

Advertiser photo by Ron Jon

Waikiki Yacht Club paddlers stroke past the finish line to win the men's masters race of the opening Hui Wa'a canoe regatta of the season.

Lokahi claims season's first regatta

By Stephen Tsai
Advertiser Staff Writer

Surprising even itself, the Lokahi Canoe Club rallied to win the season's first Na Ohana O Na Hui Wa'a Association regatta at Keeki Lagoon. Lokahi, which trailed most of the regatta, amassed 78 points. Na Keiki O Ka Mo'i, the two-time defending Hui Wa'a champion, finished second with 62. Nobody else came close.

Lokahi was scheduled to compete in 21 races. But a rash of no-shows and an outbreak of chicken pox forced Ka Mo'i to scratch from seven races — the mixed-open-6, men's 13 and junior, and women's master, junior, senior and open-4.

Lokahi eagerly took advantage of the situation. "We thought all we had to do was enter a lot of races and we'd score a lot of points," Cushnie said.

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and no penalties are to be assessed during that time. "I was worried," Cushnie said. "The whole thing could have been for nothing."

Cushnie had gambled in the women's junior and senior races. He knew he needed to enter crews in those races, but found himself short-handed. So he borrowed five paddlers from his women's masters crew and asked Sue Trent, a novice-class paddler competing in her first regatta, to steer a crew that would compete in both the women's junior and senior races.

"There was a lot of pressure," Trent said, "but I think we did a good job." Kaaekuahiwi acknowledged that his team's defaults probably cost Ka Mo'i the regatta. Kaaekuahiwi could have filled some of the vacancies with paddlers from the lower levels, but resisted using the strategy. (Paddlers are allowed to compete at several levels. But once they move up, they are frozen at the higher level for the rest of the year.)

Cushnie remembered Kapua for his leadership. "He was the backbone of the whole association," Cushnie said.

The Hawaiian Outrigger Canoe Club was greeted with rousing cheers from the beachside crowd after crossing the finish line fifth — and last — in the girls' 12-and-younger race.

"It's a big drive to have, even see, youngsters like this," assistant coach David Cosier said of the crew, believed to be the youngest and shortest in paddling. "They give us a big boost."

The crew is composed of Vyna-Ann Okazuki (age 11), Shana Lee (11), Meredith Ammerman (10), Stephanie Oshiro (10), Deirdre Wilhelm (10) and Kapiolani Kekaulike (9).

Another petit paddler, Amanda Fujimori, who stands eye to handle with a 3-foot paddle, competed for the mixed-12 crew.

"They're the easiest paddlers to work with," Cosier said. "They don't talk back, they don't have any bad habits. As the years go by, they'll be one team to reckon with. They'll be tigers."

- 1/2-mile races
Women's masters: 1. Manu O Ke Kai...
1/4-mile races
Men's novice "A": 1. Koa Kai...
1/2-mile races
Men's novice "A": 1. Koa Kai...
1/4-mile races
Men's novice "A": 1. Koa Kai...

Earlier in the day, Lokahi coach Mike Cushnie said the regatta "is a numbers game: the more crews you enter, the better chance" you have of winning.

That logic seemed to favor Ka Mo'i, which registered crews in 25 of the regatta's 31 races.

Ka Mo'i led Lokahi, 48-36, after 22 races. But Lokahi turned white-hot in the final nine races, winning seven and outscoring Ka Mo'i, 42-14.

(Scoring is based on the following system: five points for a first-place finish, three for second, two for third and one for fourth.) Lokahi, competing alone, won the women's

junior to close to 53-51. It went ahead by winning the men's junior.

Lokahi, again racing by itself, used a makeshift crew to win the ensuing women's senior race, although the crew came close to being disqualified.

The Lokahi crew struggled in the windy conditions at the starting line and its boat hit the flag separating the first and second lanes.

Ka Mo'i coach Rona Kaaekuahiwi filed a written protest arguing that Lokahi should be disqualified for the bump.

"I think it was a good protest," Kaaekuahiwi said. Hui Wa'a officials disagreed. They said the bump occurred while the yellow flag was raised. See Lokahi on Page C-6.

