

W. T. Rawlins Was Pioneer In Developing Swimming As Major Hawaiian Sport

Through His Interest Youth Was Encouraged and
Recognition for Hawaiian Swimmers
Secured. First to Discover Remarkable
Ability of Duke Kahanamoku.

THE FINEST SWIMMING TANK IN THE WORLD

By WILLIAM T. RAWLINS

The new swimming tank at Punahou is the finest swimming tank in the world!

I know what I am talking about, for it is modeled after the Yale university tank, and that is the finest indoor tank there is anywhere; but the Punahou tank is in the open, an amphitheatre of concrete and velvety green grass terraces rising on all four sides, affording seating capacity for approximately 3000 persons (Yale seats only 200) and capable of indefinite expansion by continuing the seats higher.



The Punahou tank has beautiful blue sky with fleecy clouds drifting by, for a roof. It is surrounded by palms and other tropical trees. In the background are the wonderful mountains of Oahu—the most beautiful in Hawaii—on one side and the blue surf margined Pacific on the other.

With its pure white tile finish and its sparkling, clean spring water, it would be a noted structure anywhere. It stands unique the only one of its kind—the finest swimming tank in the world.

I would like to see other tanks of this same type, in Honolulu, so as to give other children the advantages that those at Punahou have.

With these and the great memorial swimming tank at Waikiki about to be built, Hawaii will add one more reason why it should be a "world convention city."

William T. Rawlins says in a signed article in today's Advertiser that the new Elizabeth Waterhouse Memorial Swimming Tank at Punahou, is "The Finest Swimming Tank in the World."

No Ka-ma-ai-na (old timer) needs to be told who William T. Rawlins is, or what he knows about the swimming game, but for the information of the ma-li-hi-ni- (new comer) and the uninitiated elsewhere, it may be said that "Bill" Rawlins is one of the men if not the man—who put Hawaii on the map; so far as organized swimming as a sport is concerned.

Rawlins is a "Honolulu Boy," a lawyer, a graduate of Yale University, an ex-judge, an ex-member of the legislature, an ex-U. S. assistant district attorney and several other things; none of which count, so far as this article is concerned, as compared to the fact that he "discovered" Duke Kahanamoku—or at least his swimming abilities; secured recognition of his first breaking of the 100 yard record in 1911, and enabled him to make the U. S. swimming team to the international Olympic games at Stockholm in 1912. Duke there again broke the world's record for 100 yards, becoming world's champion for that distance, which position he has held ever since, against all comers, in Europe, the United States, Australia and Hawaii.

Progress In Speed Swimming

An interesting side light is thrown on the rapid progress made in the speed swimming game, in connection with Duke's first breaking of the 100 yard straight away in open water, in 1911.

The record up to that time had been 60 seconds. Duke made it in 55 3-5 seconds.

Rawlins notified the A. A. U. secretary of the record, and asked to have it officially recognized. The reply intimated that there was something the matter with the stop-watches in Hawaii, winding up with the snapper the "worlds records are broken by fractions of a second—not by whole seconds—to say nothing about 4 3-5 seconds at a clip."

Incidentally Duke later lowered the record to 53 seconds flat, which Pua Kealoha, also of Honolulu, has tied.

Rawlins and others organized the Hui Nalu (surf club) in 1910, composed of "Waikiki Beach boys" of whom Duke was one. He