

Waikiki Surf Club Win

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Veteran Crew Conquers Rough Seas, Kona Winds

By LYLE NELSON

Kona weather and swells 15 feet high couldn't deny the veteran Waikiki Surf Club's Number 1 crew from winning its second Molokai-to-Oahu outrigger canoe race yesterday.

The surfers finished the grueling 36-mile event, which opened Aloha Week festivities, in 7 hours, 9 minutes and 40 seconds.

They first won the race in 1953.

Hui Nalu, defending champion this year, finished a close third only 300 hundred yards behind the Hale Au Au canoe.

Hale Au Au finished in 7:14:55, Hui Nalu in 7:19:55.

The record is 6 hours, 5 minutes, set by Hui Nalu last year.

The Outrigger Canoe Club finished fourth, followed by Waikiki Surf Club Number 2, Koolaupoko, Kukui o Lanikaula (Molokai) and Hui Kalia, which was towed from Koko Head to the finish.

WINS \$500 PRIZE

For its heroic efforts in conditions nearly as adverse to canoe racing as the first channel race in 1952, the Waikiki Surf Club won \$500 first prize. Hale Au Au took home \$300 and Hui Nalu \$100.

The king and queen of Aloha Week were at Waikiki Beach to present the winners with leis and the Aloha Week perpetual trophy emblematic of victory in the modern sport which generations ago was routine transportation for Hawaiians.

A large crowd lined Waikiki Beach under sunny skies to welcome the tired paddlers as they rode the surf to the finish line.

SIX IRON MEN

The winners never needed a relief paddler as all six men—Dutchy Kino, Moki Perkins, Sam Steamboat Jr., Jammer Kekai, Blackie Makaena and Blue Makua went the distance without stopping.

All but Kekai had made the trip before and several were making their fourth trip through the rugged channel cross-currents.

Steamboat said afterward the crew members drank fresh water and ate honey while fighting gigantic swells during the seven-hour ordeal.

Although the W.S.C. crew had only a few hours of training before the race Steamboat and Perkins said experience told the tale and brought victory.

"We used the same southern route straight to Koko Head we used in the rough weather in 1952," Perkins said. Molokai won the three-boat race that year.

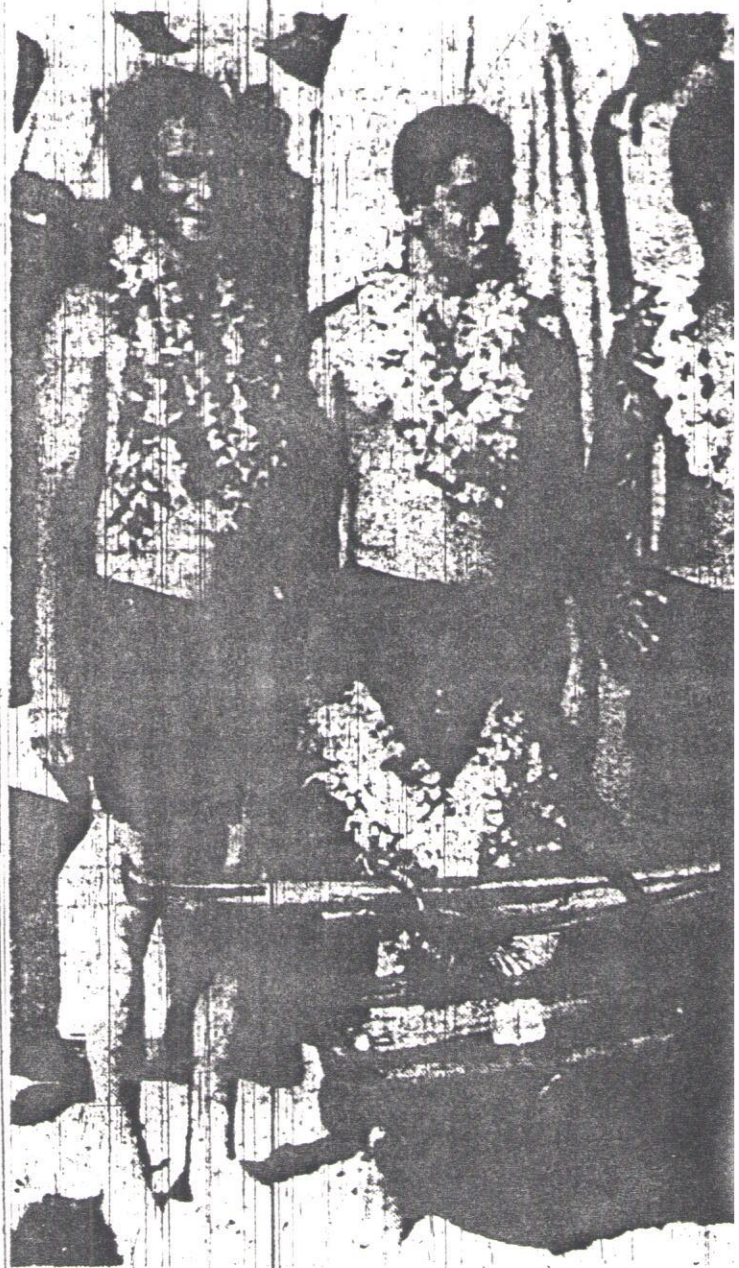
TOUGHEST SINCE '52

Rain, changing winds and currents and cold weather on the Molokai side of the channel made yesterday's event the roughest since 1952, veteran race observers agreed.

A canvas canopy zipped to the waist kept crews from wasting manpower bailing water. The front man in each canoe was continually drenched as the outriggers plowed through the surging sea.

"Some waves were as high above us as palm trees," Steamboat said.

Motor launches which served as guide boats for each canoe often had canoes ahead dip from view in the swells. Relief crews were aboard each cabin cruiser but few changes were needed by the sturdy paddlers.



The winning Waikiki Surf Club crew: Left to right, Perkins, Steamboat, Kekai and Makaena.

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RACE DELAYED

The race was delayed by two hours at Kamakiu Bay, Molokai, because heavy surf made canoe launching treacherous. The Hui Kalia capsized and the Molokai entrant floundered briefly in the breakers.

The first canoes reached the outer bay at 6:30 a.m. after traditional breakfast and prayer services but had to wait until 8:06 before race marshal Louis Kahanamoku could start them off.

The paddlers sat around in their boats, chilled to the bone, in rain and cool winds waiting for relief crews from the beach.

Earl Akana was given credit by race officials for his frequent dangerous trips in a speedboat to the beach and back transporting needed personnel to power craft before the race could start.

The Waikiki Surfers selected a southern course in view of kona winds, took the lead at the start and were never headed.

Runnerup Hale Au Au selected the northern route to Oahu's Makapuu Point. This strategy had been successfully used in past races during trade wind weather when the currents along Oahu sweep toward Diamond Head.

AU AUS SURPRISED

That Hale Au Au made a close race of it, and surprised many race strategists.