



OUTRIGGER BEACH

NOVEMBER 1966

HONOLULU, HAWAII



OCC SWAMPED OUT OF LEAD IN BIG RACE

By JERRY OBER

Hale O Lono Beach, Molokai, Sunday, October 16. Under sodden gray skies, with blustering winds, an event started which will long exist in the memories of the nine paddlers, coach and seven helpers of the Outrigger Canoe Club—The 15th Annual Running of the Molokai to Oahu Canoe Race. What lay before this crew and their canoe, Leilani, the test to which they were to be put, no one, not the coach nor the most experienced man could possibly predict.

Soon after the start the race settled down to be a three-boat affair. The contestants, Waikiki Surf Club, Lanikai, and Outrigger, were in that order as they paralleled the Molokai coast line. In then moderate seas they raced past Laau Point and out into the open channel. Outrigger, at a pace exceeding 50 strokes per minute, soon left the Lanikai crew to the rear and took Leilani on a south-westerly course. The crew quickly bore down on Waikiki Surf Club which was then on a parallel course. As seas and winds mounted Leilani and her crew steadily put Waikiki Surf Club to the rear. The seas worsened and low clouds scudded past, driven on gusts of up to 30 miles an hour, turning the Molokai Channel into an unbelievable tempest. Swells were running 15 feet with indescribable 20 footers coming through with regularity. The swells have been compared with the point break at Makaha. Near the half way point and three hours out, Oahu finally came into view and the course set directly for Diamond Head. Still on a parallel course but with an ever widening lead over Waikiki Surf Club Leilani was hit by a rapid series of swells with such velocity that she could not shake them off. Before the crew could bail or jump out, Leilani was swamped. Here started a test few crews have ever had to match. For two hours they tried

in vain to refloat the canoe. Every conceivable method was tried without success. It was an impossible task. Seas were running so high the entire canoe and crews would drop from sight. Only after the crew had succumbed to exhaustion and the continuing effort in the still rising seas became too dangerous did the crew put Leilani under tow. Sherry Dowsett and his crew of our escort boat, the Hula Kai, did all possible to bring Leilani in. With such violent seas it was impossible to bring Leilani in without damage under tow. She was finally brought aboard the 56' Hula Kai. Thus ended a race for Outrigger, not a race in which we can claim to be first over the line, but a race that proved beyond a doubt the quality and character of this outstanding crew.

The Leilani is now in the hands of one of the foremost canoe builders in the islands. Leilani and her crew will be but one place next October for the 16th Annual Running of the Molokai-Oahu Canoe Race, Hale O Lono Beach, Molokai.

The crew: Tom Bean, Mark Buck, Jody D'Enbeau, Bill Eggers, Fred Hemmings, Mike Holmes, Robert Holmes, Tome Holmes, Glen Perry; coach: Albert Lemes; helpers: Tom Arnott, Peter Burchard, Thad Eckstrand, Ole Johnson, Doug Kilpatrick, Fred Lowrey, Cline Mann, Dick McClellan, Jerry Ober; escort boat, Hula Kai: Sherry Dowsett, Darrell Heine, Poki Burke.

It is worthy of note that of the 12 starting canoes, only six finished, one broke up and sank.

We have a fine film of the canoe race and will be showing it on Thursday the 17th of November in the Board Room. If you wish to view the movie come on down to the club at 7:30 p.m.