

OCT. 21 1970

# Week of Cat--Hobie Cat Nationals set to go

The Chinese calendar says we are in the Year of the Dog but at Waikiki Beach this is the Week of the Cat as more than 70 skippers from across the country gather for the Hobie Cat National Championship.

The Hobie Cat is a phenomenal little machine made up of two pontoons, each 14 feet long, with a trampoline in the middle and a mast to carry a mainsail. No jibs allowed.

In July of 1968 a man by the name of Hobie Alter turned from nearly two decades of making surfboards

in California to the business of making catamarans. Close to 4,000 Hobie Cats are now afloat, a record growth rate for any fleet.

The allure of Hobie's boat is its speed and price. Fast and relatively cheap, the cat can hit 20 knots and sells new for about \$1200 plus freight.

Hobie has little experience in monohulls. He freely confesses he has been aboard a monohull only once in his life, and that was sometime in his childhood.

We went for a ride with him the other day aboard his

latest design, a Hobie 16, shooting questions as the 16-footer slipped away from the Outrigger Canoe Club at 10 knots.

We wondered if he felt that monohull sailors are better tactically and technically than Hobie Cat skippers. "I think the cat sailor is definitely weaker than the monohull sailor simply because those guys have been at it so much longer. But there are some darned good cat sailors coming along," he said.

Then too, he added, some monohull aces have climbed

aboard Hobie Cats and come off second-best in cat regattas.

"Tactics differ, for one



BOATING  
bruce benson

thing," he said. "You want to wait for steadier shifts before you tack since a cat can lose way quicker than your monohulls. You should plan

your starts to run at the line with speed on."

In any kind of wind above 10 knots, the Hobie Cat will

the longer course.

Monohull skippers handle all their expenses when competing in championships, but the Hobie contestants in this regatta are getting their air fare paid if they placed first in one of the seven regional divisions.

"At first you've got to get things rolling yourself," Hobie said. "You've got to jump in and set things up." He said his factory sponsors a lot of regattas on the West Coast, providing competitive racing conditions for boat owners who don't belong to the yacht club.

do better with the wind by reaching up as much as 45 degrees from a dead run, he said. Greater boat speed will more than compensate for

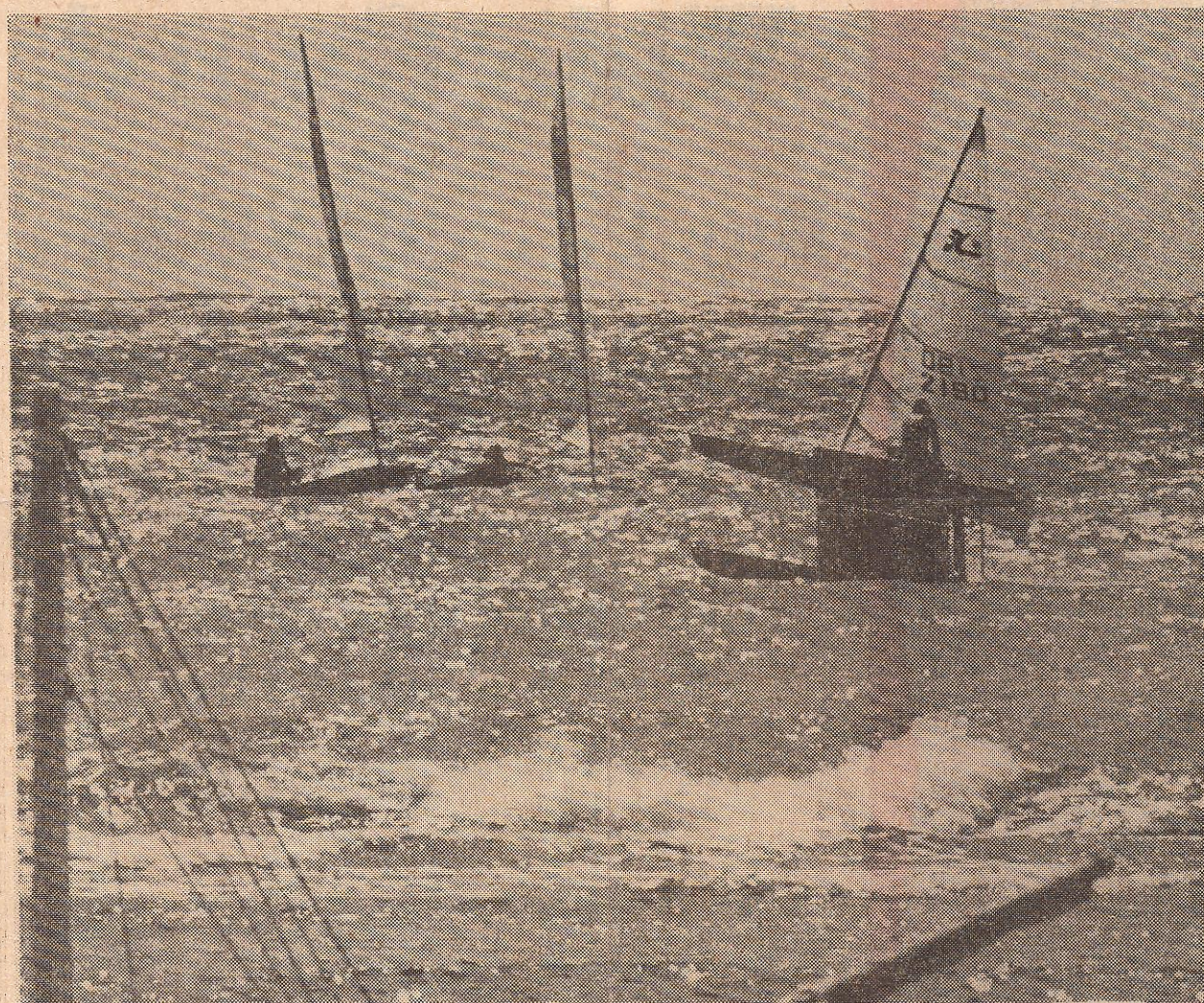
Manufacturing plants for the cat are operating in Mexico City and Australia, and others are in the works for France and South Africa, with queries received from Denmark, Japan and Canada, he said.

