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Log of a Record Run

The Victoria-to-Maui Race is run every two years from picturesque, stately and very British Victoria on Vancouver Island to picturesque, casual and very American-Polynesian Lahaina on the island of Maui in the Hawaiian chain. For handicap purposes, the Maui Race is 2,310 miles long. However, most of the yachts sail somewhat farther as the handicap distance is based upon the great circle route, which would commonly take one through, or uncomfortably close to, the calms associated with the North Pacific high.

Aboard Merlin Stephen Crary, Doug Fryer, Ron Pemberton, Breck Adams, Jim Williams, Bill Nelson, Gary Wood and Bob Spanfelner knocked two days, 17 minutes off the old record and beat Drifter in what some described as the world's longest match race.

Friday, June 30, 1978

We arrived in Victoria Harbor about 0915 today, cleared customs, took on some diesel fuel and topped up the water tanks, including numerous small plastic jugs needed to make our total of 120 gallons or 15 gallons per man. By ten o'clock, we had joined the race fleet raft in front of the Empress Hotel in Victoria Harbor, the venerable British Columbia Parliament buildings on our right. The 36 entries in the Race had formally or informally dressed ship in the raft with international code flags, race flags, yacht club flags, and some flags of just plain whimsy.

A rigorous safety and technical inspection ensued, with various minor violations being cited. (We were advised that no boat in the fleet passed the inspection the first time.) For example, our stern pulpit was found to be one inch too low at one point, quite obviously from people sitting on it, a deficiency remedied by the simple brute strength of several crew members. Our forward life lines were found to be an inch or more too low in places because of the lacings for headsails which held them down. All these lacings, with each individual knot neatly done, had to be removed and retied more loosely. We were also cited for only having three white hand-held flares, four being required by the Race rules (for what no one knew), and they had been entirely unavailable in the Seattle area, as far as the Committee knew. No substitutes such as white parachute veri-pistol flares were accepted, but fortunately one of the boats in the race, *Deuce Coupe*, had bought a large supply directly from the eastern factory and we were able to acquire one from them, as were others. After much reworking, buying, and general running around, all entrants ultimately passed inspection.

At 1400, skippers and navigators gathered for an extensive briefing, including weather. Here the "final" modified IOR ratings and time allowances were given out. A complicated modification of the IOR was in effect for the race, which, again, imposed approximately half of the Transpac ULDB penalty on lightweight boats, apparently on the theory that the Maui Race has more beating and close reaching than the Transpac, but still a sufficient amount of downwind work to favor light boats. Our rating makes us the second highest rated boat with a 99.9 IOR rating (versus our 62 foot LWL), second only to our archrival *Drifter*, with its 101.7 rating. The third highest boat is *Bravura*, at 39.4, which means we have to give them three days, one hour, and 27 minutes.

The weather briefing showed that there were two high-pressure centers ahead of us, with a trough between, and the prediction was for northwesterlies off the coast for a couple days, with the breeze dying and coming back fresh from the southwest. Doug Fryer and I agreed that, given our druthers, we would start the race immediately and get as much of the northwesterlies to take us south as far as possible as soon as possible. After all, close or beam reaching in a big ULDB is a lot more fun than beating into heavy seas, not to mention faster, and the whole idea is to get south to a point approximately where Ocean Station November used to be, so you can turn the corner as you round the high, gain the trade winds, and scoot home for Maui.

Saturday, July 1

The start was at 11 a.m. in a light southwesterly. Under a number one and a full main, we ran the line on starboard and got a good start at the committee boat end to weather of the fleet and 50 to 75 yards to weather of *Drifter*. Soon *Merlin* and *Drifter* had worked out a lead of a mile or so on everyone else. Because of the adverse flood, we short-tacked up the island shore to Race Rocks and at 1330 were the first boat through Race Passage. The early morning overcast cleared and it became a brilliant, sunny, warm day. We wished we could have had a beer to start the trip with, but there was nary a beer on board because of a Canadian brewers' strike. We beat out the Straits of Juan de Fuca in a westerly which freshened in the afternoon to the point where at one time we were down to the number three genoa and a double-reefed main. But it died gradually toward evening.

