

# the Outrigger

December 1987



# Men Bring Molokai Hoe Championship Home Again!

By Steve Scott

Four hours into the 1987 Bankoh Moloka'i Hoe, Molokai to Oahu canoe race on October 11, the winner was still in question. The Outrigger Canoe Club had battled back and forth with Tahiti #1 from the start, when suddenly the Outrigger caught a wave and surfed ahead to a 10-boat lead.

It was the turning point of the race, with the Outrigger going on to finish first overall in the Club's new fiberglass canoe, the Iwalani, in 5 hours, 32 minutes and 46.73 seconds.

Tahiti #1 finished second in 5:37:21 and FFPP of Tahiti was third in 5:37:51..

Although the win may sound easy, this year's race was the toughest the Outrigger Canoe Club has been involved with in recent memory. After last year's win as the underdog, the Outrigger was considered the favorite this year with all the pressures of trying to repeat.

Preparation for this challenge started at last year's celebration, with nine paddlers making a mental commitment towards 1987. With the competition that we face in today's race, nothing short of a total effort will place you in the top five, much less winning the most prestigious canoe race in the world.



*OCC rooters lined the beach to welcome home the victorious crew.*

**AUGUST** The start of the long distance season found the Outrigger with eight of last year's winning Molokai crew paddling, providing the nucleus for a strong distance season.

What makes Outrigger so strong is the competition within the program, because without this, the level of excellence would never improve.

In our first race, Magic Island to Lanikai, the open crew finished first in a very good time, under three hours. For the crew, this was a positive step towards winning our next race, which would be the Catalina race in California.

In the Catalina race, I felt we were prepared, and we had our best showing

ever, although we came in second behind Imua from Newport Beach, California. Because this race is at the start of our long distance season, it is difficult to expect to win against crews that are at the end of their season.

As coach, however, it is the most crucial race in determining our progress against the best competition in outrigger paddling.

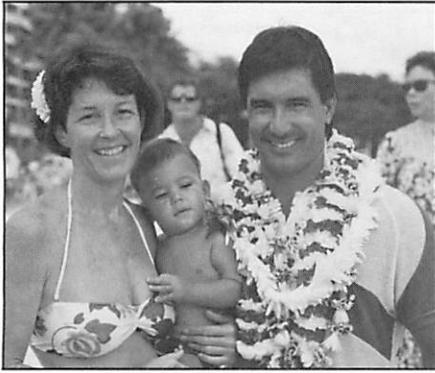
**SEPTEMBER** In our last two races, Kona and Pokai Bay, we won handily, against mostly local competition. Now we waited for Molokai.

**OCTOBER 3** Our last long workout for Molokai found us blessing the new fiberglass canoe Iwalani, then heading out from Hawaii Kai to the Outrigger. It was a disaster in that we did not have time to properly balance and

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*Below: Outrigger was once again the first across the finish line in the 40.8 mile race from Hale O Lono Harbor on Molokai to Ft. DeRussy Beach in Waikiki. The weary paddlers included Tom Conner, Scott Rolles, Steve Van Lier Ribbink, Keone Downing, Walter Guild and Kainoa Downing. On the escort boat were Chris Kincaid, Marc Haine and Mark Rigg.*

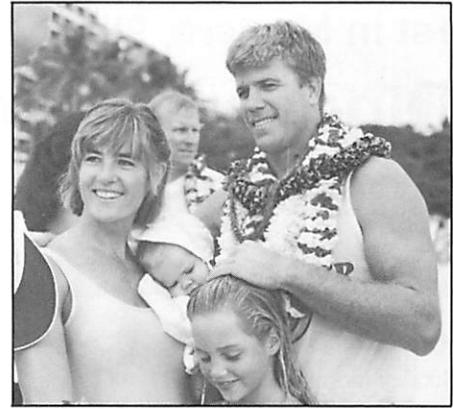




Keone Downing made his sixth Molokai crossing and collected his fourth win. Greeting him are wife Layne and son, Kaohi.



Scott Rolles was greeted by wife, Susu, and son Cutter.



The Haines pose for family photo after hard-fought race: Sandra, baby Natasha, Taeya and Marc.



After winning the Bankoh Moloka'i Hoe, Outrigger paddlers traded race shirts and posed with runnerup Tahiti #1 crew.



OCC Coach Steve Scott, right, is interviewed by KGU's Mike Buck. Scott is Outrigger's winningest coach with four Molokai championships.

canoe, and there were some in the crew who had their doubts.

**OCTOBER 10** The first order of the day on Saturday, prior to the race, was to spend whatever time it took to rig the Iwalani right. This way, no one grumbled about spending too much time at Hale O Lono rigging the canoe.

