

Chun, Wells Head Field in Swim Fest

By Jack Wyatt

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Kaneohe's Kaili Chun, one of Hawaii's best known swimmers, surprised a lot of men when she finished first overall in the inaugural Hawaiian Christmas Long Distance Invitational Swim two years ago.

"Just luck," one man was recalled as saying.

But when Chun repeated her overall win last year, she made believers out of even the most chauvanistic of males. More than 60 swimmers, from 21-year-old Chun to 72-year-old Paul Horn of Honolulu, are expected to take the plunge when the third annual distance swim gets underway from Waikiki's San Souci Beach Sunday at 8 a.m.

After the San Souci start, the swimmers proceed along Outrigger Canoe Club's channel before plotting a course direct to the Ala Wai Channel buoy. The swim finishes back at San Souci beach. "It's five miles long—twice that of Labor Day's Roughwater Swim and a whole lot tougher," race organizer Jim Anderson said.

CHUN, A PRINCETON University junior, said that it's doubtful that she'll win again. "There's a New Zealand swimmer (Richard Wells) entered who they say is good," she said. Last year Chun turned the course in one-hour and 40 minutes. The 22-year-old Wells is New Zealand's freestyle champ in 100-, 400-, and 500-meter events. He also is that country's top Olympic swimming candidate.

With New Zealand's Wells; Australia's Mark Scully, 23; Norway's Steiner Robarth, 36, plus Marion Chadwick, 61, of Washington State, among others, Anderson's ocean race is gaining worldwide popularity. "I'm looking to make this a big international swim," Anderson said. Among the local entries are Dr. Harry Huffaker, Molokai Channel swimmer and Honolulu dentist, and Diane Stowell, two-time 45-49 age-group champ.



Kaili Chun

Because of the exhausting nature of the long swim, each participant is accompanied by an escort—generally a paddler on a kayak or a surfboard. "It's (the swim) not just for anyone," said Anderson adding that each participant must prove that he or she can swim the distance within a reasonable amount of time. For safety purposes, powerboats will also patrol the course.

TOMORROW, OUTRIGGER Canoe Club hosts its sixth annual Waikiki Ocean Paddleboard Race—a 10,000-meter (6.2 miles) event which starts and finishes at OCC.

"I expect 30-40 people to enter," said race director Dale Hope.

The race begins at 11 a.m. and covers the waters between Diamond Head Buoy and a marker at the entrance of the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel. Paddleboards must fall within a 12-foot maximum length and weigh 20 pounds, or more. "There are no other restrictions," Hope said.

Oahu's Bret Goodfriend, who set the course record of one-hour, 12 minutes and 37 seconds two years ago, will be among Hawaii's top paddleboard entries.

"We'll take applications up to 10 a.m. on the day of the race," said Hope. "And best of all there is no fee and everyone receives a T-shirt."

For further information on the race, contact OCC.