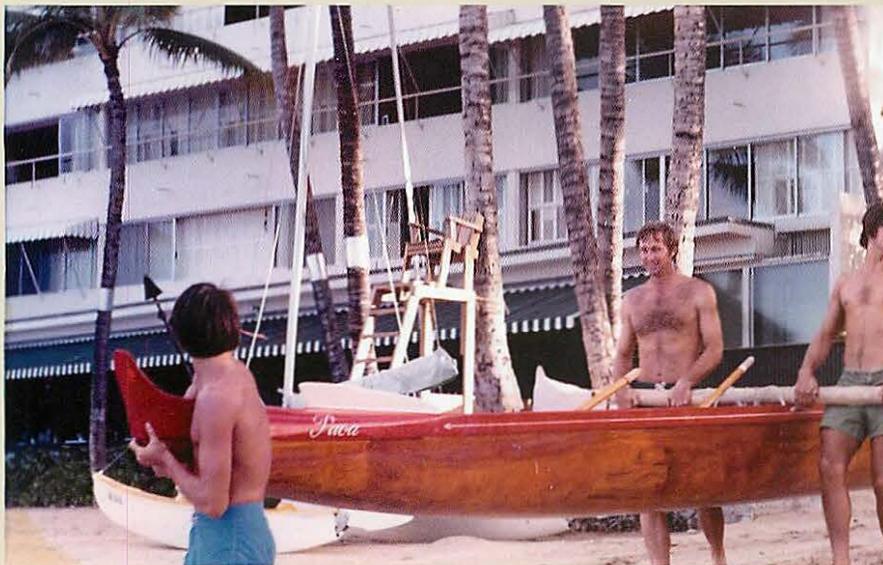


History of OCC's Racing Canoes

By Marilyn Kali

Part II

Last month we related the history of Outrigger's koa canoes *Hanakeoki*, *Kakina* and *Leilani*. This month we talk about the Club's other two racing canoes.



The *Paoa* was blessed in June 1969 and taken into the water for the first time.

Paoa

After the *Leilani* was damaged in the 1966 Molokai race and believed to be a total loss, the Board of Directors decided that a new koa canoe should be built to replace the *Leilani*.

The only koa log that was available was on exhibit at Ulu Mau Village. It weighed eight tons and had a diameter of 4 1/2 feet. Both of its ends were termite infested.

The Club hired George Perry to build the canoe. He says the log came from the Kulani region on the Big Island and was probably more than 100 years old.

The *Paoa* was 39 feet 6 inches long and weighed 400 pounds. No metal screws, nails or braces were used in the canoe, only wood dowels. Perry says he designed the canoe for calm water, as the *Kakina* was intended for rough seas.

The canoe was originally named the *Leahi*. However, when Duke Paoa Kahanamoku died in January 1968, the Club decided to honor Duke and renamed the canoe the *Paoa*. It was dedicated on June 15, 1969.

The first crew to race in the *Paoa* was the Boys 16 which included Skipper Barnes, Doug Straehley, Barry Hall, Johnny King, George McPheeters and Dale Hope. They won.

Although Outrigger won some races in the *Paoa*, it was eventually considered excess since the *Leilani* had been rebuilt and the *Kakina* was in top form. It was sold to Ewa Beach Canoe Club in 1983 for \$10,000.

Kaoloa

In 1981, the Board of Directors decided again that a new koa canoe should be built to complement the aging *Leilani* and *Kakina*. While Club members looked for a koa log, the Board commissioned member Joe Quigg to design a new koa canoe in March 1982.

