



Na Kai Ewalu's boys 12 crew relax after winning Maui's first gold medals of the day at the Hawaii Canoe Racing Association State Championship: (from left) Cypriano Simarago, Donald Mahoe, Patrick Kekahuna, Kawika Kea, Leeward Akahi and Gabe Olsen.

## Canoe competition strong again

### Three Maui crews find gold in Hanalei Bay's pristine waters

By LOU ZITNIK  
Staff Writer

HANALEI BAY, Kauai — The high point came early for Maui at the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Championships. The low point came about 21 events later.

Maui earned two of its three gold medals before the morning sky had a chance to clear away the rain clouds over Hanalei Bay Saturday.

And Maui's big sweep came only five events deep in the 31-event regatta.

Fourteen crews paddled onto smooth waters for the boys 12 event, the second event of the day. A couple minutes later, Maui had its first gold medal.

Na Kai Ewalu's boys, undefeated during the Maui County season, earned the gold medal with a 2:13.33 clocking for the 1/4-mile race. Gabe Olsen, Cypriano Simarago, Patrick Kekahuna, Donald Mahoe, Kawika Kea and Leeward Akahi had little trouble with the "big boys" from Honolulu as Akahi steered Na Kai Ewalu to the finish line three seconds ahead of the second-place canoe, Oahu's Hui Lanakila (2:11.20).

Akahi had little trouble handling Hanalei's smooth waters or steering the koa canoe required for competition on the state level. According to Akahi, the big difference between the water at Hanalei and Kahului Harbor was visibility.

"Hanalei is more clean," said Akahi, a student at Iao School.

Although Na Kai Ewalu's boys are used to paddling in one of six lanes at Maui races, they found lane seven to their liking at Hanalei.

"Lucky seven, that's for us," said Kekahuna, who also said he kept his eyes on the competition most of the race.

"I had to watch so we could win," said Kekahuna, who sat seat three for the winning crew and also

attends Iao School. "I had to know when to start stroking hard, to pick it up."

Almost before Na Kai Ewalu had a chance to pick up its gold medals, Maui was already busy experiencing its biggest thrill of the day.

The boys 13 event featured 14 crews, a full house, with Napili in lane 2, Kahana in lane 4 and Hawaiian in lane 12.

Lanes 1, 2 and 3, the "inside lanes," were supposed to be the fast lanes, but Hawaiian's boys weren't worried. They had been struggling against Napili and Kahana all year and still hadn't won a race — the point wasn't to get a good lane, it was to beat their two rivals.

Sherman Haupu, George Keani, Mark Rocco, Donald Pyle, Keoka Kosuga and Christopher Balcita shot off the line and a little over two minutes later they had exacted their revenge in the shape of a gold medal.

Hawaiian finished first in 2:03.46. Napili was second in 2:03.88, and Kahana placed third at 2:07.98.

"It was easy steering," said Balcita, the crew's captain. "No current at all."

What did the crew do to jump from third place on Maui to first place in the state? It was simple, said Balcita: "Paddle harder."

"When you have faith in a crew, you have to stand by them," said Paul Luuwal, who coached Hawaiian's 13s. "We had to buy a lane for them because they didn't qualify for one during the regatta season. But we knew they could do it. So we paid \$25 for the lane Molokai didn't use."

To help his crew, Luuwal shifted two paddlers from his boys 12 crew in the 13 race — Kosuga and Balcita. The change paid off in a big way, a gold way.

"I knew they could do it," said Luuwal. "All year they've been chasing Napili and Kahana, that

The Maui News / LOU ZITNIK photos

hawaiian Canoe Club's boys 13 led a trio of Maui crews in a 1-2-3 finish at the state regatta in Hanalei Bay Saturday: (from left, back row) Mark Rocco, George Hookano, Keola Kosuga, David Pyle, and Sherman Haupu. (front row) Christopher Balcita, Paul Luuwal (coach).



Hawaiian Canoe Club's boys 13 led a trio of Maui crews in a 1-2-3 finish at the state regatta in Hanalei Bay Saturday: (from left, back row) Mark Rocco, George Hookano, Keola Kosuga, David Pyle, and Sherman Haupu. (front row) Christopher Balcita, Paul Luuwal (coach).

helps. When you have tough competition on Maui, you get ready for the state."

Kihei's novice A women had little trouble winning on Maui. At the last regatta of the season, Greta Owen, Cindy Heberton, Deborah Belezos, Aimee Anderson, Sarah Thompson and Pam Carroll beat Na Kai Ewalu by 14 seconds in a 1/2-mile race. Kai Opua gave them a little more trouble Saturday, but not much.

Kihei won the gold with a 1/2-mile time of 4:31.23. Kai Opua finished second in 4:34.95.

"The course was wonderful," said Carroll, who steered Kihei in lane two. "The water felt really smooth."

Carroll didn't run into any real problems until she made the turn at the 1/4-mile mark.

"We powered into the turn and I felt really good because I knew we were in the lead, then I looked up and I couldn't see our flag."

