



CANADIAN OUTRIGGER HALL OF FAME

James Hill



Summary

James Hill had notable canoeing achievements in the 2000s-2020s. However, online references for James during this time are meager, making it a challenge to compile a Hall Of Fame Profile that fully represents the accomplishments of James.

What is known is that James had established himself as a respected competitive outrigger canoe distance paddler between 2007-2014 having raced at Moloka'i Hoe, Pailolo Challenge, Catalina Crossing, Queen Lili'uokalani, Maui 2 Moloka'i OC1, as well as countless local and regional races. Beginning in 2016 when Latitude 48 was formed, the coaching staff at Latitude 48 including James would continually have Womens / Mens / Mixed / Open / Masters crews racing in their 2 distinctive green / black Puakea Malolos to top place finishes in CORA / PNWORCA distance/changes races. James had made his coaching skills available from 2016-2025 to Latitude 48 members, CORA members through Town Halls, and Team Canada paddlers as a dedicated coach.

Early Career

The intrepid kayaker who had an OC1 lesson with James in 2007 noted that James was a letter reader and writer for the Ministry of Transport, where James likely heard about every pothole in BC. It just so happens that there is a James Hill who at some time had been a Senior Writer with the BC Government in Victoria BC. That James attended the University of Victoria from 2004-2006, and this is the storyline still to be pieced together. [11] [12]

Outrigger Canoeing Achievements

The earliest mention of James with regard to paddlesports is a 2007 Times Colonist article about how James was an OC1 instructor with Gorge Rowing and Paddling Centre and was giving a lesson on solo outrigger canoe paddling to an intrepid kayaker. [21] There is then a mention of "James Hill" as a member of the Chinook Racing Canoe Club founded in 2012 and operating out of the Fairway Gorge Paddling Club, formerly a part of the GO Rowing and Paddling Association. [22] This may be purely coincidence as "James Hill" is a common name and there is even a like-named accomplished ukelele player/singer from Victoria BC. [23] However, given that the Chinook Racing Canoe Club operated out of Gorge Rowing and Paddling Centre, where James was an OC1 instructor, this would seem to be a concurrence.

Ashley Paul James and Mike Bernemann in early-2025 provided details on how the original "*Team Cascadia*" came to be, and this outrigger canoeing history has been fully documented in the CORA publication "*Team Cascadia Origins*". The 2012 Pailolo Challenge would be the 1st time that *Team Cascadia* would officially race together. This 2012 crew was comprised of Ashley Paul James, Mike Bernemann, Calvin (Pake Nui) Chow, Vance Hashimoto, Alan Goto, with legendary Hawaiian steersman Jim Foti. This 2012 *Team Cascadia* crew would finish 1st Place Men Open Spec Iron and 10th Place Overall. The 2013 Pailolo Challenge would be the 2nd time that *Team Cascadia* would officially race together. This would be once again top paddlers from Washington / Hawaii / Canada competing against some of the best crews in the world. This 2013 crew was comprised of Ashley Paul James, Mike Bernemann, Latitude 48 co-founder James Hill, Vance Hashimoto, Jasen Kaya, and Hawaiian steersman Jim Foti once again. This 2013 *Team Cascadia* crew would finish 1st Place Men Open Spec Iron and 7th Place Overall. The 2014 Pailolo Challenge would be the 3rd time that *Team Cascadia* would officially race together. This would be once again top paddlers from Washington / Hawaii / Canada competing against some of the best crews in the world. This 2014 crew was comprised of Ashley Paul James, Latitude 48 coach James Hill, Vance Hashimoto, Fiji paddling adventurer Jasen Kaya, Seventy 48 Race 2018, 6-By-600 Leader Alan Goto, and Hawaiian steersman Jim Foti for the 3rd consecutive year. This 2014 *Team Cascadia* crew would finish 6th Place Men Open Unlimited Iron and 10th Place Overall. [31] It is worth noting that although there are no online references for James competing in OC6 or small boats races from 2017-2012, James was invited onto a crew that would finish 1st Place Men Open Spec Iron at the Pailolo Challenge in 2 consecutive years.

