

the Outrigger



DECEMBER 2017
Published by the Outrigger Canoe Club for Members and Guests at Home and Abroad

Outrigger Enters Six Crews in Molokai Hoe

By Cory Nakamura



The *Mana Ula* crew: Seated: Indar Lange, Cory Nakamura. Standing: Jake Hamstra, Antonio Miranda, Brady Piercy, Coach Jim Beaton, Tyler Jaggars, Deke Kilpatrick, Christian Bradley, Heinere Itchner.



The *Mamala* crew at the finish line: Jordan Brandt, Casey Kahikina, Scott Casey, Serge Krivatsy, Sage Capone.



The crew of the *Leilani* powers toward Waikiki.

The Open Men's program ended the season on a strong note being one of only three canoe clubs to enter four open crews into this year's Molokai Hoe. Participation throughout the season grew and Coach Jim Beaton was able to field competitive crews across the board.

Conditions were not ideal as the trade winds died in the days leading up to the race and racers were faced with an outgoing tide. However, all four crews successfully completed the crossing and gained experience in the unforgiving Ka'iwi Channel.

***Mana 'Ula* Crew**

In a very competitive field that included three Tahitian teams, this crew finished a solid ninth place overall in a time of 5 hours 15 minutes and 44 seconds. Steered by Heinere Itchner, the crew also included Tyler Jaggars, Jake Hamstra, Antonio Miranda, Cory Nakamura, Christian Bradley, Indar Lange, Deke Kilpatrick and Brady Piercy.

A big mahalo to Coach Jim for driving the escort boat and Steven Enos for his help with water drops, organizing the coolers, and help with the picking up of paddlers.

***Leilani* Crew**

Winning the Koa Canoe Division was the *Leilani* crew, steered by Stew Kawakami. They finished in a time of 5:38:27; good for 26th overall and besting the next Koa canoe by more than 48 minutes.

Members of the crew were Neal Hafner, Riggs Silva, Connor Grune, Kevin McCallum, Keoni Watson, Max Solmssen, Mike Fine, and Bob Carlson.

Escorting the crew were members Robi Solmssen and Liat Portner. Both Robi and Liat have extensive water knowledge and were integral to the crew's performance.

***Mamala* Crew**

The *Mamala* crew was steered by Casey Kahikina finishing 67th overall with a time of 6:15:29. By all accounts, they had a

blast and passed several crews on their way from Hawaii Kai to the finish.

Crew members included Jordan Brant, Ruben Cabaniero, Rob LaFontaine, Serge Krivatsy, Sage Capone, Mark Eliashof, Vince McCormack, and Scotty Riggs. They were escorted by OCC member, Kevin Allen. Kevin, thank you for your knowledge and keeping the crew safe.

***Loli'i* Crew**

Steering the *Loli'i* crew, Kapono Fujitani led a group of experienced, novice paddlers, and youngsters who will someday lead the OCC paddling program.

Crew members included Jon Everest, Jon Claucherty, Rick Humphreys, Riley Martinez, Mark Toohey, Akea Kahikina, Dana Bergeman, and Joe Donahue. They finished in a very respectable time of 6:29:32.

Mahalo to Tom McTigue for his guidance and Annmarie Mizuno for sharing her ocean knowledge and good spirits!

It is important to all of us in the Open Men's program that we acknowledge what an incredible job Jim Beaton did this season. His focus on a serious competitive spirit, one that prioritized commitment to the Club, the program, and each other combined with having fun all while working hard made it a year we will not forget.

While we are all proud of our race results, the most rewarding part of this season was seeing a group of forty plus paddlers of all ages, backgrounds, and skill become one team. So, Jim, thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to us and most importantly to the program and its future.

The Open Men's program would like to thank the Board of Directors, Tom McTigue and the rest of the Paddling Committee for their belief in us and their efforts to make this season a success. Finally, mahalo nui to Arthur Mallet for all the hours of work throughout the year. From handling race registration to shopping at Costco for our pre-race dinner; you are truly priceless!

