

# Everything turns out 'swell' for Lanikai

By CHIP DAVEY

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"Man, we gotta get out of here," was Art Pacheco's first reaction at 9:36 yesterday morning in the middle of the Molokai Channel.

Pacheco had every reason to be concerned.

He was paddling in Lanikai's koa canoe — the crew that went on to win the annual 42-mile Molokai-to-Oahu canoe race in the startling time of 6:18:55 — when a colossal wave swamped their canoe.

"I DIDN'T even see it coming,"

said Lanikai's veteran steersman, 34-year-old Paul Gay. "It was right behind another wave that broke on us. The second one flipped us completely over."

Lanikai, however, righted itself quickly — in the middle of six-to-eight-foot swells and winds that got as high as 25 knots — and then went on to win despite conditions that were considered the worst in 15 years.

Cliff Ornellas, coach of the Kailua "A" canoe, which finished four minutes behind Lanikai and won the fiberglass division, said, "The rain was so bad that we had to use a

compass the whole way. We didn't even know where Oahu was, let alone see it."

KAILUA SAW enough of Lanikai — which led for nearly 40 miles in the race — to think that it could catch them in the final sprint from Koko Head to the Maona Hotel.

"I thought we had the angle on them," added Ornellas, "but it didn't work out that way."

Outrigger, in a koa canoe, surprised a few people by finishing third overall (6:29:00) and second in the koa division behind Lanikai.

But the main talk was about the surf — on the open sea.

"It was spooky alright. It was so rough that sometimes the number one paddler was completely out of the water and at other times he was beneath the wave," said Lanikai's Dave Hazen.

One thing the conditions proved was that the Hui Wa'a canoes (Lanikai, Kailua, and Outrigger are from the Hawaii Canoe Racing Association) are making their presence felt in paddling circles.

KANEOHE and Hanalei, the two top clubs of Hui Wa'a, finished fourth and sixth respectively, sandwiching Sam Steamboat's Beachboys, Inc., an independent entry.

In fact, some are saying it may be

## Lanikai paddlers

about time for the associations to get together and create a true, statewide Hawaiian paddling organization.

"I'm all for it," said Kailua's Cliff Ornellas, who had every reason to be happy, as both his crews finished in the top seven.

Lanikai's winning time, six hours and 18 minutes, is exceptional for crossing the channel when you consider that "small craft advisories" were raised before the race's start at 6 a.m.

"THERE WERE times we couldn't see anything," said Lanikai's strongest paddler, Gale Berengue. "And

then when we saw the island (Oahu), it wouldn't get any larger even after we were paddling for two hours."

Competing for Lanikai were Steve Wood, Fred Berengue, Hazen, 210-pound Gale Berengue, Rocky Owens, Steve Kux and Greg Culver, Pacheco and Gay.

### THE RESULTS:

1. Lanikai (koa) 6:18:55; 2. Kailua "A" (glass) 6:22:40;
3. Outrigger (koa) 6:29:00; 4. Kaneohe (glass) 6:22:48; 5. Beach Boys, Inc. (glass) 6:38:30; 6. Hanalei (glass) 6:39:27; 7. Kailua "B" 6:52:01; 8. Leeward Kai (glass) 6:52:05; 9. Waikiki Surf (koa) 6:54:34; 10. Waikiki Beach Boys (glass) 7:03:22; 11. Hui Malu (glass) 7:05:17; 12. Imua (glass) 7:07:00; 13. Heeleni (koa) 7:08:04; 14. Kapihi Kai (glass) 7:08:45; 15. Molokai (koa) 7:17:05; 16. Kai Oni (glass) 7:23:35; 17. Puumalu (glass) 7:32:03; 18. Koolauloa (glass) 7:35:54; 19. Kamehameha (glass) 7:38:08; 20. Sons of Pacific (glass) 7:40:28; 21. Kailhi (glass) 7:46:41; 22. Army (glass) 8:00:00; 23. Haleiwa-Losae 8:06:29.