The best indication that we had it right came from Mark Rigg. His smile and hand shake were a dead giveaway. Finally, I knew we were ready.

**OCTOBER 11** Raceday, with all the early morning jitters, found us delayed at the start with Kainoa Downing, Marc Haine, Mark Rigg, Walter Guild, Scott Rolles and Tom Conner ready in the canoe with no place to go while the ceremonies dragged on.

The race started 15 minutes late, but this didn't seem to hurt us any as we jumped into the lead immediately with Tahiti #1 right behind us. Halfway to Laau Point, Tahiti #1 pulled slightly ahead, and these positions held until the first change.

Waiting in the escort boat is hardest

for the three paddlers coming in on the first change, and today was no different for Chris Kincaid, Steve Van Lier Ribbink and Keone Downing. They could see that the race was going to be tight and they wanted to be a part of it.

**FIRST CHANGE** After the first change, we had an encounter with one of the Tahitian escort boats and almost lost the front of our ama. We barely missed them, and then settled into the task at hand which was to pass Tahiti #1.

By the second change we had done that, but this was not to be the last time that we would have to battle for the lead. This went on for almost four hours and it took its toll on both crews physically.

**WE TAKE THE LEAD** Out of nowhere, a bump appeared that we were able to catch and ride for about 50 yards, and then we were able to catch the follow-up wave. All of a sudden, Tahiti #1 was 100 yards back and the spirit of the crew had been lifted.

Everyone sensed that this was the time to paddle harder and put additional

distance between us. At that point, Tahiti turned right and headed towards land, and at last we were alone.

Our next challenge came from the strong outgoing tide, which we knew we would have to get through by paddling straight into it. The tide seemed to be winning as the canoe couldn't move fast enough.

Then, we finally broke past the cliffs and headed for Diamond Head. From here to the finish line it was survival. Keep the boat upright and make no mistakes.

**THE VICTORY** As the canoe passed the Outrigger Canoe Club, the sense of accomplishment was overwhelming. We knew that the goal we had all set out on a year ago had been reached together again.

This victory can never be questioned, as our competition was next to us most of the way. To win, we had to give everything.

After last year's win, this crew had something to prove. Now we can all take pride in that effort. 🍷

# 1st in Masters, 9th Overall Dinosaurs Are Endangered But Not Extinct

By Bill Danford

Sunday morning, October 11, 48 canoes, each trying for some dream-like position, sprinted for 30 minutes before the first crew change of the 1987 Bankoh Moloka'i Hoe. All had visions of being first to Laau Point and first to the finish.

We were entered in the Master's Division for crews 35 years and older and were paddling the fiberglass canoe, the Kilakila.

Our crew was experienced, with 83 previous Molokai crossings completed by the nine-man crew. Mark Buck (18) and Tim Guard (15) had been across the Kaiwi Channel a total of 33 times in the past, followed by Brant Ackerman (12) and Ed Pickering (10). Our crew also included John Finney (9), Mike Clifford (6), Bob Riley (10), Bill Danford (2) and John Mounts (1).

Finding ourselves alone in the middle of the Kaiwi Channel after a heart-jolting moment when our canoe turned over, we righted the canoe in 25-30 seconds and finally settled down to a long dog's day.

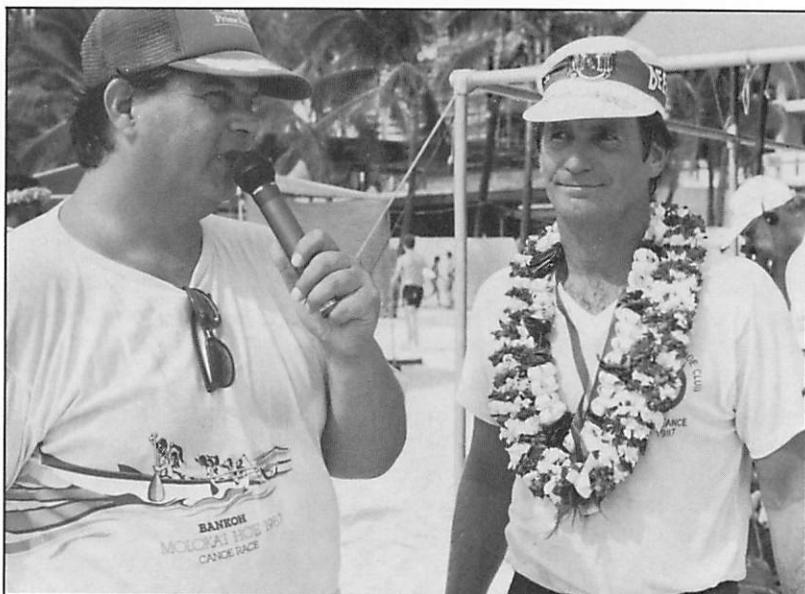
Six hours and seven minutes later, the OCC Masters, who had given themselves the nickname Dinosaurs (endangered, but not extinct), finished ninth overall and first in the Masters Division.

