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HONOLULU ADVERTISER

JUL 15 1970

light displacement Sea Bird wins Transpac

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Advertiser Boating Writer

Sea Bird, a 44-foot catamaran designed by a mathematician to go fast in a whisp of a breeze or a heavy blow, did just that and won the fourth biennial Multihull Transpacific Yacht Race yesterday.

The extremely light-displacement cat shot across the finish line seaward of Diamond Head Buoy at 10:07 a.m., setting a record crossing for the race of 10 days, 00 hours, 46 minutes, 27 seconds.

THE PREVIOUS best time for the Multihull Transpac was recorded by Seasmoke in 1968 at 10 days, 9 hours, 00 minutes, 23 seconds.

The Seasmoke, a 58-foot catamaran, crossed the finish line at 6:34.22 with an elapsed time of 10 days, 9 hours, 2 minutes, 39 seconds. Glass Slipper II is expected to finish around 4 p.m. today and can win the race on corrected time by coming in before 4:13.

Bob Hanel of Cabrillo Beach Yacht Club, owner and skipper of Sea Bird, got a good start on July Fourth off Point Fermin in Los Angeles, and clung to

first or second place all the way across.

Sharing front-of-the-fleet position with Sea Bird was Seasmoke, a bigger and heavier cat donated to the Boy Scouts of America by former owner James Arness.

SEA BIRD crew members Pat Carriker, a helmsman, and Bjorn Hallin, designer and builder of the boat's hardware, rested yesterday afternoon at the Outrigger Canoe Club where the seven entries in the race will be tying up.

"The first two days we experimented to see what our fastest course would be," said Carriker. "We were trying to figure out the best speed in the shortest distance."

Sea Bird got cranked up best on practically a dead run with the wind coming right over the stern, they reported. The boat surfed on larger swells for one and two minutes at a time, gaining such speed that the spinnaker and mainsail were collapsed.

THERE WERE high hopes before the start that the Pacific would cooperate this year and blow the fleet across to overall records with heavy and con-

sistent winds.

The best breeze kicked along at about 20 knots, however, and Sea Bird covered 700 or 800 miles with winds as low as 10 or 12 knots—not enough weather to break the monohull record set by Blackfin last year of 9 days, 10 hours, 21 minutes 00 seconds.

And of course the unofficial record of Pen Duick IV, also set last year, stands at 8 days, 13 hours, 9 minutes 00 seconds.

SEA BIRD was designed by Dr. Hugo Myers a mathematician who has worked in the aerospace industry. The boat looks fast even sitting at its mooring.

Each of its hulls is no more than three feet wide at the beamiest. They draw about 18 inches of water.

Hallin said that unlike the heavier displacement Seasmoke—which daws speed from her longer waterline and bigger sail area—Sea Bird's design went after minimum water friction and wetted surface.

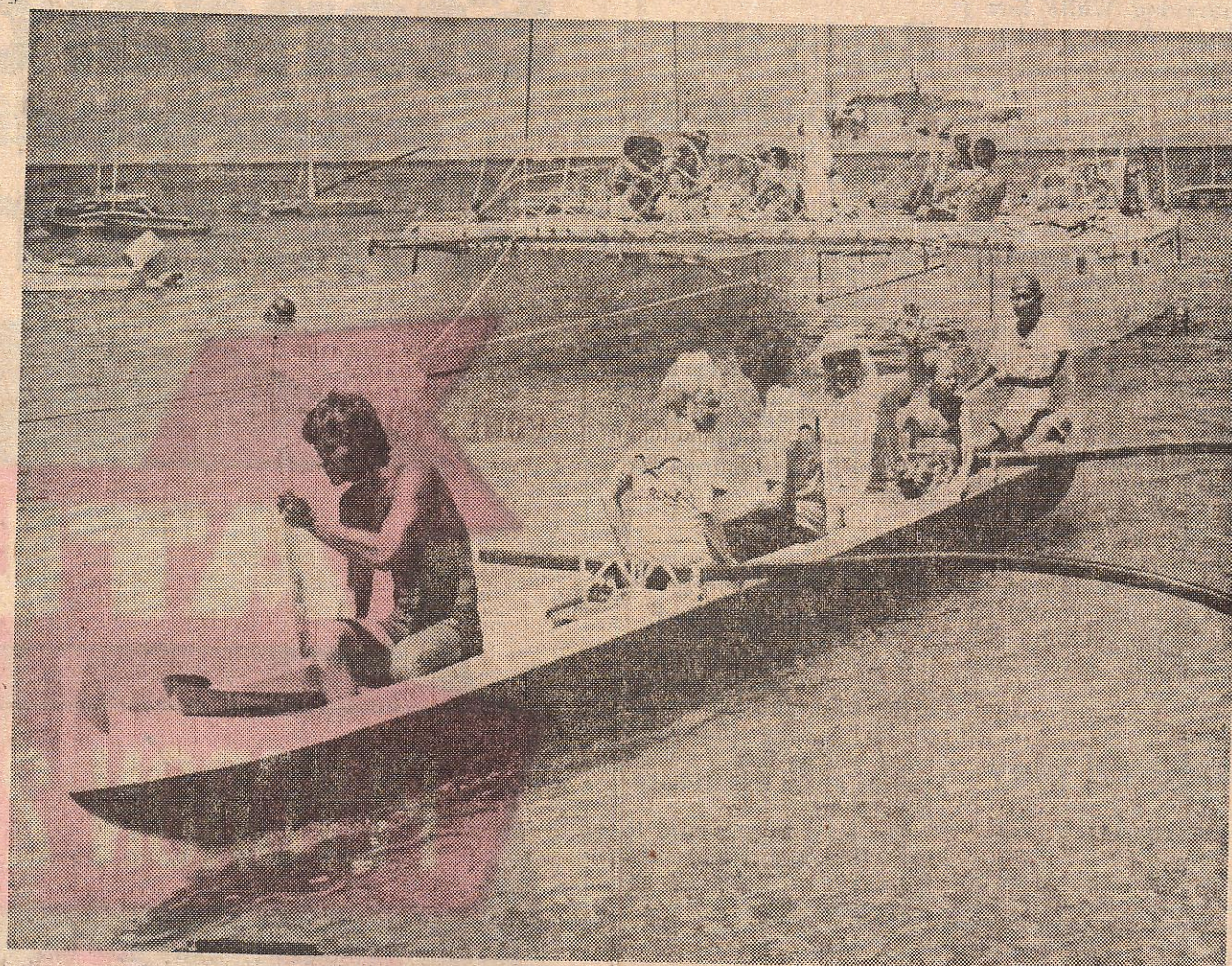
THE RACE proved to be a contest between the light, efficient rig of Sea Bird versus the more powerful but somewhat less efficient rig of Seasmoke.

Sea Bird uses retractable dagger boards and retractable rudders. Running before the wind the daggerboards are up and so is one of her two rudders.

Her mast is rotatable, presenting the slimmest part of its diamond shape to the wind and allowing the mainsail to drive the boat better to windward by reducing the area between the trailing edge of the mast and the luff, or leading edge of the mainsail.

SHE carried three chutes for the race and blew out two of them. One, a three-quarter ouncer of 1,720 square feet, was resewn and hoisted back up. A genoa also was blown out while the boat was making 20 knots reaching across the wind in heavy seas.

Carriker and Hallin said that Sea Bird can do 14 or 15 knots reaching close into the wind, and has, in other races, pegged her speed instrument at 30 knots.



Happy Sea Bird crew begins arriving at Outrigger Canoe Club after cracking record for cat Transpac.

Advertiser Photo by Charles Okamura