



OUTRIGGER BEACH

NOVEMBER 1967

HONOLULU, HAWAII

# Outrigger Wins Molokai Race

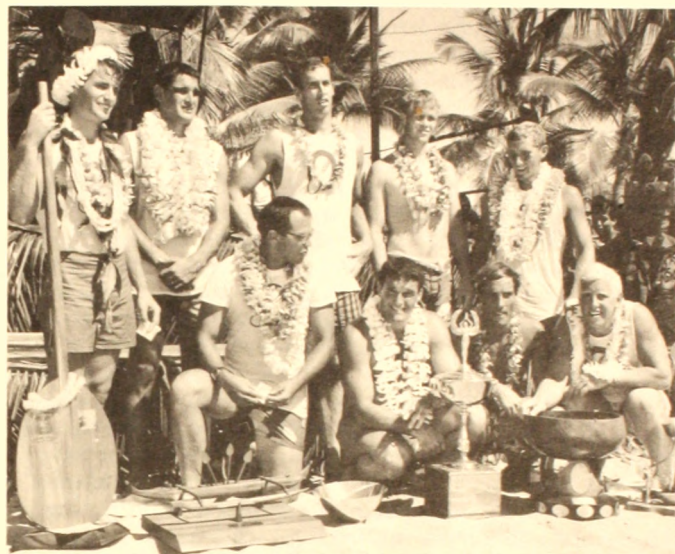
MOLOKAI CANOE RACE 1967

Story and Photographs by Jerry Ober

One year ago, following a disastrous swamping in record heavy seas, the crew of the 1966 Outrigger Canoe Club Molokai-Oahu Team pledged to return in 1967 and conquer the channel. Not only did they return and conquer the channel, they did so in the time of 6:03 hours just .07 off the existing record. This year the crew used the superbly reconditioned KAKINA, the sleek 38' koa racing canoe that produced so many outstanding victories in the regular summer racing season.

The starting gun at Hale O Lono Harbor Molokai sounded at 7:33 a.m. and Fred Hemmings, Jr., who was to steer the entire distance, shot out to a quarter mile lead with a sprint and never at any point relinquished the first place position. At Laau Point, the last land mark to be passed on Molokai, Fred took his crew out into the channel on a near straight line course for Diamond Head. The weather was almost ideal with light seas and mild breezes but clear and very hot skies. Oahu could be seen in the distance at this point but without detail but none the less, a definite objective for which to plot a course.

On the crew went, the first of many changes of crew was made. Outrigger uses an auxiliary boat to change paddlers to and from the escort boat to the canoe. Our club president Tom Arnott a superb small boat operator with the assistance of Thad Ekstrand, uses a 17' Boston Whaler to take the new men out ahead of the oncoming canoe where he drops them into the sea, they then wait for the canoe to overtake them then climb into the canoe while the paddlers being relieved jump out simul-



L to R: Mark Buck, Jon Haneberg, Al Lemes, Mike Clifford, Fred Hemmings, Bruce Clifford, Tommy Holmes, Jody D'Enbeau, Hal Burchard; not shown, Henry Ayau.

Photo by Jack Titchen, Star-Bulletin

taneously to be picked up by the whaler which has moved astern of the canoe. The men are then taken to the escort boat the 56' HULAKAI, owned and skippered by Sherry Dowsett. On the HULAKAI, the tired paddlers are refreshed and rested under the direct care of Dr. Bob Smith who this year served as the team doctor. The changing operation goes on throughout the entire race directed by coach Lemes and clocked with scientific precision by Cline Mann, course navigator, and Doug Kilpatrick who keeps a painstakingly accurate account of every paddler and the exact time and position he has paddled.

To KAKINA'S stern and keeping an excellent pace is the Healani crew in their fibre glass canoe. The Healani crew is an excellent one and gave our boys added incentive to keep their blistering pace. Healani's coach in a post race interview said "Every time we came close to them (Outrigger) they would just up the pace and pull away from us." Healani was until half way across the channel, the only canoe that could be seen or thought of as a threat to our first place position. Waikiki Surf Club, the third place canoe, was never close enough to be seen after passing Laau Point.

Molokai passed to the rear and its features slowly grew less distinct as KAKINA continued her wild chase across the channel. Soon Oahu loomed deceptively large on the horizon and familiar landmarks became distinguishable. Here about mid-channel, Cline, plotting the course and calculating the speed of the canoe, determined that the crew was bettering the 1964 record set by Kailua Civic

