.](#) has provided key financial support, satellite communications and tracking, keeping St. Germain connected to home and Mission Control. “We are very impressed by Laval’s physical and mental strength and the progress he’s made, now over the half way mark of his journey,” remarked Matieu Plamondon, VP of Operations and Customer Fulfillment at FLYHT. “The communication systems that FLYHT has sponsored for Laval have been critical for him to stay in touch with loved ones, to understand his position and to receive weather updates and communicate with experts on the ground to help troubleshoot his onboard systems. We wish him continued success and encourage everyone to contribute to cancer research to help him reach his stated fundraising goal.”

Staying healthy, and fuelled – but needing to monitor food – St. Germain says, “I’ve been watching my caloric intake carefully and only eating a substantial meal if I’ve earned it with a hard day at the oars.” [Healing.com](#) has been keeping a health watch on St. Germain, and supplied his extensive medical kit. Dr. Donovan Kreutzer from Healing.com says, “Having checked on Laval weekly and following his daily posts, I am extremely satisfied that he is safe and strong enough to complete his mission. Laval has made remarkable progress and I commend him for his physical and mental prowess. He has endured both physical and mental fatigue, loneliness, isolation, anxiety and the monotony of eating basic food day in and day out.”

Keeping St. Germain entertained and on his toes is the marine life. St. Germain says, “Porpoises are incredibly gregarious and playful, and give me some company. I can hear them on some nights thru the hull of my cockpit. A whale – just a calf, maybe the size of my boat – surfaced with a roar of air 2 meters away, looked at me for a few seconds, dove, then turned under my boat, resurfaced and as it arched its back to dive, struck the port side of my bow with its tail fluke. Not a big impact, but certainly made me think of how easily the trip could end if a whale strikes my rudder. I captured it on video.”

Back in Calgary, [Catch Engineering](#) has provided critical financial backing and has been available for St. Germain should any electrical or instrumentation issues arise. Early in the journey Catch Engineering solved an issue with St. Germain’s radar enhancer. Chad Smith, Executive Vice President with Catch Engineering says, “We are very impressed at the patience and determination Laval has shown throughout the first half of his journey. We will continue to monitor his progress and remain on standby if he requires any electrical and instrumentation technical support.”

For media inquiries please contact Christina Rowsell, Media Relations Director, to book an interview with Laval from the Atlantic Ocean via satellite phone or on his arrival.

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Follow Laval St. Germain at www.confrontcanceroceanrow.com and on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) @LavalStGermain.



About Laval St. Germain

St. Germain is a Calgary-based adventurer and outdoor athlete. In the real world he’s a husband, father and Boeing 737 captain for Canadian North Airlines. He’s also the first Canadian to have climbed Mt. Everest without the use of supplemental oxygen. He has climbed and skied off many iconic mountains, including the highest peaks of Canada, Iraq, Iran and Nunavut, cycled from the Arctic Ocean to Yukon in winter and – among still other adventures – has climbed the highest mountain on six of the world’s seven continents. Catch Engineering www.catchengineering.com, FLYHT Aerospace Solutions Ltd. www.flyht.com, Healing www.healing.com.

Other sponsors who have stepped up to help financially or with clothing/equipment are: [TrueBlue Ultimate Eye Protection](#), [Fratello Coffee](#), [Momentum Watches](#), [Helly Hansen](#), [K-Tor Human Energy](#), [Battistella Developments](#), [KF Aerospace](#), [MSH International](#), [The Marketing Girl](#) and [Christina Rowsell Media](#).

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