Kama I Ka Huli Pu

The Art of Righting a Polynesian Canoe

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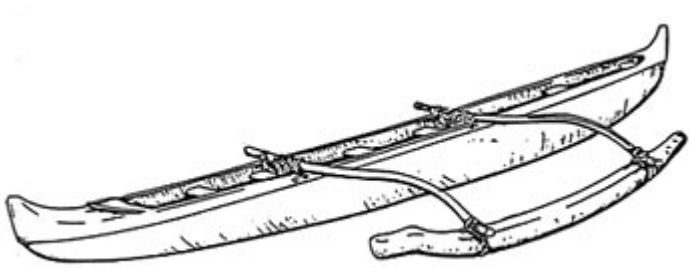
(originally on the old KOA website)

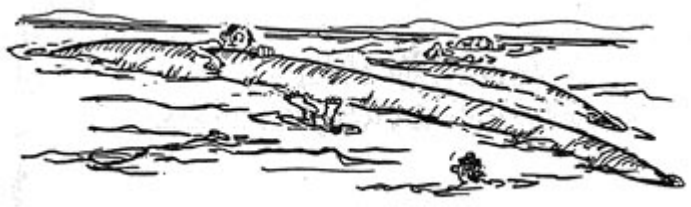


If and when you do huli pau (capsize), follow these steps and you should be back hoeing (paddling) again shortly.

Taking into consideration that you haven't gone out in 'ale nui (very big waves, 6'+) and in 20 knot makani's (winds) and your pikaos (flotation tanks) are in proper working condition (more than one p'uka (hole) in a tank allows water to enter and air escapes), this method can be used when you are out paddling with your hoa'lohas (friends).

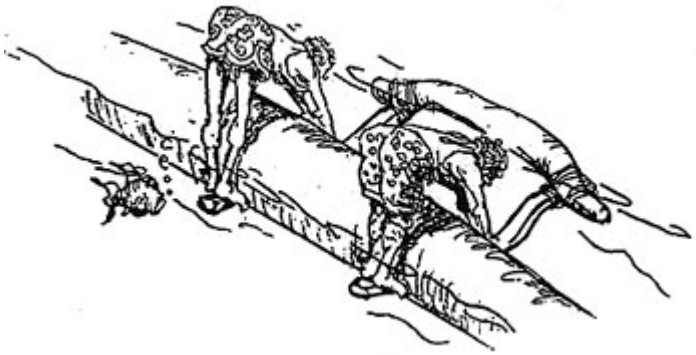
1) Count heads - Steersperson take control and have each paddler count off. If you come up one number short, start searching under va'a (canoe)

2) Have one person collect the paddles (hoe), usually steersperson, before they drift away. Also any items left in canoe and not tied down, water bottles, buckets, etc.

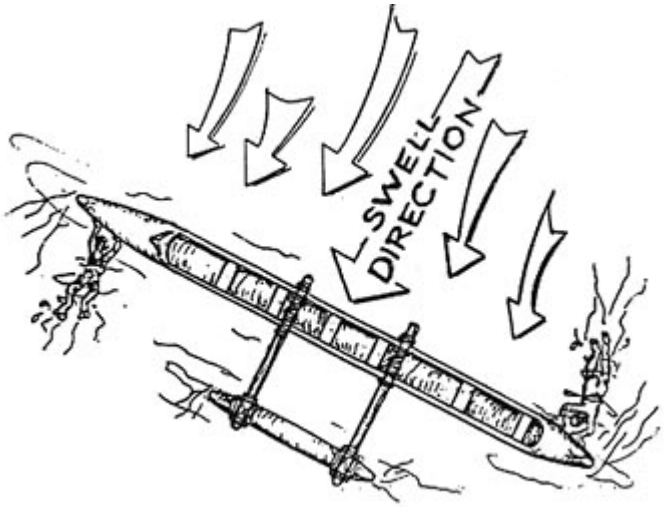


3) Get your two or three biggest to go to the outer edges of the iakos (muku) and stand on them while reaching over the hull (ka'ale) grabbing onto the gunnel (mo'o) or iakos and lift (make sure no one is in the way of the ama - as it is heavy and your skull is soft)

4a) If done quickly enough, you can minimize the amount of water that fills the canoe. Have someone ready with a bailing bucket to start bailing (ala ha ha o ke kai).



4b) If not, consider swell (ale ha' ha' o ke kai) height and direction, and position the canoe so that the canoe is parallel to the swell and it is coming from the right side of the canoe. *(ed note: He means parallel to the line of swell, perpendicular to where the swell is coming from)*



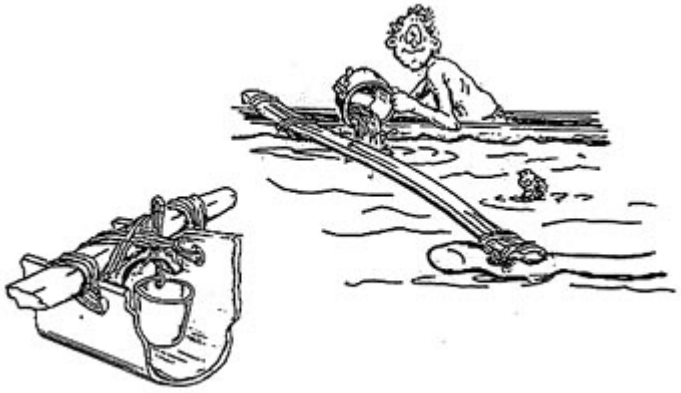
5a) At least 4 persons are needed for this step, (unless you have 2 of the Rams Offensive linemen paddling with you). What you are trying to accomplish is to sink the ama, but not the canoe, so don't hang on the canoe. The deeper the ama goes (making the iakos perpendicular to the water surface) the higher the canoe will float.

