

## **Inter Pacific Champs - Update # 4**

*Report from Darren Shields, Assistant Manager with the NZ Spearfishing Team at the Inter Pacific Champs, Hawaii*

Well the big event is all over, the stories of the ones that got away and we should have got are flying thick and fast but our young team did NZ well. Day 1 of the mens event was in area one, a long stretch of coast with a prominent point right in the middle with loads of tide flowing past it. A large red marker permanently marked the spot as it had a reef a few metres below the surface. Off the edge the bottom shelved off to a set of steps, the first at 20 odd metres the next at 30mts.

We had our game plan and with the sound of the horn the boys set about putting it in place. As with these type of events things never go as you plan ; the area we sent Tim and Brett to for drummer did not produce . Jackson and Paul were sent to the marker where they soon got onto fish but the tide increased meaning they had to swim very fast to hold their spot, with this the fish they achieved slowed. Herb and I pushed them deeper to where other teams were getting fish. We then got Tim and Brett to head out as inshore the viz was shocking whereas out wide the boys had around 15mts.They all worked their butts off but got a lesson from the tropical teams on how to dive deep in strong currents and shoot fish.Herb and I had an interesting day together in the boat with differing ideas on where the boys should go ; we did come to agreement in most cases(I got my own way in other words).At the end of the day Tahiti were at the top with 39, Hawaii 34, New Caly 25, Aussie 16, Kauai 13, NZ 9, Guam 7 . The boys were a bit down on it but we pointed out the experience they were up against, tomorrow would be another day.Day 2 was in area 3 . We had not scouted this due to weather conditions all week, neither had anyone else, Hawaii knew this so there was no changing their minds.Again we came up with a game plan after a bit of disagreement with the boss but it turned out to be the right one. The tide again was very strong, the wind even stronger than the day before. Patches of very blue water came through pushing the brown muck down the coast, things looked better. We kept the two teams reasonably close together, Paul and Jackson out wide Todd and Brett in shallow, Todd had been given the chance to swim. Jackson and Paul started well, with 4 good fish after the first hour . Brett and Todd struggled in close so eventually we bought them out wider where they got onto the fish.The Hawaiians over armed it for one hour to the top end of the area with a couple of the top teams in hot pursuit . This proved a wrong move, the water was very dirty and fish few.At the end of a very hard day Tahaiti 27, Hawaii 26, New Caledonia 22, Guam 18, NZ 18, Kauai 18, Australia 14, we were second on weight in the 18 stakes. This put us still 6th over all for

the 2 days. To beat a pretty good Aussie side on day 2 was the highlight for the boys and as we have said puts them in a strong position as a divers for the future. Tahiti deserved their win. Hawaii divers were working up to 40 mts on day one, had trained with dives up to 70 mts prior to the event, Tahitians worked deep all day both days . While a very tough event it is a satisfying outcome for a very young NZ team.As a unit, the NZ team seemed to be the best organised and a lot of fun was had. The weather has been shocking but the bluewater is now lapping the coast as the event comes to an end. Geoff and Karlene swam wide today, shooting nice jobfish and giant trevally from the shore . This place I think is really good when the rain stops.Your Hawaiian Jurno DS signing off for the trip, that is unless Herb, Geoff and I get something big when we go wide looking for tuna and wahoo tomorrow.Update # 3Report from Darren Shields, Assistant Manager with the NZ Spearfishing Team at the Inter Pacific Champs, HawaiiKiwis can be extremely proud of Karlene Going, NZs only lady entrant to the Inter Pacific Champs. I had the pleasure of swimming with her and acknowledge her as a real champion.The womans event was swum in area 2, wind was still around 25knots, viz 2-4mts.Karlene 's opponents were from Aussie and Hawaii, a little daunting considering the reputations of some and also the fact she had to dive on her own with me as a float tower only, no diving, loading guns or helping to subdue speared fish, her job was double that of the other girls.We swam to an area we had scouted on previous days, the Hawaiians over armed it to the end of the area to spot X, impressive it looked but I had seen this all before . Karlene took it into her stride and got on with the job. Within an hour Karlene had 2 fish, the word came back neither of her opposition had any, twenty minutes later she had another the other teams still none. The word obviously went out . Next minute team Hawaii were breathing down our necks and managed to secure3 fish themselves, Karlene upped the intensity, her bottom times increased, a hard thing considering the amount of dives she was now doing and the conditions we were in.As the clock ticked down info kept coming in of Aussie still nil and Hawaii still 3 . This was how the day ended . To say the weigh in was a little intense for us was to say the least, it was all down to weight to see if this good old Kiwi girl new to the sport could roll the big gun front cover model girls of the sport in this part of the world.Now at this stage I will ask you all a question, who would you want on your side at a weigh in when it comes down to the wire? Enter HERB Herbert . Man did he give the guys grief at the weigh in to make sure everything was done in the correct manner and ensure Karlene 's fish were given the same respect as the Hawaiian team 's. Someone heard the guy taking the scores say, " I don't know if I can put up with this guy much more!! " Good on you Herb.At the end of the day Hawaii piped Karlene 329 to 327 on points, it doesn ' t get any closer. Karlene was the star only outdone by the fact the Hawaiian girls wore G-string bikinis to the weigh in.Go the Kiwi Boys.Stay tuned for more from Team

