



By Dennis Oda, Star-Bulletin

**CLOSE FINISH**—Hui Nalu's junior women's crew (foreground) noses out Outrigger Canoe Club in a come-from-behind victory in the 1¼-mile race. Hui Nalu won by a half-second.

# Outrigger repeats as OHCRA champions

By Jack Wyatt

Special to the Star-Bulletin

Outrigger Canoe Club, after suffering its first loss of the season last week, roared back to win yesterday's OHCRA Championships at Keehi Lagoon like a Concorde jet accelerating at takeoff.

"That loss helped pull our club together. It couldn't have happened at a better time," said Outrigger Coach Michele St. John after her team won its third consecutive Oahu title with points to spare.

The first-year coach also noted that winning is a lot more fun than losing.

"Unlike the week before, our

Outrigger camp was all smiles today," she said.

IN ITS DRAMATIC turnaround, OCC scored big, accumulating a whopping 96 points to 58 points for runnerup Kailua. "After the loss, our crews went right to work, training harder miles than ever before," coach St. John said.

Of the 30 events it entered, Outrigger won 13 races, placed second in eight and third in three. "Our paddlers came through when it counted. We won some important races," she said. Outrigger took the lead mid-way through the 31-race regatta and was never again headed.

Following Outrigger and Kailua in "AA" team scoring, were

third place Hui Nalu with 57 points, fourth place Healanani (30) and fifth place Hui Lanakila (27).

In OHCRA's smaller "A" division, Waikalua Canoe Club of Kaneohe pulled off a stunning upset finishing first with 14 points. "Not bad for a second-year club competing in the big leagues," said Waikalua Coach Clint Anderson. Finishing behind Waikalua came Waimanalo (10), Anuenue (9) and Leeward Kai (8).

THE REGATTA SEASON culminates with the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association state championships at Keehi Lagoon Aug. 1. Three-time defending state champ Outrigger is heavily favored to repeat. "Winning the Oahu title was nice but it's the states that we're focusing on," St. John said.

Much of Outrigger's 6-1 success this season goes to its undefeated men's sophomore, junior and senior crews—all coached by Steve Scott. "My crews haven't even peaked yet. We're look-

ing beyond the states to the long distance season," a proud Scott said.

Regatta highlights included big wins by Waikalua boys' 12-B and 13 crews; a victory by Kailua's senior women; an upset win by the Lanikai girls' 18, and Hui Nalu's junior women's come-from-behind win over Outrigger.

"We battled Outrigger over the entire 1¼ miles," Hui Nalu captain Denise Darval said. "We won the race by inches."

Outrigger also won two of their events by less than a second: the men's open-4 over Hui Lanakila and the freshman women over Hui Nalu. "Several of our crews finished first by making that extra effort," St. John said.