Just past Neah Bay, the wind died completely. *Drifter* went inshore and snatched an offshore zephyr, passing ahead of us by 50 feet at about a knot and a half. However, they then reached off while we were able to equal or surpass their speed and point higher. When we got to Duntze Rock Buoy at the end of the Straits of Juan de Fuca close to midnight, we had worked out a lead of better than half a mile. This was the place where you simply, "turn left and head for Maui."

Sunday, July 2

By 0400 we were some 20 miles west of Cape Alava on the Washington coast, with *Drifter* four to five miles to leeward and astern. I was the first "extra hand," as our watch system called for two three-man watches, with the skipper/navigator and the cook standing only the four to eight watch with the "extra hand" (one person selected in rotation from the eight-to-12 watch of the previous night). The extra hand was then relieved on his next normal watch (eight to 12 in the morning) first by the cook and then by the skipper. It's a good system with the watches dogging themselves and everyone (in theory) getting eight straight hours off sometime between eight at night and noon the next day.

We were forced by a southerly to take another port tack off the coast, and when we finally tacked south we were a good twenty-five miles off the coast, heading south on starboard tack in a very light southwesterly, gradually switching around to west and, we were hopeful, eventually to northwest. Last night and this morning we were still wearing long johns, foul-weather pants, watch caps and gloves, but at midday it is warm, sunny and beautiful.

I cooked breakfast this morning as the "extra hand". The meal included bananas, pineapples, pancakes and ham. (I am a non-egg eater; the other guys can cook eggs if they want to.)

We continued to tack back and forth in the light and flukeys, sometimes sailing as high as 210 degrees on port in a southeast wind, or as high as 185 degrees on starboard in a west-southwest wind. Finally we stay on starboard tack making, or at least very close to, our ideal track line at this point —185 degrees. This morning our distance by the log was under three nautical miles for three hours and in one hour we even logged under two. But by lunchtime the wind came up some and aft some.

At 1415 we set the ounce-and-a-half chute on a very close reach, raising everyone's spirits, even though we knew we'd probably have to take it down soon. As suspected, in a few hours we had to end this first noble spinnaker experiment, going instead to the jib top, using the number four as a staysail and varying the mainsail size from full to two reefs.

This morning we saw an enormous orange jellyfish, perhaps three to four feet in diameter. Later, while the cassette player regaled us with *Saturday Night Fever*, the fin of a small shark followed us for a while.

Our noon position showed we had made 113 miles from the start, while *Drifter* reported 17 miles ahead of us, although she had disappeared out of sight behind us in the late morning. They are lost or lying, we decide, and hoot our incredulity. Still, we would prefer that they acknowledged our lead. At happy hour, Bill got an extra dollop of rum for fixing the water pump, clearing seaweed out of it so we could run the engine for charging batteries.

By 1930, a fresh northwesterly had built to 18 knots or better, and I had had the experience of hitting 16.42 knots in the DAD, close reaching with the jib top, staysail and double-reefed main. The first of the elegant dinners prepared by Gary Wood was served tonight, including roast beef, salad, carrots and potatoes, with a good Barbera, followed by vanilla pudding and homemade chocolate chip cookies.

Monday, July 3

On the midnight-to-four watch, we logged 42.5 nautical miles, still with the jib top, staysail, and double-reefed main, slightly less than the prior watch did in slightly fresher breezes. The wind teases us by starting to come aft, but then it goes forward again. There's no reasonable possibility of setting a spinnaker without bearing off way too far. The night is extremely black —no reference point at all except the compass. The binnacle light is out. We can't fix it, so we sail with a small flashlight taped to the binnacle. Someone generally sits to weather of the helmsman in the harder going to give a power assist and help bring the boat down when it takes off to weather.

The August issue of *Playboy* has become very popular, not only for the pin-ups but also for the interview with Ted Turner.

Roll call at 1600 disclosed that *Drifter* was 25 miles behind us. There was much celebrating, and a dollop and a half was declared and poured. The sky was clear, hopefully not meaning we're too close to the high, and several people put on clean clothes for the first time on the trip. Jim put on his Cheryl Tiegs tee-shirt. His shirt is very popular, and I have a feeling that it will become more so. The water is very blue, bluer than it was yesterday, and we know it will be bluer still tomorrow.

