



CANADIAN OUTRIGGER HALL OF FAME

Don Mulhall



Summary

Don Mulhall has a 25-year legacy of selfless volunteer effort to paddlesports in general and outrigger canoe racing in particular. Don has made contributions to support Canadian paddlers at the international, national, provincial, and club level. Don has been part of the Penticton Racing Canoe Club (PRCC) that has hosted the popular Duel In The Desert, Length Of The Lake, Okanagan Small-Boat Racing Series, Skaha Downwind event, Channel Parkway small-boat event, and Penticton Dragon Boat Festival. Don has served on the PRCC Executive continuously from 1999-2021 and on the CORA Board from 2017-2019.

Early Career

CORA has located minimal history on Don prior to 1999. Don was born / raised on the BC West Coast, worked for a Vancouver financial institution where he met his life partner Launa Mandrell, paddled with FCRC for a few years in the mid-1990s where he connected with Drew Mitchell and Brent Bagnall, and then relocated to the dry climate of Penticton in the late 1990s.

Coach-Builder Achievements

Don has contributed to the ongoing success of PRCC as a member of PRCC Executive since circa 1999. He has composed and published countless articles on the PRCC website highlighting events hosted by PRCC and worldwide events attended by PRCC members. Don has contributed to the ongoing success of the Canadian Outrigger Racing Association (CORA) by serving on the CORA Board in several roles from 2017-2019. The effort to coordinate the CORA Cup Series Points Results has become increasingly simplified courtesy of Don. His diligence in composing and publishing the CORA Cup Series Rules / Points / Results provided clarity for CORA teams participating in the CORA Cup Series.

CORA has noted how the ongoing introduction of canoes to clubs and regions has contributed to the growth of the sport. Don has served to expand access to canoes to other CORA member clubs through his ongoing efforts to expand / upgrade the PRCC canoe fleet. Brent Bagnall and Don managed to locate "The Burrard" and trailered it to PRCC in 1997. Brent Bagnall made a deal with a California club to have a Hawaiian Class Racer (HCR) delivered to the Columbia River Outrigger Canoe Club's Race Around The Island in 2000. Don towed the HCR with a Vernon trailer from Seattle to Canada where it joined the club's loaner OC6 "The Burrard". Once PRCC had acquired their HCR in 2000, PRCC donated "The Burrard" to Brein Kalai Foerster on Hornby Island. When Vernon upgraded their OC6 fleet in the early 2000s, Don arranged to have their 2 Dennis Campbell Rhinos sold to PRCC. Don then arranged for PRCC to acquire a Calmar Canadian Class Racer (CCR) in the early 2000s. One of the Rhinos was sold to a Victoria club to expand the fleet of OC6s on Vancouver Island. This 1st Rhino would move onwards to Sproat Lake and to Yellowknife and to Prince Rupert. The 2nd Rhino was then sold to Pacific Reach in 2006 to expand their fleet of OC6s. Don arranged for PRCC to acquire an Outrigger Connection Mirage sometime between 2007-2009, bringing the PRCC fleet to 3 OC6s. Between 2016-2017, Don orchestrated a deal to sell the PRCC Calmar to Kelowna Paddle Club (KPC) to provide them with a 2nd Calmar to rig a double-hull for winter paddling. Don then acquired 2 Bradley Lightnings to upgrade the PRCC fleet to 4 modern OC6s. Although it is common practice among Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, and Polynesia outrigger clubs to name their canoes and provide a page on their websites dedicated to the history of their canoes, this is a tradition followed by very few Canadian clubs. Many outrigger clubs give their canoes names associated with the land and waters surrounding their location. Don has played a part in ensuring this cultural tradition is ingrained at PRCC with every OC6 given a meaningful name. The PRCC canoes were on the beach at Okanagan Lake until Don approached the City of Penticton Parks and Recreation in the early 2000s about converting a 1960s shed at Skaha Lake Park East into storage for dragon boats and outrigger canoes. Don invested extensive volunteer time for many years to provide the club with an OC6 trailer, outrigger canoe and dragon boat carts, and small-boat racks. Don has collaborated with the City of Penticton from 2019-2021 on the Skaha Lake Park East Plan with stakeholders to assist with improvements to the park that will hopefully provide PRCC and Dragon Boat Festival Society with a new and expanded boathouse near the existing footprint. [01]

Don has coached PRCC competitive, recreational, and Junior crews to success at CORA Cup Series races, PNWORCA events, and Hawaii races. Some of those successes have received press coverage:

- The PRCC mixed crew battled windy conditions and big water to place 1st at the 2011 Freshwater Challenge 44-km change race in Vernon. [02]
- The PRCC mixed crew placed 1st at the 2013 National Iron Championship race in Vernon placing them as the CORA Cup Series Champions. [03]
- PRCC crews topped the podium at the 2014 Canadian National Outrigger Races in Gibsons as crews battled strong winds and some of the year's strongest tide changes. [04]
- Competing in the 2015 Maui-To-Molokai open ocean race placing OC2 Mens 3rd. [05]
- PRCC Juniors took 2015 CORA Cup Series Junior Trophy National honours while PRCC Mixed crew earned the CORA Cup Series Trophy for the 3rd year in a row at races held at Jericho Sailing Centre. [06]
- PRCC crews took 4 medals from the 2017 Canadian National Championship in Harrison Hot Springs in OC6 and small-boat.
- PRCC crew took 1st place Mixed Sr Masters and 2nd overall Mixed at the 2017 Bellingham Classic OC6 Iron race. [07]

Aside from being outrigger coach for Penticton outrigger canoe and dragon boat crews, Don has also coordinated outrigger canoe camps in 2016 and 2017 on Maui in the Winter. [08] The unplanned effort to collect CORA outrigger canoeing history was a spin-off from the CORA Canoe Registry initiative. Don agreed to sit for an interview in 2021 that resulted in a vast set of material on PRCC that became the *"The Skaha Story"*. [09] He then took it upon himself to conduct research to confirm events / times / places / individuals and diligently proof-read several drafts until the content was factually / politically correct. [10]

Pioneering Achievements

Don has a long history of volunteer effort as Race Director and registrar and timer for various PRCC events:

- PRCC has hosted a Rattlesnake Island Small Boat Race from Antlers Beach around Rattlesnake Island as part of the Okanagan Small-Boat Race Series. [11]
- PRCC has hosted a Skaha Downwind event between Penticton and Okanagan Falls for one-person and two-person boats as well as six-person outrigger canoes with direction determined by the winds. [12]
- PRCC has hosted a Channel Parkway 10K small-boat event between Skaha Lake and Okanagan Lake designed to take advantage of the winds that the South Okanagan traditionally gets in the fall months. [13]
- PRCC and Vernon Racing Canoe Club have jointly hosted the Length of the Lake Ultra-Distance Race that was held for the 19th time in 2019. This event is a 100-kilometre paddle from Kin Beach in Vernon to the Peach at Okanagan Lake in Penticton for one-person, or two-person, or six-person canoes. It is believed that Drew Mitchell and Brent Bagnall and Don started this event informally in the late 1990s. [14] [15] [16] [17]
- PRCC hosted the 21st annual Duel In The Desert race in May 2019 making this the 3rd longest continuously running outrigger canoe race in Canada. The Duel In The Desert OC6 event was started in 1999 by Don and co-founder Brent Bagnall. Don was Race Director all 21 times this event had been held. [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] [26]

Don as coach of Penticton Dragon Boat Club, has been part of dragon boat training and racing in Penticton since the beginning. Don was responsible for having GO Rowing & Paddling deliver a dragon boat, paddles, and PFDs to Penticton in Spring 2000. [27] Don has provided race management for the Penticton Dragon Boat Festival (PDBF) for 20 years from 2000-2019. He has acted as Race Director not only in Penticton, but also for some of BC's bigger dragon boat and outrigger canoeing events. The PDBF has grown to be one of Penticton's largest sporting events / festivals. [28] [29]

Exemplary Achievements

Don has been active in the local community as a liaison with the municipal government and has delivered communiques in support of the engagement processes for the future of Skaha Lake and Okanagan Lake waterfront access. [30] [31] Don has been able to generate interest within the outrigger canoe and dragon boat paddling community by having articles regarding the experience of PRCC paddlers published in many local media sites. The purpose of the Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award is to recognize volunteers who have made significant and exemplary contributions to the Outrigger Canoe Racing Discipline of Canadian Outrigger Racing Association (CORA) within Canada in the Builder Category. [32] The CORA Board reviewed nominations received and recognized Don Mulhall of PRCC as the 2021 recipient of the Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award for a 25+ year legacy of selfless volunteer effort to paddling sports in general and outrigger canoe racing in particular. [33]

