

Team Bradley dominates, defends title

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September 25, 2017



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Team Bradley paddlers, front to back, Claire Ing, Kealani Bartlett, Mahealani Botelho, Andrea Moller, Lauren Spalding and Lori Nakamura cross the finish line to win the Hawaiian Airlines Na Wahine O Ke Kai on Sunday.

For a brief moment, the countless hours of paddling and training were forgotten as Kealani Bartlett was greeted by husband Kai and son Kaiakea after emerging from the Team Bradley outrigger canoe.

After notching her first Molokai-to-Oahu title with the dynastic Team Bradley crew, Bartlett represents the latest wave of talent to join the team that not only rebuilds, but reloads year after year.

Team Bradley crossed the line in 5 hours, 55 minutes and 22 seconds to claim gold for the 10th time as a crew at the Hawaiian Airlines Na Wahine O Ke Kai. Sunday's event marked the 39th edition — and 37th crossing — of the 41-mile race from Hale O Lono Harbor, Molokai, to Duke Kahanamoku Beach fronting the Hilton Hawaiian Village in Waikiki.

Outrigger Canoe Club of Australia (6:00:31) finished second, while the local Outrigger Canoe Club (6:00:41) was just 10 seconds behind after a sprint to the finish. Hui Nalu-Uncle Jimmy Olds (6:06:14) and Lanikai-Pohako'ele'ele (6:14:13) rounded out the top five.

“To have baby waiting for you on the beach, that’s what it’s all about,” Bartlett said of her 5-year-old son. “A ton of us are mothers, so it’s a lot of sacrifice by our families to make it possible for us to paddle. This is my first year racing with them, so it was such an unbelievable honor and privilege. They’re absolute legends and I’m humbled to be in the presence of this special group of girls.”

Bartlett was joined in the victorious crew by Lauren Spalding Zukevich, Andrea Moller-Bouwens, Cherisse Agorastos, Kristin Foster, Lori Nakamura, Kaulu Lu'uwai, Mahealani Botelho, Alana Goo and Claire Ing. The squad is coached by Kelly Fey, a former Team Bradley paddler who has been part of the group since the dominant run began.

Two in a row

Team Bradley has now claimed two consecutive and 10 of the last 12 titles — including six straight crowns from 2005-2010 — and still owns the current race record time of 5 hours, 22 minutes and 5 seconds established in 2008. With the win on Sunday, the crew pulled even with the dominant group of Offshore (Calif.), which also won the race six consecutive times (1986-1991) and was victorious 10 times out of 11 tries (1986-1996).

“It’s an amazing experience, I do this for them,” said Botelho in reference to her three young children and two older step-children. “We’re just trying to build on this foundation where people come together for the right purpose, and put the team ahead of yourself at the highest level of the sport. We didn’t have one single conversation about (a 10th title), it’s about having a good time and doing what we love.”

Fast start

Team Bradley jumped ahead from the start, and increased its lead as the race went on. As the crew passed Maunalua Bay fronting Hawaii Kai, Team Bradley had about a mile advantage, which equates to a gap of approximately five minutes.

Fifty-nine crews took part in the race, and the competition featured an array of squads from Hawaii island, Maui, Oahu, Kauai, California, Australia and Japan. In distance races, crews are accompanied by motored escort boats and are allowed to substitute paddlers along the way to provide for rest and hydration breaks.

Paddlers were tasked with remaining cool without much cloud cover, and an extreme low tide created “sticky” water early on. As crews crossed the Kaiwi Channel, reports

from paddlers and officials indicated manageable 4-to-6-foot swells and another bump due to a south swell down the home stretch.

“It was a bad tide, and considering there wasn’t a lot of surf to be had, it went pretty fast,” said Tracy Phillips, a veteran paddler with the third-place Outrigger crew. “It was a hard race, and Bradley is nails. We knew it was going to be tough, Bradley is a really strong team, but that’s how it goes — it’s paddling.”

The men will compete at the Hawaiian Airlines Molokai Hoe on Oct. 8 and will follow the same course as the Na Wahine O Ke Kai in the final event of the 2017 outrigger canoe paddling season. Team Red Bull from Hawaii island, Team Primo of Maui, Lanikai and Hui Nalu represent the local favorites after strong performances in the long-distance season thus far.

