

## HCRA regatta

# Hanalei stuns field

By Andy Yamaguchi

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HILO — Call it the Ambush on Hilo Bay.

Hanalei Civic Canoe Club, a big fish on Kauai but an unknown quantity statewide, shocked clubs twice its size yesterday to win the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association championship regatta.

Hanalei edged favored Hui Nalu, 62-58, when it won the last race of the day, the two-mile senior men's event, by 1.8 seconds over Hui Nalu.

It was the first HCRA state title for Hanalei, which won three titles as a member of Hui Wa'a.

Healani outdid Outrigger, 34-31, for third place and Big Island champion Kai Opua was fifth with 22. About 3,000 paddlers and spectators jammed Hilo Bayfront Park on a gray, drizzly day.

But the sun shone on Hanalei. "We just pulled it off. I still don't believe it," said Hanalei coach Nick Beck, whose skillful lineup jockeying squeezed every possible point out of his 80-member club.

"Nobody knows how good Hanalei is until

they come here," said Hui Nalu coach Kala Kukea, whose 200-member club had run away with the Oahu championships last week.

"Hanalei doing what they did is just incredible," Hui Nalu paddler Wayne Fujihara said.

Hanalei, the little club that could, has only enough paddlers for about 11 crews.

But Hanalei entered 24 of the 27 races — winning six and placing in the top four in 12 others — because Beck made almost all of his paddlers race in at least two events.

Two Hanalei paddlers, Dan Sullivan and Craig Leeper, paddled in three winning races. Sullivan was on the Novice A, sophomore and senior crews. Leeper was on the Novice B, freshman and senior crews.

"The majority of our races involved guys who moved up," Beck said. "We've done it before. But the last couple of years we'd lead a regatta halfway and then run out of steam. This year we did the conditioning and hoped we could pull off some of the big ones."

Hanalei pulled off the biggest one yesterday.

See Hanalei on Page F-10.

# Hanalei strokes to state title

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from page F-1

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day, beating Hui Nalu's senior men in a thrilling championship finale.

Hui Nalu had closed the gap to 54-53 going into the last event after its junior men and senior women won. The junior men's victory was the key because Hui Nalu had not won the event all season and the crew was made up of five sophomores who had moved up.

To win the title, Hanalei would have to defeat Hui Nalu's best crew with what was a basically pickup team — three seniors, two sophomores and a freshman paddler. As if that wasn't enough, Hanalei drew the slow outside lane while Hui Nalu had the fast lane closest to shore.

At a mile-and-a-quarter, Hanalei just beat Hui Nalu into the turn. At 1½ miles, Hanalei had opened up a four-length lead.

Then Hui Nalu stroke Tommy Conner upped the beat from 61 to 65 strokes a minute, and the Oahu champions were flying.

Partisans from both clubs dashed to the finish line and yelled themselves hoarse, and it looked like Hui Nalu would accelerate past Hanalei. But Hanalei crossed the finish line first, beating Hui Nalu by about 10 feet, no more.

"I can't talk, but I can drink!" a Hanalei member cried.

"It just feels so fantastic," Beck said. "We've taken two thirds and a second since joining the HCRA, and I think there's not a paddler here who didn't have this as a goal."

"Just a day late and a dollar short," Conner said philosophically. "I guess we're still a four-mile crew." The senior course on Oahu is four miles long.

"I don't think we really knew the regatta was in the balance," Conner said. "We didn't talk about it. If we had talked about it, I think we would've had an extra incentive."

"I didn't know they were ahead," Kukea said, "but I don't know if knowing would have made us paddle any harder than we did."

Ditto for Hanalei. "Nick was yelling at us, 'Get 'em up, 'cause here comes Hui Nalu,'" Hanalei stroke Sean Hickey said, "but I was already on my knees. When we crossed the finish line at the 3½-mile point, I thought it was over and started to stand up, but I saw the guy behind me keep going so I kept going."

So did Hanalei's canoe, which sprung a 3-foot-long, half-inch-wide crack during a collision midway through the regatta. It was patched with tape.

Hanalei led for most of the regatta, partly because Hui Nalu didn't control the younger divisions as it usually does.

"You can never tell how the Neighbor Island clubs are going to split up the points," said Steve Scott, Outrigger's adult men's coach. "You may have clubs with two or three very good crews, and that'll take away points from a team that's dominated."

The best Neighbor Island upstart was the 18-year-old boys of Kahana, Maui. They were the 16 champs last year. "Yeah, Maui get some bad guys, too," said steersman Junior Nuesca, whose parents and seven siblings also paddle for the club.

There was a controversy early in the regatta. Currents caused the starting line markers to drift ahead, and crews had no way of knowing if they were committing a false start.

