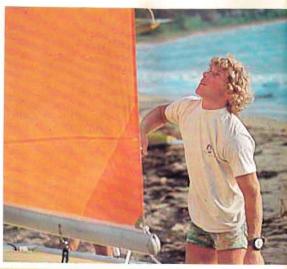


Story and Photos by Jake Grubb and Beth Parker

Wild Weather and Strong-Hearted Sailing Distinguished the 3rd Hobie 14 World Championships as the Toughest Ever



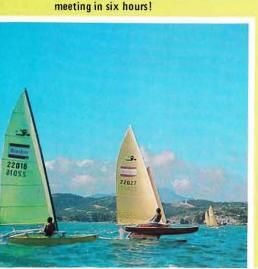
Jeff Canepa, twice World Champion.

Twisting, darkened road, howling winds and drenching rain. Tiny, gnarled man with a deranged leer hovering over the controls of the grotesque vehicle, swerving to crash over every mound and pothole in his path. Through the blinding downpour in fate's arms ... perfect weather for the dark thoughts of Edgar Allen Poe - but for Hobie Cat sailors??

"That is rain, man, that is really rain." And, "Whaddaya mean, no facilities - this is a bus, isn't it?" One soon begins to wonder how you can drive for an hour and a half on the pock-marked and treacherous roads of an island without falling off. "I can't race in this, I can't even walk in this!"

The motley caravan draws up in front of Palmas del Mar, luxurious resort on the tropical island of Puerto Rico, and dumps its travel-weary and sodden group of sailors out onto the front lawn (also sodden). A fearsome bunch, though somewhat disguised by their fatigue.

Somehow, you're in your assigned room, baggage neatly piled in the corner, travel-worn and full-up with anticipation. Sleep covers your last thought: skipper's meeting in six hours!





Wayne Schafer (left) has a pre-race discussion with South Africa's John Reid.... "You big guys don't scare ME!"

Monday morning, December 8th, first morning of qualifications. Only 24 spots still available, and 56 topknotch international sailors vying for them. Grogginess is gone, the locals are expecting sunshine. Ominous weather is cause for concern, but stubbornly overshadowed by a "down-to-business" attitude.

Conditions: tough. Gray and turbulent water, close-trough chop. Just getting out through the surf will be tricky. Strong, gusting winds. Squalls wavering along the horizon. Scattered showers on the beach. Endurance will be an important factor. We're really going to see some racing,

So starts the 3rd Hobie World Championships. Puerto Rico, or "Boringuen" as the natives call it, has chosen to unleash some challenging weather and conditions on her visitors. Sailors from fifteen countries on five different continents accept the challenge, their sporting senses peaked by the difficulties.

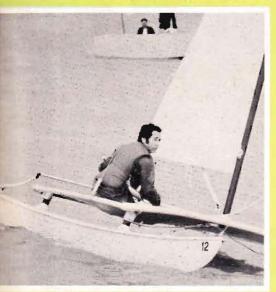
Drawn together by common interest in the international allure of Hobie Cats and bound so by their determination and skills, there is no one language shared but sailing. Even so, gestures, eyes, smiles, and laughter are enough to express all thoughts. A little time, arm waving, and exaggerated facial expressions erase all language barriers.

December 7th - 14th, 1975. A week that would prove to be a true test of every sailor present. There were 48 fortunate Hobie Catters who had already earned their entry spot in the finals by accumulating points during the year's racing season. The others had two days of gruelling competition in which to qualify for the remaining positions. Boat assignment was by the round-robin system, leaving all performance variables to the sailors' own skill. By Tuesday night, the points were totaled and the 24 final positions announced.

Qualifying in number one spot was, guess who - Hobie Alter, His endurance had mellowed with the years, but the undeniable wisdom and experience of thousands of hours of sailing lifted him to a substantial point lead in the first two days of competition. Barbara Roettger, a high school student from Puerto Rico, hung in impressively against the rugged conditions to earn a sure spot in the finals. One of only two women contestants, she sailed like a master and made the cut. Also amazingly adept at battling the forces, in spite of the disadvantage of being mute and deaf, Dave Lyons of Australia locked up one of the coveted positions still open, finishing in 12th spot with 13 points.

