

THE FLANNAGAN CUP.

1916 - 2016



THE LAST TEN YEARS.

2009 Wetsuits get green light for Cup

Wearing a wetsuit will no longer prevent a competitor from winning Taranaki's big open water swimming event, the Flannagan Cup.

The 2009 Flannagan Cup, for which entries are now open, is being held at New Plymouth's Ngamotu Beach on Waitangi Day, Friday, February 6.

Swimmers in wetsuits have been able to compete in the 3.6km race in the past, but have been barred from winning the Flannagan Cup. They have been eligible to win other trophies.

"Allowing a wetsuit-clad swimmer to win the cup has brought the event into line with other open water swimming races in New Zealand," said Flannagan Cup convener Ross Doyle, of New Plymouth.

The race would remain a handicap event.

Olympian Shane Reed, formerly of New Plymouth and now of Woodbourne, will compete in the race as a celebrity.

2010.

TOUGH RACE: Craig Dent takes a breather after winning the 2010 Flannagan Cup.



2011 First across line 'gutted' to be disqualified.

Open water swimming rookie blitzed the field in the annual Flannagan Cup swim at New Plymouth's Ngamotu Beach .

But the celebrations were shortlived.

The 53-year-old was stripped of the title after a protest, with second placegetter Adam Fraser, of New Plymouth, promoted to first in the 3.6km harbour swim.

"There was no way he should have swum that sort of time and he's been disqualified," said race convener and last year's winner Craig Dent, of New Plymouth.

"His handicap time was way off the mark. He started first off 'go', whereas he should have been off 20 to 25 minutes. His handicap simply didn't correspond with the time he actually swam."

The first out of the water swimmers time was a tick over one hour, five minutes, more than 10min ahead of Fraser.

Dent said swimmers gave a time for 400m when they entered and the handicaps were worked out from that.

"His time was 9min 50sec for 400m. He swam a 1hr 5min race which equates to a 5min 30sec to 6mins. He's saying he's only been swimming for a couple of months, but there's no way his time can improve that much in the two weeks since entries were received."

Dent said four official complaints had been lodged after the race.

"The protest committee had to look into the matter and they did."

Fraser was shocked to hear he had been promoted.

"I had wisdom teeth out four days ago and have been in bed since," he said. "It's a bit of a shock to win this, very unexpected."

2012

Nagle stunned to win big swim



"I can't believe it ... it's a lovely surprise. This is my first open water race. I only bought my wetsuit before Christmas and tried it out on New Year's Day. I've been out in it two or three times since."

Nagle, one of two swimmers to start off the front mark – go – for the 3.6km race, said her lack of open water swimming experience had her zig-zagging over the course to the first two buoys.

"I was everywhere. That first lap was a long one. I didn't know where anyone was and I just kept going. I train in the pool and only had a couple of swims in the ocean in preparation for this."

Nagle said she naively thought the paddleboarder beside her for the final lap was there for safety reasons. "I thought the guy was just looking after me because I was a scratch swimmer. I never thought I was leading, it never dawned on me. All I know, I was out there a long time, about an hour and a half."

For the record, Nagle took one hour 25 minutes 41 seconds, with Arnold in the water for 1hr 26min 4sec.

The 33-year-old New Plymouth project manager, who has ambitions of tackling a half-ironman race, is two thirds of her way to achieving another goal – completing three long distance events over the summer.

2013 Allum won't be caught in Flannagan wake



New Plymouth's Keith Allum has the jump on most in the Flannagan Cup open water swim.

And rightly so. As the oldest competitor in the 3.6km swim, the 73-year-old will start near the front of the 67-strong field at New Plymouth's Ngamotu Beach this morning.

"I just plod along near the front. My standard 2.5km per hour ... totally predictable," Allum said yesterday.

"I swim four or five times a week. When it warms up, I'm at Ngamotu Beach, otherwise I'm at the pool. Ngamotu Beach is a great asset. It's the only safe beach for miles around."

