

# Paddleboard Committee to Sponsor Junior Program

By Kristin Lee Watumull

What began informally two years ago when a group of OCC junior members' parents saw the benefit of their kids getting some organized water time in the form of traditional paddleboarding, has turned into those same kids participating in year-round organized paddleboard workouts, their own trailer, competing in races and a handful of wins.

The organized training has paid off. Recalling the Duke's OceanFest Race last year, Alan Pflueger notes, "A huge highlight is on average they all finished 20-25 minutes quicker this year compared to last. That's a ton of time and they were all two man teams."

All of the regular Oahu paddleboard races now have Junior Divisions, and in most of the races over five miles, the juniors are allowed to race as a team. A jet-ski escort is required to carry the extra paddler. Up until now, it's been up to the junior participants to cover the cost of the jet-ski/gas, as well as race entry fees.

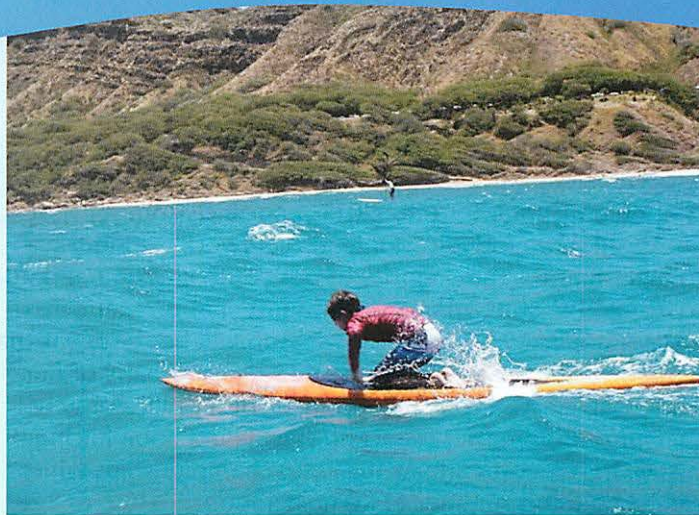
The Paddleboard committee now has some funding to cover entry fees and jet ski gas for qualified teams, and we are looking for more participants to wear the OCC jersey.

Says Pflueger, "Paddleboarding is a life-long sport. The younger you start the better you can become. The goal is to provide an avenue where our kids can develop a sense of adventure in the ocean and life. When you are that far out in the ocean in a 10 mile race and you look around it's very adventurous. When you've finished you know you've done something big and cool."

With that goal in mind, the OCC Paddleboard Committee is now prepared to formally support a Junior Paddleboard team.

The Paddleboard Committee will host paddleboard clinics on Sundays, April 15 and 29, starting at 9 a.m. for all Junior members interested. Bring a board if you have one, but boards will also be provided.

These free clinics are open to members under 18 years of age, male and female, and any skill level. Novice



Junior 'Rigger Drew Watumull paddled in the Cline Mann Race last summer.

paddleboarders will be able to try the sport under the watchful eye of the Club's top paddleboard athletes, and more experienced paddleboarders will receive advanced instruction. These clinics are to provide the Club's youth with exposure to the sport and serve as the jumping off point for the new OCC Junior Paddleboard team.

These clinics will provide traditional/prone paddleboard instruction only, no SUP.

Registration is required. Sign up forms are at the Front Desk. See you on the beach!

Questions? Email [occpaddleboard@gmail.com](mailto:occpaddleboard@gmail.com)

The OCC Junior Paddleboard Program will participate in:

Wednesday, July 4: Independence Day Race (Sunset to Waimea, 4 miles)

Saturday, July 7: Cline Mann Memorial / Ko'olaupoko (Hawaii Kai to Outrigger, 8 miles)

Saturday, August 25: Hawaii Paddleboard Championships, Duke's Race (Hawaii Kai to Waikiki, 10 miles)

Sunday, September 2: Haleiwa Joe's Race (Waimea to Haleiwa, 4.5 miles)