Masters 55

By Al Darling

The OCC Masters 55 crew, proudly wearing the red “O” race jerseys for the 65th Annual Molokai Ho’e, and predominantly manned with veteran OCC paddlers, completed the Kaiwi Channel crossing with a time of 5 hours 53 minutes, faster than the winning time for this division the previous year.

Inspired by the words of our friend Mark Sandvold at his Winged “O” induction ceremony earlier in the week, the crew strived to push ourselves and each other to “bring back the greatness that is Outrigger Canoe Club”.

After 21,886 strokes across the Kaiwi Channel (calculated estimate based on average stroke count and total time), the crew ended up 32 seconds short of the podium, proud of our efforts but a little short of our goals. However, the groundwork for next season has already begun!

Coaches Marc Haine, Brant Ackerman, and John Finney pushed the 55 masters crew all season, providing guidance based on their legendary successes, and the 55 men responded with all the energy and strength they could muster. We were fortunate to have a strong group of sixteen plus paddlers pushing each other all season, competing in the Duke and Pailolo races, and getting faster every week, every stroke.

This distance season will be fondly remembered, as they



Masters 55

Front: Al Darling, Gunnar Schull, Byron Ho. Back: Geoff Graf, Matt Esecson, Marc Haine, Karl Heyer IV, Todd Bradley, Rob Harrison, Chris Kincaid, Keahi Pelayo, Ken Silva. Overall: 45th. Masters 55 Division: 4th. Time: 5:53:37. Canoe: *Kapua*. Photo by Twain Newhart.

all are, for the inspirational moments; the strong camaraderie, the competitiveness of two boats pushing each other at every practice, and the many sessions of paddling from OCC to Honolulu Harbor and back, with the sun setting behind us as the lights of Waikiki twinkled awake.

This is the paddling brotherhood that makes Outrigger distance paddling special. We are truly grateful!

Junior Crew

By Chris R. Laird

For the second year in a row, Outrigger Canoe Club had a junior crew enter the Molokai race. This year’s crew had some of last year’s crew back and a few new ones.

The crew consisted of Mike and Scott Nakaoka, Zoran Cullinan, Colt Correa, Avi Laird, Kaimana Drago, Wyatt Yee, Ryan Martinez, and Reuben Sun Lee. Plus, they had Jack Lyons as their team helper and key go to “grom-bomb” for everything they needed. They were coached by Leighton Miyachi and myself all distance season.

The Molokai race proved to be a big challenge for the team. The team had amazing “dog-fights” and never gave up, chasing down teams one at a time. Past the midway point some of the boys began to feel themselves being tested and after some strong reflection they rallied and pushed even harder to a great strong seventh place junior division finish in 6:22:18.

The thing to remember about the junior crew is that we ran a program that was centered on bringing out the best in every young man and involving each junior who wanted to be in the program.

Almost all of the boys were involved in their high school sports along with their



Front: Avi Laird, Colt Correa. Back: Coach Leighton Miyachi, Zoran Cullinan, Kaimana Drago, Mike Nakaoka, Ryan Martinez, Wyatt Yee, Scott Nakaoka, Reuben Sun Lee, Coach Chris Laird.

school homework. It was not easy to run daily practices with nine different schedules and commitments to other sports. This caused us to only be able to run a single group practice a week – always on Sundays.

We ended the season with a bunch of boys who became a tight group of friends and good young men. All of the paddlers know that these guys were always willing to jump in and help move or rig boats and whatever else was asked of them.

In addition to Molokai, they also raced in the mixed adult/junior Kanaka Ikaika Race (went as juniors only!), plus the Duke and Henry Ayau races as well.

All of the juniors are grateful to OCC member Pua Rochlen and JAMS for sponsoring them with team shorts! Plus a large and loud mahalo to the OCC Paddling Committee and fellow distance coaches for including them all season.

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