Tuesday, July 4

The eight-to-midnight watch last night showed progressively slower speeds, as the wind died and came forward. The midnight-to-four watch this morning logged a 2.2 and a 2.1-knot hour. We went first to the jib top and a full main and then to the number one. What a lousy way to start the Fourth of July. However, by 0300 we were back over six knots and a westerly was building.

Bob cooked the breakfast, a delight of corned-beef hash, eggs, and Danish pastries. The wind has gone from west to west-southwest now. This morning we changed to the number one jib and then to the number two after the staysail came down when the wind got too close. Then it was put in a reef, take a reef out, and so on. The high seems to be dropping a little to the south and east. Not good. We punch along on our track line. To go farther southeast would simply add too many miles away from Maui. Maybe we can punch through this and leave everyone behind. But certainly this is not good news as far as the course record goes.

Bill went up on the boom with the first reef in to replace the lowest batten lost last night when the jib top sheet popped it out. He sewed a new batten in the sail, doing it with a line tied around his chest, for whatever good that might have done.

At 1415, we figured our noon position, which shows we had a 180-mile day. (The log showed 178, but we have found it to be consistently slightly conservative.) Not bad going for such light air and a couple of two-knot hours. Doug said we had to average 231 miles per day to finish in 11 days even, which would take a day and a half off the old record. Given the wind, we can do that easily. Our 238-mile day was just easy cruising.

At 1700 we had a great Fourth of July party. We fired the cannon that Breck had brought four or five times, flew the American flag from the back stay, listened to cassette music and had a triple-dollop happy hour. One extra dollop was for gaining on *Drifter* (We had had a four-mile longer run, but had gained 23 miles closer to the islands, *Drifter* being 48 miles back). Another extra dollop was by virtue of a bottle sent by Bill's dad. In the middle of happy hour we made a massive sail change, changing the No. 2 to the jib top, putting up the staysail, putting a second reef in the main, and then carried on with the happy hour, accompanied by full volume on the cassette player. Gary outdid himself by baking fresh bread for dinner.

Shortly before midnight the wind freshened and came aft to west-northwest. We took off smokin', averaging ten knots or better with the apparent wind at about 70 degrees.

Wednesday, July 5

We had the midnight-to-four watch and it was a great night of sailing. In the pitch dark, we were going 10 or 11 knots all the time. The sensation frequently was that of going downhill, not just off a particular wave, but constantly. We were sailing in pretty flat water. At the end of that midwatch we were through with midwatch for two more days.

We had just gotten into our bunks when Doug decided the wind had come sufficiently aft (an apparent wind of approximately 80 degrees) to set the jib top, so we had another massive sail change, taking down the No. 2 setting the jib top, setting the staysail (the number four) and reefing the main. The whole thing took at least 45 minutes.

At eight in the morning we were averaging almost constant 11-pluses, and the wind came aft. At nine o'clock we went to a full main and definitely began doing some good surfing. At 1130 we hoisted the 2.2 ounce tri-radial reaching chute. At first we had trouble making 185 degrees or 195 degrees, but later we began easily making 205 degrees, our optimum course, with the apparent wind at approximately 95 degrees. We were all excited when the local apparent noon position at 1350 showed a 261-mile day-run. However, our excitement was dampened when *Drifter* reported in at roll call, having sailed perhaps a few miles farther and more toward the islands. So, our lead is now cut to 38 miles. (Yesterday they were 48 miles behind, the day before, 25.) *Drifter's* position shows she is going somewhat higher, that is, farther north than we are, but the decision is definite that we will not cover because (1) they may not really be there, (2) that might not be the place to be even if they are there, and (3) we'd give away an awful lot of miles to get there without getting much closer to the islands.

Doug took the first shower on the stern today. He did his best not to shiver and said it wasn't bad, but no one else was very excited about trying it. I think I'll try tomorrow. I certainly know I need one.

I wore shorts today for the first time since the first day of the race when we were still in the Straits of Juan de Fuca.

Thursday, July 6

As I was washing the breakfast dishes this morning, Breck was being described as the broach king for his broach, during which the single sideband temporarily went dead when I was reporting our position at roll call. At Doug's suggestion, I told *Jeanoyce*, the communications vessel, which is also a PHRF entry in the race, why our transmission had been interrupted, but not (as we told Breck) who did it. As of noon today, we have not made less than 10 knots by the log for an hour since midnight of the night before last.

