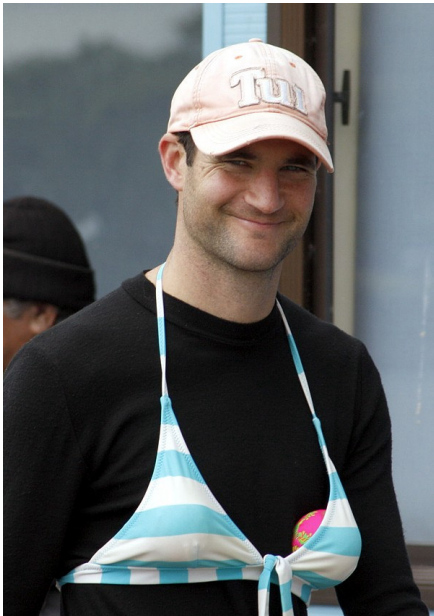


As the day dawned ~~sunny and warm~~ cold and miserable those of us not sunning ourselves in Raro trooped down to the Hamilton Lake for the first regatta of the season – the Hamilton Super 12.

Decked out in true EW style we brought the sun to the lake, as it obviously had no intentions of coming to us! In particular, Mark wowed us all with his sartorial style (i.e., water bombs in bikini top!) Nice.

Our chosen theme was 'Rarotonga' in commemoration of all those brave dragon-boating souls who had been overwhelmed by pirates from the talent-scouting ship 'Waka-Ama' and taken (against their will of course) to a remote pacific island to do 'hard labour' in little boats.

Tron 12s : Results
 Wins in heats 1-3
 2nd Semi Final
3rd Fire Dragons Grand Final



Yeah... I know my hacky sack is showing

Accommodation for those of us still marooned on NZ shores was nothing more than a large piece of material, some plastic poles, and bits of string that would have provided scant protection from the weather. However, Christine (Queen of 2 sarongs) saved us from likely hypothermia with the addition of tent pegs, and our tropical shelter was erected securely on the lee-side of the Yot Club.

As usual, our crew spent much of the racing day conserving energy and just-sitting-around-looking-gorgeous. Newspapers were read and competing teams were made to feel totally out of place through their uniform disregard for the fashion requirements of the occasion. As noted previously, Ms Hamer was a knockout.

Between these delightful periods of social harmony and opposing team-envy, EW battled for supremacy on the water. Heats were fought, and...

Having won all three of our heats we were placed in one of the top two semi-finals, up against the Sky Dragons whom we had narrowly beaten in round 2. They'd obviously had a bit of a team talk during the intervening time and slid home to victory, passing us at the finish line.

The heat was on for the finals, and we were placed alongside the other top teams – Lion Nathan (old adversaries of EW from way back), the White Tigers (a development team for one of the best open teams in the country) and, of course, Sky Dragons.

With positive words from Paulie, we knew we could do it if we kept our start strong and maintained our pace all the way down the course. The start was good, the boat felt good with everyone giving 110%. The suspense for the result was hard to bear and we had to wait until the prize-giving to hear the official result. Lion Nathan had won, followed closely by the White Dragons and us. The photos show just how close it was – White Tigers taking second by a hair, with us in third, leaving Sky Dragons to claim fourth place."

Special mention on the day must go to Supreme Coach Jim-Bob who kept up a continual commentary, mostly talking about the events as they were going down and very little about the weather.



Further commendation goes to eagle-eyed Willie, who correctly judged EW 3rd in the photo-finish final, and didn't at all mind Dr T resting the camera on his head.



The Raro-non-Raro Super 12 team



[Back] Steve (plus 1, AKA Zoe) Schwartz, Karyn Hopkins, Sarah 'Sez' McKay, Ed Prince, Joanne 'Jo Jo' Cootes, Will Gauntlet, Brian Richmond, Jackie Sandford, Catherine 'Cat' Robinson.
[Front] Christine Cahalane, Mark Hamer, Paul Smith, Les Riddle, Mike Ballard



"Everybody paddles : EW holds out SKY to take third in the grand final."



...and what did the team think of the Tron 12s?

Difficult to recall due to being very far away and not there (DB).

I don't recall I think I was in Rarotonga..... (SO).

Easy (BAT).

A long time ago...in Hamilton, involved 12 paddlers and were super!! (EP).

Close and easy to get to (MH).

Great that i heard (VC).

A long way from Rarotonga (MM).

Were not well-wardrobed by the other guys (DH).

A fun way to kick start the season. Our 'beach wear' theme brightened the day and made a few heads turn (thanks Hamer) (JC)



Super 12 – Dream team.

		
<p>Sarah Inglis as 'Ironman: he would make us paddle fast and hard'</p>	<p>Mark Hammer as 'Hammertime and the Sweedish Volleyball team'</p>	<p>Ed Prince as 'The Blonde twins'</p>
		
<p>Dan Butler as The 'Terminator'</p>	<p>Muzza Mulholland as 'Batman'</p>	<p>Virginia Comer as 'The Waterboy: (loves the water) and captain insano qualities can come through.'</p>
		
<p>Jenny Davis as 'Aquaman: The Man from Atlantis - he could be our secret weapon'</p>	<p>Bron Ata-Tauai as 'Me (of the Bizarro universe)'</p>	<p>Ric Grocott as 'Everyone in the team this year'</p>
	<p>... and the seasons best 'off the water' moments [Drumroll] were:</p> <p>Drinking Pinacolada's from a coconut (DB) First beer in Trader Jacks after the Raro 12k race (MM) Wellington after party (SO) Receiving medals when we thought we were just getting paper (BAT) Has it happened yet?? (EP) Wellingtons drunken night at Chicago bar and where ever else we went after that!!!! (MH) Lake Hood in 28 degrees the day before the Nationals - Ah... This is going to be great! (RG) What can i say, we have the most awesome team spirit so every moment is such a blast and ... I can't tell what happened to Bron in Wellington! (JC)</p>	
<p>Jo Jo Cootes as 'U.S.'</p>		