
KCC Paddler's Handbook

Kamaha'o Canoe Club

2026

E komo mai!

Welcome to the Kamaha'o Canoe Club!

We are pleased to have you join us as we prepare for another season of outrigger canoe paddling. Before getting started on all the finer points of paddling we would like to introduce our club to you.

The Meaning of our Logo



Our logo was created by JoAnne Javier. There is a lot of meaning within this logo, and every part of Kamaha'o is reflected in the logo.

Kamaha'o has a motto to go along with our logo:
"The strongest muscle is the heart."

The shell is Ka'ahupahau's mouth and teeth which protect Pu'uloa and our club - our 'Aumakua' The paddle shaft with teeth is our commitment to stand with Ka'ahupahau in protecting Pu'uloa and living things.

Diamond Head guides us across the beautiful waters and reminds us of our beginnings. The sun rises over Diamond Head during the Makahiki and reminds us of peace and life-giving things. The waves represent the waters of Kamaha'o that give us our strength and abiding wisdom. The paddle blade brings Kamaha'o its connection with the ocean, which teaches us humility. Kamaha'o means "to take on a more

splendid form”.

About our canoes

KAHU MALAMA O KA'AHUPAHAU

Named after a local fisherman of Puuloa who came to the area near Dry Dock 1 each week as caregiver (Kahu Malama) to feed Ka'ahupahau, the shark goddess that protected Pearl Harbor from man-eating sharks. His name was Kupuna Kanaweawe and he warned the Navy about the difficulties of building Dry Dock 1 over Ka'ahupahau's cave home in the 1912-1919 timeframe. She is a Bradley Striker built July 2005.

KALA'AKEAOPUULOA

She reflects Kamaha'o Canoe Club's desire to be a “bright shining lights of Pu'uloa”, accomplishing wonderful things in the Puuloa area. She is a Bradley Striker built August 2005 that continue to nurture our club and help us grow.

Kauwenaula

Is in KCC care from Na Koa O Palehua. Kauwenaula was the name given to Palehua Heiau by Kumu John Kaimikaua. It means observing the sunset from above. Most observations of the sun are done by looking up or at eye level. Only at Kauwenaula can you observe the sun setting into the horizon looking down towards the ocean, giving a deeper and more meaningful relationship with our kupuna and our environment. This is the mana`o of this special place and the name given to the wa`a of Na Koa O Palehua.

About our Ohana

Kamaha'o Canoe Club is a mixture of military and locals that come together in the spirit of outrigger canoe paddling to learn about the culture, share camaraderie and for those that desire to, to participate in the competitive sport of outrigger canoe paddling. Our club's affiliation with Kapilina Beach Homes (KBH) has provided us with a great deal of support.

As with any organization there are many things that need to be done to make us successful. The commitment and participation of all members in the daily needs of special events of the club is what helps our club run smoothly. Things like, setting up tents at a regatta, making the club web page, handling registration, loading the canoes, rigging canoes and organizing outer island travel are all part of life in a canoe club. So consider heading a committee, volunteering for a project, or assisting in one of the many things that need to be done. It is not only essential but can be a fun and satisfying way to develop relationships and learn about the sport.

Our club most of all is an Ohana (family) we collectively celebrate every trip on the water together and when we finish we say a chant;

1. Coach says “O Ka Olona Ikaika” = The strongest muscle.
2. Club answers “A’e Ka Pu’uwai” = is the heart!
3. Kamaha’o, Hu!!

Kamaha’o is a non-profit 501c3 organization and a member of the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association (HCRA), and affiliated with Hui Wa’a Canoe Racing Association.

