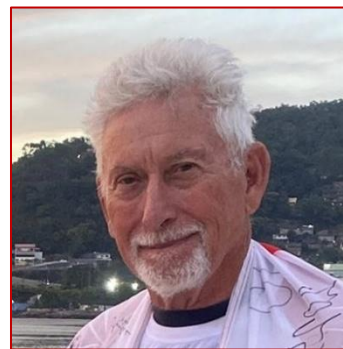




# CANADIAN OUTRIGGER HALL OF FAME

## John Roberts



### Summary

**John Roberts** is recognized as founder of the outrigger canoeing program at Calgary Canoe Club (CCC) as of 1999. John has promoted and supported the development of outrigger canoeing and racing for 30+ years through his dedication and hard work. John was heavily involved in getting outrigger canoeing into the 2005 Edmonton World Masters Games. John was instrumental in the success of the 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints. John has competed in Canada and internationally in outrigger canoeing for almost 40 years. John has competed in world class events in Hawaii and at IVF World Sprints / Distance and events in V1 and V6 canoes for 30+ years. John has captured many IVF World Sprints / Distance medals racing in Masters 50, Masters 60, Masters 70, and Masters 75 divisions.

### Early Career

There is little information available on the early career of John that led to his involvement with outrigger canoeing, and this is the storyline still to be pieced together. John was born sometime in the mid-1940s, as he raced Masters 70 at 2016 Australia IVF World Sprints and Masters 75 at the 2022 London IVF World Sprints, and an Avenue Calgary lifestyle magazine article placed him at age 79 as of Aug-2023. John may very well have spent most of his life in the Calgary area. What is known is that John was a marathon canoe paddler and cross-country skier at Calgary AB in the 1980s / 1990s before his introduction to outrigger canoeing on visits to Hawaii in the mid-1990s. There is a record of "John Roberts" of Calgary AB and Mark Bayard of Langley BC having completed the 1999 Yukon River Quest in tandem canoe. [111] [112] [113] [114]

### Outrigger Canoeing Achievements

John has represented Team Canada at International Va'a Federation (IVF) World Sprints / Distance from 2004-2024. At 2004 Hilo IVF World Sprints, John would take Bronze in V1 500M Senior Masters Men. At 2006 New Zealand IVF World Sprints, John would take Bronze in V1 500M Golden Masters Men. At 2006 New Zealand IVF World Sprints, John would race with Team Canada crews that would take Bronze in V12 500M Golden Masters Men, and place 6th in V6 500M Golden Masters Men. At 2008 Sacramento IVF World Sprints, John would advance to Semifinals in V1 500M Golden Masters Men. At 2008 Sacramento IVF World Sprints, John would race with Team Canada crews that would take Bronze in V12 500M Golden Masters Men, and take Silver in V6 500M Golden Masters Men. At 2014 Rio IVF World Sprints, John would take Gold in V1 500M Masters 70 Men. At 2014 Rio IVF World Sprints, John would race with Team Canada crews that would take Gold in V6 500M Masters 50 Men, and take Gold in V6 1000M Masters 50 Men. At 2016 Australia IVF World Sprints, John would take Gold in V1 500M Masters 70 Men. At 2016 Australia IVF World Sprints, John would race with Team Canada crews that would take Bronze in V12 500M Masters 60 Men, and take Bronze in V6 500M (1-turn) Masters 70 Men. At 2018 Tahiti IVF World Sprints, John would advance to Finals and place 4th in V1 500M Masters 70 Men. At 2018 Tahiti IVF World Sprints, John would race with Team Canada crews that would take Gold in V6 500M Masters 70 Men, and take Silver in V6 500M (1-turn) Masters 70 Men. At 2022 London IVF World Sprints, John would take Bronze in V1 500M Masters 70 Men, and take Silver in V1 500M Masters 75 Men. At 2022 London IVF World Sprints, John would race with Team Canada crews that would take Gold in V12 500M Masters 70 Men, take Silver in V6 500M Masters 70 Men, and take Silver in V6 500M Masters 75 Men. At 2024 Hilo IVF World Sprints, John would race with Team Canada crews that would take Gold in V12 500M Masters 70 Men. At 2019 Australia IVF World Distance, John would race with a Team Canada Mens crew that would take Silver in V6 Distance Masters 70 Men. [121] [122] [123] [124] [125] [126] [127] [128] [129] [131] [132] [133] [134] [135] [136] [137]

When not competing at IVF World Sprints / Distance events, John has a very long and successful career as an OC1 / OC2 / OC6 international competitor. John has participated in 5 Molokai Hoe races, 5 Queen Lili'uokalani races, 2 Pailolo Challenge OC6 races, and 3 Maui-To-Molokai (M2M) OC1 events. Some of the most memorable achievements were finishing 1st Place overall

in V12 Masters Mixed at the 2011 Queen Lili'uokalani race, and racing with an Unlimited Masters 60 crew that would have the fastest time ever for completing the Length Of The Lake Ultra-Distance Race. [141] [142]

