

Canoe Racing Arrives

If you haven't noticed from the canoes stacked on the beach and the activities of the paddling crews, it's Paddling Season!

The part of paddling that is visible to all of us is the activities of the crews training. You can find crews in training from 6:00 a.m. until the sun goes down. However, there is more to the OCC paddling program than the activities taking place daily on the beach.

This year's Canoe Committee members are Stu Brisette, Kimo Austin, Walt Guild, Hank Lass, Paula Carbone, Mike Mason, Bruce Ames, Bob Fisher, and Tom Connor.

On race day, members of the racing committee are at the Club before dawn, loading boats and other equipment required to put OCC paddlers in the water. The job is fun, but a lot of work.

In addition to the normal maintenance activities, the Club is continually experimenting with new methods to increase the performance of our boats, and to find new ways to preserve our irreplaceable Koa canoes.

When Wayne Faulkner constructed the OCC's new racing fiberglass canoe, the Iwa Lani, he included a bracing system that has proved so effective that it is being added to our Koa Fleet.

If you're not a paddling fan, it's because you haven't been going to the Regattas. It's difficult to try to relate the feel of a Regatta scene to those of you who haven't been to one. A Regatta consists of 27 events, which run from 9:00 in the morning until completed, usually at 3 or 4 in the afternoon. Each event will include from four to fourteen boats, depending on the interest that each club has devoted to the various events.

The enthusiasm which the younger paddlers enjoy for the sport has, in many cases, spilled over into the rest of the family, who will come out and make it a family event.

The 1979 canoe season was one of stiff competition between OCC and Hui Nalu Canoe Club for the State Championship. As you can see from the results of the first 5 regattas, things have

not changed much. This year's action has been fast and furious, with stellar performances from all participants. The season started with a bang on June 8th at Kailua Beach Park, when OCC outdistanced all other participants in the Kamehameha Day Regatta with a total score of 77 points. OCC's closest rival was Hui Nalu with a score of 51.

The OCC paddlers showed balanced strength with the following crews winning their events: Boys 12A, Girls 13 Under, Boys 13 Under, Boys 14 Under, Women Novice A, Men 18 Under, Freshmen Men, Junior Men, Open Four, Senior Men.

The Freshmen Men were very impressive and showed to all that they will be a crew to be reckoned with this season.

The Junior Men came through as expected. This crew has a lot of pressure on it, as Head Coach Walt Guild counts on them as a sure win each week.

The Open Four is truly a crew to behold. At first glance, you think you are looking at the Senior Men's crew, less two, and in fact five of the six members who rotate in and out of the boat are previous Senior paddlers. If Kailua is any indication, we'll see a lot of gold out of this Crew this season.

As always, the premier race of any regatta is the Senior Men's race. At Kailua, OCC's Senior crew swept the field and served notice to all that they are the premier crew.

The second regatta was the Leeward Kai Regatta, held at the Nanakuli Beach Park on June 16th. OCC continued their winning ways, scoring 83 points. Hui Nalu was second again with 55 points.

The winning crews at Nanakuli were: Boys 12A, Girls 17 Under, Women Novice A, Freshmen Men, Junior Women, Junior Men.

The third regatta of the year was the George K. "Pop" Waialealea Regatta, held at the Waimanalo Beach Park on June 22nd.

The ocean cooperated by providing some of the best conditions that paddlers have encountered there in several years.

I'm sure the people who were caught in the two-hour traffic jam didn't appreciate it, but it was a great day. Particularly great for OCC, as they won the regatta, scoring 67 points to Hui Nalu's 63 points for second place.

OCC's winning crews were: Girls 13 Under, Boys 14 Under, Women Novice A, Freshmen Men, Senior Men, Women's Masters.

As you can see from the results of the first three regattas, Hui Nalu appears to be creeping up. Normally this wouldn't bother a stout-hearted OCC paddler, however the next two regattas were scheduled at Waikiki Beach. Fred Hemmings and company are noted for their performance in the surf at Waikiki.

For those of you who have not witnessed a surf race, the draw of the lanes can be all important, depending on surf conditions. The course is laid out perpendicular to the beach with canoes starting from the beach area, out through the surf to a set of flags a quarter and a half mile out. Depending on the length of the race, the canoes will turn on the appropriate flag and race back to the beach.

However, if the surf is too big and unpredictable, as it was this year on July 4th, it's not so much the luck of the lane draw, but the luck of that lane's conditions during the race.

The first of the surf races, the John D. Kaupiko Regatta, sponsored by Hui Nalu Canoe Club, was held on June 29th. Hui Nalu had an incredible day.

At the end of the regatta, they had amassed 95 points. Hui Nalu's closest rival was OCC, which was second with 45 points. OCC's winning crews were: Girls 15 Under, Women Novice A.

The water was relatively flat and Hui Nalu had predominately the first three lanes. However, this doesn't explain away Hui Nalu's 95 points. Hui Nalu had a great day. For our paddlers, it was one of those days when we didn't do anything really bad, but nothing seemed to work right.

The Walter J. MacFarland Regatta was held on July 4th at Waikiki Beach.

As you all know, the Walter J MacFarland Regatta is sponsored by OCC, and as the sponsoring club, due to the high surf conditions, OCC, with the approval of the OHCRCA officials, opted to allow any club which so desired to use fiberglass canoes instead of taking a chance on destroying any of the irreplaceable Koa canoes.

Waikiki Surf Club, the only club that opted to use its Koa Canoe, had to withdraw in the later stages of the regatta, when the canoe was split as it swamped on a wave.

Unfortunately for OCC, Hui Nalu's crews had most of the fun. Hui Nalu won the regatta with 86 points to 62 for OCC's second place finish. OCC's winning crews were: Boys 13 Under, Girls 15 Under, Women 17 Under, Men 18 Under Freshmen Men, Sophomore Men, Junior Men, Women's Masters.

If you only had the results of the first 5 regattas to go by, it would appear that OCC is on the ropes and that Hui Nalu has received a shipment of strength and is approaching invincibility.

This was evident at the Makaha Regatta where Hui Nalu outpaced OCC by only one point under good water conditions, and finally in the Oahu Championships where Hui Nalu assembled their best effort by blitzing all Clubs by scoring over 90 points and holding OCC to Second Place.

At this point Coach Guild has seen everything go wrong that could go wrong and is currently mounting a tremendous offensive effort to bring home the State Championships to OCC.

—Jim Petersen

On the cover: A collection of ceremonial canoe paddles from the Pacific.