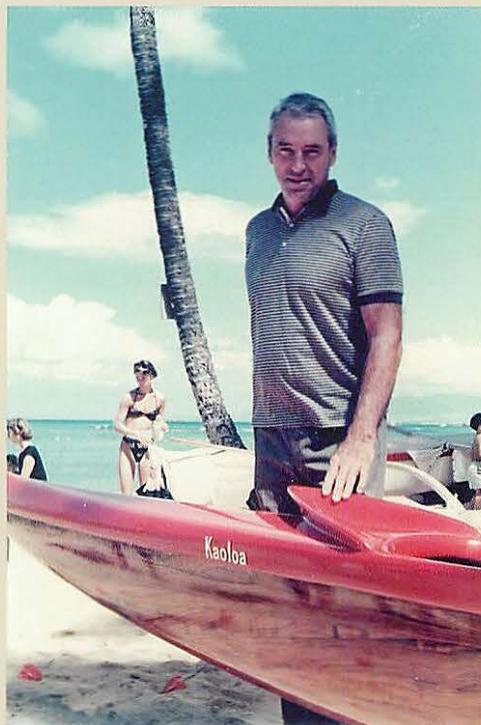
During the OH CRA regatta season in 1983, Outrigger paddlers won a koa log by scoring the most points during the season. The log was a gift from Laura Thompson of Hui Nalu to OH CRA to encourage and promote the use of koa canoes. The 45-foot log came from the Big Island.

With the log in hand, the Board gave Quigg the go-ahead to build the canoe. Work began in January 1985 and the canoe was finished in July 1986.

Quigg estimated the log was 200 years old, which is why it was so hard, heavy and rotten at both ends and in the center. When he got the log it had already been cut in half and left out in the rain for a long time. It had an original diameter that ranged from six to seven feet.

Winning the log gave Outrigger a chance to build a canoe to the most extreme limits of the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association rules, which had been changed after the long, narrow, sleek Tahitian canoes had won the Molokai race in 1976 and taken eight of the top 11 places.

Quigg used a chain saw to cut the outlines of the canoe. To hollow out the inside he made cross cuts and then broke out the middle using a small curved adze about the same size as one used by ancient Hawaiians (2-foot long), a chisel and sledgehammer. A power planer was used



Joe Quigg designed and built the *Kaoloa*.

OCC paddled the *Kaoloa* to victory in the 1990 Molokai Hoe. Front: Mark Sandvold, Chris Kincaid, Walter Guild, Mark Rigg. Back: Coach Steve Scott, Tom Conner, Bruce Black, Geoff Graf, Courtney Seto and Kainoa Downing.

to bring it down to the design dimensions and smooth it out. A power sander was used to smoothly round everything out. Finer and finer sanding was done to hone it into the exact HCRA specifications. Quigg patched the rotten portions of the canoe with koa from a new log.

The *Kaoloa* was 44-feet 11 -inches long and weighed 415 pounds when completed. The canoe had koa seats which were integrated into the hull. The wae are raised two inches. Strength and support were given by adding wood strips crosswise inside the canoe. Quigg fashioned four new iako for the *Kaoloa*.

The *Kaoloa* was blessed on July 12, 1986 by Auntie Eva Pomroy. It was named by Quigg and the Canoe Racing Committee. The name means long spear.

The day after the blessing the *Kaoloa* was put to its first test in the John D. Kaupiko Regatta at Kaneohe Bay. The first crew to race in the *Kaoloa* was the Girls 12. They finished second. The first crew to win in the *Kaoloa* was the Men's Novice B crew in a half-mile race.

In the following weeks, the Outrigger used the *Kaoloa* to win both the OH CRA and HCRA championships.

