

ATHLETICS

THE LANIKAI TO WAIKIKI CANOE RACE by Jerry Ober

The Third Annual Lanikai-Waikiki Canoe Race was held on Sunday, August 30, with a field of 13 entries. Outrigger entered two boats in the race and the word has to be that you can't win them all. With such an illustrious season just past the winning streak couldn't go on forever. Outrigger took third and fifth places in the race. The honors went to Waikiki Surf Club's koa and fiberglass crews.

The race was run in very rough seas, perhaps the roughest of the three times the event has been held. This race, while not as long as the Molokai-Oahu race or the Waikiki-Pokai race, has more unusual and unfriendly water conditions almost all the time than the other two races. This year the sea was unusually rough. The day before the race it was almost dead calm but by race time at 8:30 a.m. the whole sea was a tempest and as the race progressed it only became worse. There were many swampings along the way and only the front running crews escaped a good wetting. Some swamped within a few miles of the start and it was a rare few who made it past the Makapuu Light and Sandy Beach area without flipping or filling with water.

Shortly after the start it appeared that Healani and Surf Club were in a very close battle for first and second side by side. Outrigger's Kakina crew took a course to the outside and kept a third place position. The Outrigger's Leilani crew even further out to sea assumed a fifth place position. Healani took the lead in the race near Sea Life Park and were holding it until a total swamp at

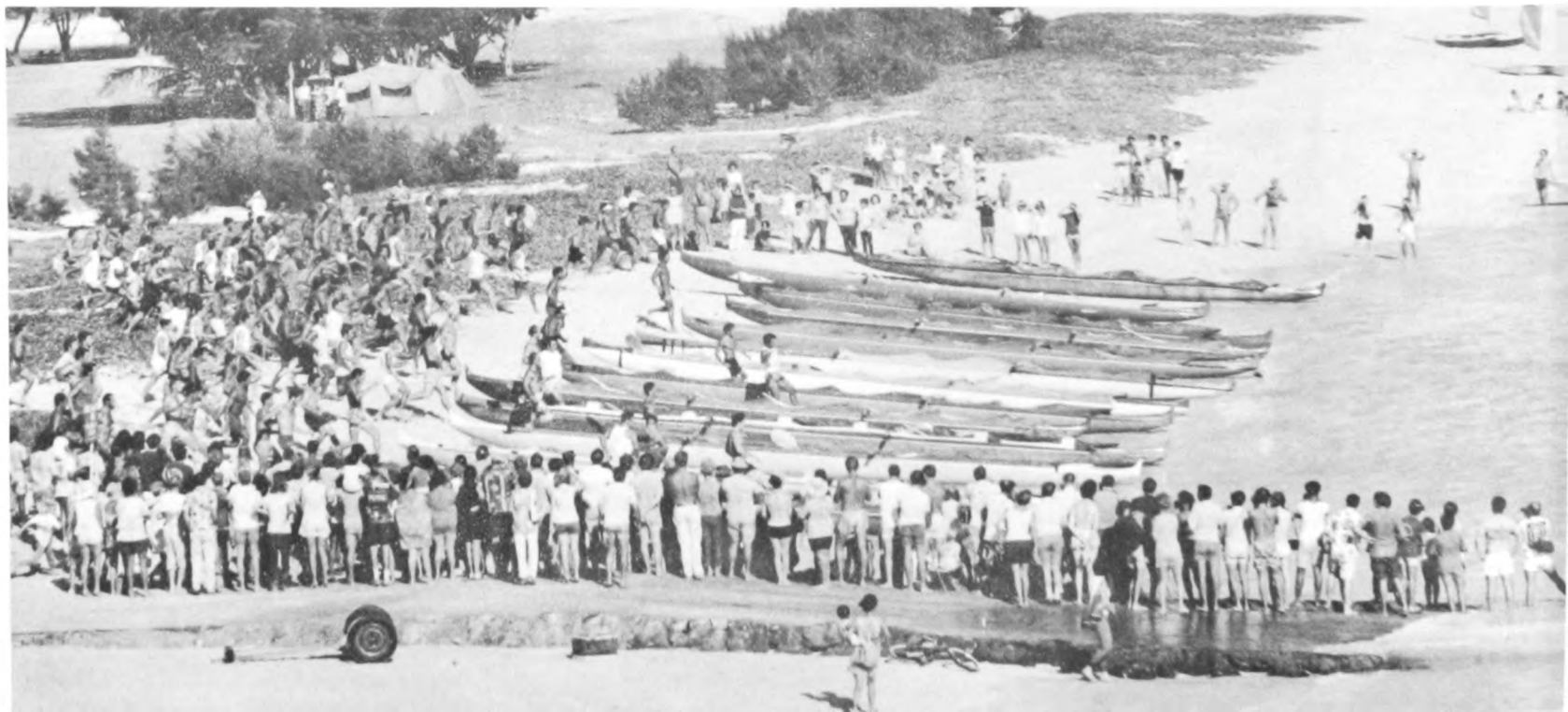
the Makapuu Light forced them to withdraw from the race. An unfortunate ending to an excellent effort. Waikiki Surf Club in the Malia then took the lead to go all the way. The Surf Club glass boat overtook the Kakina crew in the area off Koko Head and the Kakina crew could not get past them and finished in the third place spot. Our crew in the Leilani were holding a lead over the Lanikai entry paddling in a glass boat but then the Leilani fell victim to an ama over-swamp right under the Makapuu Light. The crew, in an excellent effort, righted their boat and in unbelievably rough seas bailed and were underway in about eight minutes. Several other crews overtook the Leilani but they too were soon swamped and did not get going again for some time. The Coast Guard rendered aid to some who were really in trouble with their helicopter. The Leilani crew continued on in water which made coordinated paddling an impossibility, the ama being out of the water more often than in. The Leilani ran into trouble again by Sandy Beach and several of the crew had to jump out to keep her from going under. Once again the crew bailed in short time and had the race under way again. The remainder of the race is all "down hill" and went very well and very fast, not fast enough however to reach the Lanikai crew who had made it untouched by the sea all the way around.

