

PADDLING

Kailua outpaddles Hui Nalu; Outrigger third

By Dave Reardon

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Kailua Canoe Club fought off a strong challenge from Hui Nalu Canoe Club to win the Waimanalo Regatta yesterday in wind-whipped and Portuguese man-o'-war-infested waters off of Waimanalo Beach Park.

Two children who were swimming in the area were stung and sent to the hospital, and many canoe paddlers sighted men-o'-war throughout the day.

Still, Kailua's steady overall paddling was more of an obstacle for rival canoe clubs than any waterborne creatures.

The churning Windward waves might have helped the winners.

"This is like our water in Kailua. Rough and sloppy," Kailua coach Beenie Heen said. "I don't think the town clubs are used to this type of water. It's like what happened to us last week when we went to Nanakuli, a flat-water area, and pretty much got our butts whipped."

That was at the Leeward Regatta, the only Oahu Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association meet that Kailua has failed to win this season. Outrigger Canoe Club was victorious there.

Outrigger, once as dominant in Hawaii canoe paddling as Mike Tyson is in heavyweight



Advertiser photo by Greg Yamamoto

Hui Nalu's boys' 18 team (left) heads for the finish line three-quarters of the way through the one-mile race while Outrigger is still in the start of the turn.

boxing, finished third yesterday.

OCC's acting coach, Walter Guild, said it may indeed be the water . . . and a lot more.

"Sure, the water has something to do with it," Guild said. "But I think another thing is that the level of competition has risen. Everyone says Outrigger has gone down, but I think the overall quality has gone up. Everybody has improved. You can see it in the hull designs, the technique."

Upstart Hui Nalu is a good example to back Guild's state-

ments.

Hui Nalu, thriving early yesterday with its strong youth crews, led the meet as late as the 25th (of 30) event. The Hawaii Kai club, which has won only two regattas since 1983, was primed to complete a major upset.

But Kailua took over first place in ironic fashion, as a funny thing happened to Hui Nalu's outstanding Women's 4 crew: it didn't win. And Kailua's did — for the first time this season.

"That was a surprise," Heen

said. You could tell by the smile curling on his lips that it was a pleasant one.

One reason Heen felt like Christmas came early is that the crew of Nancy Perry, Peggy Tester, Molly Mosher-Cates and steersman Kathy Irwin has been together only two weeks. In fact, last week's race was the first Irwin has steered. Ever.

"Paddling out to the start, we knew (the regatta) was close," Perry said. "Of course we wanted to do our best anyway."

And did that rough water help, Kathy?

"Yes, we like the water lively," Irwin answered.

Hui Nalu's crew was missing two regulars: archaeologist Butchie Lee was away on a dig, and Jennie Scafe was also off-island.

And if history means anything, the Waikiki water at the Fourth of July's Walter J. Macfarlane Regatta could be as calm as a backyard swimming pool.

"We'll be looking forward to that," Guild said.

So will other town-side clubs, as Kailua is now the team to beat.

Lokahi keeps rolling: At Maile Beach Park, the Lokahi Canoe Club continued its domination of Na Ohana O Na Hui Wa'a, winning its fourth regatta in as many tries.

Lokahi's 70 points easily outdistanced Koa Kai, which finished with 40 points. Manu O Ke Kai was third with 36. Kamehameha won the "A" division with 26 points, two more than the Waikiki Beach Boys.

Lokahi won 12 of 31 races.