Membership

Your membership includes HCRA (Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association) and Hui Wa’a Organization fees which covers insurance, registration, member card and regatta race fees. Membership dues also helps to maintain and repair KCC equipment and facilities, use of equipment, trailering fees, canoe insurance and administrative costs. *There are additional charges for travel costs for state races, cost of entry, travel, food, drinks and escort boats for distance races.*

Annual Membership dues for 2026:

1. Annual membership: (February to February, no prorating of dues)
 - \$200 single adult paddler
 - \$150 Kieki
 - \$150 single recreational (REC) paddler

Registration Information

General Registration requires the following:

FOR RETURNING KCC PADDLERS:

1. 2026 Hui Wa’a Waiver
2. KCC Registration and Waiver Form
3. Media Waiver Form
4. Membership Fee in full

FOR NEW PADDLERS:

1. 2026 Hui Wa’a Waiver (adult for adult, minor for minor)
2. Copy of proof of identification (Drivers License, Military Identification Card, Passport, Birth Certificate, etc)
3. KCC Registration and Waiver Form
4. Media Waiver Form
5. Kapilina Beach Home waiver form and Vehicle Registration
6. Membership Fee in full

FOR EXPERIENCED PADDLERS NEW TO KCC: All of above plus Hui Wa’a Transfer Sheet

FOR REC PADDLERS: 2026 Hui Wa’a Waiver Form and KCC Registration & Waiver

New paddlers, Youth & Keiki:

Girls: Monday's and Wednesday's 4:30pm-6:30pm

Boys: Monday's and Wednesday's 4:30pm-6:30pm

Women: Tuesday and Thursday's 4:30pm to sunset

Men: Monday's and Wednesday's 4:30pm to sunset

Saturday 7:30 am until 10:00 am for racing crew (long distance)(pending changes)

****Changes in this schedule may occur with occasional practices on the weekend.*

Check with your coach for practice schedule.

What to Bring to Practice

- A positive attitude
- Canoe paddle is available for visiting paddlers for the first FEW sessions
- Hydration system (essential for distance practices)
- Shorts - Paddling shorts preferred, they offer protection from butt chaffing but surf shorts or other shorts that dry quickly are fine
- Shirt - cotton is alright but a good paddling shirt made of technical fabric is better
- Footwear - reef walkers work well
- Hat and Sunscreen
 - Change of clothes - for when you get wet, in case you huli (flip over) or are cold after practice

Care of Canoe and Equipment

- Never allow the canoe to drag or scrape the ground/bottom. It is the responsibility of the entire crew to be sure the canoe does not scrape bottom when moving into or out of the water or when in use.
- Paddlers must enter the canoe at their assigned seat butt first.
- Enter and exit the canoe from the ama (outrigger) side at all times. - All equipment should be rinsed with fresh water after use and before storing - Take care of your paddle. Keep the blade off the ground.

Safety

Safety is the responsibility of all paddlers

- All paddlers must be able to swim
- Inspect the canoe before going out and report any concerns to your coach
- Know what to do in a huli (overturned canoe)
- Report any injuries to your coach and fill out the accident and witness reports
- Two bailers should be tied in the canoe before going out
- Hydrate! [Very important] The sun intensifies on the water.

Club Rules

- Help keep “our” Hale clean.
- Treat all members and equipment with Aloha.
- Listen to your coach.
- Minimize talking in the canoe (except for steersman who disseminates Coach’s directives).
- Everyone helps move the canoe in and out of the water
- Alcohol is not allowed at the hale when minors are present
- No alcohol before or during practice or at races
- Paddling sessions not over until canoes and equipment are cleaned and covered for proper storage.

Seat Responsibilities

Seat 1 - STROKER sets a consistent pace and stroke for the crew to follow.

Seat 2 - CALLER motivates the stroker and lets them know if the stroke is consistent in length and pace. They are responsible for watching the ama (outrigger) to keep the canoe from turning over (huli). Seat two calls the changes (this could also be done by seat 3) and during a regatta race they help the steersman turn the canoe on the assigned flag.

Seat 3 - Power seat. Could also be the CALLER.

Seat 4 - Power seat, responsible for watching the ama and keeping the canoe from huli-ing. Seat 4 is also responsible for keeping the canoe dry. They will bail out any water from the canoe as needed.

