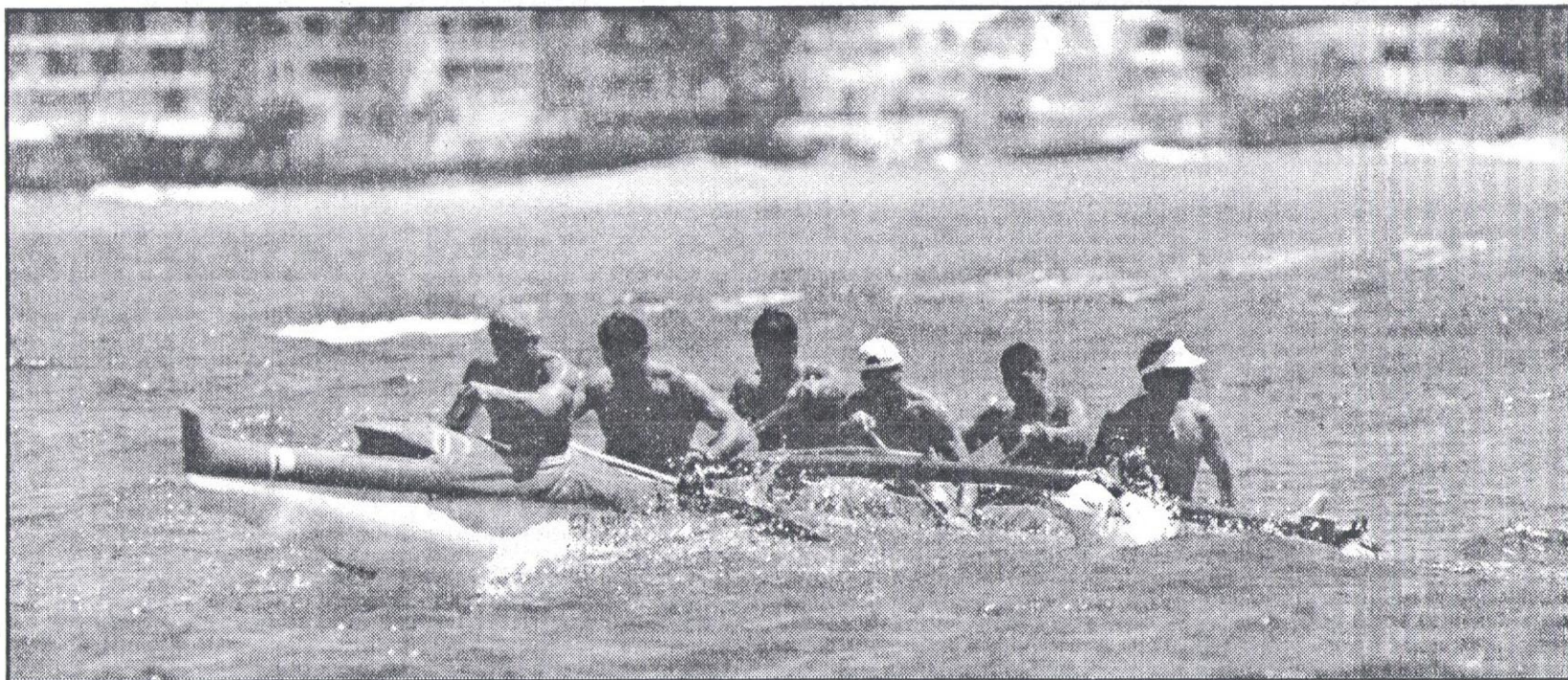


PADDLING

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BY KATHRYN BENDER, Star-Bulletin

The Faaa Canoe Club from Tahiti powers toward the finish line at Fort DeRussy Beach to win the Molokai Hoe title for the second straight year.

Tahitians defend Molokai Hoe title

BY JACK WYATT

Special to the Star-Bulletin

Powering through the waves yesterday with the speed and might of a tsunami, Faaa Canoe Club of Tahiti for the second straight year won the Bankoh Molokai Hoe, the men's canoe race from Molokai to Waikiki Beach.

"A terrible crossing. Much harder and slower than last year," said steersman Tom Conner after Faaa's victori-



— its closest competition — by a whopping 11:03. Foreign teams have won the past four races.

The 43rd annual Molokai Hoe, billed as the world championship of outrigger racing, drew a record 77 entries representing eight countries.

Each team was allowed nine paddlers, six in the canoe at any one time. Wind, choppy seas and a fast-running current plagued the fleet.

"It took us two hours, or even more, before we pulled away from

(5:19:36), Hawaii Canoe/Kayak (5:20:59) and Waikiki Surf Club (5:30:20) — the second through seventh-place finishers — staged a heated fight.

"We were ahead of Outrigger at Diamond Head, and then again at the turn marking the channel to the finish," Morris said. "Then Outrigger caught a wave and surfed ahead. They beat us by 10 seconds. It was a huge disappointment."

Three Hawaii teams, Big Island's Kai Opua (6:12:06), Honolulu's Kamahameha (6:12:06.1) and Hilo's

and the winner in 1992, lost approximately two minutes yesterday after its canoe capsized in the waves.

Jericho Outrigger, an entry from Vancouver, British Columbia, failed to finish as a result of a capsize and subsequent swamping. The boat and crew was taken to Hawaii Kai.

Australia's Mooloolaba topped the masters 35-and-over division, finishing 16th overall in 5:45:01. Kailua's team led the 45-and-older senior masters with a 30th place