5b) This can also be accomplished in reverse. That is to say, lift the ama in the air, remembering swell direction so as not to fill the canoe as you are trying to float it as high as possible. Realistically, 2 people can steady the canoe and float it (drop ama) when water is at a minimum in the canoe

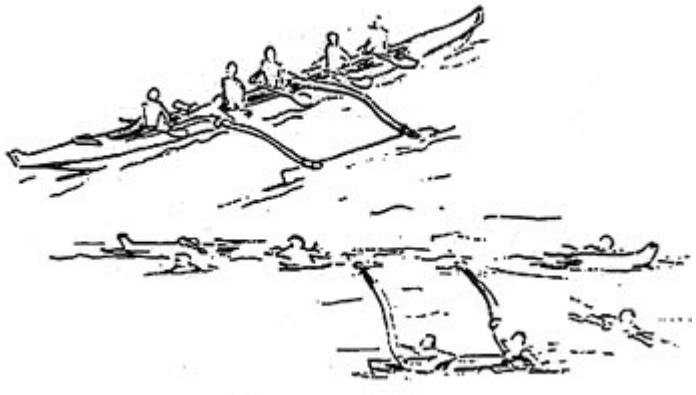
6) The next step takes timing with the swell and the canoe float, and quickness to get off the ama and start bailing - like FAST!

7) If successful, and your gunnels aren't awash, you can bail out your canoe. When you have a sufficient amount of the water out of the cane, you can put someone in #3 and/or #5 (because of the large bailing area and they are nearest the center of gravity of the canoe).
Keep someone on the ama so it doesn't go over again.

8) While this is going on, have the extra people change with #3 and #5 to help bail, and have the person holding the paddles start putting two each into seats 2,4, and 6.



9a) If you have another canoe around, you may use it to help bail out water.

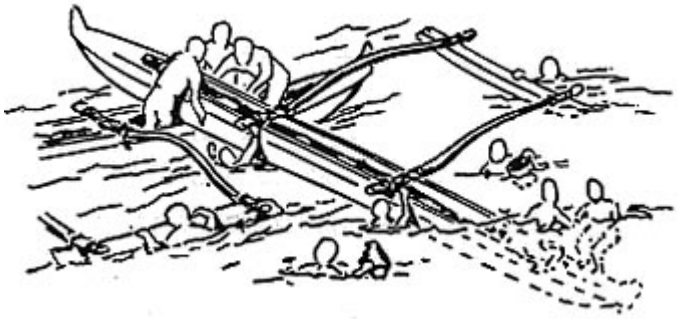


9b) One method is to pull the bow of the victim canoe onto the rear of the assisting canoe. (this is one of the largest displacement of the canoe and there is more room for pulling). Make sure you keep sufficient weight on the ama or the situation may become more complicated.

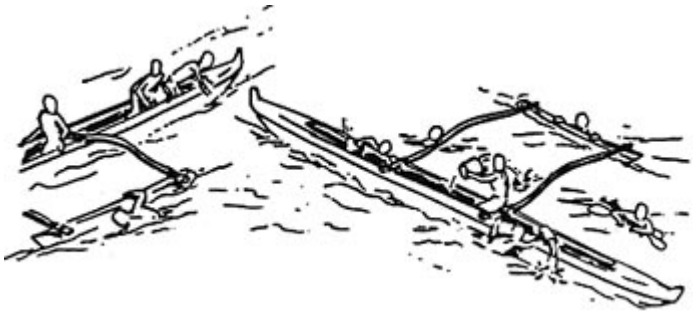
9c) Either the bow or the stern, it is entirely up to the situation, but have the crew sit on one end of the victim canoe. This should help raise the other end so it can be pulled out of the water onto the assisting canoe. Be aware at all times of swell direction and bodies in the water.

9d) When you've pulled the victim canoe out of the water partially, have persons slip off the bow of the victim canoe to further get the canoe out of the water.

9e) When sufficient water is removed, push victim off assisting canoe and bail out remaining water.



10) When you have removed enough ka moana (ocean) from the vessel you love, you can get back to doing that thing which you hate to do, but do it anyway.



Some related ike akea (information) to consider before disaster strikes:

a big bucket will cut your bailing time down.

two make canoe dryer faster

1' x 4' piece of inner tube (rubba ban) can repair any loosened rigging, a broken iako or ama, and can tie paddles together

if a canoe is in disrepair, such as faulty flotation tanks, loose or worn rigging, weak or broken iakos or ama, jagged edges or bolt, etc., it should not be used until all are in proper working condition.