Qualified or not - everyone stayed. The disappointment and weariness could not overshadow the mounting excitement and promise of fun yet to be shared. Many of those who didn't qualify were soon to become integral to the proceedings by helping with repairs on the beach, manning the stake boat, and warring against the elements in an effort to keep the competition running smoothly.

Tuesday evening brought the vivid reality that the next four days would clearly determine the worth of every competitor's efforts. Commitment was in the air; everyone seemed eager to be helpful and involved. The antics of punch-drunk Hobie sailors playing like reunited old carousing buddies, lightened the evening. The "Sun Fun Hut", which leaked rain like a sieve, had become the stomping grounds for the



Nelson Piccolo - Brazil



Bruce Fields - USA



Barbara Roettger, one of two women contestants, placed 36th in final standings.

formidable crew. Large banquet dinners were ravished and the poolside bar was mobbed in a never-ending flow of camaraderie and, of course, sportsman-like conduct . . . frequent pool dunkings and pies-in-the-face were no doubt the working of outside agitators.

Snatches of conversation that evening revealed both the coiled expectancy and necessary release of good humor. Peter Cairnes, or "Ted" to his countrymen and "Tate" to those who hadn't deciphered the disarming Aussie accent, performed mystical disappearing acts with huge mounds of banquet food — and between bites bemoaned that he hadn't had a chance to swim the course yet to view the rough spots and meet the local "munchies" (dorsal finned fish with appetites).

The two Japanese representatives came bearing beautiful native gifts tucked away in the sleeves of their festive kimonos. Hisao Kanai from Hiroshima, who manages a Pachinko Parlor at home (Japanese pinball), and Hiro Yoshida, a sales engineer in Kyoto, managed to straighten out the story circulating that they had tied up Japan's number one Hobie sailor to prevent his participation, convincing all that it was actually business which had kept Mr. Nakazawa tied at home — all this with much laughter and approximately seven English words.

Young Rick Eddington was still shaking his head at "his good luck in qualifying" insisting he had been "dogmeat at the Nationals". But those who watched him race the first two days knew he would be one of the powers to be reckoned with in the finals.

Wednesday dawned - only if you walked the beach at 5:30 a.m. could you catch the breath-taking stillness of the unrigged boats nestled patiently along the sand, silhouetted against the wakening sky. Soon the quiet would crack ... skippers checking weather, competitors and their families having breakfast at The Hut, race officials organizing and announcing plans at the early morning meetings, and most inspiring of all - the ever constant presence of one of the event's superheros, Lou Murillo. Patience and realms of know-how about Hobie Cat anatomy emanated from under his bushy mop. He was the man who put all thirty-six factory-supplied championship boats together before the racers ever arrived ... in spite of the odds. (Yes - all the sails were lost in shipping, along with other assorted hairy moments.) First on the beach every morning, last to





Lou Murillo - "Superhero"



Miss Puerto Rico and Hobie present Quique Figueroa (rt) with his trophy. Eleven-year-old Quique sailed with his friend Walter Burgas (left) as ballast and placed 59th in total standings.



"This Hobie Catting is a real gas, baby!" (Photo: D. Hatfield)



leave each evening, Lou was one of the irreplaceable men who kept the works running smoothly.

Competition that day was excruciating. The elements again wielded their snarling faces; horrendous wind, mean chop, and fearsome swells. As Jeff Canepa, the defending World Champion related, "You

Director, rode his trusty 18-foot Aquasport — bucking and snorting — into shore. Being stake boat while alternately bailing and sinking in the driving rain tends to take a bit of the glamor out of water sport. It's not easy to maintain communications with the committee boat on a radio bundled in plastic bags, and the huge swell has a way of

Thursday before lightening caused officials to cancel the rest. On Friday, they staged a marathon of five races. Mother Nature relented her onslaught at times but always substituted with tricky wind shifts and deceptive calmness. By day, the work was hard and challenging. Evenings brought a combination of relaxation and full-on



Jose Rodriquez and Ann Bennett -Puerto Rico Sailboats



Puerto Rican dancers provided entertainment at the Awards Banquet..."Ole!"



