



Cascadia - Paddlers Without Borders



"Team Cascadia" [01] is a concept that has been around for many years that involves paddlers from Oregon / Washington / Canada forming crews for outrigger canoe racing events and quite often taking the podium. The concept of Team Cascadia has gone by many names over the years and this article captures four memorable occurrences of this concept.



Molokai Hoe 2019. Gordon Martinez [02], head coach of Kikaha O Ke Kai [03], had a vision of a Masters 40+ Pacific Northwest crew that would be competitive in the outrigger canoe racing Super Bowl that is Molokai Hoe. Gordon assembled a stellar crew named "Kikaha Northwest" of nine rock-star paddlers from six different clubs that included

Bobby Fontes (WA), Jacob Murray (WA), Gordon Martinez (WA), Jono Saunders - steersman (WA), Matt Taufaasau (WA), Eric Scharffenberg (OR), Taz Lee (OR), Ashley James (BC), and Len Morris Jr. (BC). This crew also had boat coaches John Richardson and his son Keala Richardson, who captured a photo / video journal [04] of the event.



The crew spoke highly of the great experience coming and working together with men from different clubs. Gordon attributed one key to their success in that everyone had respect for each other as equals, no chip on the shoulder, just pure trust and hard work together. During their crew training, everyone made sacrifices to travel as far from Oregon, Washington, up to Canada. The result was Kikaha Northwest finishing 44th overall and taking Masters 40+ Silver [05] – one of the best showings ever by a Pacific Northwest Molokai Hoe crew – with a top Tahitian team taking Masters 40+ Gold.





Catalina Crossing 2016. Brian Itami, with Kai Ikaika [07], had a vision of a Masters 40+ Pacific Northwest crew that would be competitive in the Southern California Outrigger Racing Association (SCORA) Championship event that is the Catalina



Crossing. Brian assembled a stellar crew named "Kai Ikaika Paddling Club" of nine rock-star paddlers from five different clubs that included Eric Scharffenberg (OR), Todd Whitby (OR), Joel Strimmling (OR), Tau Porter (OR), Brian Itami (OR), Robbie Magus (BC), Bradley Morrison (BC), Bob Woodman (WA), and John Richardson – steersman extraordinaire (WA).



The crew was racing Spec Masters 40+ in a canoe equipped with built-in bilge pumps. There are some great photos from the start of the race where several of the crew are seen leaning very far right for some reason. We can only guess that the crew was keen to know how well the built-in bilge pumps would work in a race situation. The canoe flipped and the crew was able to utilize the built-in bilge pumps to empty the canoe of water before the race started. The result was "Kai Ikaika Paddling Club" finishing 34th overall and taking Spec Masters 40+ Gold [08].



Queen Lili'uokalani 2015. Boy Chun Fook [09], KBCS Radio celebrity [10] and guest speaker [11] and long-time PNWORCA President [12] and one of the co-founders of Kikaha O Ke Kai, [13] had a vision of a Masters 40+ Queen Lili'uokalani Change-Out crew. Boy sent individual text messages to 8 guys he had seen

consistently at the 2015 PNWORCA Winter Series Small-Boat Racing Series, extending them an invitation to be part of this crew. When Mr. Boy Chun Fook sends you an invitation to be on a crew that he is organizing, you do not ask who is on the crew. You reply with "I'm in", you book



flights, you book a place, and you train even harder. Boy sent out a message after the PNWORCA Small-Boat Winter Series Championship event announcing the crew: *"Most of you were chosen to race with us because of your commitment and passion for outrigger paddling. You all shown so far this year the brave ability to paddle in this Winter Series and train on your own to be in better physical and mental shape each week than most paddlers do."* Boy had assembled a stellar crew named "Kikaha Manulele" of nine ageing rock-star paddlers from six different clubs that included Dave Oreiro (WA), Dave Hartley (WA), Robert "Lopaka" Keliinoi (WA), Russ Woosley (WA), Greg Sherman (WA), Rick Renaud (WA), Boy Chun Fook (WA), Graeme Galves (BC), and "Uncle" Paul Aio (HI). Boy sent out a change-rotation-schedule one week before the event and when we all met each other as a crew for the first time on the dock at Kailua Bay in the scorching heat of 105F to rig the canoe, there was an acknowledgement from everyone that Boy had assembled a group that might just medal.

It was a very fast 18-mile race pace as "Kikaha Manulele" easily passed many OC6 Spec crews and OC6 Unlimited crews that had started out in waves ahead of the OC9 crews. The Kikaha crew blazed across the finish line, not knowing where they placed among the 120+ crews, beached the canoe, and went home to clean-up before the Awards Presentation. Boy Chun Fook stuck around the Kailua Pier to see the posted results and sent a text message to everyone with just one word – "Gold". The result was "Kikaha Manulele" finishing 62nd overall and taking Spec Masters 9-Man 40+ Gold [14].



The men quickly changed from spectator garb to photo-op attire and hustled to the King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel grounds to revel in an unexpected achievement. This was just one of many opportunities where "Kikaha Manulele" and Bridge City Paddling Club Members from Oregon and Nevada would team up to medal in the Thursday OC4 Skills races, the Sunday double-hull races, and the Sunday small-boat races on that Labour Day Weekend.



Molokai Na Wahine 2013. Lance Mamiya, who has a reputation for innovation and inspiration and bringing together quality individuals for memorable adventures, former Tri-Cities Outrigger Canoe Club coach [15], father of two stellar baseball player sons, steersman for the 2012 Olamau Crossing [16], founder of the "Ninjas" [17] (Mark Mayeda, Vance Hashimoto, Jasen Kaya, Stephen Paelua, Dave Williams), founder of Team FreeLance that became home for dozens of orphan paddlers, owner of the first Giblin Vortex in the Pacific Northwest, had a vision of a Pacific Northwest Molokai Na Wahine crew.

