

Candid Camera Chronicles

pre-Christmas Canoe Caper



Ready (l/r): Bob Moore; Kimo Austin; Bruce Ames; Jack McGuire; Tommy Holmes; Kimo Hugho.—Ober photo



Tom Conner's crew at the starting point in Portlock.—Ober photo



Conner's stalwarts heading into the channel.—Ober photo



(Bow/stern): Moore, Marshall Rosa; Austin; Dale Hope; Tommy Holmes; Ames steering.—Ober photo

Rosa Invitational II—it was beery exciting!

By Tim Guard

You won't find the final event of the canoe racing season listed on the HCRA's calendar of events, and the recorded order of finishers isn't tallied in the history books. Perhaps half a hundred spectators view this race of which we speak and a few score more are on the beach at the Outrigger to commemorate the finish of one of canoeing lesser-known challenges. But to the paddlers who participate in this pre-Christmas race, the annual "Rosa Invitational" is a notable challenge, pitting men against the sea and men against the bottle—of beer, that is.

This year's annual was held Sunday, December 22nd. As luck would have it, team captain and steersman Brant Ackerman was graced with a crew which included Molokai competitors Mark Buck, Milt Beamer and Tim Guard, plus Lanikai race veterans Paul MacLaughlin and Walter Guild. Ackerman's crew was immediately tabbed the favorite over crews captained and steered by Bruce Ames and Tom Conner.

True to pre-race predictions, the Ackerman team jumped into an early lead, and by the time the fourth beer was downed, led the field by 300



At the finish (l/r): Mowat; Siegfried; Austin; Ames; Ackerman; unidentified.—Tsuzuki photo

The Rosa Invitational was conceived a year ago for the purpose of bringing together for a year-ending day of good fellowship the participants and helpers in October's Molokai-to-Oahu canoe race. The race itself is an eight-mile paddle from the Rosa Hilton at Portlock Beach to the Outrigger, and crews for the event are chosen by lot, the luck of the draw determining who sits in each of the three competing canoes. Naturally the race is won by the crew first crossing the finish line but there are several intermediate stops along the way which have been shown to have a profound bearing on the outcome of the race.

At six more-or-less prearranged points along the course, the canoes must glide to a stop and may not again proceed until each member of the crew has guzzled down a beer. Stress and exertion, plus the heat of the day, take a predictable toll. By the time the sixth ale has been quaffed, distinct signs of functional disharmony have set in.

yards. But injudicious use of a following sea caused the leading entry to swamp, and as Ackerman and his men lay wallowing in the water, steermen Conner and Ames navigated their boats past the furiously-bailing lead entry. A valiant effort to catch up by the Ackerman crew led to an unexpected collision with Conner's crew at the windsock off the Outrigger and as the two lead boats remained

locked in an unholy embrace, tail-ender Ames made his erratic way to the beach, leaving in his wake several dented Hobiecats, a dozen or so irate swimmers, and a punctured plastic porpoise.

An impartial decision of the judges, rendered on the spot, awarded first place to Conner's crew, the ruling having been made that Ames' boat was so intent on reaching the beach that the crew members failed to drink their final beer. Members of the winning crew were, in addition to Captain Conner, Bill Mowat, Donny Mailer, Kimo Hugo, Tuck Siegfried, and Barry Hall. Ackerman's crew, which came out second best in the collision at the windsock, was awarded the runner-up position. Ames' crew, made up of paddlers Bob Moore, Marshall Rosa, Bill Bright, plus novices Kimo Austin and Tommy Holmes, was relegated to third place.

As a footnote to the race, a special commission of judges empaneled for the occasion awarded Tommy Holmes the beer-dribbler-of-the-year award. Certainly he spilled more down the front of his chest than ever reached his gullet.



Ekahi crew at guzzling stop (bow to stern); Mailer; Mowat; Siegfried; Hugo; Barry Hall; Conner (the Invisible Man).—Ober photo



Peter Balding in Rosa T-shirt.—Tsuzuki photo