## **Pioneering Achievements**

There have been at least 4 eras in the growth of multi-disciplinary paddlesports at Calgary Canoe Club (CCC). The first era would be the establishment of the club in 1958, and the acquisition of the venue and the construction of the clubhouse in 1959, and the introduction of the flatwater / whitewater programs in the early days. The second era would be the emergence of the highly competitive Sprint Canoe / Kayak programs in the mid / late-1980s. The third era would be the acquisition of outrigger canoes and the introduction of the outrigger canoeing program as of 1999. As a member of the Calgary Canoe Club (CCC), John Roberts was the main force in starting the outrigger canoeing program in 1999. John was an accomplished canoeist competing in marathon canoe races, when after a few trips to Hawaii he caught the outrigger canoeing bug, primarily due to the Aloha that he experienced in Hawaii. John recruited five other paddlers and attended the Gibsons Howe Sound Challenge on the BC coast, borrowing a six-person outrigger canoe from Western Canoe & Kayak (Clipper Canoes) as Gibsons inaugural race in 1999. John then acquired and donated two Clipper Advantage six-person outrigger canoes to the Calgary Canoe Club (CCC), thereby introducing the members to outrigger canoeing. To provide OC1 canoes for the club, John and some other members built five OC1 canoes from SeaSpray sailboat hulls, modifying them with fiberglass and using a tin can for a rudder. [151] [152] [153]

## **Coach-Builder Achievements**

The World Masters Games is an international multi-sport event held every four years which, in terms of competitor numbers, has developed into the largest of its kind. The 2005 Edmonton World Masters Games was notable for many reasons including: 1) The event offered an extensive suite of Canoe / Kayak Flatwater Sprints and Distance events; 2) The event offered for the first-time, War Canoe (C15) and one-person Outrigger Canoe (OC1) and six-person Outrigger Canoe (OC6) events. Calgary Canoe Club (CCC) and Leduc Boat Club (LBC) collaborated on the OC1 / OC6 / C1 / C2 / C15 / K1 / K2 / K4 / MC1 / MC2 events for 2005 Edmonton World Masters Games. John was strategically involved in getting outrigger canoeing into the event. At the event he promoted outrigger canoeing to some of the European teams that attended, thereby convincing them to participate. [161] [162] [163] [164] [165] [166] [167] [168] [169]

John experienced disappointment at 2006 New Zealand IVF World Sprints because of the method used to form teams in Canada. John wrote a plan that he felt would provide Canada with a method to form strong teams. The Free Agent selection method at Canadian sprints trials to form teams was promoted by John prior to the 2008 Sacramento IVF World Sprints. The plan was accepted and with his assistance, a coach and manager were put in place to oversee Team Canada for the 2008 Sacramento IVF World Sprints. This resulted in Team Canada improving their medal count and this model has been used since then.

Canadian women had an exceptional performance at 2010 New Caledonia IVF World Sprints, but the Canadian women were considered "sprinters" by the paddling community. John Roberts and the CORA Sprints Council offered assistance to the Canadian women to do the 2010 Queen Lili'uokalani Race (after New Caledonia) to advertise the upcoming 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints. The Canadian women (Kamini Jain; Leanne Stanley; Cheryl Skribe; Leanne Zrum; Chelsey Brooks Tidmarsh; Helen Currey) raced as Calgary CC #1 #406 and placed 1st Iron Open Non-Koa (NK). [171] [172] [173] [175] [176]

The 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints was jointly hosted by the Calgary Canoe Club (CCC) and by CORA. The CORA Sprints Council for the 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints consisted of Sheila Kuyper, John Roberts, and Daphne Ann Brockington. Although John was unable to compete as planned due to a shoulder injury, he was instrumental in planning and operation of the 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints. As a CORA Sprints Council committee member, John was responsible for finances, merchandizing, canoe organization, docks and course preparations. The 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints has proven to be a legacy for outrigger canoeing for the Calgary Canoe Club (CCC) in that it has acquired a fleet of V1 and V6 canoes to develop club paddlers and assist CORA with sprints trials since the 2012 Calgary IVF World Sprints. [181] [182]

At the Calgary Canoe Club (CCC), John has volunteered numerous hours as a Board member, coach, clinic lead and away regattas. John is constantly promoting outrigger canoeing. He has brought many paddlers into Calgary Canoe Club (CCC) by promoting outrigger canoeing at other paddling and cross-country skiing events. [186]

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