

The Lotus Story (1986-2019)

Much of this history was collected in a series of virtual interviews with Lotus Sports Club life-long member and 2019 Hugh Town Award recipient, Grace Morissette. Additional details were provided by various Lotus Sports Club and False Creek Racing Canoe Club (FCRCC) alumni and many other individuals with familiarity of the events of the early years of outrigger canoeing in Canada. Official records on race results for Canada / California / Hawaii / IPCF / IVF events prior to 2000 are becoming increasingly difficult to locate in order to confirm historical events / results.

Roots

This chronicle is intended to capture unwritten history of outrigger canoeing at Lotus from 1986-1999, as records from prior to 2000 are becoming more and more scarce. The history of outrigger canoeing at Lotus is linked with the growth of dragonboat racing in BC and camaraderie with False Creek Racing Canoe Club (FCRCC). There are essentially four paths that converged to lead to the development of outrigger canoeing at Lotus;

1. **California / Hawaii Outrigger**
2. **Burnaby Canoe & Kayak Club**
3. **Expo '86**
4. **The Malia**



California / Hawaii Outrigger

Based on an article by Doug Mancell of Lotus and a series of interviews with Grace Morissette of Lotus, there is a very high level of certainty that there were no OC6s in Canada until after a California Malia mould was brought across the border circa 1986 and a group of individuals from Lotus manufactured the first Canadian Malias in 1987 in the Nimbus Kayaks fibreglass shop owned by Steve Schleicher. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, there were no outrigger canoe clubs in Canada. Canadian paddlers who were interested in participating in the Catalina Channel Crossing race or the Molokai Hoe needed to join a US crew participating in these races or form crews with other Canadian paddlers.

In the mid-1980's (pre-Expo '86), a number of False Creek and Lotus paddlers trained together at False Creek for international outrigger canoe races. Over the course of several interviews with Lotus, there arose a question as to what canoes False Creek and Lotus paddlers used to train for California / Hawaii races. There was a line of thought that False Creek had an OC6 before the Canadian Malias were manufactured. Discussions with Drew Mitchell (FCRCC alumni) indicated that Hugh Fisher may have modified a rowing hull with struts and an ama to provide a 6-person outrigger canoe in the early to mid-1980's.

There were several False Creek and Lotus paddlers who formed or joined crews to participate in the Catalina Channel Crossing race in the early 1980's prior to the first Canadian Malias being trailered to California for official weighing by Bud Hohl. It is highly likely that it was shortly after the 1986 Catalina Channel Crossing race that David Boulding of False Creek arranged to have Bud Hohl load the California Malia mould that had been in some fellow's backyard for quite a while onto the Necky trailer to be towed to Sumas, WA.

Burnaby Canoe & Kayak Club

Canoe Kayak BC introduced a program in 1982 to support Olympic flat-water sprint canoe kayak racing.

<https://www.canoekayakbc.ca/paddle-with-us/find-a-paddling-club?c=ridge-canoe-kayak-club>

<https://www.canoekayakbc.ca/paddle-with-us/find-a-paddling-club?c=burnaby-canoe-kayak-club>

<https://www.canoekayakbc.ca/paddle-with-us/find-a-paddling-club?c=false-creek-sprint-canoe-club-vancouver>

<https://www.canoekayakbc.ca/paddle-with-us/find-a-paddling-club?c=nanaimo-canoe-kayak-club>

<https://www.canoekayakbc.ca/paddle-with-us/find-a-paddling-club?c=penticton-racing-canoe-club>

Drew Mitchell, with Canoe Kayak BC, was responsible for organizing Olympic flat-water sprint canoe kayak racing at various Canoe Kayak BC sites including Nanaimo, Penticton, Maple Ridge, and False Creek.

Burnaby Canoe & Kayak Club already had an established flat-water sprint canoe kayak racing program with a number of athletes who would go on to participate in the Olympics, World Championships and Pan Am Games. These athletes included Hugh Fisher, Colin Shaw, Don Irvine, Sheila Taylor, and Drew Mitchell.

<http://cfly.ca/canoe/Burnaby.htm>

Anthony (Tony) Hall (future Nova Scotia Sport Hall of Fame) landed a position coaching paddlers in British Columbia at the Burnaby Canoe & Kayak Club for a few years before returning to Nova Scotia to lead Orenda Canoe Club to a national championship in 1987.

<https://nsshf.com/inductee/anthony-hall/>

Many of the Burnaby Canoe & Kayak Club paddlers joined the False Creek Sprint Canoe Club (Society).

