

Annual OCC Paddleboard Race

By Joe Teipel

Twenty-eight men and one lone woman turned out Saturday, August 27th for the 5th Annual Long-Distance Paddleboard Marathon race. It's the Honolulu Marathon and the Waikiki Roughwater Swim of the paddleboard and surfing sphere. One difference between these events, though, is the admission by many former participants of all three that paddleboarding is the most grueling. Congratulations are in order, therefore, for all who completed the 6.2-mile (10,000 km) endurance test.

The weather was sunny, with deep-blue skies, fleecy white cumulus clouds fanning sparsely over Oahu's makai flank, and strong gusty trades. The otherwise pleasant conditions were hampered by the windchop, which made the ocean even more bitter. The slower than record times reflected, too, the hardship resulting from a sea surface that seemed mostly in opposition to the racer's intention. Side effects included stomach, chest and knee rash, bloodshot eyes, sunburn, burnt-out shoulder, arm and back muscles, a parched throat and a fatigued mental state due to the dogged determination required to complete the distance.

Mark Jackol, former paddleboard participant and professional surfing judge, said of this race, "I realized it was time to retire when I started taking heavy doses of aspirin to overcome the excruciating pain." Karl Heyer IV, agreed. "My back twinged for a week after the last one I entered." And then

there's Aka Hemmings who, in his yesteryear at age 17 or so, captured first place honors twice, commented that he doesn't want to do it unless he trains somewhat. "Nowadays," he added, "completing the race is just an accomplishment to see how the old bones are holding up!"

Top professional bodyboarder Pat Caldwell, who holds the Molokai-to-Oahu paddleboard record, bowed out of Saturday's competition due to lack of equipment. Lori Fagothey, normally an active surfer, is resting with an injury. She commented that she would like to see an all-women's race someday.

Back to the race itself, the finish was electrifying as hundreds of spectators focused seaward to watch Aaron Napoleon quickly close the gap between himself and then-leader Pua Rochlen to capture 1st place. Keone Kino, an active runner and swimmer, is remark-

ably consistent in these races having turned out for every one since their inception.

Here are the top finishers by category:

Boys

1) Aaron Napoleon	1:20:44
2) Bruce Eliashaft	1:28:07
3) Dawson Jones	1:28:15

Masters Men

1) Kimo Austin	1:32:37
2) Harry Cerny*	2:00:46
3) Bucky Logan	2:13:52

Mens

Pua Rochlen	1:20:53
Joey Napoleon	1:22:58
Brian Toguchi	1:29:14

Kids

Heath Hemmings	1:52:31
Wyatt Jones	1:55:46

Women

Robin Smith**	2:06:16
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*oldest participant **lone woman entrant



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