NZ in Hawaii. Darren team jurno. Update # 2 Report from Darren Shields, Assistant Manager with the NZ Spearfishing Team at the Inter Pacific Champs, Hawaii Dive day 3, area one needed a good day to look it over, there was still no sign of any other teams. Our trusty Kimo and his small boat did 4 trips to ferry us all to the zone. The viz was still around the 4 metre mark, okay but far from comfortable with a great white being seen in this area only days before. We broke up into small groups working areas over as best we could all coming to the same conclusion fish are in the rocky area close to the coast, depth no more than 10mts. I found a submerged float obviously used by one of the local dive operators because of the fish and turtles that were in the area. This was the best spot I found in the area. After an 8 hour swim Herb and I were the last to get a ride home, the old buggers doing the hard yards. Back at the ramp everyone had seen good fish but scattered, there was lots of dead ground but if you found a fishy spot there were some really good fish to be taken. Day 4 the weather was really bad, a trip around the island to do the tourist thing was an order of the day, no one complained. Day 5 we woke to stronger winds and more rain, conditions were not looking good but dive we did. In front of several local walkers the Kiwi's suited up, gauged the swell taking turns to leap from the rocks like a bunch of out of control penguins then swam out past the reef. Herb and I were left to drive the cars up or down the coast should the tide make it hard for the team to get back. While I sat and watched two guys came over and in their very strong American twang they asked was I part of this mad group that had just dived into the shark infested waters? I was told the area was full of big tiger sharks and they love to feed in dirty water like this. He then went on to explain he used to night spearfish and needed to smoke meth to work up the courage to get in, only problem was he then needed to dive 3 nights in a row for 9 hours at a time to come down off his high. He told me once the drug was in his system, when the tip of his pole spear touched the ocean it was fuc+ #n game on man, everything died, eels, sharks, rays and turtles which was his down fall, the Feds got him and he had spent the last couple of years doing time for his trouble. The positive side is he doesn't smoke meth anymore, only dope to cope with the pain across the front of his chest. Wow, with all this info my head was spinning, should I get the boys back and find them some meth to help them through the dive, nah, more stories from him filled in the rest of the morning until the boys came back. Other teams started to show as the opening ceremony was due today at 5pm. We got our best gear on and finished the day with all the teams at a local bar talking old times and eating chicken wings that were covered in a greasy batter with vinegar on them that would have to be the worst thing I have ever eaten. Day 6 started very slowly, celebrations the night before had taken its toll but we were the first team in the water and checking zone 2. I swam out through a reef break with the boys wondering of my sanity at doing this sort of thing again. The viz was 2 maybe 3 metres with 2 metre waves, fish were

