

Takapuna Super 12

Proof that Dragon Boats float.

The three most important facts about the first Super 12 Regatta of 2007 at Takapuna beach one fateful, bright sunny mid-summer's Auckland day were, the water was amazingly warm, dragon boats float, and that racing across the face of tsunami-sized chop creates the exhilaratingly bizarre and fantastically exciting variables that dragon boats can float with or with out people, on top of or underneath the water.



These actions and consequences were brought to our attention very early in the regatta when, after a few drops of do da Coruba rum, kindly donated by our manager and safety officer Allan Halse, we marched down to the beach for the first race of the day. After selecting the finest boat in the fleet, the wily cunning of our Master Helmsman and sweep Ross 'asleep on the sweep' Wightman saw us out past the increasingly intimidating swell and off to the start line.

This turned out to be a bit premature to the start of the first race.

Instead of the usual jostling backwards and forwards as the boats line up anticipating the starter's order "paddles ready!", we were able to take a much more relaxed approach to the starting protocol, although our attention was often grabbed somewhat unceremoniously by a passing swell leering at us and being very intimidating.

For the next 30 years we sat there like a roller coaster doesn't, enduring the barrage of swells that were now all intent on proving which of them could be the most intimidating, watching and waiting for the other crews to swim their boats back into the shore, bail all the water out, hop back in and repeat this procedure all over again.

We were joined momentarily by our arch enemy ARC (Auckland Regional Council) and some other crew (who after seeing Canpac once again decide that they hadn't yet perfected their 'Swim A Dragon-boat Into Shore Method' (or SADISM), in turn decided that since the water was so warm, now would be a good time to practice theirs) but in the end, as we watched ARC who had obviously had enough of the intimidating leering that was now becoming ridiculous, paddle back into shore, we decided if this is going to be a one horse race then strap on a saddle and call us Sun Liner, we were going to be that horse!

Unfortunately the officials didn't agree with our logic and in their stupefying wisdom decided that the race should be re-run. Apparently there is some race clause stating we were not allowed to use a performance enhancing saddle when paddling a horse?!?



However, our performance in the first race set the precedent for the whole day, where, if you were the last boat floating you won. Very few races were decided by who crossed the line first. It was more a case of who crossed the line at all, or got closest to it, swam their boat in the fastest, or bailed their boat with the least amount of buckets (of which there weren't any so they allowed us to use saddles instead).

As the day swam by, and it became obvious that we were going to win, it was decided at a very high level, that since we weren't very practiced at SADISM we should enlist the services of BRETT MOORE, a well known local disaster area, to initiate a Critical Rollover Action Procedure (or CRAP). Unfortunately the idiot stuffed it up and performed a Salty Hydro Intake Technique (or SHIT) and we ended up winning the race before we were able to practice SADISM, much to everyone's displeasure. This pivotal blunder on BRETT MOORE'S behalf almost cost the life of one of our best paddlers Jenny Davis who suddenly realised that swimming was not an automatic bodily function, but that heart palpitations can be.



All in all, a fantastic day was had by all. We won every prize and were admired by the masses that came to awe at us. Allan Halse slept well in the knowledge that he had once again staved off a Scurvy epidemic with his enforced shots of Coruba Rum Vaccination before every race. The water was amazingly warm, dragon boats float, and exhilaratingly bizarre and fantastically exciting variables can often be the best part of a day.

El sid, Tama Pereto Bristowe

"If you don't paddle that dragon boat you'll regret it. Maybe not today or tomorrow but someday and then for the rest of your life." Rick

"Of all the Dragon boats in all the world you had to paddle in this one, this race of all races...." Rick