At the same time, there was another contingent of paddlers training at the Burnaby Canoe & Kayak Club facility who went by the name "Lotus Eaters". This was a collection of cross-country ski racers, kayakers and canoeists, triathletes, high level national athletes, and ex-Olympians. In 1986 / 1987, there were no dragonboats or outrigger canoes in BC available for training; practicing for the dragonboat races at False Creek meant paddling repetitive lengths in two Voyageur canoes and two tandem Clipper canoes on the 2000M Burnaby Lake rowing course.



Burnaby Canoe & Kayak Club

Expo '86

The introduction of dragonboat racing to Canada on False Creek at Expo '86 was a pivotal moment for paddle sports in North America. Prior to Vancouver's first dragonboat festival in July 1986, Canadian paddlers had been limited to K1 / K2 / K3 / K4 (International Canoe Federation Sprint / Marathon sitting boats), C1 / C2 (Olympic Class Sprint / Marathon kneeling boats), and the C-15 or WC or "War Canoe" (unique to Canada). Thirty teams registered for the 1986 Vancouver Dragonboat Festival in five categories.

<https://terrybolland.wordpress.com/paddle-craft-definitions/>
<https://www.castanet.net/news/Penticton/78908/War-canoes-to-race-again>



In 1986, the "Lotus Eaters" and a team from False Creek, drawn from athletes across various paddling backgrounds, were introduced through a demonstration dragonboat race during Expo '86 in Vancouver. These two teams quickly became fierce yet friendly competitors in dragonboats, a competitive spirit that was transferred to outrigger canoe racing in the BC Lower Mainland.

FIRST ANNUAL VANCOUVER DRAGON BOAT RACES 1986	
Registered Teams	
COMMUNITY SERVICE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Danish Brotherhood ("Vikings") 2. Yee Mah Athletic Association 3. Shon Yee Benevolent Association 4. Chau Luen Kon Sol 5. Chinatown Lions Club 6. Rotary Club of Vancouver
PUBLIC SERVICE, & ATHLETICS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Vancouver Firefighters 8. Royal Cdn. Mounted Police 9. "Canadian Coast Guard Cutters" 10. Trojan Rugby Club 11. False Creek Racing Canoe Club I 12. Vancouver Police Dept.
CORPORATE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Cathay T. V./Success 14. Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce 15. M. K. Wong & Associates ("Lotus Eaters") 16. Ray Leung 17. "Team Komodo" 18. Liddle, Burns, Beechinor, & Baker
MIXED "A" - CORPORATE & OTHERS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Far East Soc. of Architects & Engineers 20. Veronica Smith 21. Shrum, Liddle, & Heberten ("Shrumbleton Clippers") 22. Vancouver School Board I 23. Burnaby Teachers/ C.W.S.R.A. 24. Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce II
MIXED "B" - SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 25. Chinese Cultural Centre 26. Cordova House 27. Britannia/Strathcona Community Centres 28. Vancouver School Board II 29. St. John's Ambulance 30. False Creek Canoe Racing Club II

1986 Vancouver Dragonboat Festival Registered Teams

The competition for the 20 seats in the men's / women's / mixed dragonboat crews in the late 1980's and early 1990's would generate a pool of male and female Canadian athletes that would provide the basis for outrigger canoe crews at several clubs.

In 1986, the Chinese Cultural Centre Dragonboat Association (CCCDDBA) of Vancouver organized and hosted the first authentic dragonboat festival in North America. The local committee contacted the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) and, with the financial assistance of businesses connected to Hong Kong (Cathay Pacific Airways, Sing Tao and Empire Stevedoring), brought six teak wooden dragonboats built in Hong Kong to Vancouver for Expo '86. This committee maintained a fleet of nine teak dragonboats after three more were purchased under the leadership of Dr. Wallace Chung and Dr. S. Wah Leung. Part of this group of founding volunteers included David See-Chai Lam, Milton K Wong and David Lam, who would reorganize the Vancouver Dragonboat Festival as the Canadian International Dragonboat Festival in 1988.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_International_Dragon_Boat_Festival

<https://www.seniorlivingmag.com/2008/06/01/team-work-team-play/>

After Expo '86, the Chinese Benevolent Association organized dragonboat races for a few years (1987, 1988) before the Dragonboat Festival was founded with Milton K Wong as its chair. In its 1989 inaugural year, with David Y. H. Lui organizing, 32 teams competed.

