



Super12 was held this year on November 26th - a balmy day with gentle sun-drenched breezes and absolutely no ugly competitiveness amongst the EW Dragon boaters. The Coach(es) encouraged us to relax between races and were gentle in their encouragement, particularly for Team 2 which was heavily stacked with new-comers. For anyone contemplating joining the EW Dragon Boat crew, stop reading here!

For an absolute novice it was something of an eye opener and for an old dude it was a huge culture shock. The "warm-up" sessions took on a whole new meaning and I seriously considered whether it was fair on the rest of the crew to try and drag the ancient bones back out for yet another race when it was clear that they were going to have the unpleasant task of removing the dead body at the end of the course - provided they hadn't chucked me overboard half way to save weight!

Nevertheless I did as I was told and got back in the boat time after time. There seemed to be a pattern forming - warm-up, find the boat, find the seat, find the paddle (preferably before finding the boat), paddle elegantly out to the start, switch brain off, Finish! Easy!

The "impromptu" battle that took place in the last race did challenge the "disengage brain" part. The amount of enthusiasm (and warmth) that was generated in that short race kept me going until the next regatta. Of course if our crew hadn't clearly won, it would have been a very different story. It was also encouraging to hear many of the seasoned veterans from the other boat desperately trying to claim some sort of moral victory on the grounds of having led for much of the race. That is just the impetus needed to keep you going through the tyre towing sessions and the "up and down the ladder" torture.

Despite the snow on the banks of the lake and the complete lack of coordination in the races, this was an immensely enjoyable day and left me keen to see what "real" competition was going to be like. ~ Ric



*Nationals has always been the most important race of the season...until this season when we raced each other at the Super 12!*

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