Call us Dino's or Sunday spoilers, our program was a tremendous success.

Thanks to our Coach Brant Ackerman, Cline Mann and Aaron Young, who planned our course strategy; Randy Shibuya and Paula Carbone, who aligned our bodies for the crossing; and Henry Ayau. 🍌



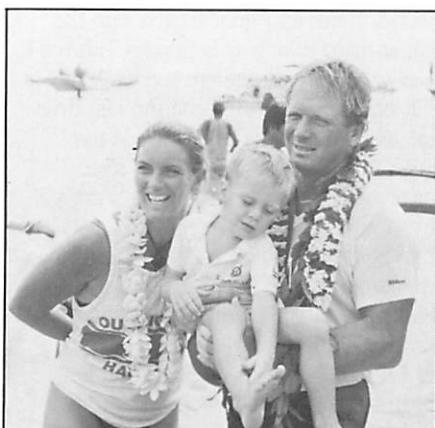
*Paddling for Outrigger on the winning Master's Crew in the Bankoh Moloka'i Hoe were Mark Buck, Ed Pickering, Tim Guard, Bob Riley, Mike Clifford, John Finney, Brant Ackerman, John Mounts and Bill Danford.*



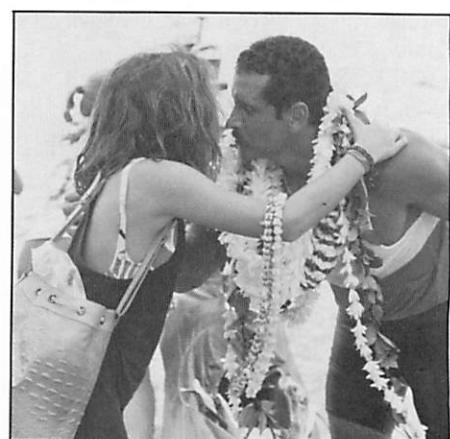
*KGU's Mike Buck interviews brother, Mark, who made his 17th Molokai crossing, the most of any Outrigger paddler.*



*Kathy Clifford had a warm welcome for husband, Mike.*



*Family time for the Finneys--Tiare, Thomas and John.*



*Bob Riley receives a lei and kiss from daughter, Skye.*

## 3rd in Masters, 16th Overall

# Seniors Masters Do Us Proud

By Doug Kilpatrick

At the end of summer, the Outrigger Senior Masters canoe team set out to participate in the long distance season, and if competitive, to enter the 1987 Bankoh Moloka'i Hoe.

Age--each crew member was at least 45 years old, with Hank Lass topping the list at 61--and lack of experience--only three paddlers, Lass, Gaylord Wilcox and coach and principal steersman Mike Holmes, had ever crossed the Kaiwi Channel before--were cited as the principal obstacles that would doom the crew to a series of inauspicious performances at best.

No Outrigger crew this old had ever "done Molokai", however, we did pass the tests of the Lanikai and Pokai Bay races and were allowed to enter Molokai as one of Outrigger's teams.

The questions remained. Although Outrigger members compete regularly and successfully in state and national age groups in volleyball, running and various water sports, would we be out of place in a sport where very few 35-and-over teams seem up to the task? Would age be too much of a detriment to overcome in a fast-paced 6-7 hour crossing?

What about experience? Can first-time channel crossers overcome the mental fatigue caused by the fact that (as repeated by Tom Merrill at the end of each of his stints in the boat) "Koko Head hasn't gotten any closer . . . any closer . . . any closer"?



Ken Stehouwer was greeted by wife, Barbara, at end of race.



Hank Lass is presented third place plaque by Joan Malama, OHCRA President, and emcee Mike Buck.

For the record, the OCC Senior Masters finished the race in 6:17:03, third in the Masters Division and 16th overall, paddling the fiberglass canoe, the Holomalie. Most gratifying is that we beat 30 open division teams.

Was it worth it? The heart-felt "good job" congratulations received from fellow Club paddlers, supportive members and staff were reward enough.

Comments, such as "you've shown that it can be done" and "you've inspired us to do a better job next season" received from the paddlers of the other clubs who made the special effort to single us out after the race, will help to push the hours of 5:45 a.m. long distance and interval training sessions into dim memory.

