



Benjamin 'Benjy' Ka'apuni Bo Wong

July 21, 1938 - July 17, 2018

Benjamin "Benjy" Ka'apuni Bo Wong, 79 of Kaohao (Lanikai), Kailua died July 17, 2018, 4 days shy of his 80th birthday, at home of natural causes. He was born in Honolulu.

Benjy was a proud graduate of St. Louis College class of 1956. The following year, at age 19, he went on to win the Manoa Cup which is the most prestigious amateur golf tournament in the state of Hawai'i. His professional career included draftsman, real estate broker and sales and marketing. He ended his professional career as Chief Land Agent with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

He is survived by wife Pua'ala Bruhn, daughter Kaluna son Kiaaina (Deborah), grandsons, Bo Kawika Wong, Tavian Kana'iaupuni Ramirez-Wong, Kameona (Brittney) Hokoana, granddaughter, Haukea Hokoana, great granddaughter Nanea Hokoana, brother, Edmund of Oregon and sister, Lucile (Rufus) Kaukani.

Rosary 9:00am, Friday, August 31 at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Kailua, Visitation 9:30am, Eulogy and family remembrances 10:30am, mass at 11am with lunch to follow Mass in the Makai Room of the the Church.

Share memories online here at kenordensteinfunerals.com.

The following article was taken from the Honolulu Star Advertiser

WONG HAD A MEMORABLE RUN IN THE 1957 MANOA CUP

By Bill Kwon

The 107th U.S. Open isn't the only golf tournament this week with a history going back a long way.

They're playing the Manoa Cup for the 99th year with the winner being crowned as the state amateur match-play champion Saturday after a grueling week of walking the hilly Oahu Country Club course.

The list of previous champions reads like a who's who of local golf: Francis I'i Brown, Arthur Armstrong, Jimmy Ukauka, Ken Miyaoka, Lance Suzuki and David Ishii, all Hawai'i Golf Hall of Famers.

But one of the most improbable champions of them all was Benjy Wong, a 19-year-old who stunned Masa Kaya, 9 and 7, in the 36-hole final 50 years ago. "Nobody heard of the guy," said Kaya, who's also a member of the local golf hall of fame. "And he also beat Owen Douglass in the semifinals, and at that time (Douglass) was in his prime."

Kaya, who's now 80, still remembers as if it were yesterday:

"Everybody was telling me, 'Ah, Masa. You going win. Guarantee. No problem.' He shot lights out. I got swamped."

Although he reached the finals several times, Kaya never won the Manoa Cup. "And I never won the Mid-Pac Open, which was one of my favorite tournaments," he added.

For Wong, who retired in 2001 as land management director for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, it was his only victory in a major golf tournament.

"I just played utterly fantastic," recalled Wong, who dazzled a gallery of more than 500 with his putting display that steamy August day.

"Every time he was on the green, he made the putt," Kaya said.

Wong had a few backers of his own.

"Some of the Filipino busboys told me that they had bet on me," Wong recalled. They obviously cleaned up in more ways than one.

Wong shot a 4-under 64 to go 7-up in the morning round. Par for the OCC course was 64 because the 13th and 14th holes were par-3s then. He closed the match at the par-3 11th hole in the afternoon when Kaya overshot the green and couldn't get up and down. Wong was short of the green but saved par.

One person who wasn't surprised by Wong's stunning upset victory was his Saint Louis School golf teammate, Jim Burns.

"Benjy was the best short-game player I ever saw in my life. He had a short game that was unbelievable," said Burns, who recently retired after 30 years in the Hawai'i state judiciary.

They grew up caddying for their fathers at the Mid-Pacific Country Club.

Wong, the club champ six or seven times, says, "I'd played with my father against Jim and his father. All we had were our putters."

Though he took a junior golf class conducted by club pro Alex Beckley, Wong said he was basically a self-taught golfer, reading "Power Golf," a book by his golf idol Ben Hogan, "over and over."

"I used to dream of myself winning a tournament, hitting the ball and seeing the ball falling into the cup. Today they call it visualization. I didn't know it was visualization then," said Wong, who won the Territorial Junior Golf Championship in 1956 after leading the Crusaders to their second Interscholastic League of Honolulu golf championship in three years.

If winning the Manoa Cup was his biggest accomplishment, Wong says his greatest thrill was representing Hawai'i in the Tournament of Champions at the Sunnehanna Country Club in Johnstown, Pa., the following year.

"I finished second to last, but it was a wonderful experience," said Wong, whose only disappointment was that the champion from Ohio, a guy named Jack Nicklaus, couldn't make it because he was taking his college exams at Ohio State.

Memories are all that remain for Wong, except a photo or two. All of his golf memorabilia were lost when his Kailua home burned down.

But he'll never forget that day 50 years ago when he won the Manoa Cup. No Manoa Cup champion ever does.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 31. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (HST)

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
148 Makawao St.
Kailua, HI
adminasst@stanthonyskailua.org
<http://www.stanthonyskailua.org>

Family Program

AUG 31. 10:30 AM (HST)

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
148 Makawao St.
Kailua, HI
adminasst@stanthonyskailua.org
<http://www.stanthonyskailua.org>

Mass

AUG 31. 11:00 AM (HST)

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
148 Makawao St.
Kailua, HI
adminasst@stanthonyskailua.org
<http://www.stanthonyskailua.org>

Tribute Wall



“ Benjamin 'Benjy" Ka'apuni Bo Wong

November 15, 2022 at 12:05 AM



“ Benjamin 'Benjy" Ka'apuni Bo Wong

November 14, 2022 at 10:52 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Benjamin 'Benjy" Ka'apuni Bo Wong.



August 27, 2018 at 01:28 PM