

# the Outrigger



2016 OCC Molokai Kane O Ke Kai

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# The 2016 Molokai Hoe Saw OCC Represented by 6 Crews

By Guy Wilding, Head Coach



The *Manu Ulu* crew: James Donovan, Heinere Itchner, Jake Hamstra, Christian Bradley, Simeon Ke-Paloma, Sean Kaawa, Karel Tresnek Jr., Griffin Bolan, Victor Bovino-Agostini.



The *Henry Keawe Ayau* crew: Jayson Whitman, Art Mallet, Connor Grune, Sage Capone, Mike Fine, Twain Newhart, Jon Everest. Missing John Akana and Wilson Lau.

In addition to the three open crews representing OCC this year in the Molokai Hoe on October 9, we also had a junior crew, made up of 16-year-olds who were all doing their maiden crossing of the Kaiwi Channel. Plus a 50s Masters crew (coached by Jimmy Kincaid) and a 55s Masters crew (which consisted of six OCC paddlers in combination with six paddlers from the strong Mooloolaba Masters from Australia).

The trades were blowing all week leading into the 2016 Molokai Hoe and all our crews were excited as conditions looked like they would suit our strong surfing combinations.

Unfortunately, as has been the case now for several years, the wind did not cooperate on race day. The lack of trades combined with a changing tide midway through the race made for a very hot, tough channel with very little assistance from the ocean.

In any case, all 95 crews that started the race had to deal with whatever cards Mother Nature dealt on race day.

The Molokai Hoe is scheduled to start at 8 a.m. sharp - but for whatever reason it started five minutes early and some crews were not on the line. There was no bringing the early starters back and the frantic push to La'au Point was on. The mighty Shell Vaa 1 and 2 and EDT led the way immediately from Primo, Red Bull and Hui Nalu.

Many crews headed on a more southerly route but we had decided to stay a more northerly course and take advantage of the lee of Oahu later in the day to avoid the outgoing tide.

I was coaching the *Manu Ulu* crew and they battled early with Kailua and Kauai plus two Australian crews and later with Keahiakahoe (who had recruited several Tahitians to bolster their lineup). The *Manu Ulu* crew was strong all the way and all nine guys gave it everything they had. Changes were

generally good and all nine did the little things well (bailing, getting into and out of the canoe, zipping & unzipping, etc.).

The more northerly line paid off for us and when approaching Black Point we could see the strong Puna crew (second at States in 2016) coming up from the south. When the two crews came together on the same line the Puna crew had about a 200 yard lead and it was going to be a battle all the way to the finish line.

Karel Tresnak Jr., who had been sharing the steering duties with Heinere Itchner during the previous five hours, was in the *Manu Ulu* driver's seat at the time. Karel knows the waters around Diamond Head as well as anyone and being as competitive as he is Karel elected to take a line inside Puna and right on the edge of the surf.

Karel then dropped into several waves and then stayed inside the surf line until shooting out from the reef right outside OCC. *Manu Ulu* had taken the lead from Puna!

The boys paddled hard and increased the lead through to the finish line, finishing in ninth place, just in front of a valiant Puna combination who crossed in 10th place. Both crews had given their all and it was a great way for the OCC boys to finish what was a tough crossing of the Kaiwi Channel.

Our crew in the *Leilani* placed first in the Koa division and maintained OCC's strangle hold on that trophy for the last four years straight. Congratulations guys.

Our crew in the *Henry Keawe Ayau* were predominantly Novice paddlers mixed with a few more experienced guys. They were all enthusiastic and aggressive all the way across the channel and acquitted themselves very well in the tough conditions. They stuck to the game plan and performed well above what was generally expected of them. Congratulations on a job well done.

# Masters 55 Finish Second in Division

By Marc Haine

The Masters 55 was a two club combined effort with six men from our reciprocal club Mooloolaba Surf Lifesaving Club of Australia and six men from Outrigger. Strong competition from Kailua and Hawaiian Canoe Club made for a close race the entire time. In the end, Hawaiian won by one minute at six hours with OCC/Mooloolaba at 6:01 and Kailua was third at 6:04. Of the six Outrigger entries, the old guys were the second OCC canoe to finish. We had a great time and hope to do it again next year.