Lance had assembled a core group of six rock-star paddlers from five different clubs that included Jackie (Kaya) Nagano (WA), Lori (Hashimoto) Miyasaki (WA), Minnie Fontenelle (WA), Terri Mayeda (OR), Rhonda Bintliff (OR), and Nattie Blue (OR) from PNWORCA. Lance reached out to his Canadian contacts to complete the 10-wahine roster and the six PNWORCA wahines were joined by Linda Warren (False Creek), Melanie Conard (Latitude 48), Jacinta Sheridan (Comox), and Laurel Archer (Comox).



The Pacific Northwest Molokai Na Wahine crew trained all of 2013 and were joined on the adventure by the support team of Lance Mamiya and three HWOPS paddlers - Vance Hashimoto, Jasen Kaya, and Stephen Paelua. The support team had some great footage of water-changes in the middle of the Kaiwi Channel [18].

Boy Chun Fook, then President of PNWORCA, sent out a communique to the Pacific Northwest paddling community inviting everyone to follow along on this adventure.

Aloha Friends, please join in supporting the "Pacific Northwest Wahine" as they race across the Kaiwi channel in the 35th Annual Na Wahine O Ke Kai race this Sunday, Sept 22. These tough competitors have been training year round in preparation for this epic outrigger event. Team captain Jackie Kaya, Lori Hashimoto, Minnie Fontenelle, Terri Mayeda, Rhonda Bintliff, Nattie Blue combined with veteran Canadian paddlers Laurel Archer, Linda Warren, Jacinta Sheridan, and Melanie Conard, are your PNW Wahine. Watch as they battle 41 miles from Molokai to Oahu with water-gals from around the world in the spirit of all Wahine O Ke Kai who pioneered this race some 35 years ago. Sponsored in part by Kialoa and Ocean Minded, PNW Wahine give a huge shout out to all supporters, sponsors, family, and friends. Watch the live feed courtesy of Ocean Paddler TV on Sunday, starting at 8:00am HAST (11:00am PST). [19]



Archer, Linda Warren, Jacinta Sheridan, and Melanie Conard, are your PNW Wahine. Watch as they battle 41 miles from Molokai to Oahu with water-gals from around the world in the spirit of all Wahine O Ke Kai who pioneered this race some 35 years ago. Sponsored in part by Kialoa and Ocean Minded, PNW Wahine give a huge shout out to all supporters, sponsors, family, and friends. Watch the live feed courtesy of Ocean Paddler TV on Sunday, starting at 8:00am HAST (11:00am PST). [19]

The Pacific Northwest Wahine would have a very respectable showing finishing 32nd overall and 23rd Open Fibreglass. [20]

References

Note	Article	Link
[01]	Impressive showing by Team Cascadia, Master Men, came in 3rd overall!	https://thegorgerace.com/the-gorge-race-2018-results/
[02]	Kikaha O Ke Kai Kokua Gordon	http://kikaha.com/kokuagordon/
[03]	Kikaha O Ke Kai Tacoma, WA	http://kikaha.com/
[04]	Molokai Hoe 2019 Kikaha Northwest Race Start	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qwn6E7nhxsk
[05]	Molokai Hoe 2019 Results	https://pserevents.com/events/1109/results
[09]	Molokai Hoe 2019 Action & Gordon	https://fb.watch/jStd5wSurn/?mibextid=YCRy0i
[07]	Kia Ikiaka Portland, OR	https://www.kaiikaika.com/
[08]	Catalina Crossing 2016 Results	http://www.scora.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Catalina-Crossing-2016_Men.pdf
[09]	Travel Tacoma, Boy Chun Fook, Outrigger Paddler, Tacoma	https://www.traveltacoma.com/sports/ambassadors/clarence-boy-chun-fook/
[10]	KBCS Radio Fireside Chat with Boy Chun Fook, Part 1	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/KBCS-FIRESIDE-Boy-Ah-Fook-Part-1.mp3
[11]	KBCS Radio Fireside Chat with Boy Chun Fook, Part 2	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/KBCS-FIRESIDE-Boy-Ah-Fook-Part-2.mp3
[12]	Hawaii Radio Connection with Boy Chun Fook	https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/hawaii-radio-connection-with-boy-chun-fook/
[13]	Hawai'i Radio Connection	https://www.kbcs.fm/programs/hawaiian-radio-connection/
[14]	Queen Lili'uokalani 2015 Saturday Results	https://www.qlcanoerace.com/publicdocs/2015QueenLiliuoRaceSatMenResults.pdf
[15]	Tri-Cities Outrigger Canoe Club (TCOCC)	https://www.wenatcheeworld.com/sports/paddling-away-stress-on-the-columbia-river/article_9166d402-53f6-56d7-a300-26383a6ae3d6.html
[16]	Olamaui 2012 Lance Mamiya	https://outriggerzone.com/news/unlimited-olamaui/
[17]	Olamaui 2012 Lance Mamiya Crew	https://www.facebook.com/162196033846445/posts/these-are-the-courageous-crews-that-participated-in-olamaui-2012team-primo-mael-c/304869326245781/
[18]	Molokai Na Wahine 2013 Footage	https://youtu.be/kdoLCuxQyUo
[19]	Live Feed Courtesy Of Ocean Paddler TV	https://vimeo.com/75619260
[20]	Molokai Na Wahine 2013 Results	http://nawahineokekai.com/results-history/2013.html