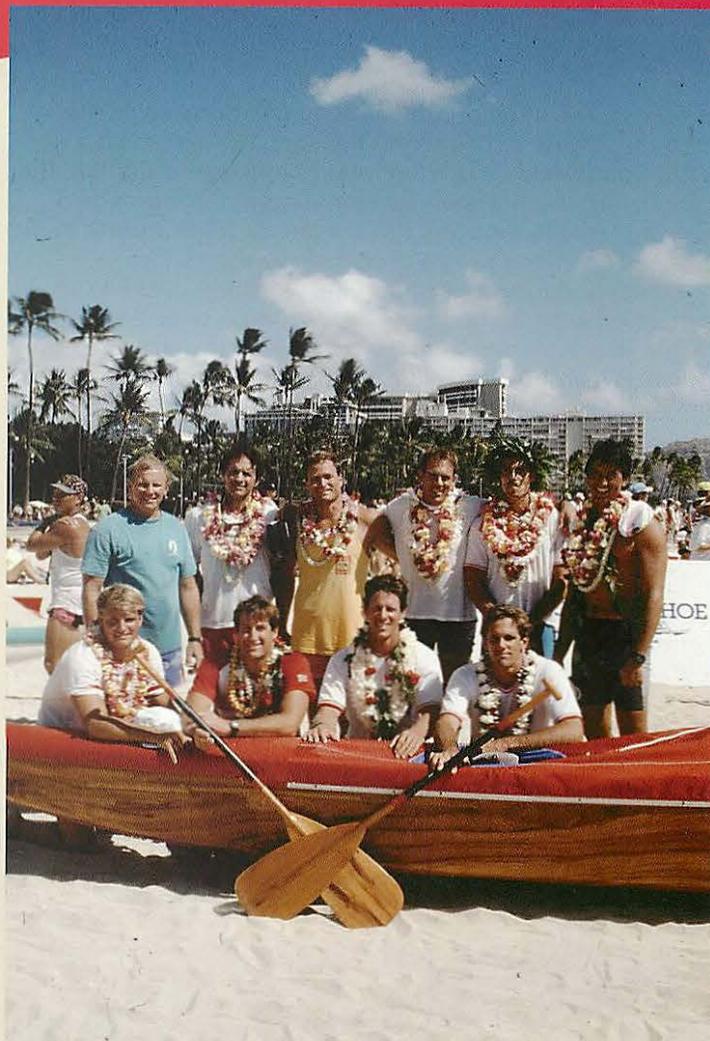
The ultimate victory in the *Kaoloa* came in the Molokai Hoe on October 17, 1990 with a winning time of 5:19:38, the third fastest crossing time ever for a koa canoe. The glass boats had dominated the Molokai race so heavily it was very unusual for a koa canoe to do so well.

The *Kaoloa* has undergone the on-going development process of a koa canoe. Over the next two decades during paddling off-season, OCC masters craftsman Domie Gose straightened the *Kaoloa*, reduced its weight to 400.5 pounds by replacing portions of the hull with lighter wood, deepened the hope wa'a so it would turn more easily, and widened it by two inches. He also replaced the seats with lighter veneer laminated seats.

One of the first procedures was to straighten the canoe. "We put a string down the middle of the canoe and measured the distance to the gunnel on each side. Where it was smaller we opened it up until it was straight on both sides."

He also identified heavy wood and replaced it with lighter wood. He shaved wood from the entire hull. "We saved the sawdust and put it on the scale and then replaced it with a lighter wood until the canoe weight was reduced to 400.5 pounds."

Another year, he widened the canoe by two inches. The orig-



inal waterline was 38 feet. After he widened it, the water line was 36 feet. This resulted in faster turning.

Following that, he widened it again and put more curve in the stern.

In 2006, the *Kaoloa* was completely renovated to remove all non-wood materials and bring it into compliance with the requirements of the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association for the state championship regatta. Domie replaced the *Kaoloa's* mano and gunnel and widened the "bow arc". The work was done in the OCC shop and took seven months to complete.

Domie also designed a grooved wooden rail on the gunnels so that the canvas cover can easily slide on and off during distance races. The wooden rail has also been installed on the *Kakina* and *Leilani*. This is significant because now the canoe is completely made of koa wood. Several other paddling clubs have copied his inventive design.

As the *Kaoloa* continues its on-going development, Domie will be asked again to ply his skill on her in the near future.

Next Month: Part III: The Ka Moi and the Stephanie.