

# Faaa channel surfs to first

## Steersman brings Tahiti crew a record in Molokai Hoe

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Under the direction of veteran outrigger steersman Tom Conner, the Faaa canoe crew from Tahiti set a new record for crossing the Molokai Channel and won the 1993 Bankoh Molokai Hoe yesterday.

Seventy-five canoes set out on the 40.8-mile course from Hale O Lono Harbor on Molokai to Fort DeRussy on Oahu. Faaa finished in 4 hours, 55 minutes, 27 seconds, shattering the previous mark of 5:06:29 set by the OffShore Canoe Club of California in 1989.

It was the first time the channel had been crossed by an outrigger canoe in less than five hours.

"This is a really strong crew," Conner said. "I knew if we could get in front we'd be OK."

It wasn't until Faaa reached Koko Head that Conner knew they had a

### Fastest Finishers

Best finishing times in the Bankoh Molokai Hoe on the 40.8-mile Hale O Lono-to-Fort DeRussy Beach course:

■ 1993: Faaa, Tahiti.....	4:55:27
■ 1989: OffShore, Calif. ....	5:06:29
■ 1988: Outrigger, Oahu.....	5:08:11
■ 1984: Outrigger, Oahu.....	5:18:19
■ 1990: Outrigger, Oahu.....	5:19:38
■ 1981: OffShore, Calif.....	5:25:01
■ 1986: Outrigger, Oahu.....	5:27:45
■ 1992: Panamuna, Australia .....	5:30:57

shot at breaking the record.

"I know how long it takes to finish from Koko Head so I told them we could do it and they really put the hammer down after that," he said.

Conner had won the race nine times previously with Oahu's Outrigger Canoe Club. He said he began training with Faaa last year at the

request of the team's coach, John Gabilou.

Panamuna Outrigger from Australia took second, finishing in 5:08:12. Dana Outrigger from California finished in 5:10:56 for third.

Lanikai Canoe Club was the top Hawaii finisher, posting a 5:11:36 time for fourth place.

"We had won all the races in Hawaii this year so we were pretty confident going in, the Tahitians were just too strong," said Bobby Nottage of Lanikai.

The top three finishers jumped out together at the start of the race, but Faaa stormed ahead at Laau Point, about four miles from the starting line.

"We paddled well and I don't think we did anything wrong, Faaa just really killed it," said Dean Gardiner of Panamuna Outrigger.

Conner attributed Faaa's performance to favorable water conditions,

a strong crew of paddlers and preparation.

"You take what the ocean gives you and we were able to ride a lot of waves," Conner said. "But this crew is really explosive and we've been preparing for this for about a year."

Jim Foti of Lanikai said a course change cost his crew a second-place finish.

Foti said Lanikai headed south after rounding Black Point and was unable to catch Panamuna Outrigger, which had gone north and was able to ride waves.

Lanikai still had a chance at third place but was passed by Dana Outrigger around Diamond Head, Foti said. Dana had risked a three-man substitution of paddlers, giving up some time for fresh arms, he said.

"They just went for it and our guys had been in the boat too long," Foti said.

# CANOES

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## Bankoh Molokai Hoe

Men's outrigger canoe race from Hale O Lono Harbor, Molokai to Waikiki, Oahu (41-mile course).

### Open

1, Faaa, Tahiti (Tuura Mairao, Armand Tavaotaha, Lewis Laughlin, Yannick Aama, Karyl Maonni, Tom Conner, Milton Laughlin, Jean-Pierre Barff, Ralph Teariki), 4:55:27 (new record). 2, Panamuna Outrigger, Australia, 5:08:12. 3, Dana Outrigger, California, 5:10:56. 4, Lanikai-1, Oahu, 5:11:36. 5, Taniwa, New Zealand, 5:15:08. 6, Hawaii Canoe & Kayak, Oahu, 5:19:20. 7, Waikiki Surf Club, Oahu, 5:21:14. 8, Outrigger Canoe Club-2, 5:23:53. 9, Marina Del Rey, California, 5:31:14. 10, Outrigger Canoe Club-3, 5:32:10.

11, Kai Opua-1, Big Island, 5:33:05. 12, Hanalei-1, Kauai, 5:33:28. 13, Lanakila Outrigger-2, California, 5:33:55. 14, Anuenue-1, Oahu, 5:34:30. 15, Imua, California, 5:37:23. 16, False Creek-1, Canada, 5:38:34. 17, Molokai Ranch, Oahu, 5:39:23. 18, Puna, Big Island, 5:44:49. 19, Hawaiian-1, Maui, 5:47:09. 20, Lokahi-1, Oahu, 5:48:48.

### Koa

1, Kai Opua-1, Big Island, 5:33:05. 2, Lanikai-2, Oahu, 5:54:26. 3, Outrigger Canoe Club-1, Oahu, 6:01:58. 4, Kai E Hitu-1, Big Island, 6:08:14. 5, Lanakila Outrigger-1, California, 6:14:02.

### Masters

1, Outrigger Canoe Club-3, Oahu, 5:32:10. 2, Imua, California, 5:37:23. 3, Keauhou, Big Island, 5:55:11. 4, Koa Kai-2, Oahu, 6:11:47. 5, Pennsylvania Outrigger, Pennsylvania, 6:17:26.

### Senior Masters

1, Kailua-3, Oahu, 6:12:00. 2, Kai Opua-3, Big Island, 6:21:28. 3, Anuenue-3, Oahu, 6:31:08. 4, Na Kai Ewa-2, Maui, 6:32:45. 5, Lokahi-3, Oahu, 6:44:37.



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The Faa'a canoe crew from Tahiti, nearing the finish line near Fort DeRussy Beach, is the first ever to complete the crossing in less than five hours.

Advertiser photo by Rich Ambo