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# Sports

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## Outrigger wins Molokai Hoe

### Late surge insures successful defense

**By Stephen Tsai**  
*Advertiser Staff Writer*

The Outrigger Canoe Club, spurred first by a catchy slogan and then by tailgating competition, paddled to victory yesterday in the 36th Bankoh Molokai Hoe, the Molokai to Oahu canoe race for men.

Outrigger, which led for the final two-thirds of the race, completed the 40.8-mile distance from Hale O Lono Harbor to Fort DeRussy Beach in 5 hours, 32 minutes, 46.73 seconds.

Tahiti Nui finished second in 5:37:21.54 and FPPP, also of Tahiti, was third in 5:37:51.77.

Outrigger won for the second year in a row and the eighth time in the last nine years.

"We were favored to win the thing in everybody's eyes but our own," Outrigger's Walter Guild said. "We never look at ourselves as favorites. We have too much respect for the other crews. That's why we were telling ourselves today, 'Run Scared.'"

Said Kainoa Downing: "Run scared — that's it, that was our call. Run as fast as you can, as hard as you can and, hopefully, you don't die on the way."

"We wanted this bad. We felt we had to push all the way."

That was apparent from the start. Forty-nine boats left Hale

O Lono Harbor at 7:47 yesterday morning, but Outrigger, the two Tahitian crews and Hui Nalu quickly formed a lead fleet.

Outrigger's stroke count, however, was too frenetic.

"They were losing me," said Tommy Conner, Outrigger's steersman. "The stroke count got too fast I couldn't keep up. They were taking me out of the race. I had to bring the stroke back down so we could have all six paddlers going."

Said Marc Haine: "Tommy calmed us down a bit. He told us to just stay with him until we got into the (Kaiwi) Channel, then we'll be fine."

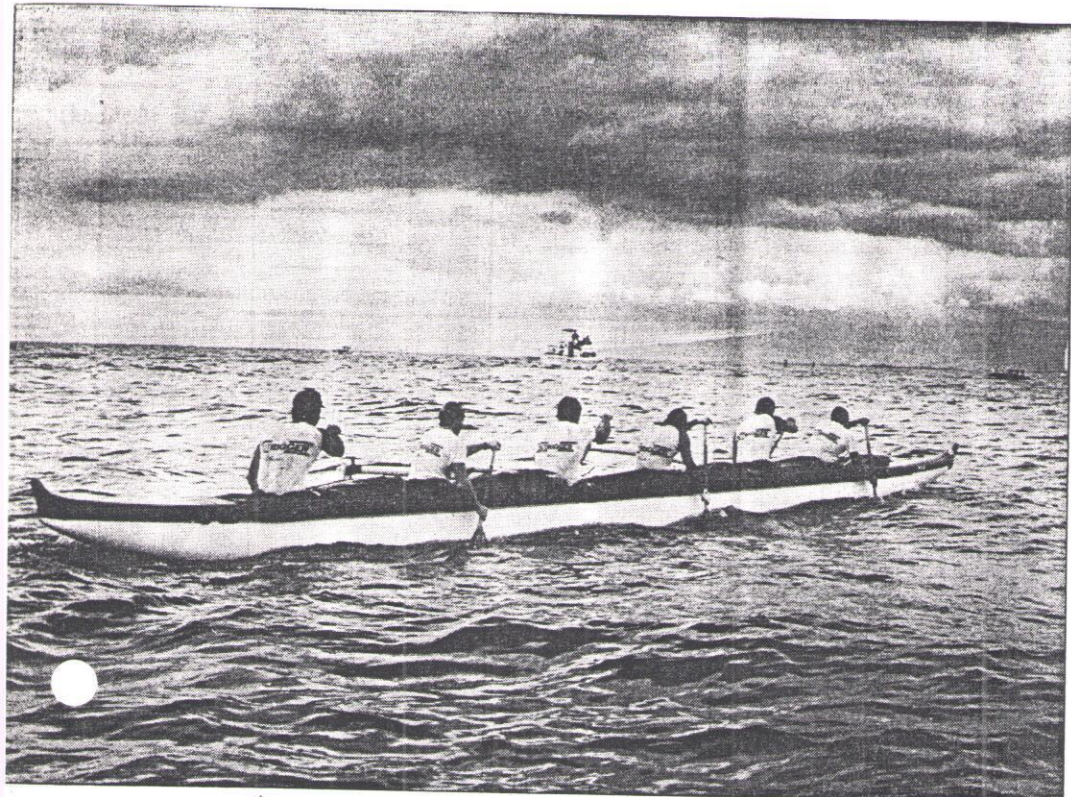
Tahiti Nui led by about the length of two boats at Laau Point, the southwestern-most tip of Molokai and the entrance to Kaiwi Channel.

