

# ***Junior Women Winning Recognition and Respect***

Outrigger Junior Women have gained recognition and respect throughout the state and on the Mainland in a few short months. This spunky team started training in December and has already made a mark in local junior tournaments competing in the 16 and under division, in USVBA women's B League and in Las Vegas in February. Audience members often comment about their improving skill level, spirit and determination.

Competition in the KAEPA Invitational in Las Vegas during President's Day three day weekend was tough. Mainland girls, often referred to as "trees" by our fans, tend to be much taller (5'10" to 6'2") and have many opportunities to excel because of the vast array of tournaments available for them to play in throughout the club season.

This didn't seem to faze our girls at all as they quickly upped their level of play and became stronger in pool play. They soon won the hearts of audience members as they joined our three father chaperones and team mom cheering! The girls finished the

tournament in a respectable 21st place out 60 teams! Most importantly, they discovered that top placement in the upcoming Nike Festival at Davis in June is definitely a possibility!

Meanwhile back at home the girls improved their skills in weekend tournaments and prepared for Haili. Their B Division consisted of a combination of women and junior teams. The impressive group of our parent "groupies" cheered them on and kept them well fed and motivated to do their best.

Our OCC team came out strong, won their way out of each "pool" and soon found themselves in the championship round facing a team from Maui that they met up with on their flight over. Team Waioha was coached by their father (yes, five of them were sisters from the famous Sam Fong family on Maui)!

Competition was tough as the girls won the first match, lost the second because of time limitations and then went to a rally scoring third game. Even though they did not win that game, they had won the hearts of all at Haili because of their skill level,

determination, team spirit, parent participation and sportsmanship demonstrated throughout the three days.

The team stayed for the 49th annual luau enjoying the ono food, music and awards ceremony. They were honored with trophies for their impressive second place finish and were also awarded the Sportsmanship Trophy, a first for any Outrigger team!!!

Mahealani Lum and Mekia Ostrom were also honored by being named on the All-tournament Team. Kisi and all of the team definitely

deserve accolades for their performance. They not only played their hearts out but found the time to rush between gyms to cheer on the other Outrigger teams competing in the tournament.

The team is now setting their sights on the upcoming local junior tournaments and for Davis in July. Meanwhile they practice, scrimmage and continue to fundraise. Anyone interested in their efforts and in cheering them on can look at the tunnel bulletin boards to find out about upcoming events. ☺



*The Junior women's team includes Kisi Haine, coach; Annie Rosa, Kia Ostrom, BJ Yoshino, Reiko Schoenfeld, Marisa Whalen, Eva Rochlen, Mahealani Lum, Brandy Mailer and Leslie Johnson.*