The Kakina crew was made up of Mike Lemes who steered all the way, Mark Buck, Pat Spencer, Jody D'Enbeau, Billy Mitchell, Tim Guard, Mike Clifford, Hal Burchard

and Tom Conner. The Leilani crew was made up of Bruce Ames, Keone Downing, Bill Burso, Jim Dorsey, Geof Avery, Henry Ayau, Bruce Connable, John Mounts and Dale Hope.

As always, to put on a distance canoe race there are a large number of people who help out in various capacities and give freely of their time and equipment. In this race we were indeed fortunate to have use of Dan Wallace's boat, the Scuba Duba. The Scuba was driven by Kimo Austen who was assisted by George McPheeters and Skipper Barnes. Cline Mann took care of the crew's immediate needs. Along with the Scuba was Bobby Johnson with his crew and boat escorting a canoe race for the first time. Bobby happened to choose one of the tougher races and race days for his introduction run and the crews were thankful to have him along. Another man out for his first taste of canoe racing was Dr. Jack Scaff who provided medical aid for the members of both crews. Dr. Scaff is a welcome new member of the Outrigger's canoe racing staff. A boat and crew that need no introduction is Tommy Arnott's Kipa Kai driven by Tommy and crewed by his son Winkie and Thad Ekstrand. Albert Lemes shared coaching duties with Mark Buck to round out the complete roster of people involved with the race.

Now that the preliminary distance races are over, the long hard pull toward the Molokai Race starts. The classic race this year will fall on October 18th and to be sure it will be a great duel with rival Waikiki Surf Club.



Paddlers run for their canoes in "Le Mans" type start of the Lanikai Canoe Race.

Photo: Ron Haworth