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HONOLULU STAR BULLETIN

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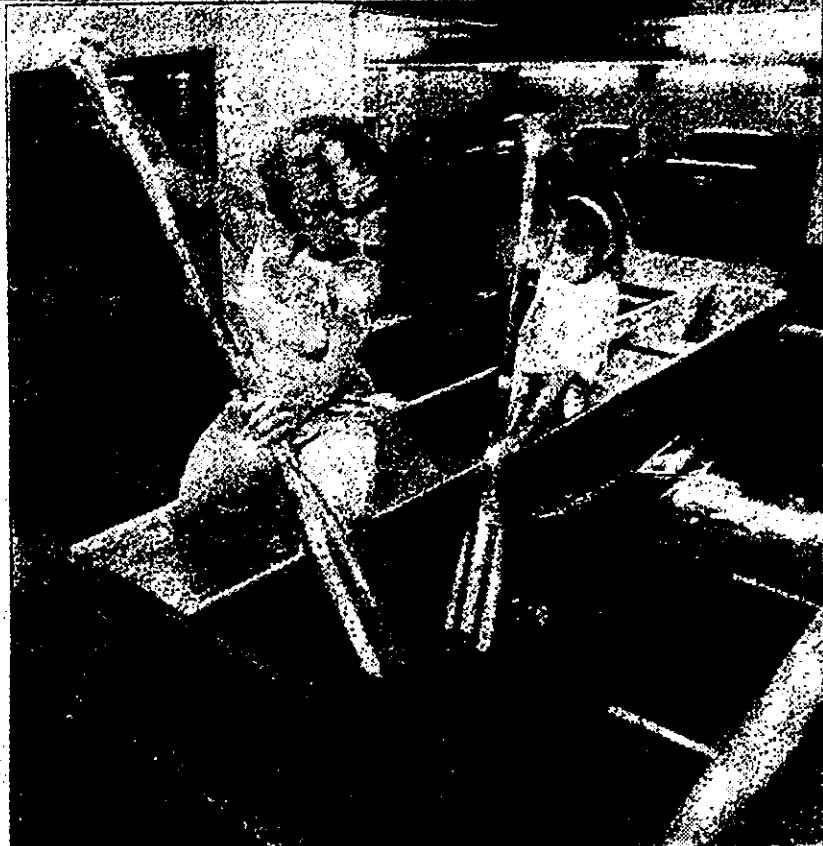
At OCC, wahine is coach

By Jack Wyatt
Special to the Star-Bulletin

Michele St. John thrives on pressure. And it's a good thing. For as Outrigger Canoe Club's first wahine head coach ever, every chauvinist worth his paddling skills will be watching her every move.

Defending champ Outrigger is the club to beat in tomorrow's Kamehameha Day Regatta at Kailua Beach. The 16-club Oahu Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association opener is expected to draw more than 2,000 paddlers competing in 31 heats. Competition begins at 8:30 a.m. with the youngsters.

"DO I FEEL pressure? None from Outrigger members. The pressure I feel is what I've placed on myself," St. John said. OCC has won the HCRA state title the past three years.



By Mike Tsukamoto, Star-Bulletin

PADDLING INDOORS—Michele St. John, OCC's first wahine coach, instructs Meaghan Hemmings (right) in the canoe club's indoor training tank located in the club basement.

paddlers and more are expected to join in once school ends. ST. JOHN IS quick to credit recruiting efforts by her coaches and other OCC members. "I think we now have talent and depth to go all the way," St. John added.

that 15 women are competing for six Novice-B seats. In last year's Kamehameha Day Regatta, Kailua, with wins by its younger paddlers, led for much of the day. Outrigger overtook Kailua when its talented adult crews began to tally points.

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OCC Paddleboard

Outrigger Canoe Club's Paddleboard Surf Race is set for 10 a.m. Saturday at OCC Beach. Registration is at 9 a.m. with competition for both men and women. There is no entry fee and refreshments and awards will be given out after the last racer has finished. For more information, call Dale Hope at 847-5346, or OCC, 923-1585.

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Kamalii volleyball

In preparation for two mainland tournaments, four junior teams from Kamalii Volleyball Club will play exhibitions against the Outrigger Canoe Club Golden Masters men and Burmy's women's teams Saturday at McKinley Gym.

Kamalii's girls' 13, 15 and 17 teams and boys' 17 team will participate in the matches, beginning at 5 p.m. The OCC team features such USVBA All-Americans as Tom Haine, Fred Hlapp, John Stanley and Dave Sheji while Burmy's is comprised mostly of former University of Hawaii Wahine players.

Kamalii will be competing in the Volleyball Festival in California, June 28-July 2, and the Junior Olympics in Albuquerque, N.M., later in July. KVC's 13s are defending champions in both tournaments.

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MAUI NEWS

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Outrigger wins opener

HONOLULU — Outrigger Canoe Club, the defending state champion, won the first Oahu Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association regatta of the season yesterday at Kailua Beach Park.

Outrigger finished with 91 points, while Kailua scored 75 to capture second place. Lokahi scored its second consecutive victory in the Na 'Ohana O Na Hui Wa'a Association regatta at Waimanalo Beach Park. Ka Mo'i finished second.

The Maui County Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association will stage its first points regatta, the Kam Day Regatta, at Kahului Harbor on Sunday, June 14.

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Outrigger sets the pace

Outrigger Canoe Club's junior men's team strokes to victory in the 2 1/2-mile race at the King Kamehameha Regatta yesterday at Kailua Beach. From left, the paddlers are Tom Conner, Keone Downing, Steve Van Lier Ribbenk, Walter Guild, Marc Haine (leaning) and Chris Kincaid. Story on Page C-2.

Advertiser photo by Bruce Aaso