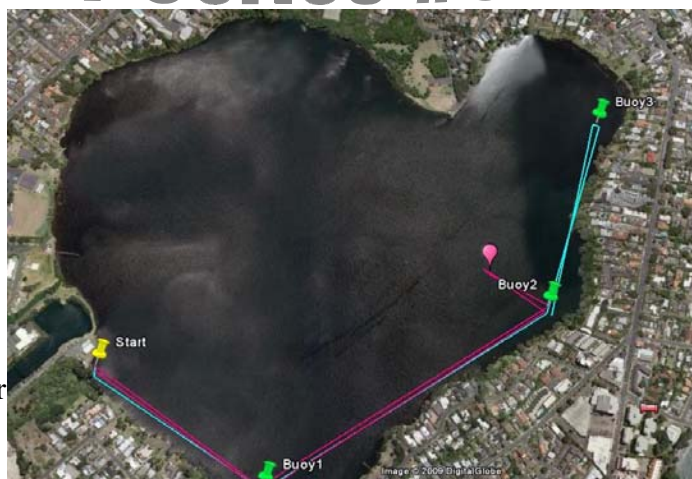


BUOY 2 BUOY

Intermediate W1 Series #3

Weather was offering periodic showers early in the morning but the sun was often squeezing through dense clouds. To spectators Lake Pupuke was a tranquil ice pond but having just finished training knew what was in store on the otherside of the lake. Rather than our usual Red Buoy Course chose a new course (boys blue, girls pink) allowing a bit of protection from the surrounding landscape or so I thought.

First race of the day began with the boys and our three female Kuki Bunnies (aka Cookies) Deidre Hill, Storme Pare and Lyndiana Rosieur having a 1.30min handicap to their male competitors.



Wiremu Mackey of Tamaki charged off into the lead followed closely by Daryon Strickland, both only knowing all too well they would soon be confronted by their merging female foe. At the first buoy 500m into the race, paddlers were welcomed by a south westerly, increasing with force every stroke into the journey giving the paddlers an overly speedy sail down the eastern side of the lake to buoy 2, by this time Deidre Hill was comfortably in the lead.

The most challenging part of the race was now to be encountered, the return trip from buoy 2 to buoy 3, maybe a total of 500metres. Here we can see Willie keeping a watchful eye on Te

Paerangi boys Scotland Mokoau & Tule Tagitule as they turned buoy 3, the strong wind setting a cadence of, two strokes forward and one stroke backward, nevertheless all three survived to tell the tale. Yes I did say three, 5 minutes after this shot Willie was introducing himself to the neighbouring treeline you can see in the background.



A valiant effort for Storme Pare racing rudderless executing buoy 3 safely and journeying back home to calmer waters to finish in second place overall (29.01min), only to be beaten by an 'Extreme', a rudder and fellow team mate Deidre Hill (27.11min), seen below.

Third home was the last of the Kuki girls Lyndiana Rosieur (30.51min) and when asked what makes these girls so good, reply given was, 'it's all about the food'. If it goes by the spread we had following presentations the secret diet is, chop suey, donuts, banana cake and heaps of coconut cream. The mana of the gods that breeds champions!!



First boy home once again was Wiremu Mackey of Tamaki (31.55min) pictured here in action, followed by Daryon Strickland (35.35min), and third and fourth places battled by Waitakere paddlers Metua Ewart (37.29min) and Turuki Dunn (37.42min). Next home were our W2 men Scotland & Tule, Mason Matthews and Wetere Taka Brown, everyone weather forlon, tired and just glad to be home.



Race 2 Girls Division

Having experienced the first race and knowing 40-50kg females would be racing, not to tempt fate, we decided to shorten the girls race and eliminate the ravid winds from buoy 2 to buoy 3, all-knowing there would still be a challenge in the return paddle from buoy 2 to buoy 1 with the head wind the girls would face.



Let the race begin, charging from the start was Kuki's Rautea Mitchell oblivious that fellow Club mate Kendra Leilua was tangled around a buoy rope. Moments later Makaira Berry makes her move and seizes control of the lead.

Tshei Karauna missed the first race so like the other girls in that heat she too had a 1.30min delay behind the rest of the field. Not knowing what was in store for them the girls cruised round buoy 1, once again unfavourable strong winds greeted them pushing them down to buoy 2.

The newer course now directed the girls to turn a red buoy 50metres inward, what may not seem far, meant paddlers were more vulnerable and exposed to the head wind. W2 pair Sam & Lauren's shared strength enabled them to execute the turn and maintain a narrow lead over the pack, until Tshei's fearless determination saw her reel in the duo on their journey back to buoy 1.



Unsuspecting to the race leaders a little battle was taking place on the red buoy turn between Kendra Leilua and Sally Motu, sending both girls towards Sylvan park 90 degrees in the opposite direction, allowing Siale



Lagotule and Ashley Pile to pass.

Final honours went to the tenacious effort of Tshei Karauna seen here, finishing the course in 21.23 mins, followed behind were her Club mates W2 pair Sam and Lauren (23.30mins).

Second W1 home was Makaira Berry of Waitakere (24.42mins), one minute behind Rautea



Mitchell paddled in at a time of 25.42mins.

Kendra and Siale battled out for 4th and 5th position with only 4 seconds separating them both.

Ashley Pile and Sally Motu concluded the day reinforcing that 'girls can do anything'.

Thank you to all the land helpers and the galliant supporters that escorted the paddlers around the race course offering encouragement and giving advise when assistance was needed.

Once again a shared feast was had by all.

Looking at the photo of Siale below in the start/finish area, this could pass for a scenic postcard. Don't be fooled as one would never have thought that danger was only around the corner.



To view all photos follow link:

<http://www.bebo.com/PhotoAlbum.jsp?PhotoAlbumId=11027907027>