

Surf Ski Races – May & August 2009

May 9 – Whaingaroa Hoe Panui

Venue: Raglan
Course: In the harbour – circuit course
Distance: 7km; 12km for OC1 and Ski 25km OC6
Entry Fee: \$25 (must enter by 6 May)
To enter & details: www.surfski.co.nz

May 17 – Molokai Crossing

Venue: Molokai, Hawaii
Other information: Go to www.surfski.info to follow the race on the day



Photos from 2008 Molokai Race

May 30 – Surf Ski & Waka Ama Hoe Tonga

Venue: Matariki, Wellington
Distance: 25km
To enter & details: chester.burt@gmail.com for all details

August 29 & 30 – Tour de Tasman

Venue: Tasman Bay
Course: Two day
Distance: 8 races covering 60km
Entry Fee: \$250 (limit to 100 paddlers)
To enter & details: www.tourdetasman.co.nz



Photos from 2008 Tour de Tasman Race



Auckland Beach Series - Tuesday Night Races – a year in review

By Garren Cooper



Another year over and all the bragging and talk is over (for most of us). Overall most would have to agree a good year ... except the weather or more specifically the wind which did not play its part being mostly to flat and calm for us paddlers.

In summary a year dominated by Steven Ferguson and Katie Pocock. For Steve 15 races 13 wins and 2 seconds. In terms of wins only 3 more than Mike Walker a year before but probably the most impressive fact was the gap Steve put on the field in some of the races. This would have to be good news for all paddlers as it strung out the field and along with the likes of Brainislav Sramek and Travis Mitchell ensured we had a tough quality competition.

There were 92 male paddlers who did three or more races (125 registered paddlers in total). Interesting to note in the 2007/08 season we had 102 male paddlers who did three or more races (and 141 registered). For the women there were 13 competitors who did three or more races (with 23 registered). In the 2007/08 year we had 23 women competitors who did three or more races (and 31 registered).

The Good

- Good quality competition.
- The volunteers, always busy and friendly. Make a difference so thank you.
- Sponsors, always welcome. Especially the free samples after every race, much appreciated.
- The starts (excluding race 1 and 2) finally sorted (mostly) but now a lot fairer than the water starts.
- The weather (wind excepting)
- Families on the beach exercising together and enjoying Takapuna beach.

The Bad

- Race starts, yes good and bad for this one as some people are 'special' and always ignore the race start instructions and either straddle their boat or creep out further.
- The wind ... not enough from the east, north east, or south east.
- Race courses. We will need some more to help keep the format fresh and give us something else to talk about.
- Prize giving ... a bit drawn out drag due to the multitude of age groups and recipients. My vote is to have announced prizes for the top 5 in each event and make a bid deal of it, the rest can pick there category prizes up from the table.



The Ugly

- Some would day Simon McLaren's faded series singlet (but you'd be a brave man)

Surf ski Ama Waka Ama in Wellington

By Chester Burt & Sharlene Winiata - Wellington Surf ski and Waka Ama Series Organisers

Well time to give an overview of our 5th Season of running the Wellington Surf ski and Waka Ama series.

Ten fortnightly Sunday races were held over the 2008/2009 in the Capital..... due to the fact that we have had a Tuesday Night kayak series running in Wellington pretty much every Summer for the last 15 years.

The Surf ski and Waka Ama Series races in Wellington squeezes it's races in and around the Hoe Tonga (Regional) Waka Ama Trials and Regattas in Wellington and thought is also given to other major races on both the Surf ski and Waka Ama National Calendars.

We tend to start our races mid September as most people will generally be doing some sort of training either in Waka Ama or in Kayaks and also racing over the winter with some great races through August, September and October in our extended racing Area which includes the Manawatu, Wairarapa, Blenheim and Nelson.



We started on September 14 this current Season, and had 7 races every 2 to 3 weeks up until December 21. After Christmas the calendar for events around the country looked pretty chocka block so we only had 3 races to end the Series here and the opportunity was then left for paddlers to be able to pursue races up North to finish the Season off.

I'm not too sure if people want to read continually about those who topped the pile at every race of the Season so I'll just say you can read the results from each of those races on our blogspot. www.surfskiandwakaama.blogspot.com

To Promote Surf ski paddling a little more in Wellington this Season we ran the first ever Surf ski Demo day in Wellington in January. This was held on the same night as the better than TV Twilight kayak Series . Paddlers were able to demo Epic V10 skis and Stand Up Paddle



boards from Fergs kayaks and Fenn Mako 6 and Fenn Mako XT Surf skis from our fleet. We had an excellent response to the demo day and we've been watching the sales of Surf skis continually flow into Wellington from this.



Next Season we will be running three demo days, likely to be October, November and January and with an extended range of skis to try out and more brands coming into Wellington every Year, the signs of future growth in all areas look good from where we're sitting.