<http://www.vancouver.sun.com/health/vancouver+dragon+boat+festival+celebrates+years+paddling/8562720/story.html>

<https://www.latmultilingual.com/vancouver-embraces-the-dragon-boat-festival/>

The Canadian International Dragonboat Festival began as an exhibition event in 1986, and is now the largest dragonboat festival in North America, attracting over 190,000 people and 190 dragonboat teams each year.

https://archive.news.gov.bc.ca/releases/news_releases_2013-2017/2016SDSI0012-000584.htm



<https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/1986-dragon-boat-races>

Keep in mind that this historic event took place in the midst of Expo '86 which ran from May 2 to October 13.

<https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/history/vancouver-was-awesome-expo-86-and-false-creek-1922909>



<https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/expo-86-when-vancouver-wooded-the-world-30-photos-30-years-later>



<http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/pdfs/ubcreports/UBC Reports 1986 07 10.pdf>

The inaugural Vancouver Dragonboat Festival in 1986 was won by False Creek Racing Canoe Club men's team. Expenses to participate in the following year's Hong Kong Dragonboat Festival International Races were covered by the Vancouver Dragonboat Festival organizers. The FCRCC men's team would represent Canada at the Hong Kong Dragonboat Festival International Races in 1986, 1988 and 1990; Lotus Sports Club's men's team would represent Canada at the Hong Kong Dragonboat Festival International Races in 1987 and 1989.

China captured first place in the 11th annual Hong Kong International Dragonboat Races in 1986 but, to everyone's surprise, the False Creek Racing Canoe Club of Vancouver, British Columbia, placed second.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1986/06/23/sports/chinese-crew-is-first-in-dragon-boats.html>

1989 was a defining year in the history of Lotus. The "Lotus Eaters" men's team would win the 1988 Vancouver International Dragonboat Festival and go on to represent Canada at the 1989 Hong Kong World Championship International Dragonboat Races. The "Lotus Eaters" men's team was comprised of cross-country ski racers, kayakers and canoeists, triathletes and ex-Olympians including Walt Dengler, Kris Landal, John Simpson, Scott Selbie, Ken Williams, Chris Cooper, Eric Grummisch, Gord Lyster, Mike McRae, Al Thomas, Peter Price, Steve Schleicher (Nimbus Kayaks), Jack Cairney, Jim McArthur, Bill Alley (Lotus Sports Club Bill Alley Dragonboat Regatta), Garry Mancell, and Jim Mancell.

A-4 THE SUNDAY NEWS, May 21, 1989

Lotus Eaters strain towards Hong Kong

Their oars cut into Burnaby Lake's glass-flat surface, churning up foam as they thrust with all their might to propel their small boats forward.

Their faces are windows through which the strain on their well-muscled backs and shoulders can be seen clearly.

By Richard Dal Monte
Features Editor

On a platform above the water's edge, their teammates shout encouragement, keep a close eye on their timer's watches and, eventually, look straight down the finish line to determine their mates' finishing times, which they will write down on their clipboards.

Time trials. The low-profile, blood, sweat and tears part of the Lotus Eaters' training.

Weeknight practices in canoes on Burnaby Lake are millions of paddle strokes away from their destination: Hong Kong, and its annual World Championship International Dragon Boat Races.

The Lotus Eaters, a 28-man

The history behind the race

In the 4th century B.C., a popular statesman and poet, Qu Yuan, drowned himself in the Mi Lo River to protest the corrupt regime of the emperor of the Chou Dynasty.

Local Fishermen, who saw Qu Yuan plunge into the river, raced to save him but to no avail. And, in an attempt to prevent dragons and fish from preying on his body, they sounded gongs and beat drums and hit the water with their oars.

Today, the Tuen Ng Festival is celebrated in Hong Kong and in countries with large Chinese communities, in the form of Dragon Boat racing called Par Lung Chow.

The Dragon Boats are stored in a special place for 11 months. Prior to the festival, ancient rituals take place, such as "Awakening the Dragons" — rousing the Dragon Boats to life by a special eye-drawing ceremony.

The World Championship Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races have been held every year since 1976. Teams from all over the world compete.

The champion of the 1989 Dragon Boat Races in Vancouver will compete in the 1990 Hong Kong championship.

country, especially in the Vancouver area.

They first put paddles to water to move one of the ornate, 2,000-pound, teak "dragons" during Expo 86, when the first such races were held in Vancouver, said Jim

Wong and Associates and First Marathon Securities, edged their closest competition by .39 of a second to win the chance to travel to Hong Kong this year.

