

Wow! What an Anti-Climax to the 2016 Regatta Season!

By Guy Wilding, Head Coach

You really have to look beyond the disappointment of the cancellation of the Oahu Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association Championship Regatta and then the poor water quality leading to OCC withdrawing from the HCRA State Championships to see the reality that 2016 really was a great season for the entire Outrigger Canoe Club paddling program.

Whilst for a variety of reasons we were short on numbers of paddlers, the paddlers we did have performed extremely well. Even with a lot of people travelling throughout the regatta season, the paddlers that committed to the task did an outstanding job. Our coaches again did a fabulous job right across the board from 12s through to 70's.

I know Mark Sandvold is providing a separate report on the junior program but I would like to take the opportunity to say a big THANK YOU to Mark and his entire team of coaches for another fantastic season. They not only teach the kids how to be competitive paddlers, but espouse the principals of sportsmanship, humility and that attitude and application is everything in sports, as in life.

One of our goals for 2016 was to perform well at our own Macfarlane Regatta. We did that and fell short by only a few points of winning the overall point score. Winning a total of 17 gold medals that day was a truly brave effort and hats off to our senior steersmen who performed so well leading all our crews to some great results in the surf of Waikiki.

In 2015 our upper division senior women won seven gold medals at the Oahu regattas and then the silver medal at States. In 2016 the women continued on their winning way, dominating the senior women's races and winning gold in that division in all but one regatta. The powerful Novice A women were again the driving force in their division.

2016 was a resurgent year for the upper division men. This was the best season of results for the men for many, many years in senior, junior, sophomore and freshmen divisions. OCC last won the senior men's division in the State Championships in 2009, but even then did not have the depth of results across all four upper divisions that we have enjoyed through the 2016 season.

The masters divisions were also down on numbers this season in some divisions, but performed very well qualifying nearly all crews for Macfarlane, Oahus and States. Well done!

As an aside, after the Oahu Championships were cancelled, OHCRA elected to present the medals to the crews who were ranked 1-2-3 prior to Oahu. Outrigger Canoe Club won the following medals in the adult divisions:

Gold

Women Novice A
Sophomore Men
Junior Men
Women's Senior
Senior Men
Men 40
Women 65

Silver

Freshmen Men

Bronze

Women's Junior
Women 55
Women 60
Men 60

Also a big THANK YOU to OCC President Fred Noa and his Board of Directors for their support of the paddling program and continuing the legacy of all those legendary OCC paddlers and coaches that have gone before us.

So for some it's now on to the distance season and for others it's time to do other things. Refresh your minds and bodies - but be ready for another BIG year in 2017 for the Outrigger Canoe Club's Paddling Program. Bring your friends and family with you and let's make it a great experience in 2017!

A hui hou!

Upcoming Distances Races

September 11 E Lau Hoe (women)
September 18 Henry Ayau Memorial Race (men)
September 25 Na Wahine O Ke Kai
October 9 Molokai Hoe

