

Hui Nalu ascends to state title

Outdistances OCC by 22

By Andy Yamaguchi
Advertiser Staff Writer

Neither Outrigger nor Hanalei nor a 100-ton oil tanker double-parked in Keelii Lagoon could block Hui Nalu's path to the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association state title yesterday.

There was not much suspense in this regatta. Hui Nalu, a Hawaii Kai club founded in 1908 by, among others, Duke Kahanamoku, rolled up 89 points by luncheon and finished the 30-race program with a staggering 144 points.

Outrigger Canoe Club was second with 122 points. Heaiani third with 109 and defending champion Hanalei fourth with 100 in the AAA division.

Kai Oni won the AA division and Napili won the A title. Classifications were based on number of events entered.

About 5,000 paddlers and spectators endured a day-long dust storm to watch the races from the Keelii Lagoon Park shoreline.

Hui Nalu won its second HCRA title in 1988 in an unconventional way. Instead of winning a lot of races, it piled up points by placing in virtually all of the 25 events it entered.

Hui Nalu won but three events — and two of those victories came after protests ahead of it were disqualified for infractions. But it took three seconds, seven thirds and a boatload of other high places.

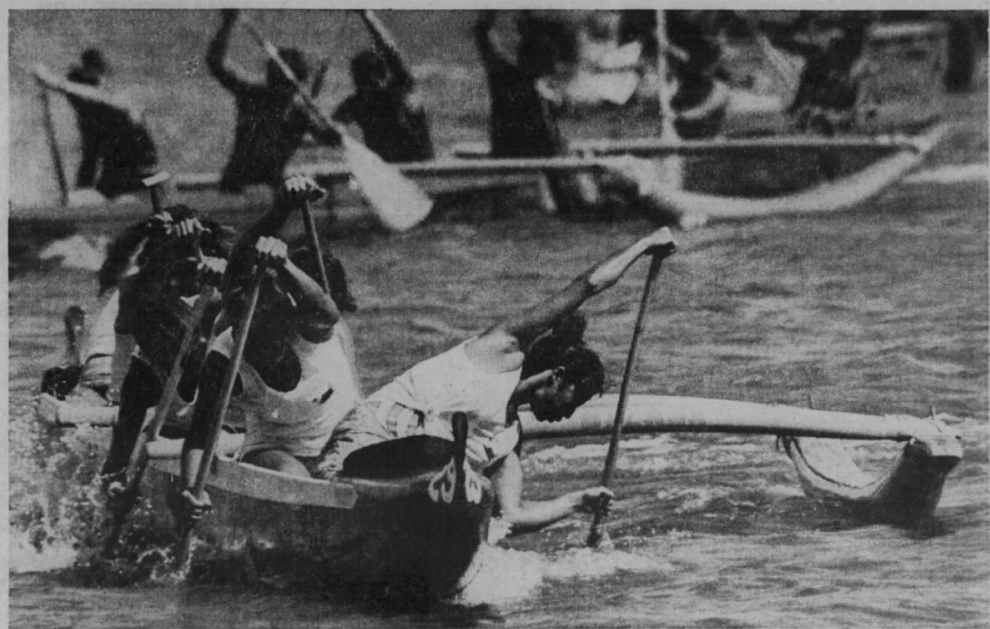
Depth, Hui Nalu coach Kala Kukea said, was his team's trump card.

"Our upper division was good, though not overpowering, but I felt we were stronger this year in the kids and the middle (events)," Kukea said. "In terms of overall strength, this is one of our better years."

Hui Nalu also was aided by a new, inflated scoring system, which awards 12 points for first place, 10 for second, etc. instead of the old 5-3-2-1. The new system shifted the emphasis from winning races to placing high in as many as possible.

That was a subtle facet of yesterday's races. A more overt one was the moored ex-Navy tanker that drifted into three of the course's 12 lanes at the far turn, making it impossible to race in them.

