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PAT CALDWELL

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SwellCaldWell Updated 2 PM Friday, November 21, 2025

DATE	SWELL HGT	SWELL DIR	SWELL PER	SURF H1/3	SURF H1/10	TREND	PROB	WIND SPD	WIND DIR	TREND
12 PM	5	NNW	13	6	10	SAME		13-19	E	DOWN
11/21	8	ENE	8	5	7	DOWN				
	2	SSE	13	2	4	SAME				
SAT	6.5	NNW	16	10	15	UP	LOW	12-17	E	DOWN
11/22	6	ENE	8	3	5	DOWN	LOW			
	2	SSE	13	2	4	DOWN	LOW			
SUN	7	NNW	14	10	15	DOWN	LOW	9-14	E	SAME
11/23	5	ENE	8	3	4	DOWN	LOW			
	2	SSE	11	1	2	DOWN	LOW			
MON	5	NNW	13	6	10	DOWN	LOW	9-14	E	SAME
11/24	4.5	ENE	7	2	4	DOWN	LOW			
TUE	3	NNW	11	4	6	DOWN	LOW	9-14	E	SAME

11/25	4.5	E	6	1	2	SAME	LOW			
WED	9	NNW	16	15	20	UP	LOW	9-14	E	SAME
11/26	4.5	E	6	1	2	SAME	LOW			

Table Definitions given after Discussion

Summary

Country active NNW pattern.

Discussion

Midday Friday 11/21, northern shores have breakers from 310-340 deg of 12-16s near/notch under average and from 010-040 degrees of 8-10s intervals at small levels. Former still holding small to moderate Saturday dawn as the latter wind swell fades. New event should bring surf above average by midday on Saturday from 310-340 degrees.

On this day, 11/21, in the historical H1/10 visual surf observation Goddard-Caldwell database (https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/metadata/geoportal/rest/metadata/item/gov.noaa.nodc%3A0001754/html) (starting 9/1968) for the north shore of Oahu, the average is 6.2 Hs, (12' peak face, Oahu Surf Climatology (http://ilikai.soest.hawaii.edu/HILO/climo/oahu_surf_climatlogy.html)) and the largest surf on this date was 18 Hs (sets 36' peak face top spots) in 1975.

Moon's view-

- Broad lows from NWPAC to NNW/N of Hawaii to keep steady pace of overlapping NNW events.

Broad, slow moving low NWPAC to east of Date Line 11/14-17

- Backstory
  - The broad low formed in the Kamchatka corner 11/14. ASCAT measured severe gales during onset, but soon most winds favored near gales to pockets of marginal gales 11/15-16 west of Date Line.
  - The fetch of marginal gales with seas ~20' crossed the Date Line Sunday night. It is expected to be closest to Hawaii early Monday 11/17 afternoon about 1000 nm away with mostly near gales and seas 14-18'.
- Pulse status:
  - NOAA NW Hawaii buoy 51001 midday 11/21 still holding moderate energy 12-16s.
  - PacIOOS/CDIP Waimea buoy 11/21 shows this event has settled near average energy and holding steady so far morning to noon
- Local surf prognosis:

    - With such a long, wide stretching back to Kamchatka 11/14-16, still small to moderate surf into Saturday dawn from 310-340 degrees. A new event to override it Saturday morning.

Kamchatka to east of Date Line low 11/18-20

- Backstory:
    - 969 mb low formed SE of Kamchatka 11/18 about 2600 nm away from Hawaii.
    - It stayed stronger than expected as it crossed the Date Line Wednesday PM with aim of severe gales at Hawaii over the 315-330 degree band with seas >25'.
    - Aim more NE of Hawaii Thursday 11/20 with closest reach of near gales about 1000 nm away Thursday night.
- Pulse status:
    - 51001 has some 17-19s forerunners midday 11/21 though not much magnitude.
- Local surf prognosis:
    - Surf on rise Saturday morning climbing above average noonish
    - Max of event Saturday night with elevated surf into Sunday morning from 310-340 degrees.
    - Monday surf near/notch under average as it falls to small levels by Tuesday from 310-350 degrees.