At lunch we folded and bagged all the head sails to get them off the foredeck. This is more than just your normal tidying up or to get weight off the bow. The head sails were collecting a tremendous amount of water, as the bow is buried frequently, even at 12, 13 or 14 knots.

At 1300, we set a staysail inside the reaching chute. The wind is now north and sometimes north-northeast, almost tradewind direction, but certainly we do not have either a tradewind sky or a tradewind sea. The sky continues to be overcast, and the sea is relatively smooth. So far, *Merlin* steers beautifully, and when she does go down she does it gently and comes back easily.

I trimmed my race-grown stubble of a beard today before a lunch of chili dogs with onions and cheese and potato chips. After lunch, my first bath-shower on board on the stern from the galvanized bucket. I washed my hair, threw my underwear over the side, changed clothes, and used fresh water for a final rinse —we are allotted a quart per shower. With clean clothes I feel about 150 percent better.

After the noon site, we found that our past day's run was 273 miles, up from the 261 of the day before and better than an 11-knot average. We are now about 1,365 miles from Maui and only about five days out. At this rate, we will take about a day and a half off the old record. The question is, where is *Drifter*?

At 1600 at roll call *Drifter* reports in 78 miles farther from the islands than we are. That's cause for a great happy hour, a three-dollop one (our watch got two and a future credit because we were driving), followed by wine with dinner. And what a dinner it was. Sauteed chicken breasts, rice with mushrooms, green beans, an excellent Cabernet Sauvignon, and fudge cake. The whole affair led to some interesting night entries in the log, most of which are unrepeatable. During the night we saw a Japanese freighter; the log entry (by the other watch) proclaims we were faster.

Friday, July 7

About 0145 this morning, while we had the midwatch and I was driving, the port spinnaker halyard chafed through, dropping our primary ounce-and-a-half chute into the water. It was very dark at the time. At first I couldn't tell what had happened. I yelled for help and Pemby got there immediately and with Jim and Bob we thought we had the spinnaker back on the boat. But then one of them left to go below to get the other ounce-and-a-half chute so we could re-hoist, and also to get more help, when the clew of the chute we had just retrieved went back in the water with the boat still on course, making perhaps six or seven knots. The chute then ripped badly, even if it had not been too badly ripped before, completely down one tape and across the middle.

Checking of the sail confirms that it is badly torn. It's repairable in a sail loft, but on a boat? Doug thinks it can be repaired, by taping and sewing through the tape. It will probably take several days to do the job. Still, that sail could very well mean the difference between winning and losing the race. If we lose the remaining ounce-and-a-half, we'd be in trouble, as neither the three-quarter-ounce nor the 2.2 storm/reaching chute is an adequate substitute.

At about 0930 this morning we jibed to port, the first time we have been on port for five days, and everything on the boat shifts a little as we have a new leeward side. It was an easy dip pole jibe in relatively light air. But during the jibe a line flicked by my wrist, and my French sailing watch was gone over the side. Definitely a casualty loss, and I made a note for my income tax return that I left the watch at about 32 north and 139 west.

The wind continues to be tradewind in direction, and the sea, although there is some swell, is down some from last night. Last night we had a confused sea, and driving was something of a handful at times.

Personal items are now perpetually stuck in the hand holds in the interior cabin top grabrails: socks, caps, hats, gloves, towels. Also, as soon as the sun comes out for a while, there are all kinds of such items on the lifelines aft, particularly the weather one: tee-shirts, underwear, and more socks and towels.

Merlin has a great gimbaled tray, kind of a condiment, silverware and whatever tray, suspended above the table, which is not gimbaled, in the main cabin. This is a great place for leaving eye glasses or other items that need to-be accessible night or day but require protection against being thrown to leeward while they are in safekeeping.

The torn 1.5-ounce spinnaker is now in the cockpit, drying, pending possible repair attempts. The bulkhead is covered with *Playboy* pin-ups.

The sea is leaden blue, flecked with white crests scattered across the expanse. In its constantly changing face and its sameness, it qualifies for all the dramatic adjectives you have ever heard applied to it.

