

8/29/85

Hokule'a

Our man in Tahiti joins voyage

Weather permitting, the voyaging canoe Hokule'a is scheduled to leave today from Tahiti on the second leg of its Pacific Voyage of Rediscovery. Advertiser columnist Bob Krauss will be along for the ride. Here's his first report. Other reports will be made from the canoe's stops on the way to Raiatea.



bob krauss aboard the Hokule'a

I know that the old Polynesians must have been experts at the jet-set skill of traveling light. Members of the Hokule'a crew are allowed to bring only what they can pack into an ice chest, the kind you take on picnics to Kapiolani Park.

For me, there is an additional complication.

I started this trip with a family reunion in Northern California. So I had to pack for the chill of foggy San Francisco, for a formal night in a dress-up restaurant, for the informal heat of the South Seas and for the wet of the Hokule'a.

This outfit has to serve me for six weeks and it must all fit into one small suitcase. The suitcase also has to contain my mattress, my bedroll and my rain gear.

For those of you interested in projecting old Polynesian survival skills into the space age, here's how I went about it. We'll soon find out if it works.

First, my mattress is the kind mountain climbers carry in their packs. It's self-inflatable and rolls up to about the size of a loaf of French bread when you squeeze the air out of it.

Second, I packed only two pairs

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PAPEETE, Tahiti — This adventure began almost a year ago when Hokule'a navigator Nainoa Thompson said, "Bob, why don't you sail with us? The run from Tahiti to Raiatea should be very interesting."

So here I am in French Polynesia, waiting for the second leg of the Voyage of Rediscovery to get under way, the first newspaperman to join the Hokule'a crew.

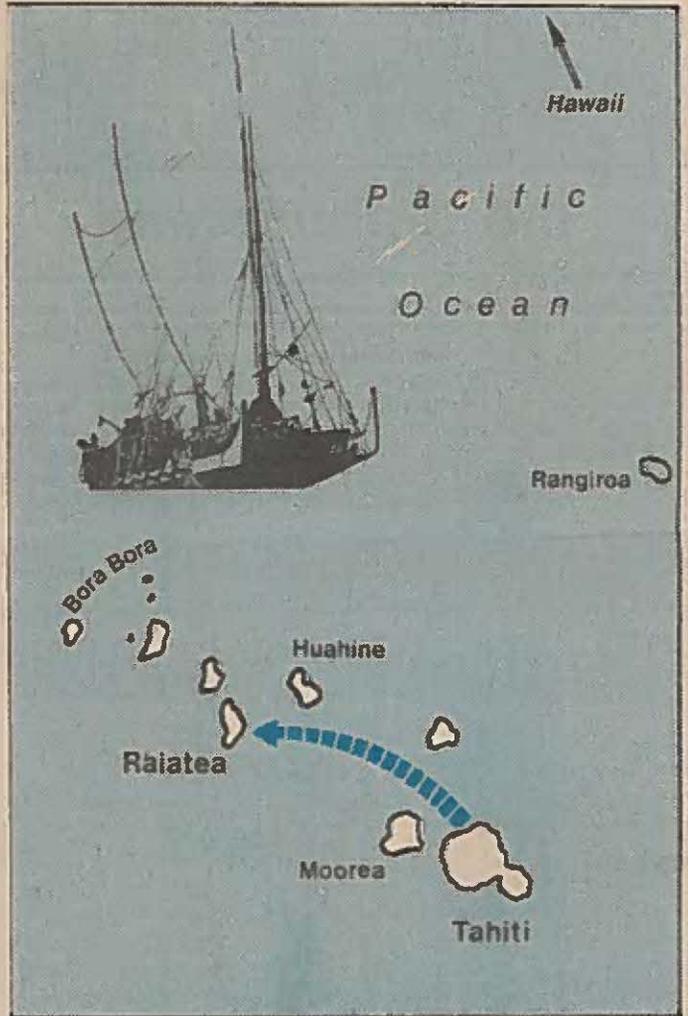
The canoe is moored right in the middle of downtown Papeete on Boulevard Pomare, the Kalakaua Avenue of this South Sea capital, where garbage trucks and limousines and pretty girls on motor scooters whiz by all day long.

I must confess that my mind is not so much on the scientific aspects of non-instrument navigation as I prepare for this voyage into the past as it is on the less glamorous problems the old Polynesians faced when they set sail for a new land.

How will I keep warm at night in a vessel that has no cabin?

How will I keep dry?

How will I sleep on the bare boards of the deck without a mattress?



HONOLULU ADV.

Our man in Tahiti on road to Raiatea

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of long pants, one presentable with my single tie and one jacket to get by a maitre d', the other rugged and washable enough to wear for warmth on the canoe.

I also brought along two pairs of walking shorts and four aloha shirts. One is white and, with a coat and tie, you can't tell it has short sleeves and no top button.

Two lightweight pairs of white shoes go with everything. On the canoe I'll go barefoot.

I've passed inspection so far. Now comes the final exam: four days in an open canoe.

There is no way I could have packed an ice chest, so a roll of plastic rubbish bags will keep my typewriter and camera bag dry. They take up practically all the space I'm allowed.

So I'll get along with two T-shirts, a pair of swim trunks and a pair of quick-drying shorts with plenty of pockets for stowing pencils and film, etc. A lightweight poncho that fits into the camera bag will keep me dry, I hope, and double as a blanket.

Hokule'a crew members told me I'd better invest in a long-sleeved shirt to wear at night for warmth. They also recommend suntan lotion, mosquito repellent and headgear to keep the sun off.

The plan is to touch at three Tahitian islands on the way to Raiatea, the site of the great marai (heiau) of Taputapuata and the jumping-off place for Rarotonga and New Zealand.

This part of the voyage will be about 300 miles. It should be much like a journey Kamehameha the Great would have made had he started from Kauai and sailed by voyaging canoe to the Big Island, stopping at Oahu, Molokai and Maui along the way.

From Raiatea, the canoe will sail on to Rarotonga in the Cook Islands.

The crew that sailed Hokule'a from Hawaii has gone home. I'll be sailing with crew No. 2, two Tahitians and a Cook Islander.