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Gill Sponsors “Morning Light” Project, Documenting Crew Sailing The 2007 Transpacific Yacht Race

Buford, GA, June 29, 2007 – Gill North America has been appointed as an official sponsor of the crew of *Morning Light*, a Transpac 52 that is part of the 44th Transpacific Yacht Race to Hawaii that starts July 15. The Morning Light project is led by race veteran Roy E. Disney and is a real-life adventure feature film that is being shot before, during and after the Transpac competition. Its purpose is to document the adventures of this professionally trained and uniquely selected sailing crew as they compete in this race, which follows a course from Los Angeles to Diamond Head in Honolulu.

With a target release date scheduled in 2008, the high definition film will chronicle in documentary style, the recruitment, training and performance of the Transpac sailors who range in age from 18 to 23, hailing from all parts of the country. As Disney has said, "If we do our job right, I don't care as much whether they win or lose as how they come together as a group and wind up a team in the end. However they do is how they do. But we're giving them the equipment to win."

To that end, Gill North America is supplying the crew with a variety of high-performance Gill gear and apparel, including gloves, base layer, mid layer, Technical Apparel lines (shirts, vests, jackets and shorts), Gill-branded DryShirts™ supplied by DryUV, Key West range jackets, one design smocks and all-weather duffle bags. According to Robbie Haines, Olympic gold medalist and sailing team manager for the Morning Light project, part of Pacific High Productions that has partnered with the Walt Disney Company: "We wanted Gill products because they were popular with the crew, and we know that they are very conducive to the conditions we will experience in Hawaii and California and during the Transpac Yacht Race. In California, the warmer products and Gill's exclusive layering system will add to the crew's comfort, while Gill's breathable materials will work particularly well in Hawaii where the conditions are more humid."

Gill North America President David Pritchard is equally enthusiastic about the company's participation in the project. "The individual crew members all represent up-and-coming top sailors, so getting to know them and building a relationship and trust was also a goal. Gill is very pleased to be the preferred performance gear of choice and we look forward to our participation and a successful joint venture," he said.

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About The Transpacific Yacht Race

The 44th Transpacific Yacht Race in 2007 will launch its second century as the longest of the two oldest ocean races in the world, first sailed in 1906. That was the year of the great San Francisco earthquake, which literally altered the course of the former event. Clarence MacFarlane of Honolulu invited West Coast sailors to race to the Hawaiian Islands from San Francisco, but the city's devastation forced the three entries to start from Los Angeles, as the race does today. The finish is off the Diamond Head lighthouse in Honolulu, establishing a distance of 2,225 nautical miles.

Morning Light's crew hopes to become one of the younger Transpac crews with an average age of 21.2. Another crew on the sailboat called *On the Edge of Destiny*, has an average age of 19.8, which could make them the youngest Transpac crew ever. Currently the distinction of youngest Transpac crew belongs to the seven young men that averaged 22.57 years who sailed on Jon Andron's victorious Cal 40 Argonaut in the 1969 Transpac.

The *Morning Light* team will train out of Long Beach, CA, until they start the Transpac race to Hawaii on Sunday, July 15 off Point Fermin in San Pedro. With a diverse crew, sailors on the *Morning Light* team include a Harvard University graduate and students from the University of Rhode Island, the Naval Academy, Stanford University and a student newly accepted into Brown University. The expected finish date for the Transpac race is July 22-23, depending on the strength of the winds.

Transpac is held every two years and stands apart from other major ocean races as essentially a "downwind race," as determined by normal weather patterns in the eastern Pacific north of the equator. After two or three days of slogging on the wind, the fleet encounters the "Pacific High," a mammoth blob of high pressure rotating clockwise between Hawaii and the West Coast of North America. As boats reach the lower edge of the high, the wind bends aft and turns warm, usually providing the sailors with a pleasant ride the rest of the way.

Along with the boats, the soul of the race is evolving with modern times. There have been all-woman crews, as well as in 1997 a crew composed entirely of men with HIV and AIDS who carried a message of hope on the horizon for a cure for the disease. In 2003 and 2005, teams of disabled sailors representing Challenged America of San Diego competed well on equal terms.

About Gill North America

Gill NA, with headquarters near Atlanta, GA, is the exclusive distributor for the Gill brand in the U.S. and Canadian marine markets. For over 30 years, the Gill brand has been a global leader and innovator, specializing in high tech, breathable waterproof clothing. Gill NA markets and distributes a variety of performance-oriented, award-winning apparel and accessories for virtually every type of boating activity with product lines that include the following: foul weather gear with lines of jackets, deck coats and trousers; interactive layering systems; footwear; gloves; yachting watches; bags and all-weather luggage; junior gear; headwear, sunglasses and team wear. Gill North America is the official sponsor and supplier of Gill technical apparel to the US Sailing Teams. For more information on the 2007 Product Line, visit www.gillna.com, or contact Susan O'Reilly at susano@kentonsmithadv.com or at 407-856-6680 Ext. 220.

Caption for Photo: Gill North America is supplying gear and apparel for the young crew competing on the *Morning Light*, a Transpac 52, in the upcoming 2007 Transpacific Yacht Race from Los Angeles to Honolulu. As an official sponsor, Gill is an enthusiastic supporter of the Morning Light project led by Roy E. Disney that is documenting, for a scheduled 2008 theatrical film release, the adventures of this *Morning Light* crew before, during and after the Transpacific Yacht Race that starts on July 15 off Point Fermin in San Pedro, CA, and finishes after 2,225 nautical miles at the lighthouse off Diamond Head in Honolulu.

