

MITCHELL MAKES IT FOUR IN A ROW AT HENNESSEY'S INTERNATIONAL AUSSIES CLINCH ALL THREE MAJOR DIVISIONS

Honolulu - (July 23, 2005) - - A change in course for the fourth annual \$10,000 8-mile Hennessey's International Paddleboard Race resulted in excellent conditions today - 10-20 mile Tradewinds and a 2-3 foot following swell, yet no major changes to the results. Australian lifeguards clinched all three of the major divisions on offer today, as the race moved from Oahu's North Shore to the South Shore run of Hawaii Kai to Kaimana Beach, Waikiki.

Jamie Mitchell, 28, posted his fourth consecutive win of this race ahead of an all-star field of 149 paddlers from around the world. Completing the course in a time of one hour, 11 minutes and 28 seconds, Mitchell was more than two minutes ahead of runner-up Ryan Addison (Malibu, California - 1:13:49) and close to three minutes clear of his long-time training partner Mick Di Betta (Australia - 1:14:12).

Australia also took the honors in the 12-foot stockboard division, won by Queensland's Bruce Taylor (1:17:17) and in the women's with Hayley Bateup (Queensland, 1:25:48). The top Hawaii finisher was Honolulu lifeguard Brian Rocheleau, who placed fourth overall in the open class division with a time of 1:14:13. For their efforts, Mitchell pocketed \$1,150, Addison \$750, Di Betta \$650 plus a bonus \$100 for being the first to reach the first off-shore marker buoy. Taylor won \$1,150, and Bateup \$850.

While the California and Hawaii paddlers were left scratching their heads, wondering what it will take to bridge the gap, the Aussies put it down to the excitement of livelier ocean conditions in Hawaii and better lifeguard cross-training, incorporating the knee-paddling style. All three winners today spoke of the excellent Tradewind conditions that generate longer "runs" - time spent actually surfing the open-ocean swells rather than paddling, and also of the benefits of the Australian lifeguard training schedule. Unlike Hawaii and California lifeguards, Australian lifeguards participate year-round in "Ironman" lifeguard competitions that test the four skills of running, swimming, paddleboarding and surf-ski paddling. It's a pursuit that keeps them in prime condition year-round.

Hawaiians have tried to lift their game with changes to equipment design and more importantly, the incorporation of the knee-paddling style that allows a deeper stroke and better swell-riding capabilities. But it's a skill that takes years to master. It is only in its infancy in Hawaii.

"It always feels good to win," said Mitchell, who has been undefeated in Hawaii and California races for four years now. "It was a pretty tough course. I was a little behind at the start but as soon as you got out to the bumps it was actually pretty fun. Funny enough, I connected a couple (of swells) on my stomach for the longest today, which is usually not the case, but if you can get a couple and link them up, you can go for a couple hundred yards without much effort.

"This kind of race is pretty much a sprint for me, but it's a good gear up for next weekend's Molokai race. Shorter races are always a bit more competitive, but I like riding the bumps and I think that's where I'm at my best. I just try to get in front and not look back. The rougher it gets, the more I like it."

Ryan Addison's runner-up finish to Mitchell today was his second in as many weeks. He placed second to Jamie last weekend in the Hennessey's United States Championship race of 14 miles.

"To beat Jamie, I think you need two Chevy V-8s on either side of your paddleboard," said Addison with a head-shake. "That guy's just amazing. Hats off to him.

"I was concentrating on myself, but watching his form, and Guy Pere and Rocheleau. We're all so tight and it's just one little slip-up and your placing behind. But I'm planning on doing next week's Molokai to Oahu race and I think over 32-miles there'll be more opportunity to bridge the gap."

Compared to the longer (15-foot plus) open class boards, the stockboard and women's division race on 12-foot boards that are generally slower, but more maneuverable in the swells. Bruce Taylor, the top male finisher, and Hayley Bateup, top woman, found today's conditions just right.

