

PEYTON: "A TREMENDOUS EXPERIENCE."

A day or so off the Diamond Head TransPac finish line, the crew of the Club-hosted *Sweet Okole* tossed hundreds of dollars worth of gear and possessions overboard.

It was a last gasp effort to further lighten the already feather-light craft to gain maximum speed and time in the final hours. And it helped. Some. But not quite enough. They came within a hair of the top spot.

"It's estimated that 100 pounds is worth about 33 minutes of time in a Pacific crossing," according to Dr. Robert W. Peyton, Jr., co-skipper-owner. "We gained perhaps 10 minutes in the brief time remaining."



Sweet Okole heads for Honolulu, July 2

For the record, *Sweet Okole* came within about an hour-plus of first place in Division II — ultra light displacement boats (ULDBs) — a performance exceeded only by *Merlin*, the entry that was "first to finish," first in Division II and first on corrected time overall among the 65-plus boats in this year's TransPac.

Sweet Okole crossed the line at about 6:35 a.m., Thursday, July 14, putting into Ala Wai Yacht Harbor around 7:30. Elapsed time: 11 days, 20 hours, 48 minutes, 45 seconds. Second Place Winner, Division II, 1977 California-Hawaii Trans Pacific Yacht Race.

And Ala Wai exploded in an arrival festival surpassed by no other greeting in the event. Scores of Club members, friends of the crew, racing fans, TransPac officials and workers, and just harbor-front strays joined the celebration which

covered the deck of the *Sweet Okole* and spilled over onto nearby boats.

The early morning quiet for tourists in the Ilikai and nearby hotels was shattered when the Show Band of the City's Royal Hawaiian Band burst forth with an arrival concert like no other in TransPac history.

The festivity extended into late morning and beyond the noon hour.

On deck, greeters surrounded Peyton, Greg Gillette, co-skipper-owner and son of Club-member Cy Gillette; Club-member and Seaflyte skipper Hal Burchard; Tim Rhea, navigator; Louie Wake, co-builder of the boat; and Mike Farley.

"There were no horrendous close calls," Peyton said. "No catastrophes, no malfunctions of gear" in the crossing. "No injuries or illnesses.

"There was one sudden, unexpected jibe. Perhaps ten or a dozen or so roudups ... But nothing major."



Bob Peyton at the finish. *Photo Costa*

And the uncommon co-skipper command was uncommonly harmonious.

"We set two watches. Gillette, Rhea and Farley on one, and Burchard, Wake and me on the other," Peyton said. "We used a modified Swedish system in the watch schedule. It rotates so you don't stand watch at identical hours each day.

There are few "creature comforts" aboard a ULDB. Racing feather-light means dehydrated food exclusively. Bunks were poles with dacron slings between.

"We shared a single tube of toothpaste."

Like mountain climbers who scale Mt. Everest and then are repeatedly asked "Why did you do it?" (to which they answer "Because it was there."), Peyton is repeatedly asked, "Was it fun?"

"Was it fun?"

"Fun was only part of it," he says. "Fun is not the right word."

His considered and thoughtful response is very simple.

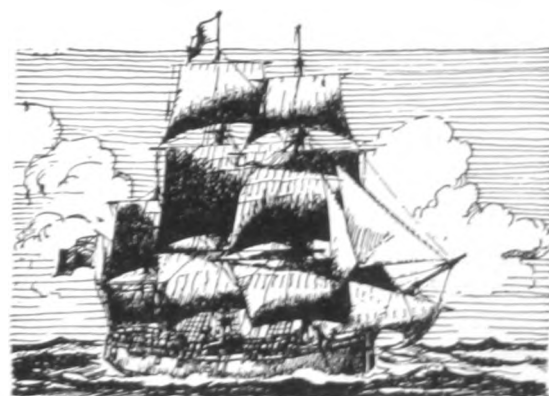
"It was a tremendous experience."



Hal Burchard lei-bedecked. *Photo Costa*



OCC Sailing Chairman Dave Hoffman



Multimast Yacht *Flying Dutchman* off Diamond Head, finish of 1577 Transpac. *Woodcut Hans Vanderhooven*