Frank Amaru - Regatta Cochairman

just have to go out there and billy-goat it."
There were three races on Wednesday, a
fourth cancelled due to oncoming darkness.
After lengthy hours of fighting weather and
sea, the sailors and officials were forced to
head for shore.

Sandy Banks, Hobie Class Association

aggravatingly knocking the beer and pop cans up against your ankles. Somehow Sandy handled a job that should have taken three men — yet that familiar hint of smile never left his red furry face.

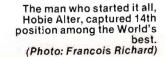
Thursday and Friday were equally taxing. They ran only two races on

boogie'ing.

Accommodations were unbelievably luxurious and included fully equipped kitchens. Wives and girlfriends shopped at quaint village stores and cooked in the rooms. Many a man returned triumphantly to his quarters, grabbed a cold "alleged"



Hank Pauloo, of Coast Cat France, demonstrates the native art(?) of coconut mutilation.







Jack Bourgard-Tahaiti



Sandy Banks... somehow he handled a job that should have taken three men.



Keith Baxter of Hawaii pulled an impressive 3rd place.

beer from the refrigerator, and gulped down the refreshing gusto — only to run gagging to the sink. "What the ...!" Alas, Corona Malta is not the same as Corona Cerveza. It would seem Malta is a health drink smacking of black-strap molasses and other questionable by-products (perhaps animal related) and not at all the three dollar bargain the little lady thought she was snapping up at the local beer stand.

Parties fluorished. It was college all over again, with . . . "there's a hot group over in #118" and, "everyone's in 230 with six gallons of Don Q." (local rum with a killer kick). You could fall asleep each night to the sound of the Australians singing their way home, seemingly always the last to bed yet always with the cheeriest smiles at breakfast, obviously harboring top-secret cures for hangovers. Always having the most fun but never offending or overdoing — they have a natural ingredient for being the most liked anywhere.

Seventy-four competitors fought their way through those three days. Two racers were alternates who were able to sail due to

later dropouts. Un Friday evening, the top thirty-six were announced — those who had one more day of battle, and still the chance to race for Hobie World Champion of 1975. Festivities ended early — everyone wanted to be ready for the nitty gritty on Saturday. Two final races, points tallied, and a decision. Alot to sleep on . . .

Maybe the toughest day of all — Saturday spawned rough, gray water and ominous skies. The colorful line of boats pounded out through the surf once again. Ufficials never soften their demands, and one of the toughies, Rich Jeffries (race co-chairman), flashed the course from the committee boat: ACABCAC, and was close enough to hear Hobie Alter from one of the boats below let out an involuntary "ooohhhh nooo".

With winds screaming constantly at 31 mph, the race lasted an hour and a half; eleven of the world's best sailors didn't finish, Hatfield and Berman, both top runners from the U.S., flipped but managed to finish. Cartwheeling four times and still finishing eighth, Rick Eddington was impossible to stop. Hobie beached his boat after the race and admitted, "the wind was unbelievable ... that was the longest, toughest race ever for me. When you look ahead to the mark and see five guys down, you know it's big trouble." Jeff Canepa finished first, the original "billy goat" in his element, commenting with righteous respect on Taupi Tamata from Tahiti. "He was right with me through ACABC, I couldn't shake him until he stuck it in off the point."

After an hour's rest, Tamata went on to



It was college all over again...!

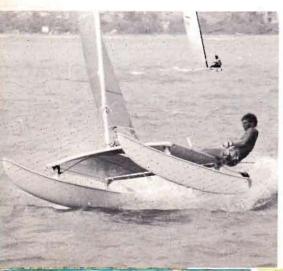


Kerli Corlett · Australia



Randy Hatfield, with skillful manuevering and shrewd race sense, took 2nd place. (Photo: D. Hatfield)

Canepa...the original "billy goat" in his element. ( Photo: Francois Richard)



win the second race. Conditions had lightened a bit, the sea and the course slightly more forgiving. The second race lasted forty-five minutes, lacking only the background music of "Victory at Sea". The dramatics were over, only the point tally left to complete.

