

Advertiser photo by Greg Yamamoto

The triumphant Offshore Canoe Club nears the finish line after completing a record crossing in the 38th annual men's Molokai-to-Oahu canoe race.

# Offshore tops Molokai race record

By Robert Collias  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Billy Whitford knew his Offshore Canoe Club crew from Newport Beach, Calif. had what it needed to win the 38th annual Bankoh Molokai Hoe, the 40.8-mile men's Molokai-to-Oahu outrigger canoe race.

He just wasn't convinced they could do it until they crossed the finish line at Ft. DeRussy Beach in Waikiki yesterday with a record-breaking time of 5 hours, 6 minutes and 25 seconds. That time broke the record of 5:08.11, set by Outrigger

Canoe Club last year.

All 53 crews that began the race crossed the finish line. The crews came from Hawaii, California, Tahiti, Canada, Australia and England. The limit for each crew was nine men with six in the canoe at any one time.

Offshore was loaded with talent. Olympians Greg Barton and Terry Kent headed the list, but the other seven paddlers on Offshore's boat could almost be considered a sort of crew all-star team. Willie Reichenstein is the U.S. women's na-

tional team coach. Serge Corbin is a North American marathon kayak champion.

Hui Nalu of Oahu finished second overall in 5:11.38 and first in the Koa (wooden canoe) division. Two Tahitian clubs — Ihilani and Punaru — were third and fourth, respectively. Three-time defending champion Outrigger finished seventh in 5:22.16.

Whitford, who founded Offshore with Bud Hohl in 1979, assembled his crew for yesterday's race carefully. But it wasn't all smooth sail-

ing.

As of two days ago Offshore hadn't practiced in the boat it would use for the race, but the resourceful Whitford didn't worry. He knew his old friend Kala Kukea, the coach and steersman for Hui Nalu, wouldn't let him down.

Kukea set up Offshore with a boat from Hui Nalu, the California crew rigged it Saturday, practiced in it for about an hour yesterday morning and then set out into waters off Hale O Lono Harbor in Mo-

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# Offshore wins in record time

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lokal to start the race at 7:24 a.m. The pre-race practice session was Offshore's first workout together as a team.

When they rounded La'au Point into the Kaiwi Channel, the Offshore crew was in seventh place. Still, Whitford wasn't worried.

"We're not the greatest starting team," he said. "We knew the flat conditions were to our advantage. We just had to start reeling them in one at a time."

One by one, the boats in front were eaten up by Offshore's juggernaut. Whitford, who now lives in Palolo Valley and is the National Junior Kayak/Canoe Development Coach, has finished this race 12 times and four times his crew has finished first — the last time with Offshore in 1981 and '82.

"About three hours into the race it was goodbye to Outrigger, goodbye to Australia, goodbye to Tahiti, hello open water," Whitford said.

Barton, a double gold medalist in kayaking in the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, and his

Olympic teammate Kent were both ecstatic to win the race, billed as the world championship of distance outrigger canoe racing.

"I have been third, fifth and seventh in this race," said Barton. "I figured if I was ninth this year I was going to quit. The Olympics were obviously the highlight of my career, but this race is right up there with anything else I have ever done."

Kent, a two-time Olympian in kayaking, was in his sixth Molokai-to-Oahu race and was also ready to call this one his last with a loss.

"If we did worse than seventh this year, I was going to

quit," Kent said. "This is a very fun race. There is a lot more to it than just a canoe race. You come and learn a lot about the Hawaiian culture and meet a lot of different people."

For Hui Nalu's Kukea, the race was satisfying even though it marked his second straight second-place finish. Kukea, 46, has finished the race 17 times, but never has his boat been the first over the finish line.

"We paddled as well as we could paddle," Kukea said. "The expectation is to do as well as you can do. When another crew is better than you like Offshore was today, well, that is the way it goes."