The original CORA publication "*Team Cascadia - Paddlers Without Borders*" was written to document a concept that has been around for many years that involved paddlers from Oregon / Washington / Canada forming crews for outrigger canoe racing events and quite often taking the podium. [32] The concept of *Team Cascadia* has gone by many names over the years and that article captured 4 memorable occurrences of this concept. However, that article was based on a reference to a July 2018 The Gorge Outrigger Race crew

named *Team Cascadia*, consisting of Alan Goto, Ashley Paul James, Erik Scharffenberg, Jeremy Cole, Mike Bernemann, and James Hill, who would finish 1st place Unlimited V6 Masters Men and 3rd place overall. [33]

More than 300 paddlers participated in the August 2018 Howe Sound Iron Canadian Championship Outrigger Races held in Gibsons BC. Alan Goto from Sand Point Outrigger Canoe Club and James would team-up on Sunday to race OC2 finishing with a time of 46:58, beating the 2016 fastest time of 48:30. [35]

From 2019-2024, James amassed an impressive portfolio of wins in OC1/OC2 distance events. [41] [42] [43] [44] [45] In both 2022 & 2023 at The Gorge Outrigger Race, James would race with a V6 crew to 2nd place Unlimited Masters Men. [51] [52] [53]

James has represented Team Canada at International Va'a Federation (IVF) World Distance in 2023. At 2023 Samoa IVF World Distance, James would race with an all-Canadian crew that would place 4th in V6 Masters 50+ Men. [55] [56]

Coach-Builder Achievements

The coaching staff at Latitude 48 of Jim Pearson, Corey Teramura, Melanie Conard and James, who have tailored coaching programs to paddlers from 19 to 70 years of age, bring decades of outrigger canoe racing experience including Molokai Na Wahine, Molokai Hoe, Catalina Crossing, Queen Lili'uokalani, Hamilton Cup, Pailolo Challenge, Maui to Molokai, IVF World Sprints / Distance Championships, PNWORCA distance/changes races, and many CORA mid/long-distance races. [71] [72] The Latitude 48 coaching staff of Melanie Conard and James, have put together a range of training programs that include a recreational program ("Horizon") created for people who love to be on the water in a fun, supportive environment, an introductory competitive program ("Meridian") for eager new paddlers or experienced paddlers wanting to train and race but without the commitment required for the competitive team, and a high-performance program ("Competitive") for paddlers looking to train and race at a competitive level. [73]

After getting into paddling through dragon boating, James was coerced to start coaching with a mere 6 months of paddling experience and has been learning and loving coaching ever since. James enjoys learning about human performance and coaching theories, and putting that knowledge into effect by helping people discover their passion for paddling and reaching beyond what they assumed limits. As an athlete, James has competed in the Moloka'i Hoe, Pailolo Challenge, Catalina Crossing, Queen Lili'uokalani, the Maui 2 Moloka'i OC1 race and countless local and regional races. Having now coached everyone from novices who had never paddled before on up to Team Canada, James is proud to be working with Latitude 48 to build this new club and its athletes. [74]

The CORA Town Hall Committee has been fortunate that so many individuals have been willing to step forward as Guest Speakers and showcase their public-speaking skills. James generously volunteered his time to speak at the CORA Town Hall (11 November 2023 4PM Pacific): *Stellar Seven*, as a Guest Speaker on behalf of Norman MacDonell. His personal account of their life-time friendship shared insights on the character of Norman MacDonell that had contributed to his induction into the Canadian Outrigger Hall Of Fame. [76]

James has volunteered his time to provide coaching guidance in various forums. In 2018, James did a presentation as part of a podcast with Kristyn Anthony on "*life in an outrigger canoe*." [78] In 2021, James did a CORA Town Hall presentation as part of the CORA Coach Panel on Solo Boat Stroke Technique. [79] In 2025, James did CORA Town Hall presentations as part of the CORA Cup Series Invitation to Regional Coaching Roundtables. [80] James has served with the CORA IVF Committee as a member of the IVF Selection / Coaching Committee. [81]

Pioneering Achievements

Latitude 48 Paddling Club was formed in 2016 by coaches and leaders in the Victoria outrigger canoe and dragon boat paddling community of British Columbia, including co-founders Melanie Conard and James. There is very limited water access in the Victoria Gorge Waterway (the narrow tidal inlet that connects Victoria Harbour to Portage Inlet), known simply as "The Gorge" to Victoria locals. Latitude 48 Paddling Club and Ocean River Paddling Club (ORPC) shared dock space at the Village Marina behind the Value Village on Store Street until the amalgamation of Latitude 48 and ORPC in May 2021. This amalgamation of Latitude 48 and ORPC provided many benefits to the Latitude 48 and ORPC club members specifically, as well as the paddling community in general. ORPC contributed 4 traditional Spec OC6s (2 Clipper Advantages; 2 Outrigger Connection Mirages), while Latitude 48 contributed 3 Unlimited OC6s (2 Puakea Malolos; 1 Kamanu Nanahope). This expanded OC6 fleet allowed Latitude 48 with Melanie Conard and James to provide training in a diverse set of OC6s to a growing club membership. ORPC and Rosemary Henry had founded the mid-distance Bridges Race in 1996, the Bridges Inny / Outty Small Boats in 1997, and the Island Iron in 1999. By virtue of Latitude 48 bringing a larger club membership and a commitment to continue these 3 legacy CORA races, Latitude 48 with Melanie Conard and James brought **continuity** to the outrigger canoeing community that these events would remain on the race schedule. [82]

