

OCC Paddlers

Share Their Experiences

By Rob Durkin & Billy Philpotts | OC1/Kayak Committee



Bobby Hastings | Kulani Jones

Rob Durkin and Billy Philpotts, Members of the OC1/Kayak Subcommittee, asked two active one-man paddlers, Kulani Jones and Bobby Hastings III, to share their experiences with the paddling programs at OCC. Specifically, the conversation focused on their impressions of the one-man canoe and kayak programs here at Outrigger. The committee also wanted their input on certain programs to be developed to support OC1/Kayak paddlers.

RACING

RD: I understand that you both are racing your one-mans this season. Bobby, you are racing in the solo Molokai to Oahu race. And Kulani, didn't you just finish the Molokai relays?

KJ: Yeah, I raced the relay with Kuponu. It was excellent. We really left it out there on the water and gave it our all.

BP: Describe your emotions during a race and all the ups and downs.

KJ: I don't know. It's a lot of frustration. You want to be perfect, you know when it's wrong or not perfect. But, when it is running good, doing what you want to do, it's pretty awesome. There is nothing better than getting into a dogfight with someone. When you are off Black Point dueling with somebody and you push to catch a bump and cruise away... Nothing better.

BP: What is the recurring theme while you are out there? I know when I am out there; in a way, I am talking to myself. I am talking to the water and trying to get a response from the water. Sometimes when I put my paddle in the water and I get no response, it feels like quicksand down there. What is the recurring theme for your races?

BH3: It can be very different. In regatta races, it's all about going fast. There isn't much time to think. In longer races, the conditions are variable, your competitors are all around you, and you have to think about the course. You don't want to get sucked inside and off the straight line. You need to take advantage of any swells that are out there. You have to deal with getting frustrated with yourself. You have to think about what's happening and get through it and the current, the swell, your conditioning, and the wind.

KJ: Regatta is great camaraderie, but distance races are about so much more. The guys that can find something more within paddling than just the race, those are the guys that are going to stick with it. When you are out there for hours, you can't help but love it.

GOALS

BP: Will you guys be paddling 10 years from now?

BH3/KJ: No doubt... guaranteed.

BH3: That's one of the coolest things about paddling, anyone from 7 to 70 can get in a seat and paddle. At the State Championship at Maui last year, people of all ages were together chanting and dancing. It was really cool to see.

WORKOUTS

RD: Who gave you this (workout) schedule? Is it your own creation?

BH3: No, I pretty much raced whatever Kanaka Ikaika long races were going each week. I also came to Outrigger two-three mornings per week and did Walter's thing. And then on the weekend, go long.

RD: How many people were coming out to Walter's (Guild) workouts (MWF mornings)?

BH3: Anywhere from four to 12.

RD: Was it like last year when I was going out in the mornings? You know, like from my level to Walter? - (*Generalized knowing laughter!*)

BH3: No, it was just pretty much all fast folks and then one slow. I was the slow. (*Laughter again.*)

BP: How did those workouts help you? Did you see improvement?

BH3: Oh yeah, it helps a lot. And it teaches you how to switch gears well (with the interval workout).

RD: Does anyone give you any individual advice on those mornings?

BH3: Not directly, because it is more about going out together and having a paddle. I ask a lot of questions, and everyone always gives really good advice. And, a lot of it is just being out there with those guys and watching them... because you learn a lot from just watching them. A lot of times, I will just draft behind Jimmy (Austin) or Walter. I watch how they are paddling. Like when you are in a six-man, you follow the strokes and stuff, and that helps a lot.

BP: It's just a really nice way to start the day, isn't it?

BH3: Oh yeah. On the days when it's really calm, you go around Diamond Head. The sun is rising and silhouettes the neighbor islands. It's awesome. And there are dolphins, whales, and monk seals.

RD: Or during the passing months of the year, you notice the sun rising in different parts of the horizon and it's getting lighter earlier. Those times are pretty amazing.

BP: We are training for a purpose, to succeed; but, just a leisure paddle in the morning will give you that feeling.

KJ: It's hard to have that dedication with a sport and not get something else out of it. You need that connection with the water and everything else, and if you don't get that, then you will burn out fast. But if you love it, love just being out there by yourself or with other people, you will do it until you're dead. That's what I love about it. I look at all these experienced guys who don't even compete anymore. They go out every weekend and do Hawaii Kai runs.

BH3: Oh yeah, and THEY ARE GOOD!

KJ: So damn good!

BH3: They've got years on us.

RD: Yeah, put them in the bumps and they will kick your butt! They read the waves really well.

KJ/BH3: Right!

RD: You two really have such different approaches. Bobby is here in the mornings with Walter, Anthony (Hunt), and others. Kulani is at work early and is here later in the days with Evan (Rhodes) and Chris (Kincaid).

BH3: That is definitely the great thing about one-manning. You can set up here on the beach and wait for the next person to come set up. I have met a lot of total strangers and gone out for a great paddle and made some good friends.

KJ: And, Evan and Johnny were really on it this year. They had that training schedule all set up. Today is a one-hour workout or whatever. Then, you rig up, head out, and get a great workout.