There they will compete against teams from all over the world (24

John Simpson and Scott Selbie; Maple Ridge's Ken Williams and Steve Schleicher; Chris Cooper of Pitt Meadows; Port Coquitlam's Jim Mancell, Jack Cairney, Eric Grummisch, Gord Lyster, Mike McRae and Al Thomas; and Port Moody's Peter Price — have been training ever since winning last year's Vancouver event.

"Most people are active year-round," Jim Mancell said.

"It's a varied crew," he continued, "in that most people come from an athletic background, but (have) a variety of skills."

Among the Eaters are cross-country ski racers, kayakers and canoeists, and triathletes; in fact, five of the men going to Hong Kong next month have completed Ironman triathlons.

Besides being a team of strong athletes, the Lotus Eaters have the benefit of experience. Vancouver paddler Mike Maxwell was at last year's Hong Kong Dragon Boat festival as manager of the False Creek women's team, and has plenty of information to share with his teammates.

For instance, Maxwell noted the

Asian teams are usually lighter overall than their North American counterparts; thus the order from Mancell that the Eaters drop some weight — every pound counts.

Maxwell also pointed out the different starting styles of Chinese versus Canadian teams: Hong Kong squads, for example, typically start by paddling an amazing 120-130 strokes per minute before settling into a slower pace for the main part of the race; the locals start at a still impressive 80 strokes per minute and keep up a steady pace.

Technical points aside, though, "the main part is being focused in the boat," Maxwell said.

That means practice, practice, practice.

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Textile Dyes
Wholesale/Retail
CLOTHWORKS
Textile Dyes &
Screen Printers
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132 POWELL ST. VAN.

<https://www.newspapers.com/clip/51575394/lotus-eaters-1989/>

The early "Lotus Eaters" team jerseys had the MK Wong and First Marathon Securities (Bob Disbrow) logos on them. Milton K Wong was a huge part of supporting the Lotus dragonboat team. When the Lotus men's team received a trip to Hong Kong for winning the Vancouver Dragonboat Festival, Milton K Wong paid the way for wives and girlfriends to accompany the team. Milton K Wong sponsored the Lotus juniors for many years and his daughter, Liz, was also on the Lotus Junior team.

The "Lotus Eaters" would return from the Hong Kong World Championship International Dragonboat Races in June of 1989 and then host the Lotus Iron inaugural event in July 1989.

Also, in 1989, Jim McArthur and Grace Morissette decided to start a junior development program at the Lotus Sports Club, beginning with a junior dragonboat team that would compete at the 1989 Vancouver

Dragonboat Festival. Over more than 30 years, the Lotus youth program has grown to include students from six high schools with over 1100 young people being introduced to paddling in dragonboats, outrigger canoes, surfskis, and, more recently, stand-up paddleboards. The youth program has many championships to its credit in both dragonboats and outriggers and teams have competed locally and internationally with a great deal of success. Many of the former Lotus juniors are still paddling plus others have become coaches and mentors to paddlers throughout B.C.

The Malia: OC Origins 1986-1989

The significant events from 1986 to 1989 that led to the origin of outrigger canoe racing in Canada are documented in various references and many of the missing details have been captured via interviews with individuals from that era. However, the exact chronology of events during that time period may not be known until other key individuals are able to be contacted to gather their recollection of the events.

There are two dates that can be reliably confirmed: Vancouver's first dragonboat festival took place at False Creek in July 1986 during Expo '86 and Canada's first outrigger canoe race took place at Barnet Marine Park in July 1989.

For a number of years, the winner of the Vancouver Dragonboat Festival earned the opportunity to represent Canada at the following year's Hong Kong World Championship International Dragonboat Races. Lotus Sports Club won the Vancouver Dragonboat Festival in 1988, earning the opportunity to represent Canada at the Hong Kong World Championship International Dragonboat Races in June 1989.

The Lotus Iron outrigger canoe race has historically been held close to Canada Day, in late June or early July, a few weeks after the Vancouver Dragonboat Festival.

The sequence of events leading to the arrival of Malia canoes in Canada begins after the Vancouver Dragonboat Festival in 1986. The Catalina Channel Crossing outrigger canoe race was formerly held at the end of August. Based on an article by Doug Mancell of Lotus Sports Club, we know that David Boulding of FCRCC raced the Catalina Channel Crossing after Expo '86 and, while in California, learned about a Malia mould that had been stored in some fellow's backyard for quite a while. David arranged to have Bud Hohl load the California Malia mould onto the Necky trailer to be towed to Canada from California, but the trailer was left on the Washington state side of the border.



