

six-man canoe finishes fourth

young Hanalei club takes Aloha race

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A young and inexperienced Hanalei Canoe Club

from Kauai won yesterday the Aloha Week's 21st annual Molokai-to-Oahu race which included a surpris-

ing finish by the only six-paddler canoe entry.

The Beachboy six who had to paddle the entire 38-mile route without relief finished fourth, beating seven of the 10 nine-man clubs.

THE RACE, which started at 6:27 a.m. at Hale O Lono Harbor, Molokai, ended the 1973 local canoe racing season.

Hanalei crossed the finish line off the Moana Hotel in Waikiki in 6 hours, 38 minutes and 6 seconds, a remarkable showing for a crew of nine which included eight paddlers who had never crossed the channel before and for a club which is less than 10 months old.

"They did a fantastic job," said 33-year-old coach Nick Beck, the crew's only veteran who formerly paddled with Outrigger and Waikiki Surf across the channel.

"They looked good," admired Frank Crozier, a Waikiki Surf Club paddler and one of the many Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association people at the finish.

"This club is in good shape."

MUCH OF the credit goes to Beck, whose brilliant coaching has made Hanalei the undisputed king in the Hui Wa'a Canoe Association.

Beck, however, gives credit to his young paddlers in their teens and 20s. "They all live near the ocean, and they all fish and dive. They're water men, so it's not hard to train them," he explained.

"Also, there's no television, so they can train late."

The Beachboy's six-man crew made up of Samson Mokuahi, Bernie Ching, Wayne Benson, Tommy Su'e Su'e, Kalani Coito and Leroy Ah Choy appeared exhausted, but not in trouble after their seven straight hours of paddling.

"You get to thinking about food out there," said Ching, digging into his second plate of sandwiches and salad.

It was Ching's first crossing, yet the only after-effects of the gruelling

paddling were a sore neck and wobbly legs.

OTHERWISE, HE and the others were fit, perhaps because of the rigorous training that coach Polo Simeona had put them through. The crew paddled from Kuhio Beach to and from Pearl Harbor's Ford Island and then ran six miles in the sand every day.

"We wanted to be first," explained Simeona.

Beck and his crew were met by about 1,500 spectators, including Hanalei club members singing Hawaiian songs and others waiting to drape leis around the champions.

Windward Kai finished last, but was cheered with a standing ovation when it

was discovered 11-year-old Robert Kaopuiki steered part of the way and then finished the race as the lead paddler.

In a fine gesture, the Beachboys six donated their \$500 prize for crossing the channel to the Aloha United Fund.

OVERALL PADDLER FINISH

1—Hanalei, Kauai, 6:38:06 (coach Nick Beck, Kawika Goodale, Toao Hermosus, Bito Hermosus, Junior Chandler, Kirk Chandler, Fred Conant, Wendell Fu, Tigre Espere, Aoku Chandler).
2—Marines, 6:53:51 (Wayne Chun Fat, Robert Fawcett, Pat Herbert, Jonah Hema, John McDonough, Toloa Ripley, Scott Towell, Jim Wheatly).
3—Beachboys, 7:01:55. 4—Kamehameha, 7:03:11. 5—Marina Del Rey, Calif., 7:09:10. 6—Sons of Pacific, 7:14:52.
7—Kaliti, 7:25:51. 8—Kaneohe, 7:28:56.
9—Army, 7:49:35 (unofficial, pending ruling on paddler without health certificate). 10—Windward Kai, 8:23:11.

6-PADDLER DIVISION

1—Beachboys, 7:01:55 (Samson Mokuahi, Bernie Ching, Wayne Benson, Tommy Sue Su'e, Kalani Coito, Leroy Ah Choy).

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