"I had two first-place crews and one second-place crew disqualified, can you believe that?" Healani coach Gary Murakami said. "Every time we come to outside islands we get trouble."

But the meet was free of the widespread problems that ruined last year's state regatta in Lahaina. Part of the reason was the

cooperation given by Hawaii County officials.

The county built a restroom and a two-story officials' stand at Hilo Bayfront Park, cleared the beach of debris and even allowed the sale of beer and wine during the championships.

Yesterday's race results:

**HAWAIIAN CANOE RACING ASSOCIATION**  
**State Championship Regatta**  
**On Hilo Bay**

**Men**

**12B** — 1. Ohana O Ke Kai (S. Kawai, B. Domen, M. Spencer, F. Mendoza, S. Robertson, W. Kaohu) 1:57.0; 2. Kawaihae 1:58.4; 3. Waimanalo 1:59.6; 4. Hui Nalu 2:04.8.

**12A** — 1. Healani (Peter Montgomery, Earl Spencer, Hoby Parks, Conrad Chandler, Steve Murphy, Tyler Parks) 1:50.3; 2. Hui Nalu 1:50.8; 3. Hanalei 1:53.6; 4. Kai Opua 1:54.0.

**13** — 1. Kailua (Targuir Collis, Zain Saidin, Sam Martinez, Jason Rodrigues, Louis Carrigan, David Steele) 1:48.0; 2. Kamehameha 1:48.7; 3. Healani 1:49.7; 4. Hanalei 1:50.2.

**14** — 1. Healani (Jason Pang, Chad Kurashige, Keith Gomes, Daniel Ngo, James Judd, Darriel Arnold) 1:40.2; 2. Hui Nalu 1:43.2; 3. Keaukaha 1:44.4; 4. Kai Opua 1:47.2.

**Novice B** — 1. Hanalei (Craig Leeper, Gary Hudson, Dave Myrick, Mark Daniels, Skip Forrest, Rick Marvin) 3:41.5; 2. Kailua 3:52.3; 3. Kawaihae 3:53.6; 4. Hui Lanakila 3:55.1.

**Novice A** — 1. Hanalei (Dan Sullivan, Christian Marston, Bob Middleton, Mike Laurets, Murphy Carfagnes, Victor Williams) 3:47.3; 2. Kai Opua 3:48.1; 3. Healani 3:50.6; 4. Outrigger 3:51.0.

**16** — 1. Lanikai (Peter Weaver, Robin Moe, Mike Smith, Peter Binney, Tim Ross, Jim Fofi) 3:53.8; 2. Hui Nalu 3:54.5; 3. Outrigger 4:00.5; 4. Healani 4:05.1.

**18** — 1. Kahana (Michael Nuesca, Joseph Lindsey, Alvin Panlasigui, Guy Flores, Alex Wilsey, David Nuesca Jr.) 7:58.8; 2. Lanikai 8:00.5; 3. Kai Opua 8:03.6; 4. Outrigger 8:05.3.

**Freshman** — 1. Hanalei (Gary Hudson, Craig Leeper, Dave Myrick, David Killingsworth, Murphy Carfagnes, David Beck) 7:25.9; 2. Kamehameha 7:38.9; 3. Kai Opua 7:53.3; 4. Hui Nalu 7:57.9.

**Sophomore** — 1. Hanalei (Jeff McBride, Earl Simpson, Mark Daniels, Dan Sullivan, Mike Laurette, Nick Marvin) 7:25.5; 2. Kai Opua 7:46.0; 3. Hui Nalu 7:47.4; 4. Wailani 7:52.6.

**Open Four** — 1. Outrigger (Marshall Ross, Mark Buck, Murray Hixson, Mike Lemes) 3:57.9; 2. Waikiki Surf 4:04.3; 3. Hui Nalu 4:04.4; 4. Hui Lanakila 4:06.8.

**Masters** — 1. Hanalei (Rex Burrell, Bob Kaden, Dick Parks, Don Montgomery, Jerry Lefkowitz, Lee Ridley) 3:45.9; 2. Hawaiian Warriors 3:48.0; 3. Outrigger 3:54.9; 4. Hui Nalu 3:55.3.

**Junior** — 1. Hui Nalu (Harold Akeo, Bob Rocheleau, Rocky Higgins, Wayne Fujiwara, Richard Shizuru, Kahele Kukea) 11:43.9; 2. Outrigger 11:53.4; 3. Kai Opua 11:53.8; 4. Hanalei 11:54.5.

**Senior** — 1. Hanalei (Sean Hickey, Earl Simpson, Craig Leeper, Dan Sullivan, Gaylord Wilson, Nick Beck) 15:31.3; 2. Hui Nalu 15:33.1; 3. Kai Opua 15:48.6; 4. Outrigger 16:08.2.