The Bash — Saturday evening festivities. Open bar with warm and fuzzy rum drinks, resplendent roasted pig banquet, and a colorful performance of native dances by an exuberant group of youngsters. A Hobie 14 bobbled in the pool, donated by the Australian "over-the-fence gang".

Kevin Summerell, "da King", hosted the presentations. First and warmly felt by all, were gracious thanks to the Puerto Rican committee, especially Roberto Bouret, Eugene Balzac, and Guillermo De Lemos — who prepared the advance work and kept the wheels turning. And also to Jose Rodriguez, who did so much on the business end and still had the energy to place a skillful fourth overall in the competition.

Special mention to the Navy. Lt. Commander Al Quist assisted all week with five other members of the SeaBees support team and two hot rod navy boats. They proved invaluable — providing hours of towing and rescues. Not to mention, of course, the challenge and ensuing race against Bouncing Bob Brown (overall indispensable aide) and Balls-Out Banks in their "Astro" Aquasport. Nothing against the Navy, but they lost. The Dynamic Duo squelched yet another foe.

And at last, trophy time. Unique wooden carvings were designed as replicas of the guard houses found on the walls of Old San Juan — and Kevin, along with Hobie and Miss Puerto Rico (who, by the way, is also Miss World), presented these to the finalists.

There were surprises, amazing age differences, and an encouraging mixture of all nationalities in the top racers. In 1974, all but two of the top ten sailors were from the United States and this year there were only four from the U.S. and Hawaii — with the rest of the ten best rounded out by two skippers from Australia, two from Tahiti, and one each from Brazil and Puerto Rico.

The Tahitians were a surprise . . . they've only had the boats on their islands for a few years and their skills are amazingly developed. From Brazil, it was Nelson Piccolo in eighth place, a professional sailmaker and proven world champion sailor in both the Snipe and Finn classes. Look out for the Aussies — besides Frank Milner and Peter Cairnes in fifth and ninth place,



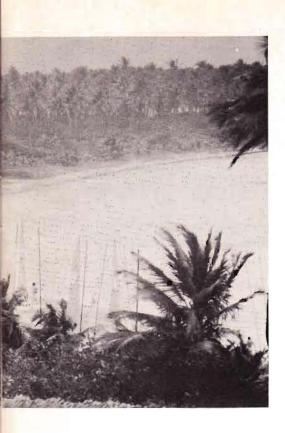
Ominous weather was cause for conern...

they had three other teammates in the top 24. Rich Jeffries, National Race Coordinator, warns that they are to be reckoned with as a coming major force.

The top three Hobie sailors of 1975 reflect youthful endurance blended with natural, highly developed skills. Jeff Canepa, now number one for two years in a row, epitomizes the concentration and adaptability of a practiced champion. Keeping total points to an unbelievably low 14%, his performance was once again amazing. Randy Hatfield, another California entrant, took second place in hand with

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Milner - Australia





skillful manuevering and shrewd race sense for his prodigious twenty years. Keith Baxter of Hawaii, having sailed a 14 only once in the last three years, pulled an impressive third place.

The upstart, Rick Eddington, just switching over to 14s from skippering 16s, placed 7th overall and left his mark on the Worlds.

Including the entire field of 74 participants, age of skippers ranged from 55 to 11 years old. The latter, Quique Figueroa from Puerto Rico, carried his friend, Walter Burgas, as ballast to meet minimum weight

When he's not sailing his Hobie Cat, Japan's Hisao Kanai manages a Pachinko Parlor.



requirements and placed 59th in total standings with an impressive fourth place in one race on Friday morning.

The Canadian National Champion, homemaker Marjorie Innes, stood 55th in the challenging line-up, and the European National Champ, Hans Muller, took 32nd.

