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Surf: Hennessey's International Paddleboard Championship

Australian paddling sensation Jamie Mitchell wins in Hawaii

Australian paddling sensation **Jamie Mitchell** (Queensland) continued on with his 3-year winning streak, taking first place in the \$10,000 **Hennessey's International Paddleboard Championship** on the **North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii**.



Jamie Mitchell continued his 3-year winning streak, taking first place in the Hennessey's International Paddleboard Championship

Mitchell, 27, topped a field of 132 paddlers from around the World, completing the 6.5-mile (10.5km) distance from **Turtle Bay to Waimea Bay** in a time of 1:03:06 - four minutes shy of his own record of 59:59:00 set last year. He won \$1,150. Mitchell remains undefeated in International competition and hopes to stay that way on **Sunday, August 1**, in the 32-mile **Quiksilveredition Molokai to Oahu Race**. Overall, **Australians** took the top three places with **Jackson English** second, and **Mick Dibetta** third. **Brian Rocheleau** was the top **Hawaiian** finisher in 7th, in a time of 1:05:47. The first 18 paddlers across the line were riding "unlimited" class boards, which range in length from 16-18 feet.

"It was a super hard race," said Mitchell, who didn't take the lead until the half-way point. "Aaron Bitmead skipped out at the start, then we both came through Backyards (outside Sunset Beach) together. I just tried to stay close to Aaron and then made my move at Backyards. But it was actually nice to be behind someone at the start. You can kind of cruise a little more knowing where they are. When you're in front, you're always feeling like there's someone coming up behind, it's hard to know."

"This is actually the perfect preparation for Molokai - a one hour race the week before. I've done the same thing for the last two years and I've won Molokai. But everyone's beatable and I'm no different, but I'd put myself in hospital to win."

The biggest surprise of the day came in a total unknown **Australian**, who took out the hotly contested **12-foot stockboard division**. **Tim Foran**, 26, beat **Hawaii's** top stock paddlers **Jimmy Austin** and **Matt Sack**, with just 18 seconds between the three. Foran's winning time was 1:10:02. What made Foran's result most surprising is the fact that he's never even competed in a race longer than 5 minutes and, unlike the dominant Mitchell, doesn't knee-paddle. Foran was actually the

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top money-earner, winning \$1,200 - \$1,150 for the stock division win and a \$50 bonus for being the first stock paddler to the No.1 sprint buoy, just off the start line.

"I've never competed in a race over five minutes and I'm one of about three Aussie paddlers back home that don't knee paddle," said Foran, who competes predominately in fast, short surf-lifesaving club races back in **Newcastle, NSW**. The famous Australian knee paddling style is what many believe has made Mitchell so unbeatable.

"I had a broken leg last year and spent my whole time on-line checking out all the paddlers, seeing who they were. So I couldn't believe it when I started passing guys I'd read about. But I've never been in so much pain as I was today."

While Foran discovered a new threshold of pain at the event, he's sure to reach a realm of unimaginable pain next weekend when he makes a solo attempt at the 32-mile **Molokai to Oahu race**, a distance he has definitely never paddled.

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