Club and could well establish a new record. The KAKINA, according to Cline's calculations, had at times gone 9 miles an hour and was consistently exceeding 8 miles an hour! With this new incentive the crew worked harder and widened their lead over the Healani crew until they could no longer be seen in the rear. It was now a race against the clock, only an unexpected event could take victory away from the crew. Sandy Beach came into view, then Koko Head, Hanauma Bay, Portlock, and all those familiar places seen so often on early morning practice runs. Up ahead was the Kahala Hilton and then Diamond Head, beautiful Diamond Head. The heat became intense and sapped the energy of the paddlers and the familiar current that runs along Maunalua Bay, coupled with an unwanted head wind, slowed progress even more. Those familiar landmarks passed slowly by but spirits were encouraged by the arrival of boats of all description loaded with well wishers from the Club. **Gibby Rietow** on his **MARY J** with the largest single contingent. **Timmy Guard** of the 1965 victorious crew with **Jere Smith** and **Tom Reiner** on a P-Cat, **Phil Edwards** with **Bob Casey** and **Robin Smith** on Phil's cat then **Jimmy Naniole** and then more and more small boats with familiar faces aboard to cheer the crew on. Above there are helicopters and airplanes hovering and circling for the best vantage point of the fast moving KAKINA. At last Diamond Head Buoy comes up and is passed on the inside and now around the point it is apparent that the surf is up along the various breaks at Waikiki. **Fred** stays outside to avoid the surf, goes through a few swells at our familiar Rice Bowl break and past the Club where many well wishers can be seen on the beach front. Then an advance reception committee on surf boards, **Mark Hemmings**, **Peter Balding** and **Bruce Soule** and others in front of the Club channel. Best of all, now the concrete towers of the Hawaiian Village and the final goal, the channel leading into Duke Kahanamoku Beach, come into sight. There is one last change of crew and **Fred** picks up the orange channel markers and heads KAKINA toward the finish line and the beach, 6 hours and 3 minutes and victory just 7 minutes off the record. **Tom Arnott** delivers **Al Lemes** and the three paddlers to the beach ceremonies and it is KAKINA KAKINA KAKINA.

The paddlers this year were **Henry Ayau**, **Hal Burchard**, **Mark Buck**, **Bruce Clifford**, **Mike Clifford**, **Jody D'Enbeau**, **Jon Haneberg**, **Fred Hemmings Jr.**, and **Tom Holmes**. Coach was **Al Lemes**. Helpers on board the HULAKAI were **Glen Perry**, **Bob Johnson**, and **Fred Lowrey**. Course navigation and plotting was done by **Cline Mann**. The timing of changes and recording was handled by Club Captain **Doug Kilpatrick**. Coordinator of the race was **Jerry Ober**. Our team doctor was **Bob Smith**. President **Tom Arnott** ran the Boston Whaler auxiliary boat generously donated by Sea Life Park. **Tom** was ably assisted in the auxiliary by **Thad Ekstrand**. Special guests of the crew were **Jim Colvin**, photographer, who has assembled some of the finest photos ever made of the race. The escort boat, the HULAKAI, was supplied by skipper **Sherry Dowsett** and his crew, **Darrell Heine** and **Lee Porter**.

Special mention must be made to point out one of the most difficult tasks facing the coach of this crew. Race rules allow for only nine paddlers. Many more enthusiastic and highly qualified paddlers turn out for this race and train. Someone has to be left out. It is a demanding decision. This year, on race day at Hale O Lono, **Al Lemes** was faced with a 10th man. It was perhaps the most difficult choice **Al** has had to make in his coaching career, all the paddlers this year were of outstanding ability. **Glen Perry** was the man out who then turned to help his fellow paddlers go on to victory with his assistance aboard the HULAKAI.





Jody D'Enbeau paddling



victory champagne



## THE MOLOKAI-OAHU CANOE RACE AS SEEN BY ONE OF THE PADDLERS, JODY D'ENBEAU

The name of the game is guts. The name of the crew is Outrigger. You take a look at the guys like **Hal Burchard, Mike Clifford, Jon Haneberg, Henry Ayau, and Fred Hemmings** and think "thank god I'm on their side." You look at **Mark Buck, Bruce Clifford, Tommy Holmes** and see experience and drive—the ability to go one step beyond total exhaustion—the will to win. Winning, that's the key word. The morning of the race **Albert Lemes** summed it up—"there is no place in this race but first. I want this crew to be first from the start, first to the middle of the channel, and first across the finish line." So it happened, there was never any question which was the best crew in the water that day. You would climb into the escort boat **Hulakai, Dr. Smith** would hand you the oxygen mask, and in a few minutes you wanted to get back into the canoe because that is where things were happening. Things like: **Mark Buck** snapping a paddle in half or **Hal Burchard, Jon Haneberg, Mike Clifford** and **Henry Ayau** all earning the name **Mr. Power**, or **Bruce Clifford** and **Tommy Holmes** facing seemingly endless stretches in the canoe but still driving, never seeming to tire; and **Fred Hemmings** always there—pushing, shouting, and matching us stroke for stroke the entire 41 miles. A bunch of guys like that you can't let down, so you force yourself to put out more than you ever dreamed possible, until your mind stops and things become fuzzy and you don't remember much except seeing the **Kakina** rammed right up onto the shore for a first place finish. It's all too much.

Sundays will come and go at the Outrigger Canoe Club and most of its members will enjoy the sand and sun, unaware of what this crew has done, but there are still those who know what it is to feel a canoe come alive under them, to feel arms straining, and to cross a finish line. These people know what the Outrigger Canoe Club is, and these people know what this crew has done for the club.

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# Surfing

By Mark Hemmings

Did you ever hear of a surfing contest without waves? That's the story of the California Surfing Championships at Huntington Beach on September 23 and 24. **Brant Ackerman** and **Aka Hemmings** were there to represent The Outrigger Canoe Club. Being used to the larger and better surf in Hawaii, they were very disappointed in the contest. However, they served the Club well by demonstrating the Outrigger's leadership potential in Hawaiian surfing and by making new friends and acquaintances for the Club. Besides that, they had an exciting week in Las Vegas as the guests of **Kimo McVay** and **Duke Kahanamoku** after the contest.

The surfing committee is seeking interested members to add their names to those surfers who want to represent the Outrigger Surfing Team at the Makaha Championships in December. The list is on the bulletin board in the lobby. The Club intends to sponsor the team by paying the entry fees for the team members. It is expected that the Outrigger will once again make the tremendous showing that it has in the past years at Makaha.