

Waikiki 'Beach Girls' open with win

[By Kyle Galdeira / Special to the Star-Advertiser](#)

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Surfers enjoyed 5- to 6-foot swells as the Waikiki Beach Boys distance crew cooled down after crossing the finish line first in Waikiki.

Much like students going back to school at summer's end, crews participating in the long distance outrigger canoe paddling season are quickly reminded of the hard work and preparation needed to succeed.

"We need to keep doing our homework," said Dana Gorecki, one of many experienced paddlers making up the Waikiki Beach Boys distance crew.

The "Beach Girls" aced their first test by claiming the 40th annual Dad Center Race held Sunday along Oahu's east and south shores. The event marked the first full-field event of the women's long-distance paddling season, and featured 41 crews that traversed a 25-mile course spanning

from Kailua Beach, around Makapuu and Diamond Head and finishing in the waters fronting Kaimana Beach and the Outrigger Canoe Club in Waikiki.

Waikiki notched the win in 3 hours, 10 minutes and 46.58 seconds and fended off Hui Nalu's open crew (3:12:23.79). Defending champion Team Bradley (3:18:22.69) crossed the line third despite suffering a five-minute penalty for an improper start, and edged Hui Nalu's masters (40-and-older) by 0.25 seconds.

"We learned a lot today, and we know that, just like us, the other crews will continue to get stronger," Gorecki said. "It's going to get tougher as the season goes on."

Gorecki was joined in the winning crew by Alanna Bender, Laura Birse, Chelsea Bizik, Rachel Brunsch, Jessica Kaawa, Eko Lapp, Frances Lichowski, Alexia Lopez and Jennifer Polcer.

Team Bradley, which races under Hawaiian Canoe Club of Maui, won this event in 2009 and again last year, beating Waikiki by six minutes. Team Bradley features an experienced group of paddlers from across the state that bears the name of outrigger canoe maker Sonny Bradley, and has won eight of the last nine Na Wahine O Ke Kai events, including a streak of six straight titles from 2005 to 2010; Waikiki dethroned Bradley in 2011.

Hui Nalu's masters and Team Bradley got out to an early advantage around Flat Island, but Waikiki and Hui Nalu's open crew eventually worked their way into the lead. The two canoes then seesawed into and out of first place as the crews rounded Makapuu and worked around Koko Head. Gorecki explained that while Team Bradley made a charge in the waters off Maunalua Bay, Waikiki answered after making some key adjustments and established the eventual winning margin.

"We played the cat-and-mouse game. ... Team Bradley marched up on us, but midway through Maunalua Bay, we made a push and opened up a bit of a gap," said Gorecki.

Waikiki's victory was made possible in part by the successful steering from Brunsch, a veteran waterwoman who was tasked with navigating the canoe after experienced steerswoman Kauai Pelekane took the year off from racing. The Beach Boys are in good hands when it comes to steering, as Bizik is also skilled at guiding the boat when called upon.

"She has some big shoes to fill but is handling the pressure very well," said Gorecki of Brunsch's solid performance.

Sunday's race was named after George David "Dad" Center, a premier waterman in the same era as Duke Kahanamoku who headed the Outrigger Canoe Club's water programs. Kawika Grant, a longtime member of Outrigger's paddling committee, explained that in those times, women were not included in canoe paddling because they were thought to lack the strength or endurance to compete in the same events as men.

In 1943, Outrigger fielded its first women's crew, and in 1974, the first women's long-distance race sanctioned by the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association was held in memory of Center and

his work in advancing women's paddling. At the time, the course spanned 8 miles from Maunalua Bay to Outrigger; it was expanded to its current distance in 1979.

Waikiki's victory netted the crew the Thomas H. Richert trophy, which is awarded to the race's open division winner each year. The cup was donated by Outrigger paddler Tiare Richert Finney, whose mother, Loretta Turnbull, won what was originally dubbed the Conte Theo Rossi Cup in 1932 as a reward for victory in Italian speedboat racing.

The distance season consists of four races on Oahu — two men's and two women's events — followed by the Na Wahine O Ke Kai and Molokai Hoe: the women's and men's versions of the 41-mile Molokai-to-Oahu race considered the sport's world championship.

The women return to action on Sept. 7 for the E Lau Hoe race, which follows a course from Maunalua Bay to Nanakuli Beach Park. The men will complete the same course Sept. 14 in the Henry Ayau Memorial Race.