Seat 5 - Power seat/steersman, share bailing duties with seat 4; helps watch the ama while canoe is moving and assists steersman by steering the canoe in rough conditions or when needed.

Seat 6 - Steersman is captain of the canoe. He or she is the eyes and ears of the canoe’s crew. They motivate the crew and steers the canoe for the best course. They are mindful of ocean environment/conditions and are responsible for the overall safety of the crew and canoe.

The Stroke

The stroke is made up of three primary parts.

- 1) The catch - where you place your blade in the water,
- 2) Power - where you move the canoe forward,
- 3) Recovery- where you remove your blade from the water and prepare for the next stroke.

Your coach will teach and instruct you on the proper paddling stroke,:

- In order of importance - Timing, Technique, & Power
- Your bottom hand should be 3” to 5” above the blade
- A clean entry into the water then power will prevent cavitations (formation of empty space) and result in a more efficient stroke.
 - *Example:* When the wheels on a car spins out. You should always be pulling the boat to you
 - Plant your paddle like a concrete pole, then pull yourself forward.
- Control body motion to keep canoe running smoothly without any side to side or up and down motion. Unnecessary movement can throw-off your timing and the forward motion of the canoe
- Keep the leg on your paddling side extended and switch when you switch sides.
- **Working hard does not mean you are going to go fast. Always work on an efficient stroke.**

Steersman’s Commands

- “Makaukau - Prepare to paddle” Seats 1-5 stretch forward with paddles ● “Imua - Paddles ready” Seats 1-5 set paddles in ready position, tip at the water ● “Pa - Hit” - Start paddling, 7 strong, deep, long strokes to bring the canoe up ● “Hold water” - 1-5 place blades in water and hold in place to slow or stop canoe ● “Back paddle” - 1-5 paddle backward in time
- “Wane out” or “ Paddles out” - 1-5 stop paddling and take blade out of the water. ● “Uni”- Seat 1 places blade against the hull on the right side of the canoe to move the nose left. This is done in a race to turn around assigned flag.
- “Pull left” - Seat 1 and sometimes 2 pull the canoe to the left by reaching out on the left and moving water under the canoe. Seat 2 will do this during a race to turn around assigned flag. * Do not pull to the right, as you will risk huli-ing the canoe.
- “Pull right”- Seat 1 and sometimes 2 place blade against canoe on the left while bracing their left hand on the gunwale. Using their hand for leverage they push the blade away from the canoe moving the nose to the right.
- “Nalu” - Surfing wave approaching. Paddlers shift forward in seat and pull hard following One Seat pace.

*** Remember; always obey your steersman’s commands at all times as soon as they are given.**

Caller’s Commands

Seat 2 or 3 will be assigned the task of caller. The caller keeps count of the number of strokes taken per side and will call “Hut” to let you know of an upcoming change.

After the “hut” take one more stroke.

The crew says “Ho” and then they change over. The caller may also decide to hold a call if the canoe is catching a wave, in a turn or coming into a close finish.

What to do if you Huli

Always be ready to swim. Do not carry anything in the canoe that you are not willing to lose in a huli.

1. Stay calm. Do a head count to be sure everyone is out of the canoe safely.
2. Position the canoe with the ama side to shore. Store paddles under seat.
3. Two people reach over the hull from the non-ama side to pull the canoe over. This will usually be seats 2 & 5. Two other people (usually seats 3 & 4) are on the ama side to help lift the ama. Hold ama directly over head, over the hull. Crew assembles all on the same side facing seats. Crew pushes hull up as ama goes over allowing water to drain out as much as possible and turns the canoe right side up. Do this quickly to minimize the amount of water in the canoe when it is righted and don't hold on to the side of the canoe while it is rolling upright.
4. Once the canoe is righted, one person (usually seat 3) gets in the canoe and starts bailing. **FAST !** If the canoe is sitting high in the water or when enough water is removed to raise the canoe two people can bail. Switch off bailers as needed. Some of the paddlers hold the ama to keep the canoe from huli-ing again and some hold the front or back of the canoe to maintain the proper position in regards to swells. Do not hang on to the side of the canoe as this can pull the canoe down and cause more water to enter the canoe.
5. The steersman will let the crew know when enough water has been removed and it is okay to get back in and start paddling. Seat 4 may still need to continue bailing while the canoe is underway.