Huge potential in this Sport of Surf ski and **Ocean racing for all paddlers**, in New Zealand, and once it becomes more expansive, and in many ways, I believe it is starting to head that way. When the rest of the Country grows the Auckland Scene (where it all started) can only kick on again to gain greater numbers to the Premier Races on the Surf ski Calendar

So just to wind all this blurb up.

In Wellington this coming Season:

- Surf ski Demo days in October, November and January
- Fortnightly races on Sundays from mid September and through to Christmas
- Post New Year races mid January through to mid March
- Circulation of Events www.surfskiandwakaama.blogspot.com and www.surfski.co.nz and www.sportzhub.com the well established Wellington e-mailing lists and the Community newspapers.

Big thanks to all the Paddlers around the Region who supported our races this Season just quickly they include All Waka Ama Clubs in the Hoe Tonga Region, all the Multisport and Sea Kayakers who support as many of the Local races as they can. The new paddlers who have come into the Series this year via reading articles in the Kapi-Mana News, The Wellingtonian and The Hutt News and all the word of mouth and Positive support (especially those actually turning up to race) and all paddlers Coaches and Administrators that have become involved down here in the Capital.

Finally big thanks to Steve at www.sportzhub.com for providing the best Sports Network in the Country and to Tracy from www.surfski.co.nz for providing great support and encouragement from up North.



What was your best race this season?

This is probably the most comprehensive calendar we've had. So let us know which was your favourite race and why – we'll publish the results next newsletter. Here are the North Island races summarised to prompt your memory.

Date	Race	Distance	Course	Total paddlers	LD Ski paddlers	Yrs running
3 Jan 09	Gisborne – Edge of the World	20km	Point to point	40	20	1 yr
25 Jan	Maraetai – Auck	20km	Circuit	29	7	1 yr
31 Jan	KOH	28km	Circuit	85 (inc 10km course, OC1 & stand up)	54	6 yrs
9 Feb	Butty Moore Memorial – Tauranga	30km	Point to point	80	37	1 yr
21 Feb	Bo Herbert Memorial – Tutakaka	28km	Point to point	40	7	1 yr
22 Feb	TBC club champs - Auck	18km	Point to point	23	23	1 yr
21 Mar	Long Distance Ski Champs - Auck	20km	Point to point	29	29	1 yr
28 Mar	Trans Taupo	44km	Point to point	100 (all kayak classes)	13	2 yrs
5 April	Waka Fest - Tauranga	28km	Circuit	46	17	2 yrs

Overall feedback from ski paddlers regarding races

- Down wind, point to point courses are preferable.
- Entry fee ideally should be between \$50-\$60. I'm sure this will get more paddlers competing.
- Combining races with OC1 paddlers works, it increases the numbers without compromising safety and the course.
- Open ocean racing requires a good safety plan (lots of boats)
- Favourite race so far seemed to be the Butty Moore Memorial race – amazing conditions (open ocean helps), good organization, but a few comments on safety.



Safety and Not Dying on the Water and stuff

By Garren Cooper

Ok so we are heading into winter ... firstly a collective groan ... now groan again ... lets look at safety.

Most paddlers, when you talk safety, start thinking life jackets, bright vests, leashes, flares even flashing lights on poles.

Guess what? Not even close to the big one. If you fall off your ski hypothermia will get you. In the peak of summer this is not a major as you will have warmer water and more daylight hours but even so if you do an overnighter or are blown out to sea you will be in big trouble. In winter? Hypothermia could have you within half an hour.

So here is how I see it. The top ranked items safety goes as follows;

1. Stay close to the shore line. Especially in winter. The faster you can get to shore and get warm when you are in trouble the better. The personal rule here is for you to look at the nearest safe landing point and ask yourself, If I fell of my ski or it sunk, could I swim to safety within ½ hour?
2. When possible, always train with another person. If you cannot always have a companion then rule No. 1 becomes a critical rule. Even in long down win runs with a larger group split yourself into pairs to keep an eye on each other (In a large group it is not manageable for every paddler to keep an eye on every other paddler so pairing up is still critical). If you are doing long training runs let someone know where you are going and when you will get back.
3. Have and use the safety gear. If you are not a good swimmer rules No1 & NO2 are critical plus wear your life jacket. Common sense is key here; if you are doing ins and outs from the beach all you need are swimmers (speedos for the boys bikinis for the girls). If you are doing a 3 hour down wind more stuff is needed (life jackets, cell phones, flares, leashes etc).
4. Change your training to suit conditions. Extreme example – if is blowing 50 knots do not do a down wind run from some point you have never been to before. In extreme conditions rule No 2 is critical. In extreme conditions test your skills in a safe manner before taking on bigger challenges. How? If you are going out in 50 knots for the first time then pick one of the main in-shore beaches where the wind is blowing directly on to the beach and do ins-and-outs for 500m or so off the beach. Why? If you fall off you will get blown on the beach along with your craft. If you can do 10 or these or keep gong for an hour you are ready for the next challenge.

Send us your races, articles, photos and feedback and we'll publish them on www.surfski.co.nz

Email tracy.wilson@clear.net.nz