CALENDAR

MONDAY

SOCCER

Outrigger Shootout: Texas vs. Hawaii, 5 p.m., Waipio Peninsula Soccer Stadium.

TUESDAY

No major local events scheduled.

POLO

HONOLULU POLO

Gene Turchi Cup and USPA Sportsman-ship Cup

At Waialana

Creekside 4, Aloha Shell 2

Goal scorers—C: Ronnie Tongg 3, Michael Ebinger. **AS:** Chris Dawson 2.

VOLLEYBALL

2014 HAWAII VOLLEYBALL INVITATIONAL

Thursday through Saturday

At Kamehameha

Saturday, Championship Round Gold Division

Mililani def Castle 25-22, 25-22

Kamehameha Blue (JV) def Punahou Div II 25-23, 16-25, 25-13

Kamehameha White (JV) def Radford 25-27, 25-15, 25-22

Kalaheo def HBA 25-15, 17-25, 25-18

Kamehameha def Mililani 25-19, 25-22

Moanalua def Kamehameha Blue (JV) 25-20, 25-16

KS Hawaii 1 def Kamehameha White (JV) 25-10, 25-16

Iolani def Kalaheo 25-21, 25-18

Radford def Castle 21-25, 25-22, 25-18

Punahou Div II def HBA 25-23, 25-21

HBA Def Castle 25-22, 22-25, 25-23

Punahou Div II def Radford 25-14, 25-22

Kamehameha Blue def Mililani 25-19, 25-21

Kamehameha White def Kalaheo 25-23, 25-21

Kalaheo def Mililani 25-19, 18-25, 25-19

PADDLING

DAD CENTER RACE

Kailua to Kaimana Beach

Overall—1. Waikiki Beach Boys 1, 3.10.46.58; 2. Hui Nalu-Coconuts, 3.12.23.79; 3. Hawaiian-Team Bradley, 3.18.22.69; 4. Hui Nalu 40's, 3.18.22.94; 5. Outrigger-Red, 3.19.51.10; 5. Kailua 40's, 3.25.16.19; 6. Hawaiian Canoe Club, 3.26.37.18; 7. Hui Nalu-Bananas, 3.26.50.62; 8. Waikiki Beach Boys 2, 3.28.44.89; 9. Outrigger 50's, 3.29.54.09; 10. Kailua 50's, 3.30.51.67.

Open women—1. Waikiki Beach Boys 1 (Alanna Bender, Laura Birse, Chelsea Bizik, Rachel Brunsch, Dana Gorecki, Jessica Kaawa, Eko Lapp, Frances Lichowski, Natalie "Alexia" Lopez, Jennifer Polcer), 3.10.46.58; 2. Hui-Nalu-Coconuts, 3.12.23.79; 3. Hawaiian-Team Bradley, 3.18.22.69.

Master women 40—1. Hui Nalu 40's (Tracy Phillips, Margie Kawailea, Teresa Felgate, Michelle Arnold, Donna Kahakui, Denise Darval-Chang, Katie Stephens, Pauahi Ioane, Julie Aio, Joanna Bozo Vierna), 3.18.22.94; 2. Kailua 40's, 3.25.16.19; 3. Lanikai 40's, 3.42.52.36.

Master women 50—1. Outrigger 50's (Paula Crabb, Kim Darling, Lisa Livingston, Katy Bourne, Marci Nowack, Kisi Heine, Mary Quinn, Linda Fernandez, Anna Grune, Laurie Lawson, Deb DeShars, Weney Wichman), 3.29.54.09; 2. Kailua 50's, 3.30.51.67; 3. North Shore, 3.40.35.90.

Master women 55—1. Hui Nalu 55's (Terry Malterre, M. Ponolani Tuinei, Lesline Connor, Brigitta Osterholt, Christie Gibson, Jonna Wickesser, Linda Nishimura, Marcia Moura, Mary Jo Gumbert, Teresa Lathrop, Lurline McGregor, Linda Cody), 3.46.03.69; 2. New Hope 55's, 3.56.08.55; 3. Kailua 60's, 4.01.52.83.

KAILUA BAY IRONMAN CHALLENGE

Long course, 13.4 miles

Open men—1. Lanikai CC, 1:38:06; 2. Kailua CC 1, 1:40:25; 3. Outrigger,