

Swimming the Kaiwi Channel

Over the Labor Day weekend, OCC member Stefan Reinke and Ryan Leong successfully completed a swim across the Kaiwi Channel between Molokai and Oahu. The pair left Molokai at a few minutes after 6 p.m. and arrived at Sandy Beach almost 20 hours later. The official time was 19:43.

The weekend before, Reinke, Leong and a third swimmer, Mark Williams were forced to abandon an attempt after almost eight hours when a curious tiger shark followed them for over 45 minutes. The second swim was less eventful, unless one takes into account man of war.

Swimming under an almost full moon, the pair were able to maintain a steady pace for the swim. The channel was unusually calm which made navigation easier, but took away any assistance from the waves. Indeed, the swimmers found themselves more than four hours behind their pace of the previous week at the half way mark.

The first official crossing of the channel was by Keo Nakama in 1961. Stefan is the first Club member to swim the Kaiwi Channel since Mackenzie Miller in 2009. In addition to Stefan and Mackenzie, other Club members that have successfully made the crossing include Harry Huffaker (1967 and 1972), Mike Miller (1979), Ian Emberson (1979), and Mike Spalding (2007).



Stefan Reinke and Ryan Leong after crossing the Kaiwi Channel.