"The runners here are so much better than Australia," said Taylor "I love it. I just paced myself off the longer boards and knew where I was headed, so it was great. This is my first season and I'm here to do the Molokai too, so I'm pretty excited. It was perfect conditions. Much better than home, that's why it's so much fun. It's nowhere near as hard work as it is at home."

Bateup is a phenomenal paddler and finished in 40th place overall today - including all the open class male paddlers who make up the bulk of the field. She won this race back in 2003, but missed it last year due to the world title lifeguard races in Italy.

"It was pretty windy out there, so it was good to get the chops and being a knee paddler you can push and then have a bit of a rest by sitting up," said Bateup. "A lot of the American paddlers don't do that, they just tend to lay down. I found it quite fun out there. I like to go flat-out basically, because you never know where anyone is. I always try to beat a few of the guys and challenge myself against them."

Runner-up to Bateup was Honolulu's Kanesa Duncan.

"The sprint's not really my thing," said Duncan. "I tried to use today as a good training race. I know that I have the home advantage, but she definitely has me in the shorter stuff. I'm looking forward to next week and having a good Molokai race."

New additions to this year's events were the Stand-up division - a throwback to the old Waikiki Beachboy days when they paddled themselves into waves standing up with the use of a paddle similar to that of an outrigger canoe, and a series of fun keiki race for children.

World class longboard surfer Bonga Perkins (Honolulu) won the stand-up division to claim \$150. He was able to compete in today's competition because the world longboard titles in Europe had been cancelled.

"I'm just trying to keep myself busy," said Perkins. "I grew up in Waikiki standing up and taking pictures of tourists under one of the Beachboys that used to do this originally, so it's all fun and games for me and if I can be a part of this and keep up with some of the top paddleboarders in the world, I'm pretty happy just with that."

In addition to the major divisions, there were also two weight categories awarded prize money today: Big Bruddah 1, for those weighing 200-225 pounds, and Big Bruddah 2, for the 225 pound-plus guys. Californian's Nathan Shore and David Waxx dominated those divisions respectively, with strong performances from Maui's Blair Thorndike and Oahu's Clifford Ahmow Jr.

All who participated in today's race would like to extend their thanks to Paul Hennessey, of Hennessey's Taverns, who made today's race possible. Strong support also came from Gotcha, Hawaiian Airlines, Rhino Linings, Simple Green, Fosters, Stoli, Zinka, Corona, the North Shore Lifeguard Association, and O2H.

For a complete listing of results, please go to:
hawaiianh2o.com/results.html

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TOP RESULTS IN EACH DIVISION:

Open Class:

1. Jamie Mitchell (Australia) 1:11:28
2. Ryan Addison (Malibu, California) 1:13:49
3. Mick Di Betta (Australia) 1:14:12
4. Brian Rocheleau (Honolulu) 1:14:13

Men's Stockboard:

1. Bruce Taylor (Australia) 1:17:17
2. Hayden Smith (Australia) 1:17:49
3. Jimmy Austin (Honolulu) 1:18:35

Women's Stockboard:

1. Hayley Bateup (Australia) 1:25:48
2. Kanesa Duncan (Honolulu) 1:28:56
3. Helene Phillips (Honolulu) 1:32:14

Simple Green Stand-up Paddle:

1. Bonga Perkins (Honolulu) 1:22:38
2. Todd Bradley (Honolulu) 1:23:39
3. Brian Keaulana (Makaha) 1:26:44

Rhino Linings "Big Bruddah" Weight Divisions:

Big Bruddah 1 - 200-225 pounds:

1. Nathan Shore (CA) 1:22:44
2. Blair Thorndike (Maui) 1:25:13
3. Taio Shipman (Hawaii) 1:26:47

Big Bruddah 2 - 225+ pounds:

1. Dave Waxe (CA) 1:40:03
2. Clifford Ahmow Jr. (Hawaii) 1:42:09
3. Chris Laird (Hawaii) 2:19:29

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