



PT.50 DISCOVERED IN THE PHILIPPINES

A YET TO BE confirmed PT.50 hydrofoil has been discovered sitting in the backwaters of Cebu in the Philippines. Or more correctly, an ex-PT.50, as the vessel has been stripped of its foils.

It is not known when the craft arrived in the Philippines or whether it has ever seen service here. Since no PT.50 was ever built for a Philippine customer, the vessel was imported at some point.

Also, it can be ruled out that the hydrofoil was built by neither Rodriguez nor Westermoen as it has the features

characteristic for the PT.50s built in Japan by Hitachi Zosen. Which is a statement needing qualifying in that the superstructure, and in particular the design of the wheelhouse, is different from the standard Hitachi craft.

To the best of our knowledge, only one PT.50 featuring this styling of the upper structure was ever delivered. It was also the last of a total of 26 PT.50 hydrofoils built by Hitachi between 1963 and 1983.

Above + Right :
A Hitachi PT.50 hydrofoil has found its way to the Philippines and ended up in the backwaters of Cebu. Most likely it is not the only one that went to the Philippines or Indonesia after being withdrawn from service in Japan and Hongkong / MIKE BAYLON photo, both



Designated PT.50 Mk II, in addition to differing exteriorwise from the rest, the vessel, *Housho*, was equipped with a roll stabilisation system, developed by Hitachi and Supramar, the latter company of which was of course responsible for the PT range of hydrofoils. In this case the stabilisation system was in the form of two fins fitted to the underside of the bow foil and operated by automatic sensors.

Housho entered service with Hankyu Kisen in southern Japan linking Honshu and Shikoku in January 1983. The company was early to take on the hydrofoil, introducing a pair of PT.20s in 1963 to be followed by two PT.50s in 1972 and another in 1975, all built by Hitachi. In the early 1990s Hankyu announced it was to enter upon a renewal programme of its fleet, including the disposal of its PT.50s.

It is believed, however, that *Housho* remained with the company for a number of years.

Whether the vessel was operated elsewhere in Japan or indeed the Philippines by another company before ending up looking like in these recent images is uncertain. The last known paint scheme on *Housho* while with Hankyu does not match the one here, which indicates that the hydrofoil may have seen, or was intended for, service in the Philippines or perhaps Indonesia.

There is a small, although remote, possibility that it is an altogether different PT.50, perhaps built locally and not previously reported on, but everything points to this being the relics of *Housho*. **cff**



Above : PT.50 *Housho* as delivered to Hankyu Lines in southern Japan in January 1983
/ HITACHI ZOSEN photo

Right : The hydrofoil 30 years later, in January 2013
/ MIKE BAYLON photo

