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Missing yachtsman 'never left Atlantic'

LONDON

DONALD CROWHURST, the lone "round-the-world yachtsman, who has been presumed dead since his Trimara Teignmouth Electron was found drifting and abandoned 70 miles west of the Azores on July 10, never in fact ever sailed out of the Atlantic.

This was disclosed in a statement last night issued by the London Sunday Times who sponsored the race.

When his trimaran was found, Crowhurst was favourite to win the £5,000 prize for the fastest time in the Golden Globe race.

After the discovery of the boat the Sunday Times gave £5,000 to launch an appeal fund for Crowhurst's widow and four children. Mr. Robin Knox-Johnston, who later qualified for the fastest time, said he would give

his £5,000 prize to the fund.

Last night the Sunday Times announced: "Detailed study of the log shows that Crowhurst stayed in the Atlantic for the 243 days he was thought to be going round the world.

"It is also clear that some of the radio messages he sent on his positions were misleading."

The newspaper goes on: "I has not been an easy decision to publish this information. The Sunday Times has been in close consultation with his widow, and she, too, has come to the conclusion that the story must be told . . .

The log entries suggest that Donald Crowhurst was under considerable mental strain towards the end of his voyage.

BIG STRAIN

The decision to publish, says the Sunday Times, has in fact been necessitated by the existence of the appeal fund.

The Sunday Times said it would continue to support the appeal fund.

Mr. Knox-Johnston, who also still intends to give his prize money to Crowhurst's family, said: "Long-distance sailors will realise the big strain that Donald Crowhurst must have undergone. None of us should judge him harshly. His boat appears to have been made ready in a hurry and it is clear that it suffered badly in a gale."