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Novice Canoe Club Wins Race

By Beverly Creamer

Star Bulletin Writer

A fledgling Kauai canoe club with a crew of novice paddlers finished first yesterday in a gruelling 38-mile canoe race from Hale O Lono Harbor on Molokai to Waikiki Beach.

The Hanalei Civic Canoe Club completed the 21st annual Aloha Week race in 6 hours 38 minutes 6 seconds.

This is the first year the race was run between Hale O Lono Harbor and the beach in front of the Moana Hotel. In past years the race has started from Ilio Point on Molokai and ended in front of the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel.

The jubilant nine-man Kauai crew, sponsored by the Hanalei Hawaiian Civic Club, touched the beach at 1:05 p.m.

As the crew dug in their paddles for the home stretch, friends and family waved and shouted from shore.

CHEERS WENT up from the beach as the gun went off signalling Hanalei's victory. Steersman Kawika Goodale dropped his paddle and leaned back, fatigue and relief sweeping his face.

The crewmen were swamped by welcoming girls in bikinis.

Just 15 minutes later, the second place winners, the U.S. Marines, hit the beach to receive a similar welcome. They completed the race in 6 hours 53 minutes 51 seconds.

The nine-member Beachboy-Warriors Club was third in 6 hours 59 minutes 52 seconds.

The six-man Beachboy Club arrived fourth, 2 min-

utes, and 3 seconds later with a time of 7 hours 1 minute 55 seconds.

Members of the six-man crew fell into the arms of waiting comrades and were smothered with leis.

Several were so exhausted they could barely raise their arms to shake hands.

Members of the winning team range in age from 18 to 33 and all live in the Hanalei area. Only team captain Nick Beck has any experience as a paddler. The rest of the crew began practice in May, when the club was organized.

Beck, vice principal at Kapaa High School, said, "I had some of my boys paddling with me."

As the winning club, the Hanalei team received \$500. The six-man Beachboy Warrior team, which also received a \$500 first prize in their division, gave it all to the Aloha United Way. Each member of the six-man crew also received a koa paddle.

THE U.S. Marines canoe club received \$400; the Beachboy Warriors, \$300; the Kamehameha Canoe Club, \$200; and the Marinadel Rey team from California, \$100.

Sons of the Pacific was seventh; Kalihi Canoe Club, eighth; Kaneohe Canoe Club, ninth; U.S. Army Canoe Club, 10th, and Windward Kai Canoe Club, 11th.

Windward Kai got into trouble just off Diamond Head when 10-foot swells swamped their craft.

One of the team members, 11-year-old Robert Kaopuiki, youngest paddler in the race, said the large swells frightened him several times, but he'll gladly compete again next year.

The six-man Beachboy Warrior crew had only six brief rest breaks during the 38 miles. The team, captained by Samson Mokuahi and Leroy Ah Choy, ate honey for energy and received water from their accompanying boat during the race.

Mokuahi said the race is a test for mind as much as body.

"When you're out there you really think about yourself—whether you can last, whether you can withstand it," he said, and completing the race becomes "something you've gotta do."