At 1215 Doug went up the mast to lead a new spinnaker halyard to replace the one we lost last night. He was up the mast for seven minutes, although it seemed longer to me as I was driving, and I'm sure it seemed longer to him. Doug looked around for other boats —he figured he could see about 20 miles plus —but saw none. We all regretted that he did not take his camera with him to take a masthead shot down at the deck. It would have been spectacular. I was a little nervous driving while he was up there. We were doing only 10 to 10-and-a-half knots as the wind was relatively light, but the seas were making the boat roll pretty abruptly on occasion despite my efforts to keep it steady.

At 1500 Doug advised we had made some 260 miles through the water, but only 247 toward Maui. Still, that's surprisingly good.

Most of us are shirtless during the day now. It's quite warm. Some are also shoeless, but that's a little dangerous on deck because the decks are sometimes slippery and bare feet have a way of finding hard metal objects such as winches, cleats and blocks. Everyone wears shorts or bathing suits. Yesterday, Doug made shorts out of his tan pants by cutting the legs off and throwing them overboard.

Everyone is also well into our paperback library, which includes some fairly heavy material and some real fluff. Glancing around, I see *Shardik*, *The Cracker Factory*, *Robert Service*, and *Playboy* being read. I think everybody on board has now read the interview with Turner.

At roll call *Drifter* claims 310 miles, which, from their track line, would be essentially downwind in light air of 10 to 15 knots. This puts her only 20 miles farther from the islands than we are. It's hard for us to believe her 310-mile run, yet it's hard to know whether to disbelieve this report or the prior one or what. There are many possibilities, and general gloom pervades the crew. Our radio seems to be working poorly to not at all, based upon our inability to receive confirmation of our transmissions. We can't tell if *Jeanoyce* received our position today. We think so, but we're not sure, and if she did not, there's a possible 15 minute-per-day penalty to be added to our elapsed time.

At 1630 we jibed back to starboard. We will probably jibe several times more. We have made no effort to repair the basic 1.5 chute as the job appears hopeless; we'll be in Maui before it could be finished.

It was a pretty wild night. We had the eight-to-midnight watch, and went very fast, doing 11 - pluses each hour. We ended the watch with Bob taking a solid-water-in-the-cockpit knockdown. Jim, I think, made a log entry at 2330, "Officially the trades — first rain squall & knockdown."

Shortly after we went below a jibe was called for, so we jibed back to port (the third jibe of the day) not long after midnight. It was a good clean jibe, a dip pole with Bill on the pointy end, me at the mast, going 12 knots plus at night. (Bill Lee warned us against two pole jibes, as, in his view, it just adds another pole you can put in the water to lose the rig.) The timing of the jibe was great, as we spent the rest of the night going very fast, almost down the rhumb line. However, when I

got back to my bunk, my nice leeward bunk had become a weather bunk. At the rate we were going it was impossible to sleep in it. Bill, Breck and Ron had a 49-knot watch, hitting 15s and 16s, with Pemby apparently hitting 17.

Saturday, July 8

At 0300 the other watch made the entry, "This ain't no hayride." At 0400 the entry is, "Ron joins 17 KT Club." The wind is now a steady northeast 18 to 20 with higher gusts and each four-hour watch is beginning to be in the 50-mile range. Successive entries in the log read, "Bill joins ready round-ups," followed by "Doug, also," followed by "Steve, too," and a little later by "Bob does it again." As the extra hand I came back on, cold, wet and tired, with Doug and Gary on the 0400-to-0800 watch. My deck shoes were soaking, but I knew it wouldn't make any difference, and it didn't. I wore foul-weather pants, but they are uncomfortably warm and don't help much. The decks are now constantly wet from waves the bow picks up and sends rushing back. The uniform is tee-shirt, shorts, life jacket and safety harness. We had a good fast watch, averaging 12 knots or better. It was still dark as a pit, with the constant sensation of going downhill always there. There is no horizon and no point of reference but the compass. I had a knockdown at over 16 knots, a real slam-banger, filling the cockpit. When we got it back up finally, there was enough water in the helmsman's cockpit that there were various items floating around and bumping into my legs, such as flashlights and the like.

The schedule called for me to fix breakfast this morning, but I didn't do much. I opened a can of pears and put on hot water for coffee, mixed some powdered milk, and handed out dry cereal and bread. By 0820 or 0830 I crashed in bed, tired and feeling like I'd played a football game. Everyone is physically tired but exhilarated this morning. There were various knockdowns last night: Bob, Bill, Doug, me, probably others. The boat can take it and, I guess, so can we, although another three days of this is going to be something.

