



Leilani crew at Hale-o-lono (l. to r.): Tim Guard; Marshall Rosa; Tom Conner; Tuck Siegfried; Milton Beamer; Don Mailer; Bob Moore; Mark Buck; Bill Mowat; Brant Ackerman; Bill Bright.—**Photo T. Guard.**

The Log of the “Leilani” Molokai to Oahu, 1974

By Jerry Ober
as narrated by Wayne Faulkner

This year's running of the annual Molokai/Oahu Canoe Race was once again a story of weather and man against the sea. For the past several years, the race has been run in more or less temperate conditions. However, this year made up a bit for past tranquillity.

As if saving up its energy, the weather started off on Molokai with sodden grey overcast and strong—perhaps 25-knot—trades blowing astern of the canoes at their starting point off Hale-o-lono Harbor. After passing Laau Point, the last landmark on Molokai, the crews encountered moderate to heavy swells and occasional heavy shower activity which tended to flatten out the sea but cut visibility to yards rather than miles and made accurate navigation and location of competing canoes almost impossible. There were a few clear moments off Laau Point from which the outline of Oahu could be seen, but that was it. Squalls came with increasing frequency and ferocity all the way across the channel climaxing with torrential rains when the crews were between Portlock and Kahala.

In the latter part of the race the wind dropped off, leaving almost glassy seas. The final several miles of the race off Diamond Head were paddled in much improved visibility, albeit still overcast.

This year both the H.C.R.A. and Hui Waa Canoe Racing organization competed in the same race. Last year there was a division of interests that

had H.C.R.A. clubs racing from Kaulakakai on one Sunday and clubs representing the Hui Waa on another Sunday from Hale-o-lono. This year's combination of organizations brought an armada of canoes—at the start 23 in all, including an entry from the U.S. Army.

Despite the number of canoes, it soon became a three-canoe race following the start at Hale-o-lono. Our OCC crew followed their traditional and often successful tactic of a fast and powerful start. This put them in the lead at Laau Point as well as could be determined in the then deteriorating weather. Kailua, paddling a fiberglass canoe, was close at hand, and they could be closely watched as weather permitted. Both OCC and Kailua chose a North-of-the-direct-line course. For the moment Lanikai was nowhere to be seen and thus out of mind.

During the early part of the race Kailua was close enough behind OCC so it could be closely watched. Finally, during a momentary break in the rain, Lanikai was spotted. They were ahead and on more or less a straight course to Diamond Head. But that was only a fleeting glimpse. Both they and Kailua soon dropped out of sight.

At about this point in the race, 2½ hours out, misfortune hit the Outrigger, as two large cracks opened in the *Leilani's* hull under number 2 seat. The *Leilani* was substantially rebuilt early this summer, and in the process all of her strengthening braces were left out. The tremendous pounding