

'Riggers Teach Aussies

By Kelly Hutchinson

Be on the lookout for some Australian competition in 1984's Men's Molokai Channel Race. They've taken up canoe racing.

Talk about luck. Hank Lass received a phone call from some of his Aussie friends who were passing through Hawaii after winning the America's Cup Race. They got together for a few cold ones and started discussing canoes and paddling. Even though the Australians own and use canoes, they are still novices in how they use them, and Hank decided the only way to teach them properly would be to go there and train them.

In no time at all, a private Lear jet flew into Hawaii to pick up Hank and paddling expert Walter Guild. (Walter was chosen because of his ability to paddle, coach, steer, build and maintain canoes.) Of course this was a very reasonably priced trip: \$00. The luck never ends.

When they arrived in Australia they were picked up by a Rolls Royce equipped with champagne and arrived at their hotel suite on the beach with a view of topless women sunbathers.

Walter and Hank began coaching 28 members of the Surfers' Paradise Canoe Club, starting with lectures, then

off to the water they went. They trained in a large river, due to shark nets in the ocean. Even so, something mysterious took a huge chunk out of Walter's paddle in the river. Never a dull moment.

After teaching the men in Southport the tutors were flown to Hamilton island, which is inside the Great Barrier Reef, where they stayed on a 110-foot yacht equipped with helicopters, motorboats and a jacuzzi.

When the Molokai Channel race rolls around you'll see this spectacular yacht and two Australian teams in the race. I don't think our Outrigger men will be beaten, but it's great competition.