Allum said his swim sessions were usually an hour - that's how he knows his time.

"Fifty lengths is 2.5km, 60 lengths is 3km. An hour's swim is 2.5km."

Allum has competed in the Flannagan Cup for at least 10 years.

"I used to do marathons - I did 34 of them - but basically gave that up.

"Swimming is great for all ages, it's easier on the body. The young ones have an advantage with muscle to weight ratio. As you get older, it gets harder, no doubt about that."

Allum also competes in the national open water swim series.

"I did the Auckland Harbour crossing before Christmas and two weeks ago I did the Wellington open swim. I really enjoy the ocean swim series, they're excellent."

2013 Girl power rules



For the second year in a row but just the third time in 97 years, a woman has won the Flannagan Cup open water swim.

New Plymouth's Alice Doig followed the lead of last year's winner Dee Nagle when taking line honours in the gruelling 3.6km handicap swim.

Swimming Taranaki operations manager and event co-ordinator Julie Owen believes only three women have won the cup in its long history.

Choppy seas and a stiff south- easterly wind blowing off New Plymouth's Ngamotu Beach tested competitors.

Doig, 29, made the most of her scratch handicap and reached the finish line first in one hour, six minutes, 33 seconds - 15min ahead of the next swimmer, John Kahu, of Manaia, who also started off the front mark. Third was Idelle Hiestand (1hr 27min 43.89sec) starting 31min behind.

The fastest time of 40min 41sec was recorded by Jay Cadman- Kennedy, of New Plymouth, who started off the biggest handicap of 48min.

"Pretty enjoyable," was how an out-of-breath Doig described the previous 66 minutes.

2014 Hardie Boys claims Flannagan Cup at first go 📄



John Hardie Boys showed his sons how it's done when winning the Flannagan Cup open water swimming race off Port Taranaki yesterday.

The 54-year-old New Plymouth doctor was competing in the annual 3.6km ocean swim run under handicap conditions for the first time.

Hardie Boys clearly sneaked under the handicappers' radar, blitzing his rivals in the Boyd Nodder Carriers-sponsored event.

Starting 13 minutes behind the front markers, Hardie Boys reached the finish line in 1hr 16.14sec. Chasing him home, nine minutes behind in second place, was New Plymouth's Steve Malley (1hr 07min 39.57sec) with Jacob McGrath (1hr 11min 52.15sec) third.

Fastest time and winner of the Taranaki Swimming Centre Cup was backmarker Jay Cadman-Kennedy who clocked an impressive 41min 10.49sec after starting 46 minutes behind.

Watching from the shore were Hardie Boys' family and friends. Among them were his two sons, who tomorrow will team up with their father in the Wells Half Ironman in New Plymouth.

Issac will be doing the swim leg, and oldest son Max, a keen triathlete, the running, while their father will this time crank the pedals on his bike in the team event.

"I swam the 1.2km open a couple of years ago, but this is the first time.

"I've done the big one and it's only the second time I've swum in a wet suit, so I'm pretty new to it", Hardie Boys Sr said after yesterday's success.

The choppy conditions made the going tough for many competitors, the one saving grace being the pleasant water temperature.

2015. Rogers rules final handicap swim of Flannagan Cup.

Brett Rogers from New Plymouth will go down in Flannagan Cup history as the last winner of the time – honoured open Water swimming race in its current form.

Even though two swimmers crossed the line ahead of him, Brett Took the major honours in the 3.6 km race, finishing in a time of 1hr 27 min 23.16 sec.

Next year the race, first run in 1916, will be a mass start event. Yesterday`s race was an example of how complex the current Competition rules can be under the handicapping process and additional rules around policing them.

The first male over the line in 2015 was John Action and the first female was Kerry Vosseler, but both were denied race honours because they were late entries. They still smiled like winners but the rules clearly state that they could not claim any prizes.



VICTOR: Brett Rogers steps out of the water before running to the finish line up the beach to win the 2015 Flannagan Cup.