Another Kamchatka to east of Date Line pattern 11/21-24

- Models show low deepening to 968 mb near 50N, 170E (2400 nm away) Saturday.
- Broad low pressure pattern due to cross Date Line Sunday, then stall near 50N, 165-170E (1800 nm away) Monday into Wednesday.
- Severe gales with pockets of storm force 11/22-23 with gales within 1500 nm Monday.
- Local surf prognosis:
    - Sharp rise above average expected Wednesday dawn from 310-340 degrees.
    - Max of event early T-day, holding elevated into Friday 11/28 with dropping trend.

Midday Friday 11/21, the east side has breakers from 60-90 degrees above the east side average. Saturday should see a decline to near average.

Windward wind-head concerns —

- Surface high pressure has shifted well off to the NE of Hawaii.
- Friday morning wing reconnaissance Kailua Bay winds turned from nearly straight east, so lots of shadowed areas in the bay. Exposed areas still fresh speeds dawn to mid morning—dropping trend late morning. Choppy surf above average.
- Models keep a zone of high pressure NNW to NNE of Hawaii 11/22-26, keeping moderate trades from 70-90 degrees.

East side surfer interests—

- ASCAT Thursday night into Friday morning still showing areas of strong trades to the east of Hawaii. Models show those winds subsiding. From seas already generated 11/21 out 900 nm, slow decline of wind swell over the weekend to levels below average by Sunday from 70-90 degrees.
- Low-end E wind swell 11/24-26.

Midday Friday 11/21, southern shores breakers from combo local trade wind swell and low, longer-period swell from 150-170 degrees. Saturday should see similar with a downward trend.

On this day, 11/21, in the historical H1/10 visual surf observation Goddard-Caldwell database (https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/metadata/geoportal/rest/metadata/item/gov.noaa.nodc%3A0001754/html) (starting 1972) for the south shore of Oahu, the average is 1.8 Hs, (~4' peak face) and the largest surf on this date was 3 Hs (6' peak face) in 2023 from S under 15 knot SW winds.

Moon's view:

Austral spring leaning summer not conducive to S swell in Hawaii.

SE French Polynesia source 11/13-14—source of longer period surf arriving 11/21

- A compact gale SE of French Polynesia 11/13-14 aimed swell at Hawaii from 160-170 degrees. The Tuamotu Islands were smack dab in the swath, but it looks like the swell did some razzle dazzle dance steps through the archipelago to allow surf to arrive in Hawaii.
- Wave models keep about the same Saturday.
- Fading back to seasonal near nil into next week.

Into the long range, let's see what Wooly Worm (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzZitoUBuCE) is up. Pau hana Friday time for Rat Worm's Sports Bar. There's Wooly and his buds over at the new sushi bar. Wooly's piling up his plate. Must be the clue. Models are hinting at winter-caliber low forming east of Japan 11/26 reaching the Date Line 11/28 with fetch favoring 295-310 degrees. This should bring an above average WNW even locally 11/30-12/1. Similar event a few days later.

The next SwellCaldWell forecast will be issued Monday, November 24.

Climatology update (Nov 3, 2025) to include through Oct 2025:

Summary (click below for details of each)

North shore, month of Oct 2025: Sucky Sept gave way to Rocktober, with some solid surf, pinch over the average for large days, nsstat10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/nsstat10.txt).

South shore, month of Oct 2025: More like Nope-tober for south side, ssstat10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/ssstat10.txt). For the 2025 season,smstat03_10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/smstat03_10.txt), March to Sept, then Oct, below average, though smoking August tilted the larger size brackets near average for the season overall,

Wind-heads: Oct 2025: Near average, steady fresh+ trades week 2 and 3, wwstat10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/wwstat10.txt). (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/wwstat05.txt)

Climate Fun 1.

Monthly Stats

North Shore Oahu (1968-present):

January: nsstat01 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/nsstat01.txt)

February: nsstat02 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/nsstat02.txt)

March: nsstat03 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/nsstat03.txt)

April: nsstat04 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/nsstat04.txt)

May: nsstat05 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/nsstat05.txt)

June: nsstat06 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/nsstat06.txt)

July: nsstat07 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/nsstat07.txt)

August: nsstat08 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/nsstat08.txt)

September: nsstat09 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/nsstat09.txt)

October: nsstat10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/nsstat10.txt)

November: nsstat11 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/nsstat11.txt)

December: nsstat12 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/nsstat12.txt)

South Shore Oahu (1972-present):

January: ssstat01 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/ssstat01.txt)