We are now one week into the race. Drifter reports in 55 miles farther back from the islands. There is general glee.

At about 1950 we let the pole forward to check the guy for chafe: In the process we wrapped our remaining ounce-and-a-half and tore it getting it down. We then put up the 2.2 to check the ounce-and-a-half for tears, which proved to be minor. As it turns out, putting up the 2.2 was indeed fortuitous.

Trying to sleep when you're off watch is difficult now because it's so warm inside the boat. All the hatches have to be closed or dogged open just a crack to prevent water coming in while she plays submarine. Gary was sleeping last night in the port quarterberth with the two small ports into the cockpit open; they are about nine inches to a foot above the cockpit sole. On one knockdown, a cockpit filler, solid water poured into Gary's berth with Gary in it, rendering Gary awake and wet and the berth unusable until it dries. Those ports are now closed. Last night while trying to sleep I lay in my wet bunk in the dark listening to water leak in through the tightly closed forward hatch every time we buried the bow.

I'm feeling my bruises and soreness today, bruises from diving across the cockpit to let the spinnaker sheet go or from working the foredeck on a jibe, and soreness from the strain of trying to control that big steering wheel. Driving is darned tough on your hands, too, involving as it does

strenuous Work on the wet elk skin wheel covering. If we slow down to only 10-and .a-half knots or so now, it feels slow, but everyone expects it to pick up tonight when, as we say, "Your eyes get big, your mouth gets dry and the tan tends to fade around your knuckles."

On the inside of the boat, the pin-ups have to compete with the duty assignments and the various pools that are entered into, including elapsed time in Lahaina, time ahead of Drifter at the finish, noon-to-noon runs, distance ahead of Drifter at the end of the day's run, etc.

We are about 850 miles from Maui, and at the rate we're going it won't take long. The eight-to- 12 watch, is burying the bow frequently, sending solid water into the cockpit. There is much talk about what this submarine needs is a periscope, and a commitment is obtained among the crew to build the periscope and present it to Bill Lee in Lahaina.

The wind is now basically northeast 25, with more wind in the frequent squalls. The eight-to- 12 watch made 51 miles by the slightly conservative log, and their last entry in the log read, "Good luck, 12 -to-four watch." Our first entry by me was, "Thanks."

Sunday, July 9

We followed with a 52.5-knot watch by the log. Because of salt on glasses, the spray, and the concentration required, we can't see or don't watch the DAD much of the time. However, I have seen us hit 17, 18, and 19 a number of times and we're doing 15 and 16 knots regularly. I wore shorts, tee-shirt, shoes without socks, life-jacket and harness, and we were always hooked in. Socks do no good because they're soaking wet. You can't dry anything on this boat. It needs more ventilation, such as dorade vents which you can keep open when you're pouring solid water over the boat and it's periscope time.

The 30-minute wheel tricks are sometimes shortened because it is such a workout, but our watch at least has not gone to 15-minute tricks. I think the other watch is using 15-minute tricks at times, and, in retrospect, I think they are smart. The wheel is slippery and rough at the same time, and the binnacle is still lit only by a flashlight taped to it. When the sea wasn't too bad, it was a most exhilarating sail, but sometimes sea or wind would take the boat right away from you.

Everybody's fear was a jibe broach, putting the spinnaker pole in the water and the rig over the side. We had to sail purely by concentrating on the compass and keeping it in a very narrow range. Sometimes you'd have 20 degrees to play in, but sometimes only 10. If you got below that, a wave would kick the stern by the lee (or by the Moluscko, as they say on Drifter—Jim says Merlin is only boat that has two lee sides). And above that a wave would push you up and you'd be down.

Nobody slept much during that night. We came off watch at 0400 soaking wet. I couldn't find my seabag to put on a dry tee-shirt or shorts. It didn't matter much, though, as the only open bunk (the starboard quarterberth), which is uncomfortable because the emergency rudder stowed beneath sticks up into it, was wet, anyway. Most of the bunks are pretty wet now from solid water down open or partly open hatches. Almost all the hatches are kept completely closed now, but everything is already wet and the boat is uncomfortably warm and stuffy. None of this really matters, though, as it looks like we'll have a 300-plus mile day, and we're all pretty confident we will have moved on Drifter.

