

RACE REPORT:

Nov 24th 2010 – CABARITA CUP: The Killer (In Reverse)
100m Swim / .8k Run / 200m Swim / 1.6k Run / 300m Swim / 2.4k Run

By: Steve Nielsen

Race Summary

With the preliminaries out of the way, it was time to get down to business with the running of the Cabarita Cup for 2010. Even despite a few last minute scratchings, this year's rendition brought together a stellar field, with 43 Cannibals greeting the starter on what was (finally) a perfect spring night.

The event, (where each athlete receives a time based handicap), often favours inexperienced 'gallopers' on the way up. And that's exactly what transpired this year with rookie John Garbutt leading home Jeremy Browne and Anne Reidy. In fact 8 of the top 10 places were filled by those starting in Group 1. This is despite the fact that all participants were handicapped to come in around the hour mark.



However, as is often the case, it's these less seasoned athletes; who are improving at an exponential rate, combined with the added incentive of winning the event, really strive to another level. While many in the latter groups posted similar and/or slightly improved times to last week, many in group 1 were 3-4 minutes quicker. In a way then, the handicap finishing order then is slightly akin to the level of individual improvement. Even so, most performed at or slightly above expectations; finishing around or just below the hour mark. (Those finishing above this mark were either harshly treated by the handicapper or returning the fitness level after some time out).

The race itself went rather swimmingly – well until the final swim leg, where all groups hit the water together. The only word that could describe it was carnage. There were arms and legs everywhere. We used every lane we had and then some! This was always going to happen at some stage and we staggered the starts for this to occur then, rather than on the final run leg for fear of missing people as they crossed the finish line. Still everyone seemed to be considerate of one another in the water and it did somewhat simulate race day conditions.

Each wave was hotly contested, but the level of competition intensified with each group. A classic indication of this was the 'No Running' on the pool deck rule clearly stipulated by Brett at the briefing. The various interpretations of this rule were rather amusing. In the main, waves 1 and 2 appear to respect and abide by this, with many doing their best 'Jane Saville' impersonations. Waves 3 and 4 were a different story altogether. To some, 'No Running' appeared to mean that you couldn't put your spikes on and sprint like Usain Bolt. Anything around 4 min per km marked was deemed to be acceptable. There were too many culprits to individually mention, but dry trackers trying to make up ground out of the swim Greg, Neil and Dave Issa were all serial offenders. (Stewards have looked at the patrol film and thinking of imposing time penalties for safety reasons going forward!).

Fierce competition however was not restricted to just the final two waves. With athletes beginning to get to know each other, many friendly rivalries are starting to emerge. There was no better indication of this than Fiona D and Anne A (who were actually racing in different groups mind you!). These guys battled it out all the way up the straight with either prepared to give an inch (reminded me of Bonecrusher and Our Waverly Star in the epic 1985 Cox Plate!).

The Waves

Wave 1:

12 starters lined in Wave 1. They were joined by newcomer Natalie, who took up the chance to have a swim whilst recuperating from a knee injury. First out of the water, was Matthew just in front of new dad Jeremy. Both were up in the weights, and knew they needed to establish a good lead on some of their better weighted compatriots still slugging it out in the pool. That they did, with Matthew leading for well into race and finishing 2nd in his group and 5th on overall handicap. Not far behind him and the overall runners up (Jeremy and Anne), was one of the pre-race favourites Gaye. With some glorious 'seal role' exits from the pool, she didn't let her 'backers' down to finish just outside the placings on adjusted results. Also in this group were Moira (who took 2½ minutes off her time from the week before) and birthday girl La La (known for her endurance at after parties) who ended up finishing 8th overall. John stayed in touch throughout and would go on to make light of his handicap and storm to victory. The group also featured Letizia, who made a name for herself courtesy of her pink shoe laces and taking in more water than the Titanic! 'Top weight' Cath, was unable to justify the lofty task set by the handicapper, but still ran a respectable 4th in her group – obviously disadvantaged by having to borrow and race in Sarah's shoes.

Wave 2:

This group also featured 12 starters. Leading then home (on net times) were 3 gallopers on the rise: Andrew Boros, Henry and Fiona C (who seemed to have finally gotten over her frumpiness in relation to the Dawny Swim). The first home in handicap honours were Michelle G, Bronwyn and Andrew – all of which had all made significant improvement from last week. (If they were race horses they would be swabbed).

Also in the group was CTC Glamourpuss Kylie (2nd from left in the adjacent picture), who despite distinguishing herself by one of the slowest transitions ever seen, still finished 14th overall on handicap. The group also contained Craig Layton, just back from his honeymoon. Interestingly, he played down his chances pre-race by saying "he hadn't done much" during his stay on the Cook Islands. I take that to mean much running or swimming Craig? The fact that you didn't run up to your pre-race handicap (coming in a conspicuous "stone motherless" last on adjusted results); I think deems your pre-race comments to be correct. Your new wife should be proud!



Wave 3:

As usual, close racing was the order of the day, with less than 3 minutes separating all competitors on net times at the finish. First home, and with the benefit of an improved swim was Neil. Not far behind him was Michele who (was the first female home), managing to hold off her close rival Vlad (whose shoes were lighting up the road and just about everything else around him) by a mere 1 second. With a 'pull in the weights', Helen (2nd female overall), finished highest on handicaps in front of Andrew Webber (who was on song yes, bad joke I know) and Neil. Not far back was Daniel, who was returning after a short injury break and will be better for the run.

Wave 4:

With such a short 1st swim leg, it wasn't long before the big guns (all dressed in black) the water. The group featured top weight Scott, who took time off work to race in the Cup. That decision was vindicated when his staying prowess allowed him to shake off his rivals late in the race. Despite being in training for the Canberra Half, it was a top effort all the same. He became the 6th overall Line Honours winner, in 6 weeks. Finishing not long after was Michael O'Dwyer (who look likes he could be the 7th winner very soon). Last week's winner Mark Huber raced well to finish on the podium ahead of Tim. With just over a minute's improvement on last week, James sailed to victory ahead of Scott and Michael in relation to handicap honours.

The Awards / Thank You's

Congratulations to all winners listed below. Special thanks too Sarah, who with Jason's able assistance, who did a magnificent job in crunching what is a very convoluted, set a numbers to determine handicap place order in such a short period of time. (Not to mention those yummy cupcakes). Thanks also to Cath and Jim for arranging some fantastic prizes and Brett and Noi Due for those fantastic pizza's that went down a treat at the post race celebrations and presentations.

- Handicap Winner John Garbutt
- Handicap Runner Up Jeremy Browne
- Handicap 2nd Runner Up Anne Reidy
- Line Honours Female Michele Pezzutti
- Line Honours Male Scott Aliprandi
- Best Pool Exit Gaye Mancuso
- Fashions on the Deck Vlad Tohadze
- Pool Sculling Letizia De Marco
- Fastest Runner (on pool deck) David Issa
- Best Sprint Finish Fiona Day / Anne Reidy