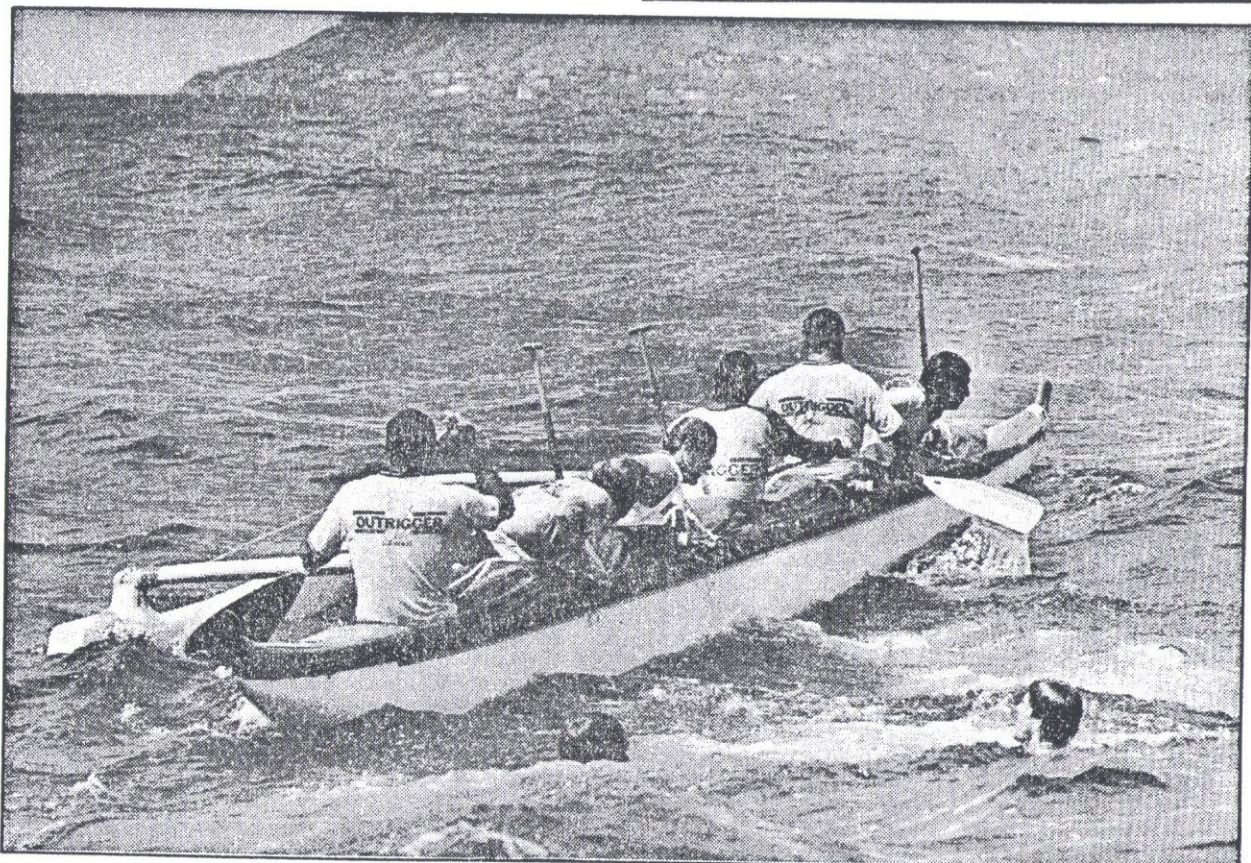
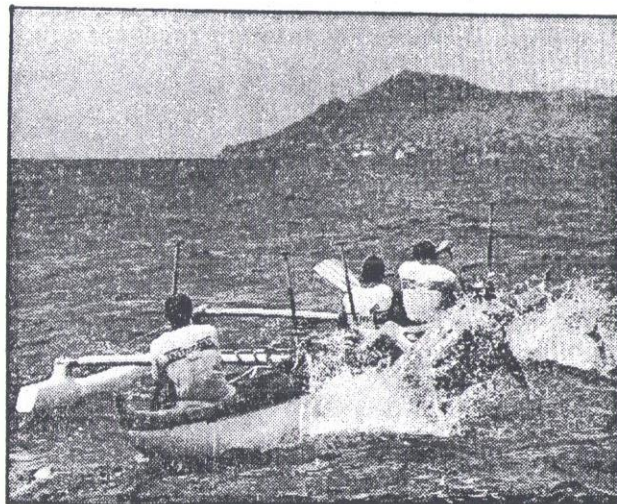
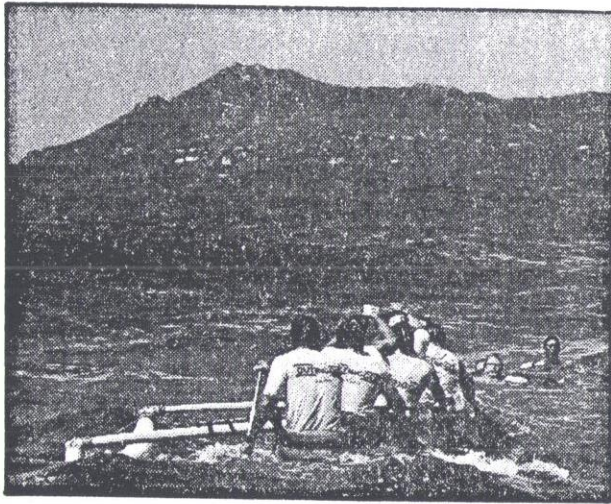
## CANOES Adv 10/9/89

