



CANADIAN OUTRIGGER HALL OF FAME

Rick Nu'u (Posthumous)



Summary

Rick Nu'u was a beloved husband, father, brother, son, coach, mentor and inspiration to many paddlers, giving his time, energy and expertise to developing and promoting outrigger canoeing (waka ama) in New Zealand, Hawaii and Canada. [01] Rick and Don Irvine met in the winter of 1990 in New Zealand. They became good friends and chased each other around the world for years of paddling with and against each other, with mutual admiration. Rick took up a coaching position with False Creek Racing Canoe Club in Canada from 1998-2001. He then moved to Maui and coached / paddled with Hawaiian Canoe Club on the north shore of Maui for many years before moving back to Canada in 2009 with his family to live in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island. In 2011, Rick and Don achieved a long-time shared dream and established a paddlesport oriented business, which they named Hana Hou Outrigger. [02]

Early Career

Originally from Kawerau New Zealand, Rick earned a Bachelor of Leisure Studies from the University of Waikato, a Diploma in Sports Studies from The University of Otago and a Certificate in Sports Science from the Auckland Institute of Technology, New Zealand. Rick started and ran the Kawerau Gym during which time he worked with a full range of athletes from novice to Olympic level in a wide variety of sports. Rick was instrumental in starting up the Tarawera Six Pack (Tarawera Outrigger Club) in 1990 and spent many years paddling, training and coaching in New Zealand. [03]

Outrigger Canoeing Achievements

Rick participated in 8 IPCF / IVF World Sprints events since 1990. His best V1 result was 4th Open Men and most recently 4th Master Men, as well as numerous medals in V6 and V12. [04] The 1996 New Caledonia IVF World Sprints results show Richard Nu'u in 6th V1 500M Open Men Finals. [05]

As Rick transitioned from coaching / racing with Canadian crews in Vancouver to coaching / racing with New Zealand / Hawaiian crews in Maui from 1998-2006, this resulted in significant outrigger canoe distance racing achievements. Outrigger Canoe Club, Lanikai, and Team New Zealand / Hawaii were perennial champions in Hawaii from 1995-2005. Team New Zealand / Hawaii at the time was comprised of some of the top paddlers in Hawaii including Andrew Glatzel, Andrew Penny, Bill Pratt, Karel Tresnak Jr., Kea Pa'iaina, Maui Kjeldsen, Pat Erwin, Raven Aipa, Rick Nu'u, Rob Kaiwai, Thibert Lussiaa, and Todd Bradley. Team New Zealand / Hawaii would take 3rd Open Fibreglass at Molokai in 1998, 2nd Open Fibreglass at Molokai in 1999, [06] 1st Open Fibreglass at Molokai in 2001, and 1st once again Open Fibreglass at Molokai in 2003. Rick had Bronze, Silver, and Gold (twice) at the World Outrigger Distance Championships. [07]

The BC mens provincial team delivered a first for Canada in 2000. A crew of paddlers racing as "Team BC" from Jericho, Pemberton, and False Creek including Hugh Fisher, Rick Nu'u, and Don Irvine would finish Spec 1st Open and 1st Overall in the Catalina Channel Crossing race – the best ever showing for an all-Canadian crew at Catalina. [08] It was a major upset, especially as sponsorship for outrigger racing in Canada is nonexistent. [09]

Just one week after taking 1st Overall in the 2000 Catalina Channel Crossing race with "Team BC", Rick travelled to Hawaii to join Team New Zealand / Hawaii for the 2000 Skippy Kamakawiwoole 32-mile long distance race. Team New Zealand / Hawaii (Andrew Glatzel, Andrew Penny, Bill Pratt, Kea Pa'iaina, Maui Kjeldsen, Raven Aipa, Rick Nu'u, Rob Kaiwai, and Todd Bradley) would take 1st Open and set a new course record. [10]

