

# Bill Capp: Doctor of Canoe Racing

*By Frank E. Walton*

Hawaiian Canoe Racing, perhaps the most traditional of all Hawaiian sports, was in a state of terminal illness in 1949 and might have died had not Bill Capp stepped in with some strong medicine. He gave it the shot in the arm that set it on the road to recovery, and from that beginning it has grown to the healthy vigorous entity that it now is.

For the 20 years preceding, the sport struggled along, hanging on only because of the dedication of a few canoe lovers, with various clubs competing against one another in haphazard fashion, without benefit of any written rules.

When Capp was appointed Club Captain in early 1950, he recognized that establishment of standard rules was necessary.

“It was obvious,” says Bill, “that some kind of an association had to be set up if canoe paddling was to survive in the Islands.”

He set about drafting a constitution and bylaws for such an association. In

May 1950, representatives from each of the canoe clubs met and formed the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association. From this initial group came standardized rules, including eligibility of paddlers, race distances, standardized canoe construction and other regulations.

How the minimum weight of canoes was established is an interesting sidelight. Capp weighed all the koa canoes then being used in competition and found that the weight varied between 400 and 475 pounds. He then established the minimum weight at 400 pounds.

Veteran canoe craftsman George

Perry, who built the Club's “Paoa” (so named in honor of Duke Kahanamoku) argued for a heavier minimum on the basis that the heavier canoe was better able to withstand the pounding in heavy seas. However, the 400 pound weight was agreed upon, primarily to prevent the participation of very light canoes in the races. Some of these were as light as 268 pounds (made of cottonwood), a considerable difference to a racing crew.

Because of Bill Capp's dedication and interest, and because of the magic elixir he dosed it with more than 30 years ago, the royal sport of canoe racing is alive and well in Hawaii.

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## Women's Volleyball Scores

*By Kisi Haine*

With the organizing skills of some of the team members and lots of help and

season (one in Lanikai, the other at Chaminade College), we captured first