References

Note	Article	Link
[01]	2021 Skaha Lake Park East Plan	https://www.penticton.ca/sites/default/files/docs/parks-and-recreation/2021-03-16-PDF-Skaha%20Lake%20Park%20East%20Plan%20Final%20Document.pdf
[02]	2011 Freshwater Challenge	https://www.todayinbc.com/sports/paddlers-take-freshwater-plunge/
[03]	2013 Canadian National Championships	https://www.pentictonherald.ca/sports/local_sports/article_353e6b36-16f2-51bb-b5ce-50530a5798bb.html
[04]	2014 Canadian National Championships	https://www.todayinbc.com/sports/penticton-canoe-crew-paddle-way-to-national-podium/
[05]	2015 Maui to Molokai	https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/sports/paddling-hawaii-waters-prove-tough/
[06]	2015 Canadian National Championships	https://www.pentictonherald.ca/sports/local_sports/article_900b6f74-2c22-11e5-b790-6bb7cdda69dc.html
[07]	2017 Canadian National Championships	https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/sports/canoe-teams-win-four-medals-at-nationals/
[08]	2016 / 2017 Hawaiian Outrigger Camps	http://www.kelownapaddlecentre.ca/december-hawaiian-outrigger-camp/
[09]	2018 Jack Lost	https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/news/just-a-buoy-looking-to-find-his-way-home/
[09]	2021 CORA Cultural Continuity	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/community-2/cultural-continuity/
[10]	2021 Skaha Legacy	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/The-Skaha-Legacy-Latest.pdf
[11]	2011 Rattlesnake Island	https://pentictonoutrigger.com/blog/rattlesnake-island-small-boat-race-2011/
[12]	2014 Skaha Downwind	https://www.todayinbc.com/sports/record-setting-race-for-skaha-downwind-event/
[13]	2016 Channel Parkway	https://www.pentictonherald.ca/sports/article_e7a34762-88f0-11e6-aae9-0badb5200a21.html
[14]	2019 Length of the Lake Ultra-Distance	https://pentictonoutrigger.com/races/length-lake-ultra-paddle-race/
[15]	2019 Length of the Lake Ultra-Distance	https://www.castanet.net/news/Penticton/264920/Race-spans-length-of-lake
[16]	2019 Length of the Lake Ultra-Distance	https://www.localgymsandfitness.com/CA/Penticton/931853346853664/Len-gth-of-the-Lake-100-km-Ultra-Paddling-Race
[17]	2016 Length of the Lake Ultra-Distance	https://kialoa.com/blogs/talkstory/length-of-the-lake
[18]	2000 Duel In The Desert	http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2000.html
[19]	2001 Duel In The Desert	http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2001.html
[20]	2002 Duel In The Desert	http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2002.html
[21]	2010 Duel In The Desert	https://pentictonoutrigger.com/blog/duel-desert-2010-summary/
[22]	2016 Duel In The Desert (17th)	https://www.pressreader.com/canada/penticton-herald/20160714/281792808366562
[23]	2017 Duel In The Desert (19th)	https://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/sports/duel-in-the-desert-hits-skaha-lake-2/
[24]	2018 Duel In The Desert (20th)	https://www.pentictonherald.ca/sports/local_sports/article_73818902-54a5-11e8-a246-e3a9dbd3bd70.html
[25]	2019 Duel In The Desert (21st)	https://www.kelownadailycourier.ca/news/article_1582fdc2-7399-11e9-bf2d-0b20072298e9.html
[26]	2019 Duel In The Desert (21st)	https://pentictonoutrigger.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/newsletter-PRCC-April-2019.pdf?x92439
[27]	2014 GO Rowing & Paddling Association of Canada	https://web.archive.org/web/20141221020655/http://www.gorowandpaddle.org/
[28]	2021 Penticton Dragon Boat Festival	https://pentictondragonboat.com/
[29]	2021 Penticton Dragon Boat Festival	https://www.keremeosreview.com/community/mini-penticton-dragon-boat-festival-stays-covid-19-safe-on-skaha-lake/
[30]	2021 Skaha Lake Park East Plan Letter	https://www.penticton.ca/sites/default/files/docs/city-hall/council-committees/parks-and-recreation-advisory/Late%20Item%20-%20Letter%20DB.pdf

[31]	2013 City of Kelowna Regular Council Meeting Minutes	http://apps.kelowna.ca/CityPage/Docs/PDFs/Council/Meetings/Council%20Meetings%202013/2013-07-30/Regular%20Tuesday/Minutes%20-%20Regular%20Tuesday%20Council%20Meeting_Jul30_2013.pdf
[32]	2021 Hugh Town Memorial Builder Award Recipients	https://canadianoutrigger.ca/community-2/the-hugh-a-town-memorial-builder-award/
[33]	2021 CORA Hugh Town Builder Award	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/hugh-town-memorial-builder-award-2021/