On the 0400-to-0800 watch we had our first banana split —a knockdown followed by a jibe broach with the spinnaker pole in the water. The mast stayed put, but it was enough to scare us as we had the spinnaker pole six feet or so in the water. We could easily have lost the rig. Down below when the boat shifted to the other jibe, everybody in the bunks knew what had happened and held their breath. Apparently, Bill released the flattening reef at the mast, which was acting as a kind of preventer, jibed the boom over and then back, and the boat was off again, no harm done. Phew!

At 1530 Doug, having checked, re-checked, and triple-checked to make sure, announced our day's run, 326 miles down the pike toward Maui! This is more miles than Drifter or Merlin or Ragtime or anybody we can think of has ever made in any race that we know of. Merlin made, we think, three days of just over 300 miles in Transpac. Ragtime has, I think, only one 300-mile day. Doug thinks it is 318. Anyhow, it was one hell of a day's run for us. Drifter reported a run of approximately 290 miles, putting her 92 miles farther from the island than we are, and farther to the north, which is ideal for us, as the trades are generally lighter farther north.

We were 523 miles from Maui, based on our noon position today.

Thoughts of last night keep coming back. On the 12-to-four watch we were sitting in the cockpit, crouching, actually, on a sailbag, all harnessed in. Of the two not driving, one was set to release the spinnaker sheet, one the lazy sheet. We had our system perfected. When the boat went down, the man on the spinnaker sheet released several feet. If the boat didn't come up within 10 or 15 seconds, he released several feet more. As soon as the helmsman called, "I've got it," we started cranking the sheet back in to the same point, which was marked by tape, the sheet man cranking and the lazy man tailing. Everyone in the cockpit was soaking wet from solid water coming back over the house and deck from submarining at 15 or 16 knots, as well as from occasional rain. It was a time that the Bill Lee periscope would have been very helpful. One vivid memory is of the wild, bright phosphorescence in the water and spray shooting by at 15, 16, and 17 knots.

After another experiment with the ounce-and-a-half, we were back to the storm chute at 1900. This is tough stuff, with frequent squalls. Today Bobby had the DAD over 20 knots, and I think it is conservative. As it gets dark the squalls continue and once again it is quickly impossible to discern the horizon. The knockdowns continue, and at midnight we go to four-man watches. Helmsmen are getting tired and they need more frequent relief, and sometimes a half-hour trick is too much. But we're heading for the barn and smokin' ! The boom is constantly in the water, and Bobby wants to christen the end of it, "Bill Lee's Training Wheel," which he will do as soon as it's inboard enough for him to reach it.

Monday, July 10

At 0400 the fact that we had no squalls for two hours rated a log entry. Because we are so far south and west daylight did not come until eight o'clock this morning. After another experiment with the 1.5-ounce chute, we were back to the storm chute at noon. At 1400 another spinnaker halyard let go, once again, with me driving. This time we are more adept at getting the chute in. Quickly I head the boat up, all hands are on deck and the chute is on board. We re-hoist the storm chute within a matter of minutes.

Last night we lost the man overboard pole, complete with horseshoe life ring, strobe light, die marker and whistle attached. It's probably still out floating around in the Pacific, with the strobe light merrily blinking. We probably did it in a knockdown. The overboard gear at the transom is so far behind the helmsman that he really wouldn't notice. I really think you would have trouble getting to the gear to release it in case of need. We've agreed that if a man goes overboard, the quickest way to stop the boat would be just to broach it, and we're pretty used to doing that anyway.

We rigged the other overboard pole with the other horseshoe ring. At roll call we will report the loss of our gear last night.

At 1530, Doug tells us of our day's run: 316 more miles toward the islands, for a two-day total of 642 miles! That's an average of about 13.3 knots for 48 hours and over 13.58 knots for the first 24 hours. Smokin'! We have our last happy hour of the race at 1700, followed by another of Gary's gourmet delights: avocado stuffed with shrimp, New York steak with fried onions, asparagus with Hollandaise sauce, topped off with marble fudge cake. There's no wine, as we have exhausted our small supply of that beverage long ago.

This evening Jim Williams took off his Cheryl Tiegs tee-shirt, which has been a source of constant joy to his shipmates, and replaced it with a fresh, clean Brigitte Bardot tee-shirt for the special occasion.

