



The **MAIL BOX**

February 16, 1953

Mr. Edwin North McClellan
c/o Outrigger Canoe Club

On page 18 of the February issue of "Forecast," under your heading "Spring of 1935" and subtitled "Swimming," there appears this: "From Lloyd (Poupou) Conkling as reported in the Advertiser of March 2, 1935, 'Nobody knows how fast he (Duke Kahanamoku) could swim in the old days because there was nobody able to give him a real battle.'"

For a long period of time, I think I was closer to Duke than anyone else and I still recollect the relay in the centennial meet back in 1920 when Duke, as anchor man for the Hui Nalu, waited for Dan Keaweamahi to touch the float before taking off after the No. 4 Yale man who was close to half way across on the finishing lap. Those who saw Duke that night remember very well how the forepart of his body appeared to rise above the water much like the bow of an outboard racer and it seemed that Duke's arms, jabbing in and pulling back at the water, were doing so in an effort to keep him from flying away. It may also be remembered that at about three yards from the finish, when Duke was even with the Yale swimmer, his body settled again on to the water and he swam just fast enough to out-touch the Yale swimmer. The Yale man, as I recollect, was rated a 55-second man. An unofficial time caught Duke between 46.3 and 48 seconds. Duke's time for a 50-yard indoor was 22.2 seconds.

In another instance, Duke swam during practice, approximately three-quarters of a mile, one beautiful Sunday morning at Waikiki, starting from tread water. From the same point, the Hui Nalu relay team, with such fast men as Dan Keaweamahi, Buck Kahele, Francis Brown, Bob Kaawa, Fred Wilhelm, Oudie Holstein and others, in a canoe, paced Duke by having one of the team make a flying start off the canoe and when Duke began to pass him, another took a flying dive ahead of Duke and so on until the entire team had worn themselves out with Duke coming in first.

And now, please somebody, tell me how fast Duke could swim in the good old days.

Sincerely,

William "Knute" A. Cottrell

Dear "Knute" (Bill Cottrell):

Your very readable letter of 16 February 1953 arrived a day or so ago. It was full of valuable information and I certainly enjoyed it. Your personal interest in swimming and diving I hope will be brought to bear on helping to get the Outrigger Canoe Club back into the Swim-Dive-Competition. As Duke, Dad, Toots, Gay, you, Johnny

and Bill Hollinger, J. D. Kaupiko (Lukela), Charlie Amalu, Paul Withington, Harry Steiner, and other "old-timers" pass on there will be a fatal gap unless the Club awakens to the peril. Now is the time to do something. Approval of the recommendation for a permanent Swim-Dive Committee would help. There should be an all-year-round Swim-Dive Plan to operate in conjunction with Outrigger-Surfboard instruction of youngsters by a paid coach-and-administrator, just as there is paid-personnel for the Beach-Service. Swim-Dive-Outrigger-Surfboard competitions should be held every month for the youngsters. Moreover, the OCC should actively support right now the Melbourne Olympics of 1956. The Club's mission should be at least one Swimmer and one Diver for the 1956 Olympics. Every effort should be made immediately to get surfboard and outrigger events on the 1956 Olympic Program wherever it may be staged. All these things are "good business" for the OCC and such services are essential to the survival of the Club. Many thanks for writing me such an interesting and valuable letter.

Edwin North McClellan