<http://www.catalinacrossing.org/history/>

The story of how the California Malia mould became the foundation for the first Canadian Malias is most accurately related in an email message from Bud Hohl (SCORA Historian) to Lynda Roberts (Calgary Canoe Club) forwarded to Grace (Lotus Sports Club):

"It was nice meeting you last weekend. I'm happy to see the organization is still thriving.

David Boulding was the fellas name I was trying to remember. I met him at Catalina race in the early 80's. My side-business, since 1968 was California Outriggers. The main purpose was building Malia canoes for the clubs of KOA and Hawaii. It (Malia design) had found it's maximum saturation in the early 80's. I

offered the Canadian group led by Hugh Fisher and David the loan of that mould.

Billy (Whitford) & I have known Hugh since the 70's when Hugh was down in Newport, training for his next Olympics. Billy had taken a group of Olympic hopefuls, from the area, and was training them. Actually, Hugh participated on the Blazing Paddles team that won the 1978 Molokai race, Billy was the steersman for that crew.

Because the IPCF had just been formed officially, we felt it our obligation to help spread the sport where we could do the best good. Hugh, being of Olympic stature, we felt however we could help Canada out, we would do that. We had just had a long waterline canoe designed and built. But the club was looking at Bradleys at the time. So rather than it sit on the beach, we offered it to Hugh, for Canada's starter fleet. The boat name was Keoni, Hawaiian for "John" Rader, our (Offshore CC) sugar daddy. It was 45' long. It was specifically designed for tall paddlers, that was a tough call. Hugh felt that any boat fleet would be needed. They decided that the Malia design would be the class for the new association ,they were forming."

We do know that it was only for a few days that the California Malia mould was left in Sumas, WA on the Necky Kayaks trailer that Mike Neckar towed from California. David Boulding invited Grace to join him for a drive across the border to pick up some paddling gear and met with Canada Customs to import the California Malia mould into Canada.

David's explanation to Grace about what happened that Autumn day in 1986;

"I drove to Sumas with you the next day, hooked up the trailer and drove to the border crossing. I parked at Customs, walked into office and said I had a boat mould I had borrowed from California and had to get to Albion....home of Nimbus Kayaks (borrowing from one club to lend to another paddling club). I filled out all the forms and the smiling guy waved us into Canada."



At that point in time, Lotus Sports Club had yet to acquire their boathouse at Barnet Marine Park and FCRC did not have facilities for fibreglass manufacturing. Steve Schleicher, the original and current designer of the Nimbus kayak line, offered his factory and skills for fibreglass manufacturing to start building the first Canadian Malias. The Nimbus factory, currently in Maple Ridge, BC, may very well have been the birthplace of outrigger canoes in Canada. There was a time when Steve Schleicher was manufacturing OC1s as well – the 42 lb. "Aria".



<http://www.nimbuskayaks.com/outrigger.htm>

In 1988, after fabrication of the first two Canadian Malias had begun at Steve Schleicher's shop, Lotus Sports Club acquired their boathouse at Barnet Marine Park. The two boats were moved to the Lotus Sports Club

boathouse where the finishing work was completed. Given that Lotus acquired their boathouse in 1988, the first two Canadian Malias must have been completed sometime in 1988.

When the Lotus Sports Club finished using the mould for its Malias, the California Malia mould was delivered to Ron Kaschula of Calmar Fiberglass and made available to paddlers from FCRCC who made at least two and possibly many more Malias. We know of seven Canadian Malias in Western Canada. The first two Canadian Malias from Lotus Sports Club were sold to the Pitt Meadows Paddling Club in 2016. As of 2019, Powell River had two Canadian Malias that are believed to have originated with FCRCC. Pearson College, as of 2019, had one Canadian Malia that was acquired from Powell River (Powell River obtained it from Gibsons but it is believed to have originated with FCRCC). In 2019, Pemberton had one Canadian Malia that may have originated with FCRCC given the Hugh Fisher and FCRCC connection. In 1993, Jericho owned a Canadian Malia but this first Jericho boat was subsequently irreparably damaged and then demolished.

Garry Mancell confirmed that when the Lotus Sports Club finished building the two Canadian Malias, they trailered them to the Catalina Channel Crossing race in August 1988. This timeline has been substantiated by Bud Hohl (SCORA Historian) who has "ancient" records showing two Canadian crews bringing their own canoes with them to the Catalina Channel Crossing race in 1988. The canoes had to be weighed to meet canoe specifications for the race. The Canadian Malias weighed under 400 pounds so the team put innertubes filled with sand in the boats to bring the canoes up to the weight requirement. The Lotus Sports Club men placed second in their age category behind a team from Hawaii who was racing in a Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR).

