



## 2010 NZCT Surf Life Saving Canterbury Championships New Brighton Beach 20-21 February

### *Surf Boats – Feb 13-14<sup>th</sup>. Whites Bay, Blenheim*

Whites Bay provided a beautiful setting for the 2010 Canterbury Surf Boat Championships. Calm sea's and warm temperatures gave fair conditions for racing.

Saturday's racing was over the 240m short course. The crews undertook three rounds with the accrued points deciding the winners. The open men's and women's provided the closest racing with the North Beach team triumphing narrowly in both.

On Sunday the 400m Long Course was to sort the men from the boys but in the case of the open men it was the boys sorting out the men with the under 23 New Brighton Gold team winning both the under 23 division and open men. North Beach open women again dominated their races winning all three rounds to take the title.

### **Saturday and Sunday 20-21 Feb**

After several years of disruptive conditions this years Canterbury Championships started with perfect conditions of a warm sunny day and a 1-2 foot wave. These conditions were short lived as the trusty New Brighton easterly arrived on schedule at 10am providing windy onshore choppy conditions for the rest of the day.

Sunday finally saw summer arrive in Christchurch providing brilliant conditions with a small offshore breeze keeping the surf clean for the majority of the day.

### ***IRB's***

With over 40 entries in the IRB arena it was going to be a packed day of racing. The U21 division with 15 entries proved very exciting with the crews sharing the glory over the four disciplines of tube, mass, assembly and single. The closeness of the competition is highlighted with the North Beach crew of Peter Taylor and Luke Edwards only needing two podium finishes to claim the most points after winning the Mass rescue and placing second in the Tube rescue events.

In the women's events it was the visitors from St Clair, Dunedin, with sisters Carla and Steph Laughton dominating the racing by winning all 4 events. Dunedin have been especially strong in women's IRB racing for the last two decades and this looks to be continuing. Sumner's crew of Rebecca Bailey and Sarah Williams were the next best crew with two seconds and two thirds.

The senior men's grade was also closely fought out but it was the veteran crew of James Gaskell and Stu Bryce that nudged ahead overall. Bryce the Surf Life Saving Canterbury district manager came out of retirement to team up with New Brighton club

president James Gaskell. Unfortunately Bryce suffered a severe ankle injury in the last event the single rescue where they still miraculously finished second.

In the premier division it was all class from Canterbury Open Surf Team members Simon Williams and Blair Quane who won all four races over second place Spencer Park (Damian McNaughton and Eddie Finch) and third place Taylors Mistake (James Craib and Rob Lambie)

The Teams event which involves 2 crews in a relay was won by St Kilda over Taylors Mistake and Sumner.

Sumner continued their run of top IRB club by taking the most overall points.

### ***Beach events***

In the beach arena, the star was again South Brighton's Chanel Hickman who defended her 2009 open women's beach sprint and flags titles. National beach sprint champion Ben Ryan comfortably won the open men's beach sprint. Canterbury Open Surf League coach Malcolm MacDonald proved that age is no barrier by showing his class taking out the open men's beach flags.

### ***Canoes***

There was drama in the open men's long course canoe with Taylors Mistake almost completing a major upset over the favourites and short course winners Waimairi. Taylors Mistake had the win in their hands after pulling down a great wave only to have an excited Jimmy Rattray dive off his feet at the finish line which is an instant disqualification. In the open women's canoe North Beach won the short course but were out paddled by the more youthful Waimairi crew in the long course.

### ***Swim***

The North Beach senior men Andrew Roberts and Steven Armstrong took out the open surf race and run swim run events respectively. Steph Laughton from St Clair who won the IRB open women's events proved that IRB crews can also swim by winning both the run swim run and surf race. In the surf teams race it was New Brighton Gold that claimed gold in the open men's and St Clair with the Laughton sisters again helping their team to win the open women's.

### ***Board***

The board races started the individual races on Saturday with Alex Fort jumping from the u19 age group into the open men's race and managed to out paddle Taylors Mistake's Ben Phillips to win open men's board race. In the open women's division it was Canterbury Surf Team member and Taylors Mistake coach Viv Bickley that proved she still had the pace to win the open women's board race.

### ***Ski***

The ski race titles are some of the most sort after at the Canterbury Championships with all important bragging rights heading into the March Nationals. In the open men's it was a class act by NZ Kayak team member Liam O'Loughlin from Taylors Mistake who cleared out a wave length ahead of veteran John Creighton (South Brighton). But it was Creighton who claimed another notch to his belt when he teamed up with Ben Keys in the double ski and paddled to victory in a very strong field. In the open ski relay it was National Champions Taylors Mistake that took an early lead until Ben Phillips was smashed by a wave in spectacular fashion with the wave spitting his ski high into the air. This allowed South Brighton to take the lead and win the open men's ski relay.

In the open women's ski race it was again the "Jill of all trades" Carla Laughton from St Clair that beat rival Megan Brooker from Taylors Mistake. In the open women's double ski it was the u19 pairing of Kate Johnston and Ria Pollock that paddled to victory.

### *Ironman and Taplins*

The day culminated with the Ironman and Taplin Relays. It was neck and neck between Taylors Mistake club mates Ben Phillips and Peter Rattray through the initial board leg of the open men's Ironman. It wasn't until Phillips managed to pull down a wave in the swim leg that created a break away. Phillips managed to hold the lead in the final ski leg to have a wave length lead to the finish. In the open women's Ironman Steph Laughton from St Clair showed her all round skills match her sister Carla's by beating team mate Nicole Walker.

The final event of the day was the coveted Open Mens Taplin Relay – an event that shows a club's depth and strength with six competitors in each team. With Taylors taking out many of the men's events, they were the favourites but with a poor start they were in catch up mode as St Clair developed a very handy lead. It looked like St Clair had it in the bag in the final ski leg with a good 50m lead over Taylors Mistake, but then ski race champion Liam O'loughlin had other ideas and paddled the race of the weekend by pulling in the lead to finish on the same wave as St Clair's Joel Davies. O'loughlin had the front running over Davies to the first turning flag where their legs clashed. With O'loughlin stumbling Davies picked a good line to the finish for a thrilling St Clair victory and a great climax to a superb weekend of racing.

### *Overall*

The time-honoured Radio Avon Trophy for Top Competitor at the championships went to South Brighton's Sinead Lomax who beat Ben Phillips (TM) and Steven Drabble (SB). Sinead cleaned up all her events in the u19 women's division. The Jubilee Cup for Top Club went to South Brighton. They won easily from Taylors Mistake and New Brighton with New Brighton's Surf Boat points leaping them ahead of Waimairi. South Brighton's overall class of competitor saw them consistently place in all disciplines, collecting points for the overall club title.

### OVERALL TOP CLUB

Club	Individual	Teams	IRB	Boats	TOTAL
SOUTH BRIGHTON	90	145	5		240
TAYLORS MISTAKE	46	50	19		115
NEW BRIGHTON	26	50	16	23	115
WAIMAIRI	31	76			107
ST CLAIR	27	47	23		97
SUMNER	22	13	45		80
NORTH BEACH	10	11	8	23	52
BRIGHTON	12	29			41
RARANGI				38	38
ST KILDA			24		24
SPENCER PARK	3		13		16
WAIKUKU	8				8
RUAKAKA	6				6