Parts of an Outrigger Canoe

Canoe - Wa'a	Hull - Ka'le	Float - Ama
Spar - Iaoko	Spreader - Wae Wa'a	
Gunwale - Mo'o	Fore and aft parts of hull - Manu	

Races

Two types of competition exist in outrigger canoe racing: Regatta and long distance.

Regatta races are sprints ranging from ¼ mile to 1 ½ miles. The races run on a straight ¼ or ½ mile course marked by flags. These races include all age divisions and are held on Saturdays at various beaches around Oahu. During these races crews earn points for finishing in the top 6 crews and try to earn enough points to qualify for the state race held at the end of the regatta season as well as the 4th of July invitational race held at Waikiki. Regatta season usually starts in early June and ends in 1st week in August at the state race.

Following regatta season is **Long Distance racing**. Distance season runs from August through October, finishing with the prestigious Molokai to Oahu races for women and men. Distance races range from 6-42 miles. Fees for distance races are not included in your dues and the cost will vary depending on the race.

Some of the distance races are “iron”. In an iron race a crew of six paddles the entire race without changes. Other races are “change “races. In a change race a crew will consist of 9-10 paddlers who will switch in and out of the canoe during the race. Change races will require an escort boat to follow the crew, carry additional paddlers and coaches as well as food and drinks for paddlers.

KCC Recreational Paddler Program

The following outlines participation in KCC Recreational (Rec) Paddler Program:

For KCC MEMBER PADDLERS:

1. Must have current waivers (adult for adult, minor for children)
2. Can be assigned as needed to support recreational program
3. Expected to provide own paddles

For KCC Recreational or NEW first time PADDLERS:

1. Fill out waivers (adult for adult, minor for minor)
2. May use club paddles on trial basis
3. New paddlers are required to have a canoe/water safety briefing

KCC will offer recreational paddling as follows:

1. One canoe and experienced crew of at least one steersman and one other to be assigned as needed. This will allow for four or five rec paddlers at a time.
2. Rec paddling is offered Sunday mornings from 8am to 10am, conditions permitting.
3. If more than one canoe full of rec paddlers are present, then crew changes will occur to allow all the opportunity to paddle.

KCC Rec Paddling Program Objectives:

1. Introduce the Hawaiian cultural aspects of outrigger canoe paddling.
2. Teach new paddlers the Kamaha’o paddling techniques
3. Recruit rec paddlers for competition paddling.

Board of Directors and Officers

The Board of Directors is made up of members of Kamaha'o Canoe Club who volunteer their services and are voted in by the membership. The board controls and directs the business and affairs of the club and makes decisions that are in the best interest of the club. The By-Laws describe Board of Directors and Officers and is found on the Club web site at www.kamahaocanoecub.com .

2026 KCC Officers:

PRESIDENT: Elray Jr. "Mana" Santiago, elray.k.santiago.jr@gmail.com

VICE-PRESIDENT: Zane Ostoin Ostoinz96@gmail.com

TREASURER: Erin Ludert, erin.ludert@gmail.com

SECRETARY: Sherena Prince, spb76@gmail.com

HEAD COACH: Elray Santiago, kumu0447@hotmail.com

CUSTODIAN:

PAST PRESIDENT: Justine Nogay jnogay808stuff@gmail.com

O Ka Olona Ikaika A'e Ka Pu'uwai; "The strongest muscle is the heart!"
