

The Outrigger

OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB

OUTRIGGER BEACH AT DIAMOND HEAD, HONOLULU, HAWAII

OCTOBER 1977

Outrigger Women crown undefeated Season with Liliuokalani win

by Tim Guard

Outrigger's women's distance crew verified their claim to be the best in the State by winning the prestigious Queen Liliuokalani Canoe Race, held in Kona on Saturday, September 3. The following day, though, was a day of disappointment for the Outrigger men's "A" crew as they dropped a hotly-contested companion race to the inspired and determined Hui Nalu Canoe Club.

Saturday's 11-mile grind from Keahou Bay to the City of Refuge was all Outrigger. Strong and smooth-stroking, the six starting paddlers, racing in "Kakina," jumped out to an immediate lead, never to be challenged, even in the early going when the competition was trying fiercely to keep up with OCC's speeding ladies. When Outrigger made its first change some 20 minutes out from the starting line, "Kakina's" separation from the rest of the fleet became even more pronounced. And as the race wore on, OCC's precision and finesse further worked their toll on the opposition.

By the time Outrigger's nine rounded the final jut of land and headed towards the finish line at Honaunau, 28 other canoes were wallowing in our women's wake. Finishing in second place, five minutes behind OCC, was host club Kai Opua, and Kailua's entry captured the show position. For the record, Outrigger's finishing time of 1:36.10 was nearly two minutes slower than the record time they clocked in 1976. But conditions were a bit rougher this year and veteran Kona coast watchers say an adverse current took away any chance of posting a new record.

Coach Tom Conner was effusive in his praise of Outrigger's women. "The strength of this crew," said Conner, "rests with their incredible spirit and their attention to fine details. Their changes in and out of the canoe, for example, are flawless, giving the crew an advantage of two or three boat lengths over the opposition every time we rotate paddlers. They're far from being the largest or, for that matter, the strongest women's crew, either, but each paddler is versatile and adapts quickly to changing conditions during the race. They are one of the best crews I've ever coached."

Paddling on Outrigger's championship crew were Karen Jones, Tracy Phillips, Kisi Haine, Jill Andersen, Anne Nicol, Evie Black, Sharon Bintliff, Connie Maguire, and Michele St. John.

Senior Men take a hard-fought second in Kona race

by Tim Guard

Outrigger's senior men, augmented by Colin Perry, Aaron Young, and John Finney, had high hopes of winning the Liliuokalani three years in a row by taking Sunday's 17-mile race from Honaunau to the Kailua-

Kona pier. And indications were, during the first five miles of the race, that the OCC owned exclusive rights to first place. The starting crew paddlers jumped off at a phenomenally fast pace, quickly opening five boatlengths of clear water between "Kakina" and its closest pursuers out of the record field of 39 entries. As the OCC approached Kealakekua Point, only Imua, from Southern California, and Hui Nalu were in a position to challenge for the lead.

At this point, Hui Nalu, working an advantageous inshore course and making the most of a slower, driving stroke, began eating away at Outrigger's lead and, after a short head-to-head duel, moved out to a two boat length advantage. Despite the frequent juggling of crew combinations, steersman Mike Lemes' course adjustments, and a few choice words calculated to work a "head trip" on Hui Nalu's paddlers, OCC steadily lost ground, eventually finishing three minutes astern of Hui Nalu. Hui Nalu's winning time of 2:20.59 was some 13 minutes off the record for the distance, set last year by Outrigger.

In his race postmortem, paddler/coach Tom Conner had a hard time masking his disappointment. He pointed out to his paddlers that last year's Molokai race proved
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Senior Men crossing finish line at Kailua, Kona before an appreciative Kailua audience on shore

that the Tahitians were vastly superior to most, if not all, Hawaiian crews and for the Outrigger to overcome that advantage, it would have to be winning consistently in local competition, by substantial margins and in fast times. He added that the interruption of Outrigger's winning ways takes on special significance when viewed in this context. With this year's Molokai-to-Oahu canoe race just six weeks away, much remains to be done in order to mount a winning effort.

But Connor's confidence is hardly shattered. "You may be sure that we'll be working doubly hard during our practices," he said. "Our objectives, leading up to our date with the Tahitians on October 16th, are to see that every paddler is at the peak of physical conditioning, to refine our paddling techniques and eliminate all of the small, annoying mistakes we made in the Kona race, and to prepare ourselves mentally for what promises to be the toughest canoe race the Outrigger has ever entered."

The Molokai-to-Oahu scorecard reads: Hawaii/OCC, one win; Tahiti, one victory. Outrigger would dearly love to win the rubber match.

Paddling in "Kakina," OCC's koa entry in the Queen Liliuokalani Race, were: Perry, Young, Einney, Conner, Mark Buck, Marshall Rosa, Brant Ackerman, Mike Lemes, and Tim Guard.

The crew of OCC's glass entry, which finished in 13th place overall, included Hugh Foster, Roger Cundall, Mike Clifford, Jay West, Hugh Murray, Jay Pynchon, Alan Rosehill, Willie Hawthorne, and Jim Peterson.