The man who started it all, Hobie Alter, captured 14th position among the World's best — along with the lion's share of personal gratification, spending a week with the best of those who share the legend — the sport he created. His friend and consultant, Wayne Schafer, certainly the wisest and most consistent Hobie competitor, held down 22nd place in spite of some bad breaks.

All ages, all nationalities, and all occupations (from piano tuning master to airline pilot) were represented ... showcasing the universal appeal of Hobie Cat sailing. The Hobie World Championship of 1975 was more than a racing event, every person there shared in it, creating that intangible strength and closeness that only sport can yield.

AND THEN . . .

Reward for hard work; a few days respite in the tropical sun of the Virgin Islands, Patrick Hogan of Studio City Travel, true genius who arranged the transportation and accommodations for over half the participants from all over the world, offered a tempting package for relaxation in two out-of-the-way places (Bolongo Bay and Secret Harbor intriguing, no?) on the island of St. Thomas. Albeit, a jolting, jarring DC-3 ride away, it proved to be the perfect halcyon vacation everyone daydreams about. Snorkeling in crystal blue waters, touring in open air buses through the villages and backroads, and lest the image become too docile - a rip snorting dinner-dance party under the stars, compete with steel drum band and limbo contest.

Refreshed and reluctant to return to the real world, lingering in the old hangar-terminal of the St. Thomas airport ... everyone is amazingly quiet — absorbing every last ray of experience and savoring the mood. Time to tuck it all away to memory ... the Hobie Worlds 1975.

The Hobie Class Association wishes to extend a special thank-you to our sponsors — the R.J. Reynolds Tabacco Co., Renault of Puerto Rico, Palmas del Mar and the Tourism Development Co. — for their aid and support in making the 3rd Hobie Worlds a very successful and memorable event.



The Australian "over-the-fence gang" strikes again! (Photo: D. Hatfield)



