

Extra Innings

Softballers Defend Their Crown With Season Opening Win

The OCC Softball team is out to defend its title in the tough Leahi League. OCC will be seeking its 4th consecutive championship. Losing a number of players who are working out for the Molokai race, Head Coach Jim Gaddis is playing a numbers game. In the opener, he was scraping bottom.

Starters Henry Ayau (EH) and Traci Phillips (C) had to leave after playing only three innings. Jim Joy had to come in from the outfield to replace Traci, leaving only Clay Chee, Chris Siegfried and Rick Piper to cover the outfield. Nursing a chronic bad knee, Gaddis played first, Mike Miranda covered second, Captain Jim McAluney handled shortstop and Curt Lajala played third. 1997 MVP Keith Letman took the mound as usual.

Eight players came up with multi-hit games as OCC crushed Oahu Club 15-4. The game was tight until OCC erupted with five runs in the 4th and four runs in the 5th. Highlights included long home runs by Joy, Letman and Siegfried.

Gaddis is hoping veterans Jim Cavanah, Bill Kilcoyne, Bryan Hoernig and Jon Kiner will be in uniform soon along with last year's solid newcomer Jake Mizuno. When the Bankoh Molokai Hoe is pau, Gaddis will expect the full return of Paki Vaughan and Jon Whittington as well as Ayau and Phillips.

The biggest crowd in years showed up for the opening game thanks to the Molokai paddlers preparing for a run around Kapiolani Park. Traci Phillips got the most attention for her work behind the plate and her two batting appearances. Supporters are always welcome. The post-game BBQ is the best part of all!