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WINDWARD KAI LONG DISTANCE RACE RESCHEDULED
Inaugural Rona Kaaekuahiwi Race A Success
'Alapa Hoe Has Best Turnout Yet

(HONOLULU) **April 30, 2003** $\frac{3}{4}$ High winds and rough seas canceled the 2nd annual Windward Kai Long Distance Invitational Race on April 12. The race has been rescheduled to Sunday, May 18 at Kailua Beach Park. Hui Wa`a is hopeful that the clubs who participate at Lanikai's *George Perry* Keiki Invitational Race the day before, will leave their canoes for the adults to race on Sunday, which will conclude the 2003 Hui Wa`a long distance season.

On April 19th, 39 crews entered the first *Rona Kaaekuahiwi* Long Distance Race, hosted by Na Keiki O Ka Mo`i canoe club. The race's namesake, Rona Kaaekuahiwi, presided over the race, and is a familiar and long-time fixture on the Wai`anae coast. He has had an influence on all the clubs on the leeward side of Oahu in his long and illustrious paddling career. Many current coaches owe their skill and training to Rona.

A modified Le Mans start delighted the spectators on shore as 24 crews raced from Poka`i Bay toward Lahilahi Point, back toward Ma`ili Beach and returning to Poka`i Bay. The Mixed Open crew from Hui Lanakila turned into the bay first. The winning crew of Hinano Cullen, Aulii Hirahara, Lehua Heine, Mike Swectzyf, Byron Martinez, and Adam Treinen-Aea completed the course in 1 hour, 11 minutes, 44 seconds. Fourth overall, and the first women's crew to finish, was the Open Women's team from Lokahi who completed the race in 1.15.09.

In the men's division, the first overall crew used its home water advantage and mature disposition to complete a slightly longer course in 1 hour, 30 minutes, 47 seconds. The Master Men from host Na Keiki O Ka Mo`i took the lead from the start to show the rest of the field how paddling is done in Waianae. Winning crews members were Danny Sanchez, Hartwell Afong, Nelson Dorwelo, Joseph Kanana, Rolland Padillo, and Christopher Gibson. Nearly a minute and a half later the Open Men from Lokahi, followed closely by Koa Kai, made their appearance into the bay.

On April 26, race action moved back into town for the 3rd Annual 'Alapa Hoe Invitational Long Distance Race. A record 62 crews were in attendance for the race which started and finished at Ke`ehi Lagoon. The yellow canoes of Leeward Kai Canoe Club, from Nanakuli, crossed the finish line first in the Women/Mixed and Men's race. The Mixed Open crew of Alfred Van Gieson, Yvonne Saronitman, Linda Wakatake, Kahele Anderson, Ryan Van Gieson, and Blossom Pontes raced through the course in 50 minutes, 38 seconds. Alfred Van Gieson, in seat 1 in the mixed open crew, then turned around and steered teammates Greg Gomes, Keola Wright, Darin Wright, Tim Ekau, and Jonathan Lucero to a first place victory in the open division in men's race that followed. Other Open Mixed teammates Kahele Anderson and (uncle) Ryan Van Gieson followed close on their heels with a 3rd place finish. Hui Lanakila's Open Men, who have finished in the top three in every race so far, claimed 2nd place to foil a Leeward Kai sweep.

The Open Women of Waikiki Beach Boys, Dana Gorecki, Keala Goggin, Erin Offenhauser, Malia Eversole, Meredith Takara, and Makena Coffman, finished 5th overall were the first of the women's crews to finish the race edging Hui Lanakila's women by just 15 seconds in a time of 56.56.05.

Racing should be 'gnarly' this weekend if the south shore remains active, as Magic Island is the site for Koa Kai Canoe Club's Long Distance Race.

For complete results and information on upcoming races, as well as entry forms please go to www.huiwaa.com.