



## Nautical Notes Jack Wyatt

### **The Other Canoe Story**

Last Sunday morning, the Friendly Island of Molokai became an unfriendly place for the members of Lanikai's Ohana O Wa'alele Canoe Club—competitors in the Molokai-Oahu Race.

At 40 minutes before the 7:30 a.m. start, the Windward Oahu team sadly gave the race committee notice of their intention to withdraw from official participation.

"I was shocked when they handed me the statement of withdrawal," reported Hawaii Canoe Racing Association official Chris Faria.

"Although I was pressed for time to get the race started, I got together with several of the HCRA committee members to try to resolve the problem. We were sorry that the Ohana club elected to dropout."

The Ohana O Wa'alele crew, who had been training for this grueling cross-channel race for months, did, however, compete as an unofficial entry—finishing a respectable better-than mid-fleet position.

"The reason that we officially withdrew," explained Philip Foti, the Ohana club spokesman and team stoker, "is that we felt that HCRA's 11th-hour decision to suspend paddlers who 'jump clubs' is unprecedented and ill-timed."

"It's a rule which we feel may not be legally imposed by the HCRA on its paddlers. And in our opinion, the rule is obstructionistic rather than promotional of pleasureable and fair canoe racing. We may have to go to court to resolve the matter."

Evidently, in earlier races this season, several Ohana team members paddled for Lanikai Canoe Club in some HCRA regattas. And then in long-distance events some of them switched back to the Ohana club.

"We asked the HCRA about switching and we received their permission to do so," claims Foti, "and now, five days before an event that takes months to prepare for, the HCRA starts quoting the 'no jump' rule to us."

Faria contends that the HCRA never did give the Ohana paddlers permission to switch clubs, and that the "no jump" rule is clear and it is enforceable.

Basically, according to Faria, the rule states that once a person paddles for one club or association dur-

ing that calendar year, he or she may not transfer to another club or association during that same year. Paddlers violating the rule could be slapped with a 1½-year suspension by the HCRA.

"Actually, the penalty will have no effect until next season when some Ohana team member tries to enter an HCRA event," said HCRA's president, Lei Faria. "Meanwhile, we will give them a full hearing—an opportunity to state their case. We have a lot of time to play with."

The problem with HCRA's "no jump" rule in long-distance prestige races such as the recent race from Molokai, is that the rule is not enforced with visiting teams.

"Guest teams," explained one veteran race follower, "with their ability to hand-pick the best paddlers from several clubs or associations, gives them a decided edge over our local entries."

"Take this year's winning team—California's Blazing Paddles. They were hand-picked all-stars from all over their state. In addition, the Blazing Paddles had two Olympic kayak paddlers in their crew. It's no wonder that they blew us off the course."

### **Marathon Deadline Near**

The deadline to enter the sixth annual Honolulu Marathon is next Monday, however, according to race officials, late entries will be accepted to Nov. 13 with an entry-fee penalty.

"We have more than 5,000 runners signed up thus far," reported Dr. Jack Scaff, the Honolulu Marathon Association's president, "and applications are still coming in. We'll probably end up with about 6,000 entries for the race."

The 26.2-mile event, which begins near Aloha Tower at 6 a.m. on Dec. 10 and ends at Kapiolani Park, will feature several world-class runners.

New Zealand's Jack Foster, in 1975, set the course record of two hours, 17 minutes and 24 seconds, while Kim Merritt, with a 2:44:44 two years ago, holds the mark for women. Texas runner Jeffery Wells topped last year's field with a 2:18:37 run.

The entry fee is \$8 (\$16 after Monday). Applications are available at most sporting goods stores, or at Oahu's marathon clinics.