The Skippy Kamakawiwoole 32-mile long distance race was renamed the Steinlager Henry Ayau Mens International Canoe Race in 2002 in honor of Henry Ayau, an expert waterman and long-time paddler for Outrigger Canoe Club. Team New Zealand / Hawaii (Andrew Penny, Bill Pratt, Karel Tresnak Jr., Kea Pa'iaina, Maui Kjeldsen, Pat Erwin, Raven Aipa, Rick Nu'u, and Thibert Lussiaa) would take 1st Open. [11]

Team Hawaii comprised of top paddlers from across Hawaii (Bruce Ayau, Byron Ho, Donovan Leandro, Jimmy Austin, Kafoa Halalatu, Karel Tresnak Jr., Kawai Mahoe, Nate Hendricks, Rick Nu'u) travelled to Europe in 2005 to participate in and take 1st in the inaugural Across the Sea Race against four top European teams that involved paddling 67 miles across the Adriatic Sea from the coast of Slovenia to Venice, Italy. [12]

Rick would coach and race with the Hawaiian Canoe Club mens program in 2006 to their first ever 1st Iron Open Non-Koa at the Kai Opua Queen Liliuokalani Long Distance Canoe Race. [13] In April 2007, Rick Nu'u would take 1st place OC1 Masters 40+ in the 27-mile Maui To Molokai (M2M) Race. [14]

Coach-Builder Achievements

It is believed that Don Irvine was responsible for encouraging False Creek Racing Canoe Club (FCRCC) to hire Rick from New Zealand as a professional paddling coach in the late 1990s. Rick was Race Director for the FCRCC first ever 'Ship of Fools' OC1 / OC6 Sprints Regatta in 2001. [15]

Rick continued coaching Canadian crews for international races from 1998-2003, even after he had relocated to Maui in 2001 to become mens program head coach for Hawaiian Canoe Club. Rick coached four Canadian womens crews across the Kaiwi Channel during this time. [04] The Jericho Women would participate four times in the Molokai Na Wahine race from 1998-2003. Rick was with them for their best ever showing a 6th overall (4th Open - best ever for a Canadian team in either the Womens or Mens race) in 2003. [16]

The Scatterchicks team of 6 Canadians and 6 Americans went to Australia in 2003 for the Hamilton Island event. The Scatterchicks had several coaches including Kamini Jain, Alan Carlsson, and Rick Nu'u who would guide them to 4th in the 42KM Change Race. [17]

While living on Maui, Rick began hosting Canoe Camps, coaching hundreds of visiting paddlers from 2001-2009. [04]

Rick took on the full-time Head Coach position of the mens program for Hawaiian Canoe Club in 2001. Hawaiian Canoe Club won its first ever Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association (HCRA) State Championship Regatta in 2001. [18] Hawaiian Canoe Club became the first Maui team to win the state title. [19] Hawaiian Canoe Club would win 7 consecutive HCRA State Championship Regattas from 2001-2007 with Rick as mens coach. [20] The 7 consecutive titles by Hawaiian Canoe Club is the second-longest streak in state history, behind only Outrigger's 9 in a row from 1984-92. [21]

Hawaiian Canoe Club organized the first 26-mile Maui to Molokai Pailolo Challenge event in the mid 1990s. A race that had not been held in over 10 years was brought back in 2007 by Coffees of Hawaii and Hawaiian Canoe Club. [22] Rick was event director for the Pailolo Challenge up until 2011 even after he had moved to Comox BC. [23]

Exemplary Achievements

The passing of Rick in 2013, recognized as one of the great legends in the sport, was a loss in so many ways to so many people. [24] Rick exemplified the admirable traits of integrity, sportsmanship, leadership, character, and contributions to the sport that paralleled his significant canoeing and coaching achievements. Accolades from the paddling community were a testament to his dedication to the entire paddling community. Rick's wife Zoe Norcross-Nu'u planned ceremonies in Canada, Aotearoa, and on Maui in Rick's memory. [25] A Celebration of Life was held at Courtenay, BC hosted by Comox Valley Canoe Racing Club attended by many in the Canadian paddling community. [26] A Celebration of Life was held on Maui hosted by Hawaiian Canoe Club attended by Rick's wife Zoe Norcross-Nu'u and their two daughters Tia and Kaena. [27] A memorial service was held at the PNWORCA Winter Series race in Kalama hosted by Mountain Home Canoe Club attended by Pacific Northwest paddlers with a pule by Uncle Stan Dahlin.