Tahiti Nui and Outrigger jockeyed for the lead in the first part of the channel, before Outrigger went in front for good.

Then Outrigger led the two Tahitian crews on a slightly northerly course toward Koko Head, while Hui Nalu gambled by veering slightly to the south in an unsuccessful effort to pass the other three boats.

Outrigger's plan was this:

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Advertiser photo by T. Umeda

With Oahu's finish line in sight, Outrigger Canoe Club heads toward home.

# Outrigger defends Molokai Hoe title



Advertiser photos by T. Umeda

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power past the rough current to Portlock, then paddle the rest of the distance close to shore. The strategy was picked up by the Tahitian crews.

"We were all bunched together," Haine said. "It was a dogfight."

Said Tahiti Nui official Charles Villierme: "We had to wait for Outrigger's move because this is his homeland. We followed Outrigger from the start and watched what he was going to do."

Just outside of Portlock, Outrigger caught a few waves and opened a lead of about an eighth of a mile. "We said, 'Let's surge here,'" Haine said. Tahiti Nui "stayed the same, but we put a little extra into it. We sort of broke them a little."

Villierme, however, said his crew lost ground because it misread a wave and nearly capsized.

"The canoe almost turned to Molokai," Villierme said. "It didn't turn over, but it was just a bad move. Outrigger flew way ahead."

By Aina Haina, Outrigger had a comfortable lead. The advantage was nearly a half-mile by the time Outrigger reached Diamond Head.

"At Diamond Head, we knew we would win if we didn't make any mistakes," Haine said.

Said Keone Downing: "Tahiti followed us the whole day.

They're good paddlers, but we are, too. We weren't going to break or give in. If they wanted to win, they'd have to take it from us."

Nobody did. Outrigger and its fleet of escort boats paraded across the finish line of red buoys nearly five minutes ahead of Tahiti Nui.

Steve Van Ribbink threw his paddle into the air to signal the start of the celebration. Conner, who steered the entire distance, rubbed his arms. "I feel sore," he said later.

And Villierme offered his final observation. "Outrigger is getting stronger and stronger every year."

## Molokai results

1. Outrigger (Scott Rolles, Mark Rigg, Keone Downing, Walter Guild, Tom Conner, Marc Haine, Chris Kincaid, Steve Van Lar Ribbink, Kamoa Downing) 5:32:46.73.
  2. Tahiti Nui 5:37:21.54.
  3. FPPF 5:37:51.77.
  4. Hui Nalu 5:40:19.12.
  5. Imua I 5:55:17.14.
  6. Tahiti 6:00:38.22.
  7. Offshore 6:00:56.31.
  8. Healani 6:01:26.03.
  9. Outrigger Masters 6:07:40.81.
  10. Kaiula 6:11:54.95.
  11. Kaopuu 6:13:40.63.
  12. Kai Opuu Masters 6:14:57.13.
  13. Kamehameha 6:15:10.86.
  14. Hui Lanakila 6:15:42.52.
  15. Atlantic Division 6:16:44.
  16. Outrigger 6:17:03.
  17. False Creek 6:18:20.
  18. Hanalei 6:19:00.
  19. Puna 6:20:23.
  20. Faaa 6:20:47.
  21. Healani 6:22:17.
  22. Anuenue 6:24:20.
  23. Kaiua 6:25:19.
  24. Lokahi 6:25:48.
  25. Hui Nalu 6:27:25.
  26. Lahaina 6:27:45.
  27. Newport 6:30:54.
  28. Imua 6:31:21.
  29. Hawaiian 6:41:17.
  30. Hanalei I 6:42:33.
  31. SurfSports 6:43:06.
  32. Offshore II 6:45:22.
  33. Honolulu 6:50:00.
  34. Kaiula 6:50:14.
  35. Kihia 6:55:04.
  36. Liheward Kai 6:56:21.
  37. Royal CC 6:56:51.
  38. Arkansas 7:07:14.
  39. Hawaiian Masters 7:10:12.
  40. Waikaua 7:15:26.
  41. Hawaiian Warriors 7:15:52.
  42. Waiman 7:17:25.
  43. Manu O Ke Kai 7:18:44.
  44. Lokahi 7:20:18.
  45. Koa Kai 7:38:09.
  46. Team Ontario 7:38:09.
  47. Manu O Ke Kai 7:51:02.
  48. Hanalei 8:18:02.
- Also, Ka Moku 7:35:41 (howe)

nd Head looming in the background, Outrigger Canoe Club churns to the Fort DeRussy finish line.