

# Molokai-Oahu surf paddlers make it in midst of search

By Ron Haworth  
Surfing Columnist

Tommy Holmes, 23, and Aka Hemmings, 17, two young men born to the sea, successfully paddled 27 miles from Molokai to Oahu yesterday. Each was on a 14-foot

stock class paddleboard. Seas were swift.

The pair left at dawn's first light from Papohaka Beach and finished at 4 p.m., 10½ hours later at a lava-strewn section of Sandy Beach.

Unescorted and unaccount-

ed for for most of those hours, the paddler's were the recipients of waves of joy from family and friends.

"It just shouldn't have taken us this long," was a casual comment by Holmes as he stood drinking orange juice and gazing back to where they had begun.

THE PADDLERS, al-

though never in trouble, caused mild alarm when no sight of them had been made through mid-afternoon, and they became the objects of a sea and air search.

Participating in the search, at various times, were the police and fire helicopter, a Coast Guard helicopter, a Coast Guard HC 130 plane, a Civil Air Patrol

plane, the KHVH helicopter, and the Coast Guard patrol boat Cape Corwin.

The police and fire helicopter picked up Edwin Adolphson of Wahiawa, who works on rescue missions as a volunteer, before flying to the Sandy Beach area to scan the waters.

Word of the surfers' safe arrival on shore was slow to reach some of the searchers. The police and fire helicopter continued its search until 5 p.m., when the Coast Guard reported the surfers had arrived safely on land at 4 p.m.

EXPLAINING the trip's length, Holmes said, "Aka figures we hit two bad currents that swept us further north than we'd planned."

But despite their extended paddle, neither was overly tired, and both appeared fit enough to go dancing that night.

Hemmings admitted his back ached "a little" and that "I am more than a little hungry."

Hemmings and Holmes took no nourishment along other than candy bars, water, and gateraid, a liquid used by professional athletes to restore their energy.

MISCELLANEOUS items, purchased from a garden shop and a drug store, along with a plastic bottle, were used to store and secure these snacks to the boards.

Foam rubber was used as a precaution against weariness. Hemmings had a soft wad taped to the board where he could rest his chin. This relieved some of the strain on his back.

Holmes preferred to do without this comfort.

Both are students, Hemmings at Puna Hou and Holmes at the University of Hawaii, and neither had much time to devote to training.

However, 12 months of surfing and canoe paddling keep them in tip-top condition and their paddle was no more exerting than a round of golf for many.

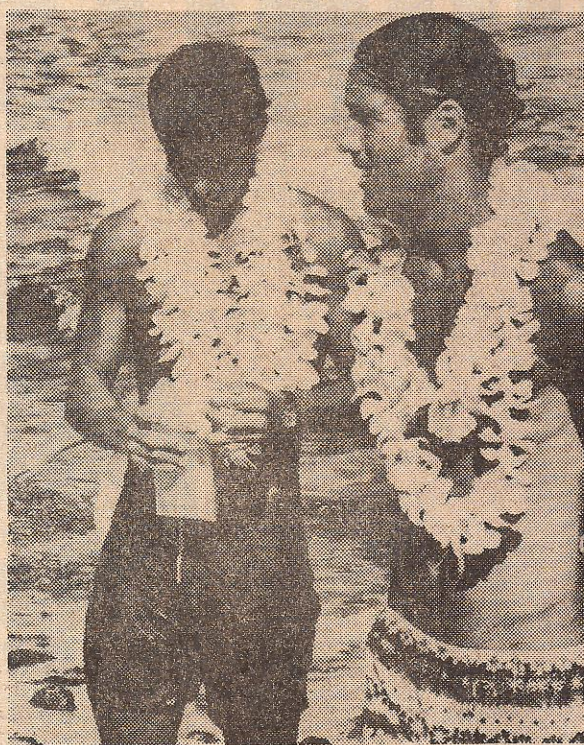
Less than a year ago Hemmings was a member of the Outrigger Canoe Club crew that set a new Molokai to Oahu canoe race record. And in December he won the Diamond Head paddle race.

Holmes paddled for a victorious Outrigger the previous year.

ALTHOUGH the challenge



A MOTHER'S WELCOME—Mrs. Fred Hemmings Sr. embraces son Aka after his successful conquest, by surfboard, of the Molokai Channel. — Photos by Ron Haworth.



REFRESHMENTS—Aka Hemmings, left, and Tommy Holmes guzzle orange juice on Sandy Beach yesterday afternoon after paddling surfboards from Molokai to Oahu.

of the high seas.

Telephoned in California shortly after Hemmings and Holmes had set out, Zahn wished them "every good luck and a safe voyage."

One other man, Gene Smith, is known to have paddled the channel, finishing at Makapu'u.

Currents in the channel are unpredictable.

Reminiscent of the northerly fish hook course of yesterday's paddle were the two unsuccessful attempts of swimmer Greta Anderson.

HAWAII'S swimmer Dentist, Dr. Harry Huffaker, started his record 13½ hour Molokai swim further towards Laau Point and experienced no currents until a few miles off Sandy Beach.

But it was a good day punctuated by a Mother's relief — even if the time was a disappointment.

"The boys deserve a big steak," Mrs. Fred Hemmings remarked.

"And thank God, they're alive and well to enjoy it."

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## Pencil Jottings *Sherman Col.*

Things I never knew: Because Dean Martin hates to ride elevators, the second floor wing of exec offices at the Riviera Vegas Hotel being converted to plush suites for the star. (He's one of the hotel owners) . . . Don Ho re-opens Duke's tonite . . . Leeteg's friend and peddler of his paintings Barney Davis, is now an author. The book, of course is "The Leeteg Story," — priced at \$15. Call him at his gallery if you want a copy . . .

Duo at the Royal's Surf Room: song bird Penny Silva and deejay Kim Chee. (Real name—sashimi) . . . Mme. Chiang Kai-shek okay after a vertigo attack . . . Surf champ Fred Hemmings off to Arizona to serve as adviser to the "Big Surf" venture —man made waves (on the desert) projected by a machine. But how can you beat the real thing? . . .

Leonard Katzman, "5-0" producer, joined in the chorus of Ili-kai employes when they presented his son with a birthday cake and a rousing rendition of the tune that goes with it . . . One good reason to hit Las Vegas the end of August: Caesar's Palace has booked Harry Belafonte and Lena Horne on the same bill. First time these two super-stars have worked together . . .



Hemmings