All of the top teams, and many other teams, were racing Hawaiian Class Racers, so the Lotus Sports Club men decided that, in order to be competitive, they had to have a Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR).

Bob Disbrow (investment legend; cross-country skiing patron; philanthropist; film producer) of First Marathon Securities was one of the paddlers on the men's Lotus team. After the 1988 Catalina Channel Crossing, Bob Disbrow was convinced by Jim Mancell to buy a Hawaiian Class Racer for the Lotus Sports Club so the Lotus team could be more competitive. David Boulding organized a container to hold the Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR). The container (with canoe) was put onto a freighter in Honolulu and shipped to the Seattle docks. David Boulding got together some people and a trailer to drive to the Seattle docks to pick up the Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR).



Bob Disbrow and Milton K Wong were both long-time sponsors of Lotus Sports Club and coincidentally owned properties at Heriot Bay on Quadra Island. Grace distinctly remembers seeing the "Disbrow" Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) sitting on the beach at Heriot Bay when she was on vacation at the Taku Resort. How that Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) travelled from Vancouver to Quadra Island is a mystery. Grace also remembers the arrival of that Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) at the Barnet Marine Park boathouse soon after the Lotus Sports Club was established in 1988. The guys had been making cradles for a "state of the art" outrigger canoe so that it could be stored next to the two Malias; Grace was there the day that the Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) arrived at Lotus. There was an understanding that the Lotus Sports Club could use the canoe, but any time that Bob Disbrow wanted to paddle OC6, the "Disbrow" Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) would be made available to him.

The next time that the Lotus Sports Club competed in the Catalina Channel Crossing race, they trailed the "Disbrow" Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) to California.



Taku Resort – Heriot Bay – Quadra Island, BC

This timeline places at least two Canadian Malias at FCRCC, and two Canadian Malias plus the "Disbrow" Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) at the Lotus Sports Club by July 1989 for the first Lotus Iron outrigger canoe race.

The Lotus Outrigger Canoe Fleet

Lotus Sports Club had manufactured the first two Canadian Malia OC6s in the late 1980's using a California Malia mould that was brought to Canada via the efforts of David Boulding, Necky Canoes designer Mike Neckar, and numerous Lotus Sports Club members. The story of the growth of outrigger canoes in Canada is covered in extensive detail earlier in this chronicle. The first two Canadian Malia OC6s ("Barnet" and the 2nd Malia) were with Lotus Sports Club for many years before they were sold to Pitt Meadows Paddling Club circa 2016.



First Canadian Malia ("Barnet") owned by Pitt Meadows Paddling Club in 2019

Lotus Sports Club still has one of the original OC1s in Canada at the Barnet Marine Park boathouse. Two Montgomery OC1s were originally purchased in southern California. How these OC1s found their way to Canada is unknown, but the "California Montgomery OC1" was a durable flat-water canoe. There is minimal reference to this OC1 online, but there is an OC Paddler article from 2008/2009 that mentions the "OC1 Museum", with several mentions and photos of the "California Montgomery OC1".

<http://www.ocpaddler.com/node/4666>



California Montgomery OC1

In the early 1990's, CORA and PNWORCA clubs struggled to acquire OC6s to support the growing number of outrigger canoe clubs. Ron Kaschula of Calmar Fiberglass had shops in North Vancouver, East Vancouver, and New Westminster and was manufacturing / repairing just about anything fiberglass since before 1990. Sometime around 1992, a Canadian Class Racer (CCR) OC6 started appearing at BC clubs – referred to as a "Calmar". It was discovered that when the Canadian Malias overturned, they rode low in the water. David Boulding, Hugh Fisher, Don Irvine, and several others had input into designing a canoe that would increase paddlers' safety in colder BC water. The Canadian Class Racer (CCR) was designed with more flotation, a bumpy front nose to hold the covers, and more strength in the seats which resulted in a stiffer boat with more flotation in the rear.

In the 1990's, there were many Lower Mainland outrigger clubs with Canadian Class Racer (CCR) OC6s: Lotus Sports Club acquired two in 1992; FCRCC acquired four by 1994; Dragon Canoe Club (DCC) at Burrard Marina acquired two by 1995; Jericho acquired four by 1997. The Lotus Sports Club purchased the two Dragon Canoe Club (DCC) Canadian Class Racer (CCR) OC6s in 1999 when DCC discontinued operations. The Lotus Sports Club acquired one more Canadian Class Racer (CCR) OC6 in 2002. All five of the Calmars (Buntzen; Bedwell Bay; Belcarra; Burrard; M.K. Wong) and the "Disbrow" Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) have the signature Lotus Sports Club teal deck / white hull.

