

L.A. Examiner Jan. 1, 1978

Skiers Complete San Diego-to-Waikiki Crossing

HONOLULU (AP)—Eighteen days, seven hours and four seas storms after they left San Diego, three thirsty, tanned and exhausted adventurers touched down Friday on a beach at Waikiki.

They had achieved the distinction of being the first persons to ski across more than 2,000 miles of Pacific Ocean in a stunt aimed at testing a product called "jet skis" and a wing stabilizer developed by one of the trio, 32-year-old Tom Calamia.

Calamia, Dave Calderon, 33, and Tracy Shelley, 21, had hoped to arrive in Honolulu the day after Christmas, but bad weather and ocean swells reaching heights of 25 feet slowed

them considerably.

"It was long, grueling, fun and scary and everything you can possibly imagine," Calamia said. He even was able to recount an incident of ramming into a startled turtle and being knocked into the water.

Calderon reported getting seasick once, while Calamia admitted that "Now and then, we all got queasy."

The two men usually rode for six-hour periods, while Shelley, a college coed, usually took three-hour rides. However, she often ended up gliding across the ocean for up to five and six hours as well.

Calamia said that at night, the skiers would ride in the wake of their

support ship, with a strobe light giving some sense of direction.

The jet ski is a mechanized version of a water ski, combined with a motorcycle and powered by a stream of water forced through a jet pump. Calamia, who conceived and put the trip together in a month's time, said the "wing" he developed helped make the skis "300 percent more stable."

He said he now has his sights and skis set to go up the Colorado and Feather rivers, and perhaps even take a crack at crossing the Hokkaido Channel in Japan.

The three are due to arrive back in San Diego—the more conventional way via a commercial airliner—on Sunday.