2017 Na Wahine O Ke Kai Results

No.	Team Name	Country	Div	Divplace	Time	Place
69	Team Bradley	Maui	OPEN DIVISION	1	5:55:22	1
35	Outrigger Canoe Club Of Australia	Australia	OPEN DIVISION	2	6:00:31	2
81	Outrigger 1	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	3	6:00:41	3
2	Hui Nalu – Uncle Jimmy Olds	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	4	6:06:14	4
42	Lanikai-Pohako’ele’ele	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	5	6:14:13	5
17	Kai Ehitu Mama Kimitete	Big Island	OPEN DIVISION	6	6:15:13	6
53	Team Bradley Masters	Oahu	JR MASTERS 40	1	6:20:31	7
68	Team Moana	Maui	OPEN DIVISION	7	6:20:43	8
1	Healani – Yama	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	8	6:21:58	9
29	Team Japan Molokai (wa’akapaemua Cc	Japan	OPEN DIVISION	9	6:25:47	10
50	Kai Opuu-Tesoro	Big Island	OPEN DIVISION	10	6:28:48	11
34	Kailua 40s Blue	Oahu	JR MASTERS 40	2	6:28:57	12
43	Puna Canoe Club	Big Island	OPEN DIVISION	11	6:30:35	13
8	Outrigger Canoe Club 2	Oahu	KOA CANOE	1	6:31:59	14
26	Hui Lanakila – Koa	Oahu	KOA CANOE	2	6:35:49	15
21	Hui Nalu – Hokupa’a	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	12	6:36:40	16
3	Kailua 55’s	Oahu	GOLDEN MASTERS 55	1	6:37:30	17
44	Lanikai-50s	Oahu	SENIOR MASTERS 50	1	6:40:28	18
47	Hawaiian-White	Maui	OPEN DIVISION	13	6:40:34	19
51	Hawaiian Blue	Maui	OPEN DIVISION	14	6:40:36	20
38	Manu O Ke Kai	Oahu	JR MASTERS 40	3	6:41:09	21
31	Kailua Na Wahine Po’ai Moku	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	15	6:41:35	22
46	Pacific Aunties	California	SENIOR MASTERS 50	2	6:43:33	23
80	Outrigger Canoe Club-Masters	Oahu	GOLDEN MASTERS 55	2	6:47:31	24
45	Na Kai Ewalu	Maui	OPEN DIVISION	16	6:47:42	25

41	Lanikai Juniors-Green	Oahu	JUNIORS	1	6:51:44	26
54	Kai Opua-Ale	Big Island	OPEN DIVISION	17	6:53:59	27
30	Kailua- 2	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	18	6:54:14	28
24	Hui Nalu Juniors – Kepo'inalu	Oahu	JUNIORS	2	6:54:27	29
25	Kamehameha-Red	Oahu	JUNIORS	3	6:54:46	30
82	Outrigger Canoe Club 3	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	19	6:57:02	31
9	Waikiki Surf Club	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	20	6:57:30	32
67	Lae'ula O Kai-Green	Maui	SENIOR MASTERS 50	3	6:58:10	33
49	San Diego Outrigger Canoe Club	California	OPEN DIVISION	21	6:58:24	34
4	Lanikai-Koa	Oahu	KOA CANOE	3	6:58:36	35
23	Pu'uwai-Koa	Kauai	KOA CANOE	4	6:59:12	36
39	Lae'ula O Kai-Red	Maui	OPEN DIVISION	22	7:00:53	37
48	Napili Canoe Club	Maui	OPEN DIVISION	23	7:00:55	38
28	Koa Kai Canoe Club	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	24	7:01:11	39
52	Haleiwa Outrigger Canoe Club-55's	Oahu	GOLDEN MASTERS 55	3	7:01:54	40
27	Hui Lanakila	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	25	7:02:13	41
7	Keahiakahoe	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	26	7:02:22	42
32	Kailua Canoe Club	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	27	7:02:49	43
36	Imua One Blade	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	28	7:03:35	44
20	Waikiki Beach Boys-Water Witches	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	29	7:05:01	45
12	Healani-Kana'i	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	30	7:05:24	46
10	Healani-White	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	31	7:05:44	47
33	Kailua 40 – Kalama	Oahu	JR MASTERS 40	4	7:06:44	48
14	New Hope – Wa'a Sistahs	Oahu	GOLDEN MASTERS 55	4	7:07:48	49
22	Hui Nalu – Mokuahi	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	32	7:07:54	50
37	Lokahi Canoe Club	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	33	7:09:09	51
16	Healani-Jrs	Oahu	JUNIORS	4	7:09:45	52
15	New Hope – 50licious Sunshine Crew	Oahu	SENIOR MASTERS 50	4	7:14:32	53
11	Anuenue	Oahu	SENIOR MASTERS 50	5	7:16:05	54
76	Keola O Ke Kai – Team Waipio 76	Oahu	JUNIORS	5	7:17:50	55
19	Kamehameha-Gold	Oahu	JUNIORS	6	7:20:52	56
40	Lanikai Juniors-White	Oahu	JUNIORS	7	7:28:03	57
6	Wahine Kiakahi	Oahu	OPEN DIVISION	34	7:38:34	58
5	New Hope Canoe Club – Nifty 50's	Oahu	SENIOR MASTERS 50	6	7:46:31	59

Results by Pacific Sport Events and Timing

<https://pseresults.com/events/968/results>