No longer are we concerned with pulse rates, individual recovery times and public weigh-ins. We performed respectably. We did not embarrass our-

selves or the Club.

As far as the general picture is concerned, this year's Molokai race gives yet another indication of the strength and depth of Outrigger's athletic programs.

However, after taking part in the race ourselves, we wonder how many Club members take the performance of the Open Crew for granted. How many realize the dedication and hard work that goes into a program that has won six out of the last nine races?

Congratulations to the Open Crew for defending its title with a decisive victory over one of the strongest and most varied fields ever assembled.

Congratulations also to the Masters Crew for their Masters victory and exceptional ninth place finish overall!

Club members can learn from the experience of this year's Senior Masters crew as well, that there are athletic and supporting-cast opportunities at our Club for most everyone. It is up to you, however, to take the time and make the effort in order to earn the support of the Club.

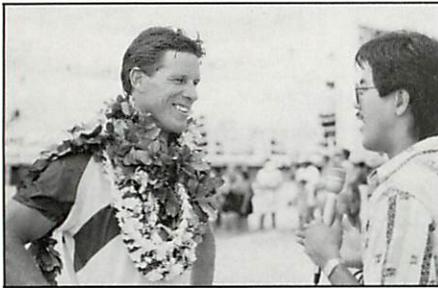
Members of the Senior Masters crew were Chris McKenzie, Tom Merrill, Jim Peterson, Joey Cabell, Ken Stehouwer, Hank Lass, Flash Dubiel, Gaylord Wilcox, Mike Town, Jaren Hancock, Mike Holmes and Doug Kilpatrick.

Special thanks to Jim McMahan, Dale Hope, Kala Judd, Wayne Faulkner, Bonnie Judd and Walter Guild. ☺



Members of the Senior Masters crew that finished third in the Masters Division were Tom Merrill, Chris McKenzie, Hank Lass, Jim Peterson, Mike Holmes and Joey Cabell. Not pictured: Ken Stehouwer, Flash Dubiel, Gaylord Wilcox, Mike Town, Jaren Hancock and Doug Kilpatrick.

# More 1987 Molokai Race Photos



A happy Walter Guild is interviewed by reporter. He built the winning canoe, the Iwalani.



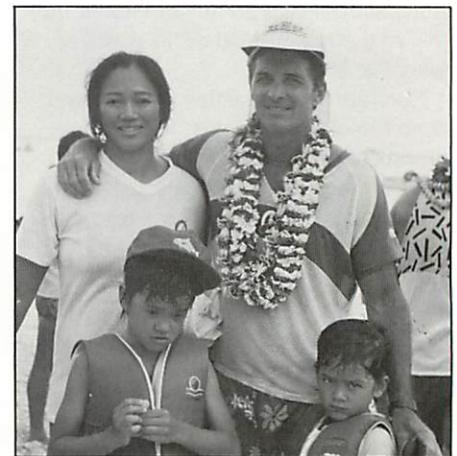
The Masters crew approaches Diamond Head in 40.8 mile race.



Brant Ackerman steered the "Dino's" to victory.



The Rigg family was on hand to greet Mark, including wife Sherry, daughters Ally and Kelsey, and parents Lei and Hank Rigg.



Tom Conner steered the entire race and considered it the hardest of his 14 crossings. It was his 7th victory. With him are wife, Lesline and sons, Taiteri and Vaimana.

**Buy one salad,  
Get one free.**

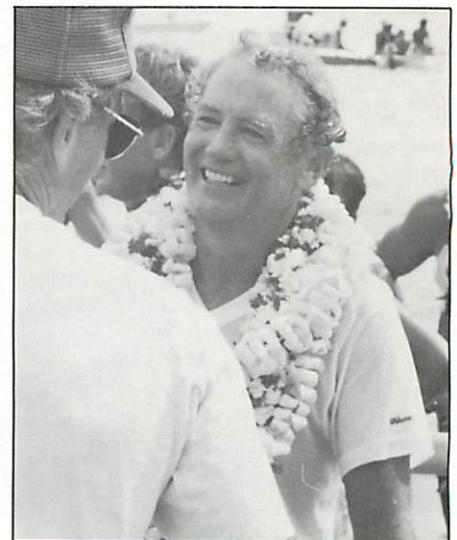
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The hard work and dedication paid off for Genie and Chris Kincaid. The victory was Outrigger's fourth in last five years.



There was a happy reunion for Steve Van Lier Ribbink at Waikiki with wife, Laura, and children Hallie and Peter.



Jim Peterson is very happy after finishing his first Molokai to Oahu canoe race.

Photos by Marilyn Kail and Monte Costa