### Bankoh Molokai Hoe

Molokai to Oahu  
40.8 miles

1. Offshore (Calif.) 5:06:29. 2. Hui Nalu (Oahu) 5:11:38. 3. Ihilani (Tahiti) 5:13:39. 4. Punaruu (Tahiti) 5:17:57. 5. Outrigger (Australia) 5:19:22. 6. Lanikai (Oahu) 5:20:41. 7. Outrigger (Oahu) 5:22:16. 8. FPP (Tahiti) 5:23:21. 9. Kailua (Oahu) 5:27:40. 10. Imua (CA) 5:29:08. 11. Healani (Oahu) 5:30:00. 12. Kamehameha (Hilo) 5:32:37. 13. Waikiki Surf (Oahu) 5:34:30. 14. Outrigger (Oahu) 5:36:32. 15. Mana'e (Molokai) 5:38:20. 16. Lokahi (Oahu) 5:38:52. 17. SurfSports (Oahu) 5:39:45. 18. False Creek (Canada) 5:40:29. 19. Kai O Pua (Hawaii) 5:41:03. 20. False Creek (Canada) 5:43:25. 21. Kihei (Maui) 5:43:58. 22. Kai O Pua (Hawaii) 5:45:55. 23. Outrigger (Oahu) 5:45:56. 24. Great Lakes Brigade (Canada) 5:46:09. 25. Hui Lanakila (Oahu) 5:46:24. 26. Nahoa (CA) 5:46:27. 27. Hanalei (Maui) 5:48:30. 28. Royal Canoe Club (England) 5:49:37. 29. Keoua-Hanaunau (HI) 5:52:08. 30. Kailua (Oahu) 5:53:00. 31. False Creek (Canada) 5:55:33. 32. Waikiki Yacht Club (Oahu) 5:57:56. 33. Lanikai (Oahu) 5:58:10. 34. Kailua (Oahu) 5:58:37. 35. Royal Hawaiian (Oahu) 5:58:54. 36. Kamehameha (Hilo) 5:59:04. 37. Kai E Hitu (Hawaii) 6:00:57. 38. Hui Nalu (Oahu) 6:01:36. 39. Kailua (Oahu) 6:03:02. 40. Outrigger (Oahu) 6:04:23. 41. Healani (Oahu) 6:05:31. 42. Napili (Maui) 6:11:09. 43. Hawaiian (Maui) 6:12:18. 44. Hawaiian (Maui) 6:13:13. 45. Leeward Kai (Oahu) 6:16:14. 46. Lokahi (Oahu) 6:17:07. 47. Honolulu (Oahu) 6:23:06. 48. Kihei (Maui) 6:23:51. 49. Kai Opua (Kailua-Kona) 6:27:34. 50. Windward Kai (Oahu) 6:36:53. 51. Manu O Kei Kai (Oahu) 6:45:06. 52. Koa Kai (Oahu) 6:54:35. 53. Haleakala (Oahu) 7:04:14.