The Lotus Sports Club acquired their latest Spec (400 lbs) club boat, an Outrigger Connection Mirage, in 2009. This would be the last OC6 to be lodged at the Lotus Sports Club boathouse until a private party acquisition of an ARE Matahina in 2019 – one of only two ARE Matahina Unlimited OC6s in the Pacific NorthWest in 2019 along with the canoe owned by Kikaha of Tacoma, WA.

<https://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/sports/park-takes-on-challenge-of-paddling-from-tacoma-to-port-townsend/>



Kikaha O Ke Kai ARE Matahina Unlimited OC6

The Bradley Lightning ama has been called an "Eagle" ama, a "Hawaiian Hawk" ama, and a (Brent) "Bixler" ama. The "Bixler" ama is a misnomer. The "Bixler" ama is much like a "Puffy" ama or a "Channel Master" ama with lengthy contact at the waterline and has a large aperture with three concave sections for rope rigging to the iako at both the front and the back of the ama.



(Brent) "Bixler" ama

The "Eagle" ama or "Hawaiian Hawk" ama has a pronounced lift at the front with reduced contact at the waterline and has two separate holes for rope rigging at both the front and the back of the ama. The Pogue Sports Bradley Lightning Package literature referred to this as the "Eagle" ama. There was an OC Paddler article from 2008 explaining that the Hawaiian Hawk is more commonly called 'io, and the first Bradley Lightning was called 'Iolana.



"Kala mai, but Bradley's ama is suppose to be that of the Hawaiian Hawk more commonly called 'io. If I not mistaking, the first (most recently modified) Lightning was called 'Iolana. I believe his Team Bradley girls paddled the 'Iolana at the Liliu race a couple years ago, then it won in the channel with the same boat. 'Iolana in Hawaiian means soaring, soaring like a hawk."

<http://www.ocpaddler.com/node/4196>



The Bradley Hawaiian Hawk ama was included with each of the 80+ Bradley Lightnings manufactured by Pogue Sports between 2007 and 2012. When Canadian production of the Bradley Lightning came to an end in 2012/2013, the Bradley Hawaiian Hawk ama mould was delivered to Ron Kaschula of Calmar Fiberglass. The Bradley Hawaiian Hawk ama was recognized for its excellence in riding surf in open ocean races and for making turns in sprint races. The Lotus Sports Club was the first to commission Ron Kaschula of Calmar Fiberglass to manufacture Bradley Hawaiian Hawk amas for their Calmars and Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR). FCRCC and Dragon Zone Paddling Club subsequently ordered Bradley Hawaiian Hawk amas to supplement their ageing amas. There are numerous Canadian Clubs that have been successfully rigging their Malias, Advantages, Calmars, Mirages, and Hawaiian Class Racers with the Bradley Hawaiian Hawk amas for many years.

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/9336076/bradley-lightning-package-2011-pogue-sports>

Lotus Outrigger Canoe Racing Events

Lotus Ice Breaker

Race Results for the Lotus Ice Breaker double-hull (V12) event on the Lotus Sports Club website only go back as far as 2005. Race Results for the Lotus Ice Breaker on the CORA website only go back as far as 2011 with the migration to a new CORA website in 2019. Race Results for the Lotus Ice Breaker on the Jericho Paddling Centre website only go back as far as 2000. The exact year for the first ever Lotus Ice Breaker double-hull (V12) event (originally named the "*Clearly Canadian Ice Breaker*" – sponsored by Clearly Canadian Springwater for several years) is verified as 1993, by virtue of a "poster" on a wall inside the Lotus Sports Club boathouse. This event was organized shortly after Lotus acquired their first two Canadian Class Racer (CCR) OC6s in 1992. By 2000, the Lotus OC6 fleet had grown to include five Calmars, two Malias and the Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR), so, with the addition of OC6s provided by False Creek, Jericho and other clubs, Lotus was able to field six or seven double-hulls (V12s) in each heat of the Ice Breaker for many years. All heats in this popular race are generally filled well before race day. <http://www.jerichopaddling.com/races2000.html>



MK Wong Calmar to the right paired with the "Disbrow" Hawaiian Class Racer to the left



Clearly Canadian Ice Breaker – 1993

Lotus Sprints

The earliest mention of the Lotus Sprints is from Summer 2000 as per the Jericho Paddling Centre website race results, where a Sprints event was held on the Sunday after the Saturday Lotus Iron event. Originally, the Lotus Sprints race was a club event held for friends and family of members but was opened up to other paddlers in the late 1990's. The Lotus Sprints were also held in 2002 (Summer), 2003 (Summer), 2005 (Autumn), 2006 (Autumn), and then in 2008 (Autumn) for the last time.