February: ssstat02 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ssstat02.txt)

March: ssstat03 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/ssstat03.txt)

April: ssstat04 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/ssstat04.txt)

May: ssstat05 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ssstat05.txt)

June:ssstat06 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/ssstat06.txt)

July: ssstat07 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/ssstat07.txt)

August: ssstat08 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ssstat08.txt)

*Picts surf forecaster validation duties Big Wednesday 8/18/21

(photos Shredsniper.com, Mike Carroll)

September: ssstat09 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/ssstat09.txt)

October: ssstat10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/ssstat10.txt)

November: ssstat11 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/ssstat11.txt)

December: ssstat12 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/ssstat12.txt)

Wind (1988-present, PC's best guess):

January: wwstat01 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/wwstat01.txt)

February: wwstat02 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/wwstat02.txt)

March: wwstat03 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/wwstat03.txt)

April: wwstat04 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/wwstat04.txt)

May: wwstat05 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/wwstat05.txt)

June: wwstat06 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/wwstat06.txt)

July: wwstat07 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/wwstat07.txt)

August: wwstat08 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/wwstat08.txt)

September: wwstat09 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/wwstat09.txt)

October: wwstat10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/wwstat10.txt)

November: wwstat11 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/wwstat11.txt)

December: wwstat12 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/wwstat12.txt)

Seasonal Stats

North Shore Oahu, 1968/69-2023/24; (full season, September to June): nmstat09_06 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/nmstat09_06.txt)

North Shore Oahu, 2024/25 last year season (Sept-June): nmstat09_06 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/nmstat09_06.txt)

South Shore Oahu, 1972-2024 (full season, March thru November): smstat03_11 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/smstat03_11.txt)

South Shore Oahu, 2025 season (March to Oct): smstat03_10 (https://www.surfnewsnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/smstat03_10.txt)

Helpful links,

Oahu Surf Climatology (http://uhslc.soest.hawaii.edu/outreach/climo/oahu_surf_climatlogy.html)

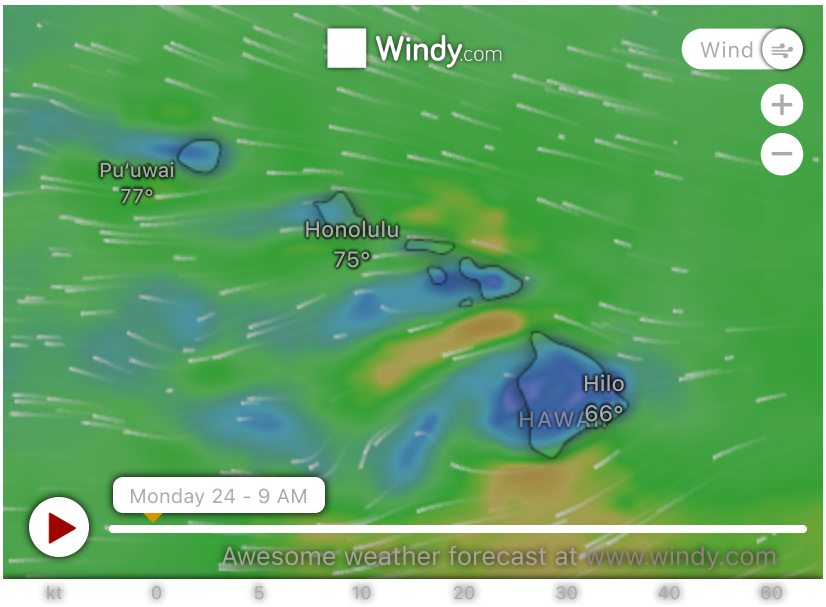
Island Shadows (http://ilikai.soest.hawaii.edu/HILO/shadow.html)

Educational outreach: Waves 101– Why Surf Varies Time/Place (http://uhslc.soest.hawaii.edu/outreach/vary/why_surf_varies.html)