OCC SUPPORT

RD: You know how we all watch these guys who go out every day in early morning. Sitting drinking coffee until the water looks right. And, you know, we all want to be like that in the future. We want to

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know who helps you out, and who motivates you.

BH3: For one thing, the Club helps us out – sponsorship with races. They give us jerseys and support for flying to Molokai. They provide the trailer before the races. You know, you do the race, store your boat, have some lunch and a drink with friends. You shower and then go home. All the camaraderie is here. The Outrigger also has the trailer available with a driver for Hawaii Kai runs. The Club does a lot.

BP: What else can the Club do to help you guys?

KJ: We need to get the kids involved.

RD: In the one-mans?

KJ: Yeah, I look at other clubs... they have one-man programs for keiki. I see herds of kids paddling one-mans up and down Lanikai beach because they belong to that program. They get boats donated. Some of us have old boats and we would want to donate them for the kids. Our kids are going to get older and they are going to improve our program. Lanikai is winning regattas because they have kids. Kailua is winning regattas because they have kids. They are going to keep winning long distance and Molokai because they have kids and they are growing up paddling for that club.

BP: They get out there early and they catch the bug, right?

BH3: We have tons of kids paddling on surf-skis in school programs. They get out there and they are catching bumps, getting stoked. They are surfing! It is a totally different feeling than paddling a six-man in the Ala Wai. It's exciting and they get the feel of the water early.

KJ: One thing the one-man offers to anyone, you go out there and catch your first bumps and it becomes a way of life. You can race. You can cruise. I can take a fishing line and troll as I work out and catch some fish. I used to surf all the time but now that is a battle... too many guys in the waves. But, you go for a Hawaii Kai run, catch all kine waves, and you're surfing the whole way.

BH3: It is the great thing about going out with guys who are better. You get better. If you have no experience, it is probably a good thing to join the novice program. Because you get someone with experience, (the coach), who can teach you technique, and conditioning, and everything it takes to paddle. And you will be meeting people of your level, same speed, same conditioning, with whom you can start paddling and socializing. And, you take that with you. It opens a whole new door on the Outrigger Canoe Club.

Proposed Projects – OC1/Kayak Committee Technique Clinics

BP: Do you think that a one-man technique clinic is worthwhile?

BH3/KJ: Definitely, yes

BP: What if we made it a specific time and clinic? Told everyone to come on down.

BH3: It might work. But better to work on getting the kids involved. The best advice that I have gotten is by talking story in the locker room after a workout. Some of the best advice I got from Walter was not directly. I got it because I overheard him talking to someone else. There is good advice all around the Club, you just have to stand around and listen for it.

KJ: Everybody's technique is different. So, you can't just copy someone else. But you can listen. It's ONE man, right? You have to get in the boat and paddle. You try something new each time to see what works. It is all about being on the water, spending time on the water, just doing it. You get frustrated because something is not working right, you huli all the time, whatever. You need to just get on the water and work it out.

RD: I remember Walter telling me the same thing. I asked Walter what it would take for me to figure it out. He just said "time in the boat".

BP: Well, can I tell you, technique is vitally important. You have to start with the right mechanics, and then build strength to increase speed.

BH3: Sounds great, sign me up for a clinic.

RD: Great. Thanks for sitting with us and talking story.

BP: You each have great ideas, and we enjoyed hearing your latest tales. Aloha.



Chris Kincaid
competed in
the relay.

Club Jerseys Draw Attention at OC1 Races

By Anthony Hunt

One of the most exciting and well-attended races each year in the one man paddling season is the Molokai to Oahu relay. For those unfamiliar with the event, it is a race from Kaluakoi, Molokai to Waikiki. There are two paddlers on each team and they take turns paddling their one man canoe across the Kaiwi Channel.

Because of the format, paddlers of various skill levels can participate. All of this makes for a fun day of racing with a lot of action and this year was no exception.

Outrigger had a greater presence at this year's race because of several members of the canoe/kayak committee. Jimmy Austin and Mike Kane were tasked with the responsibility to have jerseys made and distributed to as many willing Outrigger paddlers as they could.

The intent was to have the paddlers wear the "O" with pride as they participated in the race. By doing this Club members demonstrated what it means to represent the Outrigger Canoe Club, and as a result, earned their Club sponsorship.

The same could be said for the solo race as a number of Outrigger members proudly wore the red and white from shore to shore. Both races were excellent venues for Outrigger members to further the storied history of paddling at the Club.

The canoe/kayak sub-committee is committed to finding ways for Outrigger members to represent the Club in a number of paddling settings throughout the year and rewarding member's efforts to demonstrate that paddling has a home at the Outrigger Canoe Club.

It is important to our Club's culture and part of the history that makes this Club such a special place to be a part of.

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There are certain neighborhoods in and around Seattle that are being revitalized. Particular exciting is South Lake Union ("SLU"). Paul Allen (the other Microsoft Billionaire) is developing the 60 acres he recently purchased and is transforming SLU into an Urban Mecca. This is one of many exciting Seattle investment opportunities. Please call or email me for more information.

**Mahalo,
Renee Akiona Ostrem**

**Renee Ostrem
(206) 251-3399**



reneeco@johnlscott.com

**John L. Scott
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