## **MANU ULA**

Finish: 9th Overall

Time: 5:28:31

## **HENRY KEAWE AYAU**

Finish: 46th Overall

Time: 6:15:32

## **LEILANI**

Finish: 48th Overall, 1st Koa

Time: 6:17:04

Crew: Neal Hafner, Byron Ho, Deke Kilpatrick, Indar Lange, Charles Meyer, Cory Nakamura, Franz Solmssen, Max Solmssen, Ryan Woodward.

## **KAPUA**

Finish: 87th Overall, 5th Masters 50

Time: 7:19:53

## **LOLI'I**

Finish: 34th Overall, 2nd Masters 55

Time: 6:01:33

## **MAMALA**

Finish: 83rd Overall, 8th Junior Division

Time: 7:15:23



The Kapua Masters 50 crew: Matt Esecson, Vik Watumull, John Claucherty, David Wadsworth, Leighton Miyachi, Rick Hobson, Matt Eliashof, Jeff Davis, Darryll Wong.



The Loli'i Masters 55 crew: front: Warren "Wazai" Cuffe, Steven Fox, Todd Bradley\*, Chris Kincaid\*. Back: Karl Heyer IV\*, Ron Grabbe, Phil Thistlewood, Rob Dorrough, Marc Haine\*, Bruce Black\*, Geoff Graf\*, Tony Harding. \*OCC member.

**ON THE COVER:** Outrigger Canoe Club entered six crews in the 2016 Molokai Hoe long distance canoe race. See story and photos on pages 2-4. Photo by Twain Newhart.



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# Junior 'Riggers Crew 8th in Molokai Hoe Division

By Chris Laird



The *Mamala* crew: front: Riley Martinez, Colt Correa, Emma Humphreys (helper), Coach Jacquie Laird. Back: Coach Chris Laird, Avi Laird, Lars Von Sydow, Mike Nakaoka, Kamuela Wallace-Silberstein, Wyatt Yee, Kavika Beck, Zoran Cullinan.

This year Outrigger Canoe Club entered a boy's junior crew in the 2016 Molokai Hoe. These young men have been paddling and training together throughout both regatta and distance season forming a tight, unified team.

They were focused on learning watermen skills such as paddling, canoe surfing, swimming, and water safety (they all did the Junior North Shore Lifeguard Program at Ehukai over the summer). These boys had a fun season with several visits to the podium and a first place at the 4th of July Macfarlane race!

It was the boy's decision to paddle distance – they made a decision that school and their respective high school sports would come first. We held long practices on Sunday afternoons out of the Club.

During the season, they got to race in the Waimanalo to Chinamen's Hat race with the men. Plus, more experience was gained in the Henry Ayau race. The Molokai Hoe was an excellent rite of passage for these boys into young manhood.

Their eyes and hearts were opened up to the bigger picture of paddling. As Mike Nakaoka told me, "The race was long and brutal but the feeling of accomplishment as you step onto the beach in Waikiki is amazing because you know that you and eight other guys your age have successfully crossed one of the world's most famous channels under your own power!"

In addition, the steersmen for this race was Lars Von Sydow who over the summer won the 19 and under title in the Open Bic Sailing World Championship held in Quiberon, France. Also, a new trend for all of us older paddlers to get use to - two of the boys, Kavika Beck and Avi Laird were both third generation members of their families to participate in the Molokai Hoe.

The juniors finished 8th in the Junior Division and never faltered or stopped during the crossing and maintained a great fun-loving attitude the whole way. Jacquie and I were honored to coach them and look forward to them growing up to be good men.

The boys wish to thank the following for all of the support and help throughout the entire season: Leighton Miyachi, Tom McTigue, Jim Beaton, Guy Wilding, Art Mallet, Jen Kilpatrick, and all of the great guys in the men's program for always making them feel part of the team.

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