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### **For Immediate Release**

## **Queen Lili'uokalani Long Distance Outrigger Canoe Race Postpones Iconic September Event**

**Kailua-Kona** (May 20, 2020) – In early March, the sport of outrigger canoe racing came to a stop and since then has been unable to take place on any shores in Hawaii or elsewhere in the world. Race officials announced this week that the iconic 2020 Queen Lili'uokalani Long Distance Canoe Race, named in honor of Hawaii's last reigning monarch who's birthday is September 2, will be postponed until 2021.

Queen Lili'uokalani Long Distance Canoe Race, hosted by Kai 'Opua Canoe Club, has been welcoming paddlers from around the world to Kona, Hawaii every Labor Day weekend in September since its first race in 1971. Last year, the Queen's Race welcomed paddling crews from Australia, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, French Polynesia and U.S. crews from Nevada, Washington, California, Oregon, Virginia and New York. More than 75 Hawaii crews were also represented on the starting lines of its signature 18-mile race in Kailua Bay and Honaunau.

"In Hawaii, we use the word onipa'a, meaning to hold steadfast, don't let go, hold tight. All of us at Kai 'Opua Canoe Club want our paddler family around the world to do just that," said Race Director Mike Atwood. "As we all look forward to getting back in 6-man outrigger canoes, stay safe and healthy and we will see you in Kona next year."

As Hawaii state officials determine social distancing mandates, travel restrictions and other COVID-19 related issues, race officials are exploring the possibility of organizing a smaller modified one-day race in the coming months. Kai 'Opua Canoe Club race organizers are hopeful that paddlers can get back into their 6-man canoes shortly.

Log onto [www.qlcanoerace.com](http://www.qlcanoerace.com) for updated race information.

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### **About Queen Liliuokalani Canoe Race**

The Queen Lili'uokalani Long Distance Canoe Races ("Queen's Race") have been held annually in Kona, Hawaii since 1971. Race events are hosted by Kai 'Opua Canoe Club over the September Labor Day holiday. The Queen's Race is the largest long-distance canoe race in Hawaii by any measure and has

qualified as the world's largest canoe race. It is the only race to bring in thousands of off-island participants.

The women's and men's 18-mile races follow a historically and culturally significant course running between Kamakahonu Beach in Kailua Bay and Pu'uhonua O Honaunau National Historic Park. Other races include double-hull canoe races, SUP races, OC1 and OC2 races, and teen long distance races. Queen's Race events also include the Historic Walking Tour through Kailua Village, International Paddlers Night, Paddling Talk Story, the Torch Light Parade, award ceremonies, and a traditional Hawaiian Luau.

Hawaiian outrigger canoe racing is the State Team Sport as identified by the State Constitution. The Queen's Race is a lens through which everyone can view and appreciate not just the State Team Sport, but Hawaiian culture and history as well. It provides a wonderful experience for thousands of international participants and their supporters, as well as for those from the mainland and within the State of Hawai'i.