

Outriggers to England?

The originator of the annual outrigger canoe races across the Molokai and Catalina Channels has an interesting new idea which we hope will come to fruition.

It is that a Hawaii crew go to England to compete with Oxford and Cambridge in shell racing on the Thames, then in outrigger canoe racing across the English Channel.

A. E. (Toots) Minvielle, president of the International Hawaiian Canoe Association, feels there is ample talent at the University of Hawaii. Close to 300 students have been racing in outriggers as part of the intra-mural program.

MINVIELLE ENVISIONS using one crew for both shell and outrigger events. For the 23-mile race across the English Channel, he would follow the Molokai crew pattern — nine in the boat, with six paddling and three for relief.

The 36-mile Molokai Channel race to Waikiki has been held for 17 years, with as many as 12 canoes in competition. The Catalina contest, across the 30 miles between Avalon and Balboa on the mainland, has been held since 1959, with seven or eight crews, including one from the Islands.

Both of these events are popular and the novelty effect in England, to which it would be a new sport, should be especially appealing.

THE IDEAL TIME for the Anglo-Hawaiian match would seem to be in the summer of next year, which marks the 10th anniversary of Statehood.

Virtually all of the projects being recommended to the State by the citizens' task force on a 10th anniversary celebration would be conducted locally. The proposed races would be an excellent way of projecting Hawaii's image abroad on this occasion, with the crew from here serving as good will envoys.

The timing would be doubly appropriate since the world next year will begin marking the bicentennial of the three Pacific voyages of Captain Cook, the great English explorer who discovered Hawaii.

(Cook sighted New Zealand in 1769, Australia in 1770 and these Islands in 1778. Crews from Down Under schools might be interested in joining Hawaii in the English race. Minvielle, in fact, has exchanged correspondence on this with Monash University in Australia.)

THE WHOLE IDEA strikes us as an extremely wholesome one, coming at a fortuitous time in terms of getting international attention for our 10th birthday as a State while tying in with the Captain Cook observance.

Minvielle is now seeking to get a firm acceptance from Oxford and Cambridge. Once this is in hand, his association would seek to raise funds for the project.

About \$30,000 is believed enough to cover all costs. If the State, the City and the general public each contributed, it would produce a highly worthwhile and meaningful event renewing our link to an allied nation which has played such an important role in the history of these Islands.