Carroll had to steer by feel until she was halfway up the course, then she picked the white flag out of the light background and made a course adjustment that brought the

crew a gold medal. "The funny thing about Carroll, she has never won anything but gold medals," said head coach Mike Gerry. "In every race she's been in she's been first."

Carroll, in her second year of paddling, won six events last year and six this year. Her crew was disqualified once.

Novice A races are for paddlers in their first or second year of racing. Carroll was the oldest member of the winning crew (42). At the other end of the boat, Owen, the stroker, was the youngest (23).

Once Kihei collected its gold medals, Maui County hit a dry spell that last 17 events, until the end of the regatta.

During much of that time, though, Maui's eyes were on Hawaiian Canoe Club.

Hawaiian, the Maui County champions, held onto second place in the team standings of the AAA division (clubs with more than 14 crews entered) until event 26.

Before the women sophomores hit the water, Outrigger held a commanding lead with 135 points. But Hawaiian was hanging in with 66 points for second place. Hui Nalu had 60 for third. Hanalei was in fourth with 58. Kailua was in fifth with 55.

Then the big boys and girls took over.

"There's really no telling what is going to happen in a regatta until the sophomore, junior and senior races," said coach Tom McTigue, head coach of Outrigger Canoe Club. "On Oahu those races are very competitive."

So competitive that Hawaiian failed to score in the final six events of the day and ended up in fifth place, behind Outrigger (182), Hui Nalu (93), Hanalei (89) and Kailua (75).

"It just goes to show that we have to take another step before we're ready to compete with Oahu," said Hawaiian's head coach, Rob Hoonan. "Our junior division can compete but our adults have a way too go before they can compete at the same level with Oahu."

Hawaiian finished second in the race for the junior division (18-under) title, scoring 45 points to Outriggers 56. Hui Nalu finished third with 31.



Kihei Canoe Club's novice A women scored Kihei's first and Maui's last gold medal at the state regatta: (from left) Greta Owen, Cindy Heberton, Deborah Belezos, Aimee Anderson, Sarah Thompson and Pam Carroll.

## PADDLING

### Outrigger wins sixth straight state canoe championship

Star Bulletin staff

HANALEI, Kauai — Backed by its women's senior masters crew winning its sixth consecutive state gold medal, Outrigger Canoe Club easily won its sixth straight Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association state title Saturday at Hanalei Bay.

Outrigger, competing in all 31 events, amassed 182 points in the AAA division (15-or-more crews) followed by Hui Nalu of Oahu's 93 points and host Hanalei with 89.

In the AA division (7-14 crews), Oahu's Healani added to its 100th anniversary celebration with six first places and 84 points for top honors.

Big Island clubs picked up the other two trophies — Kailua-Kona's Kai O Pua second with 72 points and Kamehameha of Hilo third with 69 points.

The A division trophy (six-or-less

crews) went to Waikiki Surf Club with 32 points.

Big Island clubs again finished 2-3 with Kai E Hitu second with 25 points and Keaukaha third with 16. Outrigger, which lost its last state regatta on Hanalei Bay in 1984, won 13 events. Four of its winning freshmen women's crew — Dione Wilbur, Kaili Chun, Terri Pyncheon and Sarah Reilly — moved up to race juniors ... and won that event as well.

But the day belonged to OCC's senior masters women (45-and-over), who have paddled together since 1984 and capped their fifth straight undefeated regatta season with the gold.

The crew of Diane Stowell, Gerry Pedesky, Marilyn Haine, Ruby Iverson, Carol Wilcox and Keanu Rochlen trailed in the half-mile event before making their

move in the last 50 yards. "It was too close for comfort," said Rochlen, the steersman. OCC finished in 4 minutes, 40.18 seconds, followed by Healani in second at 4:43.25 and Lanikai third in 4:44.11.

In the men's seniors, Hui Nalu upset favored Outrigger in a photo finish. Hui Nalu — with three paddlers off the U.S. Junior Canoe/Kayak team in Nalu Kukea, Billy Robello and John Malolo — finished the 2 1/2-mile race in 18:25.28. Outrigger was second in 18:27.55.

One of the Cinderella stories of the 40th state championships belonged to the men's novice A crew from Oahu's Lanikai.

Two weeks ago, the crew was disqualified for finishing in the wrong lane at the OHCRA championships. It was listed as the second alternate for the state competition and nearly decided not to make the trip.

However, the Lanikai crew won the 3/4-mile race in 5:53.52. Hanalei was second in 5:56.52.

#### State results

AAA division—15 crews or more: 1. Outrigger 182 pts. 2. Hui Nalu 93. 3. Hanalei 89. 4. Kailua 75. 5. Hawaiian (Maui) 66. 6. Lokahi 55.

AA division—7-14 crews: 1. Healani 84. 2. Kai Opua 72. 3. Kamehameha (Hawaii) 59. 4. (tie) Hui Lanakila and Lanikai 33. 6. Napili 28. 7. Knei 25. 8. Na Keiki O Ka Mo'i 24. 9. Na Kai Ewalu 21. 10. Leeward Kai 13. 11. Waimanalo 11. 12. Waikiki Yacht Club 4. 13. Koa Kai 0.