Race officials took the only real choice left to them: run the races on a



The strain of making a turn is reflected on the face of this Na Kai Ewalu paddler as the Maui club competes in the freshmen women's race. Na Kai Ewalu was disqualified for hitting a flag on a turn and interfering with another canoe.

quarter-mile course instead of a half-mile course. Cutting the course in half meant doubling the number of turns — five in the senior women's race, nine in the senior men's.

"I don't think anybody wanted to race on the quarter-mile," Kukea said. "It's just a series of sprints."

Hanalei coach Nick Beck concurred: "It hurts us, 'cause we've got a boat that's really hard to turn."

Hui Nalu steersman Myron Thompson explained the adjustments needed. "You have to revamp your whole strategy. Usually we take a little time to get into our rhythm, but with a short course you have to come out of

every turn on a sprint."

And it made the nine-turn senior men's race "dizzy," Kukea said. "Coming up to the flag, I had to yell to Myron, 'Is this the finish?' Myron had to ask the escort boat, 'One more lap!' they said, 'Oh.'"

But the ping-pong course did not face Outrigger's senior men, who won their race by a whopping 45 seconds and demonstrated they just might be the best crew in any age group or class Hawaii has seen in the last few years.

Members of that crew are Bob Riley, Bill Bright, Ed Pickering, Walter Guild, Marc Haime and Brant Ackerman.

"We've been able to draw from our club a certain kind of paddler — lean and strong, not heavy," Haime said. "We're able to keep up a high stroke for a long time."

Also undefeated was the 18-year-old boys crew from Kawaihoa on the Big Island. After four years together, that crew finally won a state race.

"You train all year — hey, this is the greatest thrill in the world," Kawaihoa's Nate Hendricks said. "We owe everything to our coach, Manny Vincent. He couldn't be here because he's a freeman. He taught us how to paddle."

Not a winner, but just as thrilled, were the "300s" makila (old-timer) crew from Hanalei. They call themselves the "360s" because that is the combined age of the six paddlers.

"Jim (Tower, 62) started paddling with the young guys, then I got into it," said George Batt, 67. "Then I said, 'We're nuts, we oughta get some other old guys to paddle with us.'"

Bob Rasmussen added, "Now we'd like to get some competition against guys our own age, and not go up against the whippersnappers." Their event is for men over 42.

Cherry survives a waiting game



By Ferd Lewis
Advertiser Staff Writer

Raphel Cherry remembers the first time he stood on the practice field at the University of Hawaii and took a good look around.

The view, for a freshman quarterback looking for playing time, wasn't exactly inspirational.

"The quarterbacks were together and there were a whole bunch of 'em. There was Blaine (Ganton), (Steve) Rakshash, Mike Stennis, (Keith) Untermyer, Tim (Lyons) and me. It was pretty crowded."

Back then, four years of eligibility hardly seemed like enough to crack the starting lineup and the first "Cherry Bombs", as his passes had been known in high school, would be a way off.

They seemed even farther away when, with the overabundance of quarterbacks, he was shifted to tailback. Later, he hurt his hand and was redshirted. "Ganton and Stennis just told me to hang in there. They said 'eventually it'll all work out, it'll come to you.'"

"Eventually" seemed light years away, but when the Rainbows report for fall camp tomorrow, it will have arrived for Cherry, a redshirt junior. He's the undisputed No. 1 quarterback in camp and, barring injury, the starter Sept. 10 against Colorado State.

It is the first time since 1978 the Rainbows have gone into the fall with a definite idea of who their starting quarterback will be and, for Cherry, a far cry from past seasons when he was second — or lower — on the depth chart.

"It's nice not to have to worry about who is ahead of me," Cherry said, "but it doesn't mean I can relax. There will be guys pushing me. Tim, if his shoulder is okay, and

HORA STATE CHAMPIONSHIP At Keelii Lagoon		BOYS AND MEN		GIRLS AND WOMEN	
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