

'Copters, planes in gala welcome

OCEAN SPIRIT IS FIRST

HOME: TIME

MYSTERY

9.2.71

RIO DE JANEIRO. — The British ketch *Ocean Spirit* cruised across the finishing line soon after noon yesterday to become the first vessel home in the 3 500-mile Cape Town-to-Rio de Janeiro yacht race.

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Helicopters and aircraft soared past overhead, and a flotilla of motor launches and a South African trimaran formed a welcoming committee as the 21.6-m fibreglass yacht glided over the waters of Rio Bay with all sails set.

The bronzed crew, stripped to the waist in the brilliant sunshine, gave a loud cheer when the signal was given that they had passed the finishing line.

At the Rio Yacht Club the Union Jack was hoisted alongside the Stars and Stripes already flying in honour of the United States ketch *Ondine* which arrived earlier yesterday in first place in the parallel Buenos Aires-to-Rio race.

Ocean Spirit, commanded by round-the-world sailor Robin Knox-Johnston and Leslie Williams, held an unbeatable lead for days, although it is unlikely to be outright winner of the race, which is decided on handicap.

Details of *Ocean Spirit's* corrected sailing time have still to be worked out by the race commission.

But a minor mystery surrounded its arrival, which was six to 12 hours earlier than had been calculated on the basis of its last-known position.

One member of the racing committee at the Rio Yacht Club commented: "No one on board the *Ocean Spirit* has been more at sea than we were."

***Ondine's* third win**

There was a similar lack of accurate information over the past few days about the position of *Ondine*, the leader and first arrival in the Buenos Aires-to-Rio race.

Ondine crossed in 1 hr. 24 min. and 15 sec. ahead of her nearest rival. The American boat thus won the 1 200-nautical-mile race for the third unprecedented time.

On the last reported positions, the handicap leader was *Albatros II* from Knysna.

Among others highly placed in the race were the Argentine Navy yawl *Fortuna*, which was in second place towards the closing stages, and was thought to be closer to the lead than the Canadian ketch *Graybeard*, last reported in official second place.

Behind *Graybeard* came the Dutch ketch *Stormy*, and in fourth place *Albatros*.—(Sapa-Reuter.)