Thirty-five skippers from the seven divisions have qualified for the national championship. Another ten positions will be settled tomorrow when some 30 sailors are expected to try out in a three-race consolation series.

Two races will be held offshore from the Outrigger

Canoe Club on Friday, and a third start will take the fleet down to Keehi Lagoon. The boats will overnight at Keehi, sail two races around the seaplane triangle on Saturday, then race back to the Outrigger to prepare for a final two offshore races Sunday.

Fittingly enough, the famed 50-foot cat, "Glass Slipper," winner of the 1966 Multi-Hull Trans-Pac race, will operate as Race Committee Boat, while members of the Waikiki Yacht Club will provide a Protest Committee.



Flying Hobie Cat speeds along off Waikiki in practice run for Nationals this weekend.

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HOBIE CAT

A Hobie Cat? What's that? Something from Africa that has escaped from the Honolulu Zoo? No, a Hobie Cat is a cat that flies over the ocean waves, that is. For a Hobie Cat is a lightweight (215 lbs.) highly maneuverable, 14 sailing catamaran that doesn't plow through the ocean waves but skitters along on the surface on its two asymmetrical (not symmetrical) fiberglass hulls. Because of this unique hull design, troublesome centerboards, centerboard drag, and leaky unrepairable centerboard wells are eliminated. The asymmetrical hulls of the Hobie Cat are shaped like the cross section of an airplane wing, flat on the outside and curved on the inside. This design provides the same function as a centerboard. The flat outside edge of the Leeward hull resists leeway (sideslip) through the water and keeps the boat driving forward. With the centerboard eliminated and kick up rudders (rudders kick up automatically when beaching or sailing over very shallow reefs), the Hobie Cat can sail anywhere there is more than 8 inches of water.

How and why was this boat created? Let Hobie Alter himself tell you: "A wild experience in Hawaii is to take a ride on one of the forty foot Waikiki Beach cats as they sail and surf at lightning speed over the shallow reefs. For many years I have been impressed with the simplicity and efficiency of these beach cats, especially the ease with which they sail on and off the beach and in the surf without the use of centerboards. These big cats can sail efficiently with no

centerboards because of their asymmetrically designed hulls. I wanted to incorporate this hull principle into a small catamaran. A fast exciting boat that was simple to sail but most important of all, a boat that one man could handle. Built light for racing and easy beaching, yet tough enough to sail right in the surf. Of top quality, yet reasonable in price. My goal was to include features in the boat that I found lacking in most present day comparable catamarans. These features may go unnoticed by the novice sailor but will be quickly recognized and appreciated by the experienced sailor."

The H-14 Hobie Cat is a one design class. The Hawaii Hobie Cat Association with Tich Naish at the helm is growing every day with sponsored races every month building to the nationals here in Oahu (Outrigger Canoe Club) in October.

For more information and a demonstration ride, check in at McWayne Marine Supply, Kewalo Basin.

Hobie Cat--No other boating experience like it!

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HAWAII HOCHI

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## Hobie Cat Races

Two races for the Hobie Cat national championship will be held Friday offshore from the Outrigger Canoe Club and a third will move the fleet to Keehi Lagoon.

The 14-foot boat's will spend the night at the lagoon and race back Saturday to prepare for the final two offshore races Sunday.

The catamaran "Glass Slipper"—winner of the 1966 multi-hull transpac race — will serve as the race committee boat. Members of the Waikiki Yacht Club will provide the protest committee.