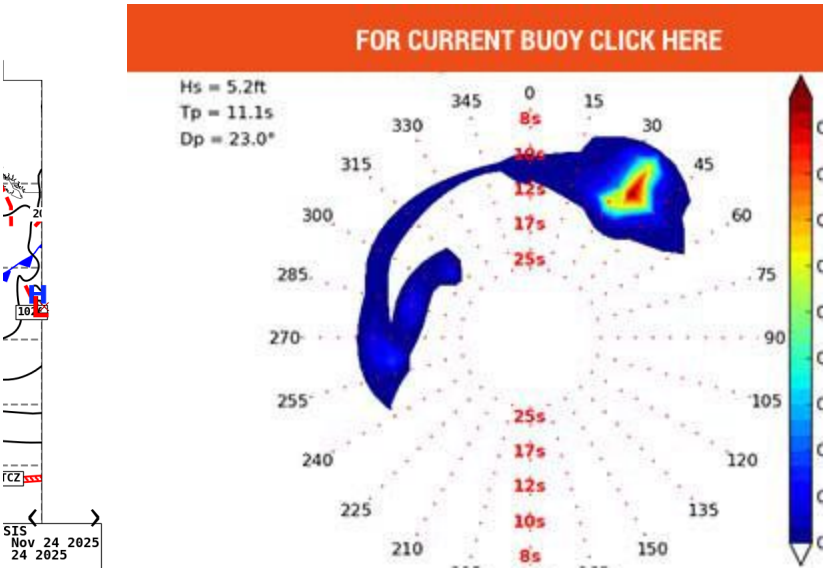
Table Definitions

DATE	Represents daylight hours in zones of high refraction (biggest surf spots for given incident swell direction, period and height). First row(s) in table refers to observations from buoys (swell) and cams (breakers) made for the time when the SwellCaldWell forecast was updated. Other rows refer to forecast for spell (~30-60 min) within daylight when arrival of maximum wave energy, or **active envelopes**, occur. This forecast tends to bias high for safety (and easier to ride a bigger board if surf is smaller than expected, than to ride a shorter board when bigger). Even under “steady” swell, heights vary spell to spell through a day.

SWELL HGT	Deep water swell (H1/3) height (feet) corresponding to a nominal (~3 mile) location offshore of Oahu seaward of the coastal shelf for the given incident swell direction. Deep water swell height from each unique wave-generating source is obtained by summing up all energy for wave periods > 10 seconds, which removes the wind swell. H1/3 is the average of the highest 1/3rd of all waves coming in for the targeted high energy envelope spell from this defined source. Wind swell are defined for wave periods <= 10 seconds.
SWELL DIR	Deep water swell direction (from) centered on 16 point compass bands.
SWELL PER	Deep water swell period (seconds).
SURF H1/3	Breaker H1/3 (defined above) height (feet, peak face) during most active envelopes. H1/3 sets arrive about every 3 minutes with large variance.
SURF H1/10	Average of highest 1/10th of all breakers (feet, peak face) during active envelopes; H1/10 sets arrive about every 10 minutes with large variance.
PEAK FACE	Trough to crest height (feet) on shoreward side of breaker at moment and location along wave front of maximum cresting,
Ocn H1/100 Cleanup or Sneaker set	Waves arrive within a range of sizes. Surf zone enthusiasts emphasize the smaller percent of larger waves when communicating a report in an X to Y occasional Z format. The X to Y range is nominally H1/3 to H1/10. The Z, or sneaker or cleanup sets, are the H1/100, which is about 1.3 times the H1/10 (eg., H1/10=10' gives H1/100=13'). H1/100th sets arrive on average every 90 minutes with large variance. Thus your typical 2 hour session is bound to see at least one cleanup set.
TREND	Breaker height (wind speed) tendency during daylight
WIND SPD	Wind speed (knots) for nominal coastal location on the windward side relative to prevailing large scale wind (ie, east side under trades or S or W side under konas),
WIND DIR	Wind direction (from) centered on 16 point compass bands. LV refers to light and variable.



WAIMEA BUOY



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LINKS

Surfrider Oahu (http://oahu.surfrider.org)
Maui Ola Foundation (https://mauliola.org)
Pacific Tsunami (http://www.tsunami.org/faq.html)
Sustainable Coastlines HI (http://sustainablecoastlineshawaii.org/)
Surfing the Nations (http://surfingthenations.com/)
Defend Oahu (http://www.defendoahucoalition.org/)
Access Surf Hawaii (http://www.accessurf.org/)
WSL (https://www.worldsurfleague.com)
Rise Above Plastic (http://www.riseaboveplastics.org/)
Water Quality (Clean Water Branch) (https://eha-cloud.doh.hawaii.gov/cwb/#!/viewer)