<http://www.jerichopaddling.com/races2000.html>

Even when the Lotus Sports Club no longer hosted Sprints Regattas at Barnet Marine Park, Lotus continued to support the Canadian IVF Sprints program by providing OC6s for Team Canada Time Trials such as in April 2014 when they trailered three OC6s to / from Burnaby Lake for the 2014 Rio IVF Sprints Team Canada Time Trials.



Burnaby Lake Rowing Pavilion / Course

Lotus Poker Paddle

The Lotus Poker Paddle was introduced in 2012 as an Autumn mid-distance fun race. The event incorporates paddling skills such as steering accuracy in order to safely scoop up floating poker cards throughout the race course, and poker skills once on shore. The inaugural event in 2012 had two heats each with six canoes all provided by Lotus. There has been so much interest from the paddling community that the event has been increased to four heats with seven canoes (Calmars; Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR); Mirage) provided by Lotus.

<https://huliganhuligan.wordpress.com/2018/09/22/2022-09-22-noodling-around-at-the-lotus-poker-paddle/>



Lotus Iron



The Lotus Iron inaugural event took place in 1989 with 2019 marking the 30th Anniversary (31st Annual). The Lotus Iron has run continuously from 2000 to 2019 based on Jericho Paddling Centre website race results. The Lotus Iron was the first and is the longest running outrigger canoe race in Canada. We have taken the liberty of preserving the CORA / Lotus promotion of that 2019 event as web articles all too often disappear.

<https://canadianoutrigger.ca/lotus-30th/>

<https://www.localgymsandfitness.com/XX/Unknown/766790536705872/Lotus->

Sports-Club

This year's (2019) Lotus Iron event marks the 30th anniversary of outrigger canoe racing in Canada. 30 years ago, the "Lotus Eaters" and a team from False Creek were drawn from athletes across various paddling backgrounds who were introduced through a demonstration dragonboat race during Expo '86 in Vancouver. These two teams quickly became fierce yet friendly competitors in dragonboats, a competitive spirit that was transferred to outrigger racing on the lower mainland.

Canada's first OC6 canoe was produced from a Malia outrigger mould obtained from California. Members from the Lotus Sports and False Creek Racing Canoe Clubs used this mould to make several Malia outrigger canoes.

In 1989, the Lotus Sports Club organized Canada's first outrigger race, the Lotus Ironman Race, at Barnet Marine Park. Since this beginning, the sport of outrigger canoe racing has grown in popularity across the Pacific NorthWest.



Barnet Marine Park Historical Significance

The facility and surroundings at Barnet Marine Park comprising the Lotus Sports Club venue have an extensive history going back to the 1880's.

The North Pacific Lumber Company Mill, known as the Barnet Mill, was built in 1889 which generated the growth of the Village of Barnet. In 1925, the North Pacific Lumber Company Mill was under new ownership and was known as the Barnet Lumber Company. It was one of the most successful local employers in Burnaby until the 1930s, when the economic crisis of the Great Depression resulted in a strike at the mill.

The City of Burnaby eventually assumed control of the site - including all of the homes - when the company failed to pay its taxes. The City then dismantled the mill and resold the property in two parts; the eastern section would become the Kapoor sawmill that operated at the site until the 1950's, and the western portion would become the McColl-Frontenac Oil Company.

In 1945, the McColl-Frontenac Oil Company purchased the western section of what used to be the Barnet Mill site from the City of Burnaby. McColl-Frontenac handled the distribution of Texaco gas and built a new plant at the site for this purpose. The company built an improved road access to the plant which later became known as Texaco Drive. Competition from other refineries eventually forced the closure of this plant and in 1985 the area was acquired by the Municipality for the expansion of Barnet Marine Park.

[https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/list?q=%22Barnet+\(Historic+Neighbourhood\)%22&p=1&ps=](https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/list?q=%22Barnet+(Historic+Neighbourhood)%22&p=1&ps=)

The Lotus Sports Club acquired and moved into the sole remaining facility at Barnet Marine Park in 1988.



McColl-Frontenac Oil Company in 1957 with future Lotus Sports Club boathouse just north of railroad tracks