

# Outrigger

OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB

OUTRIGGER BEACH AT DIAMOND HEAD, HONOLULU, HAWAII

NOVEMBER 1975

## OCC Crew wins Molokai Classic; sets new Record



Winning OCC crew (l/r): Coach Tom Conner; Paul MacLaughlin; Fred Hemmings, Jr., Brant Ackerman; Mark Buck; Marshall Rosa; Tim Guard; Mike Rodrigues; Don Mailer.

### Molokai — The Ultimate Canoe Challenge

by Dave Pierson

The night preceding the Molokai race normally finds hundreds of paddlers, families, fans and coaches trying to get a good night's sleep, but thinking, planning, and praying that the winds, the waves, the competition and the careful plans made would be carried through to victory.

Hale-O-Lono Harbor on the West end of Molokai is the site of the start of the greatest outrigger canoe race in the world. Approximately 38 miles of water, which can range from gentle calm to ferocious currents and 30-foot swells, are challenged by an armada of canoes representing not only Hawaii but the Mainland, and this year, Tahiti as well, making this the first international Molokai Race.

The kickoff to Aloha Week 1975 offers a \$600 prize to the koa division winners and a \$500 prize to fibre glass victors, but everyone who paddles Molokai is a winner whether he finishes first, last, or not at all. For Molokai presents such a tremendous challenge to strength, endurance and teamwork that it must be one of the

more protean feats in all sports.

The advance strategy of Coaches Tom Conner (Koa Crew) and Archie Kaaua (Glass Crew) was to try to have their teams steer as straight a course as possible, as there is no "inside" or "outside" in the open ocean. Depending upon the ocean, the competition, and their own condition, Outrigger planned to play a "waiting game," trailing early but coming on strong as they approach Oahu and the finish at the Moana Hotel.

The crew members who went through the rigors of training deserve equal credit.

**Fibreglass Crew** — Bruce Ames, Milton Beamer, Doug Bechert, Bill Bright, Karl Heyer IV, Kuahiwi Apple, Barry "The Bud Man" Hall, Drea Kaaua, Ricky Lemke, Bobby Moore, Robbie Muller, and Nat "Kahala Fats" Norfleet, Jr., coached by Archie Kaaua.

**Koa Crew** — Brant Ackerman, Mark Buck, Tim Guard, Fred Hemmings, Jr., Paul MacLaughlin, Donnie Mailer, Mike Rodrigues, Marshall Rosa, and coach Tom Conner.

The 1975 Molokai/Oahu Canoe Race was given such complete coverage by the Honolulu dailies and on at least one of the city's major TV channels that this account is a matter of record for most of our Club readers rather than a news story. Comments on the race are largely quotes from Member Mark Osmun's excellent account in the Advertiser of Monday, October 20.

The tone of the Advertiser story was more or less set by the headlines: Tahiti pushes Outrigger to a record". In his story, Osmun led off by saying that "the trophy for the Molokai-to-Oahu canoe race was nearly on its way to Tahiti, but the Outrigger Canoe Club managed to fend off a surprisingly strong effort by the Tahitian 'Tautira' paddlers to win and set a record for the annual 38-mile Aloha Week race."

Actually, the Tahitian crew, paddling a fiberglass canoe loaned them by Outrigger, won the non-koa division in the record time of five hours, 47 minute and 33 seconds, but had to take second place overall to Outrigger, which completed the distance in five hours, 39 minutes and seven seconds, some eight minutes better than the Tahitian crew's time. (As pointed out by Cline Mann in his article on the Molokai classic in the October "Outrigger", there are several different records for the race because of changes that have been made in some of the rules as well as in both starting and finishing points. Outrigger's new record is for the Hale O Lono to Moana Beach a distance of some 38 miles. The old record was set by an OCC crew in 1968.