At 2030, the wind having lightened a little bit, probably to a basic wind of northeast 12 to 15 with higher gusts, we set the ounce-and-a-half again. Still, even in the prior hours we had consistently averaged better than 11 knots, frequently better than 12.

Tuesday, July 11

At 0100, the watch entered "Should see land by end of watch." And, again, "Come on, train! Cold beer's awaiting."

At 0130 all hands were called to drop the chute and jibe. Doug and Bill had seen lights and were afraid we were rapidly approaching the beach at Hana on the eastern end of Maui. In addition to being afraid in the total darkness that we were steaming into the breakers on a lee shore, they were also afraid that we were about to go down the wrong side of the island. We swarmed on deck, doused the chute and executed a quick jibe. When the main came across it tore from the leech almost to the luff, a seam letting go. By the time we had jibed, the lights, probably those of a freighter, were gone. After the momentary shock of tearing the main, we reefed it down to the first reef, the tear at the leech being just below that point. As it was still fairly hard going and we were getting a little nervous, we reset the 2.2 storm chute and continued on our course to Maui.

About 0600 Breck and I picked up the loom of the light at Pauwela Point, not too far from the harbor of Kahului on the north side of Maui. It's a 19-mile light, which was somewhat obscured by a headland from the direction we were approaching the island. We were quickly able to identify the interval of the light, and by using a hand-bearing compass to get bearings to fix our position. Doug's navigation was right on, again.

At 0930 (Pacific Daylight time), still dark Hawaiian Standard time, Breck cooked a great breakfast. It was a great morale builder and furnished us some quick energy for the finish.

We sailed the boat dead down or very close to it for the last 45 minutes or so prior to clearing Nakalele Point and entering the Pailolo Channel for the finish. Sailing with a chute and a reefed main, the boat was rolling some, but not too badly. We came to Nakalele Point in a squall, screaming again at times at 13 to 17 knots. As we approached the finish, the wind went light, and we had the pole up to the headstay, in part an apparent header no doubt. We crossed the line at 0802:37 Hawaiian Standard time, doing 10 knots or so, and just missing doing the race in less than 10 days. Nevertheless, we took better than two days and 17 hours off Jo/i's old record.

At the finish off the Maui Kai Hotel, the committee shot off flares and fired a cannon and fireworks. We responded with flares and with Breck's cannon. We did it!

As soon as we crossed the line, a small powerboat sent aboard a pilot and a case of ice-cold beer, the pilot coming first, as otherwise he might have been forgotten in the melee. When we arrived at Lahaina Harbor, the typical wild, raucous and wonderful aloha greeting awaited us. Wives and girlfriends, kids, and just a whole bunch of friendly folks.

The champagne and Mai Tais flowed freely, and Doug was thrown in the harbor. There was cheap champagne for pouring on people's heads and good stuff for drinking, but nobody bothered to keep them straight. There were plumeria leis for the boat and the bodies, and food for the hungry. You can almost believe that the people who were greeting us were as glad to see us as we were to be there. The warmth of our greeting was not diminished at all by the fact that *Drifter's* skipper was the Commodore of Lahaina Yacht Club and the crew all members. We all had time to nap, sober up, clean up, and start again before attending *Drifter's* fantastic welcoming after she finished over 13-and-a-half hours behind us.

As for carnage, *Annie Cadby*, a Swan 44, and *Dorles*, an Ericson 37, both lost their masts, *Annie Cadby* on a banana split. *Topkapi*, a C&C 38, lost its rudder, and others had some steering gear problems. All were able to jury rig and finish.

By comparison, on *Merlin* we had various small mishaps (two broken spinnaker halyards, a bent stanchion, a spinnaker sheet block peeled open like an orange, torn sails, lost overboard gear, and the like), but basically the boat held up very well, despite being pushed hard and knocked down numerous times at great speed.

We had done it. We did what we set out to do, set the new record and beat *Drifter*, and just as a fringe benefit came out fairly well on the corrected time, despite our 99.9 rating.

Would we do it again? Hard to say, because we certainly did everything we set out to do, but possibly someday. Someday, undoubtedly, our record will be broken, because that's what records are for. Still, I think it will be some time before someone shortens the record by anywhere near as much as we did. We had a hell of a ride and got off not only still all friends, but I think even better friends.