hard to find but at least we could console ourselves with the thought of how warm the water was. Day 7 is the Women's event. Karlene is ready to go, I will be her sweaver. Stay tuned for results and the Men's day 8 and 9. Team selected to start is Jackson Shields, Paul Best, Tim Crawford, Brett Bamber, Todd Herbert Reserve. Darren Kauai P.S Herb is being good sort of. Update #1 Report from Darren Shields, Assistant Manager with the NZ Spearfishing Team at the Inter Pacific Champs, Hawaii Hawaii has really turned the weather on, just like the postcards, torrential rain, 35 knot winds and 4 metres viz. We had a reasonably uneventful trip to get to the island of Kauai, some 166kms west of Honolulu. The day we arrived a major storm was at its end, places on the island of Kauai had been declared a disaster zone, great. We found our humble abode after Herb did his best to do a swifty with the rental car company and get two cars for the price of one with no insurance and as many unidentified, unlicensed drivers as possible. Time for the assistant manager to step in and get on with proceedings softly so we can enter the country without Interpol being alerted to our arrival. We have two amazing condos with all the mod cons a poor spearo could dream of other than a filleting bench, never mind the Italian marble kitchen with shag pile carpet will do. The areas we are to dive can be accessed in most cases from the shore, a quick recon in the rental cars and we have the area suss'd. A quick note here to say, New Zealand are fielding the youngest team ever in the history of our participation of the Inter Pacific event, youngest 18 the oldest 25 years old. With this comes endless enthusiasm, energy and a willingness to dive anything that is available to us. Herb and I being the most experienced at this sort of weather and viz decided we needed to desparately go over the instruction manuals in the rental cars to make sure we knew exactly how to operate the American muscle we had been given the job of piloting. Geoff Crawford was voted senior to swim with our youthful team as the senior to keep an eye on what the boys were up to, also to note we have a lady member Karlene Going, yes, of the famous NZ rugby Going family. Karlene won the New Zealand Womens Champs and elected to have a go against the Inter Pacific's best females. Karlene showed her lineage with no hesitation to go wide with the boys and find fish. After 3 hours all returned with tales to tell and some class fish for dinner, big parrot fish, unicorns, trevally and a few wrasse. Our first day in paradise was finished. While Herb and I slept, whoops, I mean read the car manuals, we both noticed a small boat coming and going from a little beach close to the wharf we were at. I wandered over and introduced myself to Kimo, a skipper of a fine ship, some 3.5mts long with a 15hp, glass over ply, a broken carbon fin blade as a perma trim for the outboard, a battery with an ancient motor cover over it for protection as an electric starter and a wealth of knowledge of the area we had to dive. Kimo is a spearo come commercial net fisherman, living on the beach with a tent and tarpauline to protect him, his girl friend, dog and motorcross bike from what the weather was throwing at us. He was one of those guys

you instantly warm to, he showed me his catch for the day, 25 odd silver drummer and would I like to buy them. The Tui 's add sprung to mind "Yea right!" I asked him how much he hoped to make selling them, somewhere around \$80 bucks he replies. A light goes on in my head, how would you like to take us all diving in that fine ship of yours?? "Yeah man!!" A plan is hatched, after a few negotiations day two on the water for Team NZ is put to bed, 8am next morning the first 3 guys are heading along the coast in Kimo's fine ship. 20 minutes later he's back for another 3, then 20 minutes later hes back for me as designated old bugger to keep an eye on the young ones including Karlene while Herb runs Geoff through the finer points of the rental car manuals. I am quietly surprised by the 4 metre viz, better than I expected but still eerie after Kimo telling me about the big great white spotted 2 days before 200 metres from where he was dropping us. Fish were very abundant, parrotts, silver drummer, surgeons, it's all here and only 5 metres deep, great depth for us old guy's. The coral is good with big caverns underneath and the promise of big trevally at any moment zooming from their depths. I linked up with Karlene to help her identify the fish and show her some of the ways I have targeted these fish in days gone by. In no time we found a school of around 200 drummer and nice eating fish in this part of the world. With them were several other good eating species. We spent an hour around these fish, lots of fun and very easy diving. Next we got Kimo to move us to an area of high cliffs that promised some interesting territory at their bases. Within minutes of entering the water Karlene had a 12kg bluefin trevally and I managed a mullet similar to our red mullet around 1.7kgs, and this proved to be a magnificent eater later that night. Also spotted were a few crays that Brett Bamber managed to wriggle from their holes to again grace our table for a fare fit for kings. Kimo was gold to find and keen to do plenty more for us. Stay tuned for more adventures from the pacific paradise, Kauai. Darren Shields, team jorno, Herb controller, gear supplier and chief fish filleter.