Photos by Dennis Oda, Star-Bulletin

Outrigger Canoe Club, which has won the last three Molokai Ho'e races, changes crew off Diamond Head last year.



# MOLOKAI HO'E

## AT A GLANCE

**Event:** 38th Molokai Ho'e. Men's Molokai-to-Oahu canoe race.

**Distance:** 40.8 miles

**Start:** Tomorrow, 7:30 a.m. from Hale O Lono Harbor.

**Finish:** Waikiki's Ft. DeRussy Beach before 1 p.m.

**Canoes:** Six-paddler koa-wood or fiberglass boats, each approximately 40-feet in length and each weighing no less than 400 pounds.

**Teams:** 52, including one each from Australia, England, New York, Kauai and Molokai; three each from Tahiti; California and Canada; four from Maui; seven from Big Island and 27 from Oahu.

**Crew:** Each team consists of nine paddlers, with six in the canoe at one time.

**Record:** 1988 Outrigger Canoe Club in 5 hours, 8 minutes and 11 seconds.

**Race leaders:** Outrigger Canoe Club won 13 times; Waikiki Surf Club won 12; Healani and Offshore (Calif.) each won 2.

## Outrigger, Waikiki dominate

Outrigger Canoe Club, with 13 victories, and Waikiki Surf Club, with 12, have dominated the Molokai Ho'e from its 1952 beginning.

In addition to three-time defending champ Outrigger, crews to beat tomorrow include Australia and Tahiti; IMUA and Offshore from California, plus Hawaii's Hui Nalu, Kailua, Lanikai and Kamehameha-Hilo.

## Olympic paddlers on Offshore crew

Olympic kayakers, Terry Kent and Greg Barton, highlight Offshore's all-star crew.

"A welcome change from flat water sprint training. This race is hard but fun," said Michigan's Barton, winner of three Olympic medals for kayaking—two gold last year at Seoul and a bronze medal at Los Angeles in '84.

## Father, sons on different teams

Veteran paddler George Downing is a life-member of Waikiki Surf Club, but doesn't mind that his sons, Keone and Kainoa, compete for rival Outrigger.

"I've never insisted my boys paddle for Surf Club. They've been making their own racing decisions for years," he said.

*Reported by Star-Bulletin staff*

# British crew taking part in the race

By Jack Wyatt

Special to the Star-Bulletin

Now that Hawaiian outrigger canoes have discovered the revered River Thames, England's most famous waterway may never be the same.

"We definitely turn heads as we paddle past London's Houses of Parliament, Queen Elizabeth Hall and under the Tower Bridge. A canoe sporting an outrigger is not a familiar sight on the Thames," said Chris Horrod, 36, a paddler for England's Royal Canoe Club here for tomorrow's Molokai Ho'e.

Two Hawaiian outriggers now ply the Thames, dodging its famed barges, sleek rowing shells and tourist boats. "The only people recognizing the canoe's historic lineage are those who have seen them on Hawaii 5-0 or Magnum P.I.," Horrod said.

The Brits are making their third appearance in the men's race from Molokai-to-Oahu. "This race is special for a couple reasons," Horrod said, "our first one with an all-English crew. And the first year that we've assembled a competitive team who have trained long and hard."

The visitors are experienced kayak and Canadian-style canoe racers. "We're serious about doing well. Otherwise we wouldn't have traveled half-way around the world and spent thousands of dollars to race here," Horrod said.

With 52 crews, from Australia, Canada, Tahiti, California and Hawaii, the Brits will find plenty of competition during the 40.8 miles, from Hale O Lono Harbor to Waikiki's Ft. DeRussy Beach.

"We finished in the middle of the pack the past two years. This race we hope to do better," he said.

Like most visiting teams, the Brits lack a steersman with big wave experience. "We caught some waves while practicing in the English Channel but nothing like we can expect here," Horrod said.