

# Tanker(s) aweigh

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## Former gridder to defend T-Bird sailing title here

By CHUCK ASHMUN

The warning has gone out—watch out for the Tanker on Puget Sound.

Harry (Tanker) Jones, once the target of opposing Canadian Football League players, will be out to hold his perch atop the Thunderbird roost when the T-Bird World Championship sailing regatta opens here tomorrow.

The Whitby, Ontario, skipper and his crew hope to become the first repeat winners in the class' relatively young world-meet history in a five-day series of races near Meadow Point, off Carkeek Park.

Jones' Totem Too won the alternate-year championship regatta in 1973 on Lake Ontario, when he edged Mercer Island's Frank Francisco by 1/4 points.

FRANCISCO'S new fiberglass boat, Rooster, and 42 others will go after Jones' title starting at 11 a. m. tomorrow.

"The competition is so close that the odds of having a repeat winner are a little bit slim," Jones said. "There are about 10 boats, any of which I feel could win it."

A former world-champion sailor, Tony Redstone of Sydney, Australia, also is entered.

Jones has been sailing since before the first Thunderbird was built by a Seattle yacht designer, Ben



Harry (Tanker) Jones

—Staff photo by Bruce McKim.

Seaborn, in 1958. The Totem Too is now one of more than 1,000 T-Birds in the world, scattered among 17 fleets.

Jones said the Thunderbird has remained popular because of its adaptability to

family cruising, its one-design feature and the fact it does not take a pro-football player's salary to own one.

"I made \$125 a game," Jones said with a laugh when the subject of grid-

ders' salaries surfaced. "Bonuses? The first year I played at Hamilton, they gave me a golf-club bag when the season was over. That was my bonus."

JONES acquired his nickname as a 5-foot-10½-inch, 225-pound guard who played for Queens College in Kingston, Ont., before joining the Hamilton Wildcats (now Tiger-Cats) in the early 1940s.

He says players' salaries improved to the point that by the time he moved to Montreal in 1945 "we actually had to fill out an income-tax form, something we never bothered to do before."

Jones, who played on a Grey Cup championship club at Hamilton in 1943, retired from football briefly but joined Montreal's Alouettes "to get beat up for another year."

He started sailing in 1947, purchased the Totem Too in 1969 and steered it to the championship in a regatta involving only 22 boats.

This week's regatta, the seventh for the world championship, features the largest group of competitors ever entered.

Two races are scheduled for tomorrow, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, with one race on Wednesday. Boats will leave the Shilshole Marina at about 10 o'clock this morning for an unofficial "tune-up" race.