References

Note	Article	Link
[11]	James Hill About	https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-hill-07921a4/?originalSubdomain=ca
[12]	James Hill Strategic Planning Analyst	https://dir.gov.bc.ca/gtds.cgi?esearch=&updateRequest=&view=detailed&sortBy=name&for=people&attribute=display+name&matchMethod=is&searchString=James+Hill&objectId=148242
[21]	2007 Our Intrepid Kayaker Hits The Water - Literally	https://www.timescolonist.com/life/health/our-intrepid-kayaker-hits-the-water-literally-4566138
[22]	2012 Chinook Racing Canoe Club	https://cfly.ca/canoe/Chinook.htm
[23]	James Hill Ukulele Master	https://thefestival.bc.ca/artists/james-hill/
[31]	2017 <i>Team Cascadia</i> Origins	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/team-cascadia-origins/
[32]	2018 Cascadia Paddlers Without Borders	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/cascadia-paddlers-without-borders/
[33]	2018 The Gorge Race - 112 Crews	https://thegorgerace.com/the-gorge-race-2018-results/
[35]	2018 Howe Sound 300 paddlers at international outrigger races	https://www.coastreporter.net/local-sports/300-paddlers-at-international-outrigger-races-3408200
[41]	2019 Bridges Inny/Outty Small Boats	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ORPC-Bridges-Small-Boat-Race-REsults-2019v2.pdf
[42]	2021 FCRCC Round Bowen Small Boats	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021-FCRCC-Around-Bowen-Relay-Leaderboard-2.pdf
[43]	2022 Island Iron - Cadborosaurus Chase Small Boats	https://www.webscorer.com/race?raceid=279261
[44]	2023 PNWORCA Winter Series Final (Race #7) Results	https://www.jerichoutrigger.com/races2023/pnworca7.html
[45]	2024 Island Iron - Cadborosaurus Chase Small Boats	https://www.jerichoutrigger.com/races2024/islandiron.html
[51]	2022 The Gorge Outrigger Canoe V6 Race	https://register.pacificmultisports.com/Events/1046/Participants
[52]	2023 The Gorge OC6	https://events.pacificmultisports.com/Events/1121/Participants
[53]	2023 The Gorge OC6 Results	https://pacificmultisports.com/results/thegorgeoc6-race-2023/#0_3EF1B7
[55]	2023 Samoa IVF Distance Results	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/team-canada-at-2023-samoa-ivf-world-distance/
[56]	2023 From the Airport - Last One!	https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=760877059372987&id=100063520990384
[71]	2018 Latitude 48 Paddling Club Races Through Victoria Waters	https://www.vancouverislandfreedaily.com/news/latitude-48-paddling-club-races-through-victoria-waters-7156830
[72]	2018 Latitude 48 Paddling Club Races Through Victoria Waters	https://www.goldstreamgazette.com/news/latitude-48-paddling-club-races-through-victoria-waters-574531
[73]	Latitude 48 Programs	https://www.latitude48paddling.ca/
[74]	Latitude 48 Coaching	https://www.latitude48paddling.ca/coaches
[75]	CORA Club Reps	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/canadian-outrigger-racing-association/cora-clubs/
[76]	2023 CORA Town Hall: <i>Stellar Seven</i>	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/cora-town-hall-11-november-4pm-pacific-stellar-seven-cora-hall-of-fame/
[78]	2018 James Hill of Victoria's Latitude 48 Paddling Club discusses life in an outrigger canoe - Kristyn Anthony.	https://soundcloud.com/user-647880800/james-hill-latitude-48-paddling-club
[79]	2021 CORA Coach Panel #5: Solo Boat Stroke Technique	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/cora-coach-panel-5-solo-boat-stroke-technique/
[80]	2025 Invitation to Regional Coaching Roundtables	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/invitation-to-regional-coaching-roundtables/
[81]	2025 James Hill - CORA IVF Selection / Coaching Committee	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/cora-ivf-committee/
[82]	The Ocean River Legacy	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/The-ORPC-Legacy-Latest.pdf