

Waikiki Surf Club...

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for the Outrigger Canoe Club for \$200. When Wally first started our club, we'd borrow it from 'Dad' Center, and then in 1946 we had the opportunity to buy it for \$2,000. That was a lot of money then for a koa canoe, but Wally said we had to have one, we couldn't borrow forever."

A benefit dance at Waialae Country Club raised the \$500 down payment, and an endless string of luaus, chicken sales and car-washes scraped up the annual payments. Then in 1953, the club entered two crews in the Molokai-Oahu race, and they took first and second place, winning a total of \$800 that paid off the debt.

The club's fiberglass practice canoes are left lined up on a small stretch of beach at the end of the park when the club isn't using them. Waikiki Surf uses the park beach with the permission of the city's Department of Parks and Recreation and paddles in the park waters with permission from the state.

"Last year somebody dragged one of our boats out into the ocean and let it go. The waves smashed it to bits on the rocks," Moku said. "The club at Makaha had their canoe dragged to sea, but they were lucky enough to have it found by a fishing boat four miles out, and the fishermen towed it back.

"We have tried to get the city to build a canoe *halau*. When Waikiki Surf first started, we felt it not only would be a good thing for all the clubs to have a central storage area where the kids would get to know each other, but it would also be a tourist attraction.

"The excuse is, if they give a canoe shed to the paddlers, they would have to do something for the golfers and the tennis players and the baseball teams. Well, we say they already have—look at the public golf courses and tennis courts and baseball fields, but they haven't done anything much for Hawaii's native sport, paddling."

Waikiki Surf Club first met at the beach near the Moana Hotel, but they were thrown

out of there because of complaints from swimmers who said that the big canoes got in their way. Then they moved to Queen's Surf where the same thing happened. The Diamond Head end of the Ala Wai Canal was their next stop, but the golfers complained that the paddlers took all their parking spaces.

So they moved to the other end of the canal to the boathouse near the bridge, but that didn't work either. The canal at that time was so dirty that the paddlers were picking up staph infections. In 1977 they moved to the *ewa* end of Ala Moana Park, where they've remained.

Moku Froiseth is a member of the Hawaiian Canoe Program Council, members of the various canoe racing clubs who meet with officials of the Department of Parks and Recreation to discuss their problems. "They listen and they try," she said. "Those poor guys who sit on the committee really try, but their hands are tied. I wish Honolulu had a canoe program like Hilo has. They have a canoe *halau* for the Hilo clubs, but maybe because they have so much more space than we have here."

Wally Froiseth, for many years the club's coach, was one of the originators of the Molokai to Oahu canoe race. "The year they talked about it, the Outrigger paddlers said, 'You're crazy. You can't cross that rough channel in a canoe. You'll swamp,'" Moku recalled. "But Wally told them that it could be done, and he took a crew out. There were four boats in that first race, three from Oahu and one from Molokai.

"They almost did swamp, because they didn't have any covering over the canoe to keep the water out, but all four boats finished. After that, Wally did research and found out that the old Hawaiians made *lauhala* covers for their canoes. The next year, Waikiki Surf took first and second place.

Froiseth retired as the fire chief of Pearl Harbor and now works parttime as a pilot boat operator at Honolulu Harbor, taxiing

the pilots out to the ships. He serves as advisor to the club, no longer coaching, but is very active in koa canoe maintenance and repair.

On the afternoon most of these pictures were taken, Wally met with the club's head coach Jake Kaio and the senior men's team to talk about the weekend race, but left soon after. "He's gone down the beach to where the Warriors keep their koa canoe," Moku said.

"They asked him to have a look at it. It's the wrong shape, and they've asked Wally to make it into a racing canoe. There are very strict specifications for racing canoes, and this one didn't pass. Wally and Philip Naone have helped several other canoe clubs over the last few years, particularly with koa canoes that have broken up during races.

"They've put them back together again, and sometimes," she concluded with a smile, "sometimes those boats beat ours. But it's better that they're racing again. You can't see a koa canoe turn into junk ever."



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