

Masters Off To World Sprints

By Kehau Kea

OCC members participating in the Masters Division at the World Canoe Sprints held in Auckland, New Zealand, January 15-20 were Henry Ayau, Kehau Kea, Carolyn and Hank Lass, Keanuenu Rochlen, Sue and Scott May.

Racing under the Blue and White banner of Healani Canoe Club, both the men's and women's crews performed well. Our crew was made up of members of Outrigger, Lokahi, Healani and Anuenue canoe clubs.

The Senior Masters men qualified for both the six-man and double hull races, while the Senior Masters women placed third in the double hull.

Our biggest asset at the races were our team's "Jams World" jackets in day-glow colors. By far the most coveted of all team apparel, we were constantly approached to sell or trade them.

These jackets, highly visible to everyone and especially to each other while sightseeing, touring, etc., were to become our trademark throughout our New Zealand trip.

Prior to leaving Hawaii, the Mays had planned an incredible itinerary of touring for those of us who wished to join them and venture south after the Sprints.

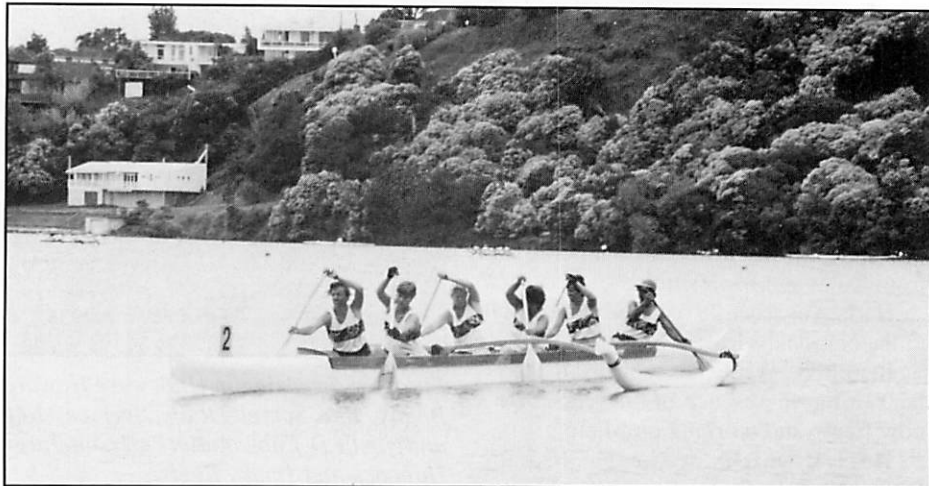
The first leg of the journey was by truck and van to Rotorua for two days of soaking tired muscles in the Mineral Baths, swimming in a turquoise colored lake, and visiting a Maori village.

Those continuing south were Na'u Kamalii, Kehau Kea, Sue and Scott May, their daughter, Malia, Carolyn and Hank Lass, Keanue Rochlen and Rob Milne.

We flew from Rotorua to Christchurch where we spent two days sightseeing, before boarding a train to cross the Canterbury Plain to Greymouth on the west coast of the South Island.

Our group then vanned and wagoned on to Fraz Joseph in the Southern Alps. An awesome trek onto the Fraz Joseph Glacier made for some hairy moments, as blue ice crevasses gaped—ready to swallow a bumbling trekker as the Glacier moaned and groaned beneath our boots.

Motoring into Queenstown, we were warmly greeted by a herd of sheep in the middle of the highway. While in Queenstown we flew to Milford Sound on the Tasman Sea. Burr. We boarded a ferry which took us through the entire Sound and



Members of the Womens Senior Masters team were Carolyn Lass, Sue May, Leon Iaukea, Anona Napoleon, Kehau Kea and Keanue Rochlen.

out the mouth to the Tasman Sea. Because of its proximity to the Antarctic, Milford is quite cold.

The next day, Sunday, was to be action-packed as we had all signed up to do the "Triple Challenge," which proved to be the highlight of our grand tour. It was everything we anticipated it would be.

We were bused over to the river at 8:30 a.m. where we donned life jackets, had our photos taken and then wedged ourselves into a small jet boat which held exactly 12 people, including the driver.

We zoomed up the river and were given instructions on how not to panic, to keep all extremities inside the boat and to enjoy a 360 degree spin when a hand signal was given. Now we were ready to charge the

river gorge walls at full throttle and survive to tell about it.

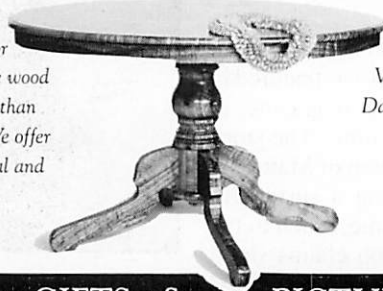
Leg two of the Triple Challenge entailed a helicopter ride from the jet boat beach to the river rafting beach. We landed on the beach and were soon to be joined by other rafters, raft steersmen and rafts, which were all trucked and bused in.

We were then issued damp, cold, unisex rubber wetsuits, complete with life vests, booths, jackets, helmets and cars.

Eight to a raft was the magic number, including, steersmen. And were we hot having just come from the world paddling sprints. We paddled, we back paddled, we spun around, we bobbed and weaved, doused other rafters with buckets of water and had a great time.

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