A division—6 crews or less: 1. Waikiki Surf Club 32. 2. Kai E Hitu 25. 3. Keaukaha 16. 4. Manu O Ke Kai 16. 5. (tie) Lanahana and Kamehameha (Oahu) 11. 7. (tie) Anehu, Kahana, Keaohou and Windward Kai 10. 11. Kawaehae 8. 12. Kaola 7. 13. Honolulu 6. 14. Makaha 5. 15. (tie) Kaneohe, Waikiki, Beech Boys and Waikoloa 4. 16. (tie) Hawaiian Outrigger, Koloa and Surf Sports 3. 21. (tie) Hui O Ikaika and Waiwai 0.

Boys

12—(1/4 mile): 1. Na Kai Ewalu 2:08.49. 2. Hui Lanakila 2:11.10. 3. Honolulu 2:13.04.

13—(1/4 mile): 1. Hawaiian (Maui) 2:03.46. 2. Napili 2:03.88. 3. Kahana 2:07.98.

14—(1/2 mile): 1. Outrigger 4:00.02. 2. Keaukaha 4:03.64. 3. Lokahi 4:05.98.

16—(1/2 mile): 1. Healani 4:00.65. 2. Outrigger 4:00.87. 3. Lokahi 4:05.05.

18—(1 mile): 1. Outrigger 7:47.12. 2. Hui Nalu 7:52.79. 3. Hawaiian (Maui) 7:59.71.

Girls

12—(1/4 mile): 1. Windward Kai 2:14.08. 2. Kailua 2:16.50. 3. Na Keiki O Ka Mo'i 2:19.70.

14—(1/2 mile): 1. Hanalei 2:09.13. 2. Waimanalo 2:10.41. 3. Keaohou and Windward Kai 10. 11. Kawaehae 8. 12. Kaola 7. 13. Honolulu 6. 14. Makaha 5. 15. (tie) Kaneohe, Waikiki, Beech Boys and Waikoloa 4. 16. (tie) Hawaiian Outrigger, Koloa and Surf Sports 3. 21. (tie) Hui O Ikaika and Waiwai 0.

Men

Novice A—(1/2 mile): 1. Lanikai 5:53.52. 2. Hanalei 5:56.52. 3. Waikiki Surf Club 6:04.98.

Novice B—(1/2 mile): 1. Outrigger 3:38.99. 2. Waikiki Surf Club 3:39.36. 3. Hanalei 3:48.52.

Freshmen—(1 mile): 1. Kamehameha (Hawaii) 7:31.60. 2. Lokahi 7:39.50. 3. Hanalei 7:40.10.

Sophomores—(1 1/2 miles): 1. Outrigger 11:09.38. 2. Hui Nalu 11:13.53. 3. Hanalei 11:19.65.

Juniors—(2 miles): 1. Outrigger 15:04.01. 2. Kai Opua 15:23.91. 3. Hanalei 15:27.30.

Seniors—(2 1/2 miles): 1. Hui Nalu 18:25.28. 2. Outrigger 18:27.55. 3. Hanalei 18:35.66.

Masters—(1 mile): 1. Outrigger 7:33.63. 2. Kailua 7:39.44. 3. Kai Opua 7:41.38.

Senior masters—(1/2 mile): 1. Hanalei 3:46.61. 2. Kailua 3:51.07. 3. Outrigger 3:52.44.

Open 4—(1/2 mile): 1. Outrigger 4:12.85. 2. Lokahi 4:17.32. 3. Hui Nalu 4:18.18.

Women

Novice A—(1/2 mile): 1. Kihei 4:31.23. 2. Kai Opua 4:34.95. 3. Hui Nalu 4:35.31.

Novice B—(1/2 mile): 1. Healani 2:04.99. 2. Kailua 2:06.43. 3. Waikiki Surf Club 2:07.75.

Freshmen—(1/2 mile): 1. Outrigger 6:48.99. 2. Kai E Hitu 7:06.31. 3. Healani 7:10.51.

Sophomores—(1 mile): 1. Healani 8:28.13. 2. Hui Nalu 8:28.44. 3. Outrigger 8:34.56.

Juniors—(1 1/2 miles): 1. Outrigger 11:06.65. 2. Healani 11:20.24. 3. Na Kai Ewalu 11:21.29.

Seniors—(1 1/2 miles): 1. Kailua 12:56.45. 2. Outrigger 12:56.68. 3. Hui Nalu 13:09.76.

Masters—(1 mile): 1. Healani 9:30.32. 2. Kai Opua 9:32.29. 3. Hui Nalu 9:35.70.

Senior masters—(1/2 mile): 1. Outrigger 4:40.18. 2. Healani 4:43.25. 3. Lanikai 4:44.11.

Open 4—(1/2 mile): 1. Healani 4:12.85. 2. Napili 4:17.32. 3. Kai E Hitu 4:18.18.

Mixed

12—(1/4 mile): 1. Hui Lanakila 2:14.51. 2. Kailua 2:16.50. 3. Kamehameha (Hawaii) 2:17.35.

Novice—(1/2 mile): 1. Kai Opua 4:20.35. 2. Hui Nalu 4:23.12. 3. Outrigger 4:25.42.