References

Note	Article	Link
[01]	Bereavement: Rick Nu'u Update	https://www.wakaama.co.nz/stories/read/1003198
[02]	Hana Hou Paddlesports	https://www.hanahoupaddlesports.com/about
[03]	Ricky Nu'u the paddler and his love of the Water	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gB-esPxoM4
[04]	Hana Hou Paddlesports & Rick Nu'u	http://www.hanahououtrigger.com/rick-nuu.html
[05]	1996 IVF Noumea, New Caledonia	http://www.ivfiv.org/1996-new-caledonia.html
[06]	1999 Molokai Hoe	http://archives.starbulletin.com/1999/10/11/sports/index.html
[07]	2001-2003 Molokai Hoe	http://www.molokaihoe.com/race-results.asp
[08]	2000 Catalina Channel Crossing Race	http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2000/catalina2000.html
[09]	2000 Catalina Channel Crossing Race	http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/news/Oct2000Straight.html
[10]	2000 Skippy Kamakawiwoole Long Distance Race Results	https://www.outriggercanoecлубsports.com/canoe-racing/skippy-kamakawiwoole-long-distance-race/2000-skippy-kamakawiwoole-long-distance-race-results/
[11]	2002 Steinlager Henry Ayau Mens International Canoe Race	http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2002/Sep/16/sp/sp08a.html
[12]	2005 Across the Sea Race	http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2005/Jul/12/sp/507120315.html
[13]	2006 Queen Liliuokalani Long Distance Canoe Races	https://www.qlcanoerace.com/publicdocs/2006-queenliliuokalaniResults.pdf
[14]	2007 Maui To Molokai	http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2007/MauiToMolokai.html
[15]	2001 FCRCC 'Ship of Fools'	http://www.jerichooutrigger.com/races2001.html
[16]	2003 Jericho Molokai Na Wahine	https://canadianoutrigger.ca/still-in-shock-na-wahine-o-ke-kai/
[17]	2003 Scatterchicks Hamilton Island	https://canadianoutrigger.ca/hamilton-island-the-3rd-and-final-chapter/
[18]	2001 HCRA State Championship Regatta	http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2001/Aug/05/sp/sp05a.html
[19]	2003 HCRA State Championship Regatta	http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2003/Aug/03/sp/sp02a.html
[20]	2008 HCRA State Championship Regatta	http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2008/Aug/03/sp/hawaii808030361.html
[21]	HCRA State Championship Regatta	https://www.outriggercanoecлубsports.com/canoe-racing/hcra-championships/hcra-state-championship-regatta-winners/
[22]	Pailolo Challenge 07 & 08	https://www.amazon.com/Pailolo-Challenge-07-08-Outrigger/dp/B001KVZGIE
[23]	Pailolo Challenge 2011-Sep-17	https://alohavisitorguides.com/the-pailolo-challenge-maui-to-molokai-canoe-race/
[24]	Canadian Outrigger Farewell Rick	https://www.facebook.com/canadianoutrigger/photos/we-are-deeply-saddened-to-report-the-passing-of-rick-nuu-on-january-30th-2013-ou/542287162456357/
[25]	Hawaiian Canoe Club Farewell Rick	https://www.facebook.com/HawaiianCanoeClub/posts/rick-nuu-was-a-beloved-husband-father-brother-and-son-everyone-that-knows-rick-w/10152335774711632/
[26]	Hawaiian Canoe Club Farewell Rick	https://us1.campaign-archive.com/?u=8cdc73b71cdf4e4f686ffea5&id=649f6c7511
[27]	Comox Valley Canoe Racing Club Farewell Rick	https://www.comoxvalleyrecord.com/obituaries/richard-nuau/