Hiro Yoshida - Japan

Figueroa and Burgas - Puerto Rico



## 3rd Annual

## **HOBIE 14 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

## December 7-14, 1975 — Palmas del Mar, Puerto Rico

1.	Jeff Canepa	U.S.A.	2	20	8	3/4	3/4	3/4	2	141/4
2.	Randy Hatfield	U.S.A.	3/4	2	3/4	6	10	11	3	221/2
3.	Keith Baxter	Hawaii	3	30	6	7	6	2	7	31
4.	Jose Rodriguez	Puerto Rico	4	5	16	3	5	16	6	39
5.	Frank Milner	Australia	3	11	11	9	3	16	5	42
6.	Kitty Salmon	Tahiti	10	5	9	4	4	DNF	10	42
7.	Rick Eddington	U.S.A.	7	3/4	3	8	23	8	23	493/4
8.	Nelson Piccolo	Brazil	2	10	3/4	12	22	6	21	513/4
9.	Peter Cairnes	Australia	6	33	10	20	2	3	11	52
10.	Taupi Tamata	Tahiti	12	11	19	7	9	14	3/4	533/4
11.	Phillip Berman	U.S.A.	21	12	24	2	3	4	12	54
12.	Mike Staudt	U.S.A.	5	2	$\frac{24}{21}$	3	15	BD	16	54
			11	12	$\frac{21}{6}$	12		7	8	
13.	Carlos Biekarck	Brazil					$\frac{21}{10}$			56
14.	Hobie Alter	U.S.A.	18	13	21	2	270.00	9	4	56
15.	Jerry King	U.S.A.	11	16	13	6	5	DNF	9	60
16.	Phil Thompson	U.S.A.	6	20	2	11	6	16	DNF	61
17.	Evan Borges	Puerto Rico	16	9	12	3/4	9	DNF	17	63¾
18.	Eric Tulla	Puerto Rico	27	4	18	5	18	15	14	74
19.	Jeff Hamilton	U.S.A.	4	7	14	22	13	18	29	78
20.	Robert Raditch	U.S.A.	3/4	15	2	13	12	DNS	DNS	783/4
21.	Graham Woods	Australia	26	21	3	13	23	5	14	79
22.	Wayne Schafer	U.S.A.	14	6	13	26	2	19	DNF	80
23.	Max Townshend	Australia	29	27	4	18	11	10	20	90
24.	Kerli Corlett	Australia	23	6	32	9	3/4	25	30	933/4
25.	Eric Hasselback	South Africa	8	13	26	32	16	12	19	94
26.	Jim McCann	U.S.A.	28	3/4	26	16	4	21	28	953/4
27.	Angel Espada	Puerto Rico	15	4	11	19	32	23	24	96
28.	Jack Sammons	U.S.A.	10	3	9	35	17	DNF	DNF	97
29.	Klaus Peters	Brazil	13	14	35	17	19	22	15	100
30.	Ron Tucker	U.S.A.	14	32	14	8	7	DNF	DNF	101
31.	P. Boula	France	20	19	22	14	8	BD	30	102
32.	Hans Muller	Germany	20	35	7	5	22	DSQ	22	104
33.	Roberto Lopez	Puerto Rico	7	30	25	10	25	13	25	105
34.	Ron Gross	U.S.A.	BD	19	14	28	. 7	DNF	27	107
35.	Don Ohmans	U.S.A.	19	22	5	21	18	DNF	31	111
36.	Barbara Roettger	Puerto Rico	5	7	31	22	30	24	26	114
			19		18	14	6	24	20	67
37.	Jean Dorgambide	France		$\frac{28}{9}$						
38.	Ludwig	T 1	33		12	27	19			67
39.	Jack Bourgard	Tahiti	22	25	5	15	34			67
40.	David Lyons	Australia	BD	21	15	18	BD			69
41.	Jerry Piety	U.S.A.	33	8	34	10	20			71
42.	Roberto Bouret	Puerto Rico	9	17	36	DSQ	14			72
43.	Bonhomme	27112700	17	3	32	33	21			73
44.	J.A. Stevens	U.S.A.	21	36	10	17	28			74
45.	Fidler		13	29	24	15	25			77
46.	Kanai	Japan	35	10	34	4	31			79
47.	Jerry Jenkins	U.S.A.	34	26	15	27	12			80
48.	Whitehead	South Africa	30	17	23	30	24			80
49.	J. Woods	U.S.A.	17	36	27	24	13			81
50.	Bruce Fields	U.S.A.	12	ĀV	AV	23	33			81
51.	Ken Keene	U.S.A.	9	27	20	31	26			82
52.	Hank Pauloo	France	24	23	8	32	27			82
53.	Brad Carpenter	U.S.A.	28	15	16	36	24			83
54.	John Hamilton	U.S.A.	35	22	19	31	11			83
55.	Marjorie Innes	Canada	8	16	30	36	31			85
56.	Martins		16	32	36	25	15			86
57.	Yoshida	Japan	32	8	22	30	29			89
58.	John Reid	South Africa	26	24	33	25	8			90
59.	Quique Figueroa	Puerto Rico	25	33	<u>~</u>	28	33			90
60.	Eugene Balzac	Puerto Rico	15	24	29	26	27			92
	Mesner	r derto Mico	27	7	29	29	35			92
61.		Charle Talanda					29			
62.	Tom Baldauf	Virgin Islands	34	18	$\frac{36}{28}$	11				92
63.	De Beyer		18	28	28	19	28			93
64.	Fabre	D	24	25	31	34	17			97
65.	Carlos Matos	Puerto Rico	32	18	17	33	30			97
66.	David Bray	Australia	AV	AV	23	21	36			98
67.	Peter Johnson	Australia	DSQ	31	25	16	20			99
68.	John Dinsdale	France	DSQ	23	28	29	14			100
69.	Henry Shrive	U.S.A.	30	29	30	24	35			113
70.	Dalbock	South Africa	31	34	33	23	26			113
71.	Lynn		31	31	20	34	32			114
72.	Voltas		36	34	17	35	34			120
73.	Edwardo Ovies	Puerto Rico	29	26	36	36	36			127
74.	Guimares	Brazil	35	35	36	36	36			142
							-			