**Women**

**12** — 1. Healani (Dellas Kaheaku, Janna Arakaki, Chrystie Poaha, Tany Yamamoto, Suzette Telles, Christine Pabillano) 2:00.3; 2. Hui Nalu 2:03.5; 3. Kai Opua nt. 4. Hanalei nt.

**Novice B** — 1. Hui Nalu (Yvonne Nansini, Venessa Foljas, Laura Medrick, Jane-Ann Pryor, Puahi Joane) 1:51.6; 2. Lanikai 1:51.9; 3. Hui Lanakila 1:52.1; 4. Healani 1:54.5.

**13** — 1. Outrigger (Katie McCravy, Heather Moore, Stacy Starrhouse, Sheila Stehauwer, Malia Boyd, Kimmy Merrick) 1:54.3; 2. Hanalei 1:57.4; 3. Kai Oni 1:57.5; 4. Kailua 1:58.1.

**Novice A** — 1. Hui Lanakila (Shelley Kahuanui, Elizabeth Kamakena, Terry Spencer, Malia Kamaka, Sissi Kamali, Naunani Kinanau Kamalii) 1:45.6; 2. Hui Nalu 1:48.8; 3. Hanalei 1:50.4; 4. Kauikeaouli nt.

**15** — 1. Hui Nalu (Shavonne Spencer, Kili Mednick, Mele Franco, Marian Pettigrew, Laurie Avilla, Karyn Johnston) 1:52.3; 2. Kahana 1:54.3; 3. Hanalei 1:54.7; 4. Kailua 1:58.6.

**17** — 1. Kauikeaouli (Maile Chapman, Bernadette Cho, Healani Kimitete, Nicole Navarro, Annette Pierce, Tracy Watei) 4:25.8; 2. Lanikai 4:33.2; 3. Hui Nalu 4:35.7; 4. Healani 4:36.3.

**Freshman** — 1. Kauikeaouli (Jane Bockus, Nicomas Dollar, Barbara Lasich, Lynn Long, Yvonne Khouri-Morgan, Tammy Sullivan) 4:18.4; 2. Healani 4:19.8; 3. Hanalei 4:20.1; 4. Hui Nalu 4:25.4.

**Sophomore** — 1. Kailua (Jenny Scafe, Lori Bode, Ann Malama, Sandy Scafe-Kalama, Andrea Ward, Luanna Burke) 4:23.5; 2. Hanalei 4:23.8; 3. Outrigger 4:25.6; 4. Na Kai Ewalu 4:26.1.

**Masters** — 1. Healani (J.J. Miller, Susan May, Jane Taniguchi, Evelyn Arakaki, Jane Gay, Elsa Wright) 1:57.1; 2. Hanalei 2:01.4; 3. Lanikai 2:02.0; 4. Outrigger 2:02.1.

**Junior** — 1. Na Pili (Mary McGinty, Jackie Burke, Celine O'Grady, Gail Ingrish, Anne Sharpe, Jeannie Livingston) 4:12.4; 2. Hui Nalu 4:17.5; 3. Hanalei 4:19.8; 4. Healani 4:21.5.

**Senior** — 1. Hui Nalu (Lita Blankenfeld, Lindsey Styan, Nalani Spencer, Trish Gallagher, Carol Kukea, Denise Darval) 8:42.4; 2. Outrigger 8:50.1; 3. Hanalei 9:00.6; 4. Kai Opua 9:04.0.

**Mixed**

**12** — 1. Kawaihae (Kevin Takada, Scott Martinson, Dominic Souza, Jeffrey Hall, Maitland Akau, Jim Ninis) 1:56.7; 2. Hanalei 1:57.5; 3. Hui Nalu 1:57.8; 4. Healani 2:01.5.

**Adult** — 1. Healani (Blacky Conant, Tony Serafin, Catherine Kam, Alexander Chang, Nancy Johnson, Dede Reiplinger) 4:04.5; 2. Kamehameha 4:05.3; 3. Outrigger 4:05.6; 4. Hui Nalu 4:08.0.

**Club scoring**

1. Hanalei 62 points; 2. Hui Nalu 58; 3. Healani 34; 4. Outrigger 31; 5. Kai Opua 22; 6. Lanikai 16; 7. Kailua 15; 8. Kauikeaouli 11; 9. Kawaihae 10; 10 (tie). Kamehameha and Hui Lanakila 9 each; 12. Kahana 8; 13. Na Pili 7; 14. Ohana O Ke Kai 5; 15. Hawaiian Warriors 3; 16 (tie). Waimanalo, Kai Oni and Keaukaha 2 each; 19 (tie). Na Kai Ewalu and Wailani 1 each.