

Oahu's North Shore surf scene documented in book

■ HAWAII: ALOHA, SURF & TRADITION

Photographs by Maurice Rebeix
Editions Surf Session, France, \$24.95

By Ronn Ronck
Advertiser Staff Writer

A few years ago Maurice Rebeix, a French documentary photographer and filmmaker, joined the hoard of observers who swarm over the North Shore for the winter surfing events.



Rebeix

Most of his color photographs were sent back to France where they were published in Surf Session magazine. He also shot black-and-white photos on a more intimate level, that he kept to himself.

His favorites have been published in a new softcover book, "Hawaii, Surf & Tradition," that was originally published last summer in France. It's now available here in a bilingual edition.

All of the photographs in the book were taken in 35mm and the



reproduction is top notch.

"The publisher took a bit of a gamble with this black-and-white book," Rebeix said, "because surfing in France is an exotic activity usually associated with the vibrant colors of French Polynesia. But it's been a big success from the start."

When he was working on the photos that would become the book, Rebeix rented a room from a family in Makaha and set up his traveling darkroom in a laundry closet. After a day's shooting, he developed and printed his work into the early morning.

"My style of photography," Rebeix explained, "is not accidental, though it's instinctive. Something takes place in front of you and you react quickly enough to record it. If you don't, it's gone. Just another memory."

Rebeix's dramatic water shots share the pages with North Shore attractions and portraits of familiar faces such as "Buffalo" Keaulana, Butch Heleman, "Rabbit" Kekai, Dick Brewer, Robby Naish and Rell Sun. There are also a number of photographs that, while not taken on the North Shore, reflect the Hawaiian flavor of the community.

"When I began working on this book," Rebeix said, "I had no idea what it would turn out to be. It grew photo by photo, page by page. The final product is a gift back to the North Shore community which took this wandering Frenchman by the hand and accepted him as a brother."

Rebeix's next project will take a look at the Native American culture in North and South Dakota. He is thinking ahead to another book but will "just let it happen."

"I'm never without a camera," he said. "My job is to be in the right spot at the right time."

"Hawaii: Aloha, Surf & Tradition" proves just how well Rebeix does his job. Check it out in your local surf shop or bookstore.