

PIHA CONQUERS ALL!

To Quote the headlines in the French Newspapers the day after the European Open Men's Championship final the above says it all, The Crew after training extensively for 5 months over winter in NZ enjoyed the best that the French Atlantic coast could throw at them during the weekends Surf boat Carnival.

The crews came from Spain, Portugal, England, Holland, Australia, France and of course NZ. There was an enormous media presence as the French Coxless 4 (Bronze medal at Beijing) were rowing for France, Also 4 other Olympians were present (3 from England & 1 from NZ) Also Surprisingly Piha's reputation of their Big Wave antics via "Youtube" made sure that we were all well known & respected !

Heat racing was interesting with a vicious shore break making great filming for the Huge media presence, Only 3 crews remained unbeaten at the end of the heat racing, Mount Maunganui, Cornwall England & Piha NZ, only the first 2 crews qualified from the Quarter finals, All 3 unbeaten crews drew the same Semi final making this race hotly contested, Both Kiwi Crews qualified for the Final with a 1st & 2nd Finish.

The 4 crews to make the final were the French Coxless 4, Twickernim from England, The Mount & of Course Piha from NZ, By the time the final had arrived the incoming tide had lifted the wave height to close to 2 meters, Both Piha and the Mount crew got a hot start off the beach being drawn side by side, A large set coming through belted both crews with consecutive large waves, Piha survived & unfortunately the Mount crew didn't, Piha rowed and turned first at the Buoy line. The Piha boys fought off a hard charging French Olympic crew who although very quick weren't as happy in the Big Surf as the Piha boys and they finished 4 boat lengths in front as both other returning crews ended up sideways in the large surf. The top of the Podium was Piha's once again.



Photo left to right, James Dallinger (NZ Olympian) Brad Myton (Oxford Uni) Hayden Smith, Craig Knox, Matt Kirke , Mark Bourneville, Bruce O'Brien.

The media presence was very large and a 4 part Sports production is being produced for the two largest European sports channels, Eurosport & Sky Sports 2, these channels have a TV audience of 400 Million viewers. This should be screening in the first or second week of October. Piha had been selected also as one of 6 crews who had been handed a handy cam to record their preparation along the way. So with being the title holders we can expect some great Airtime for the Piha boys.

Race Photos Below :



Crew Punching out through the shore break



Climbing over the top of Another one



Crew rowing into the break zone back from the Buoy lines



The Boys getting Oars Aft for the ride back to the beach

The Club & Crew would like to pass on their sincerest regards to all our sponsors that have supported us over the last few years, Without the support from these People the Club and Piha Boat Crews would not have been able to achieve some of the Objectives they have. We look forward to your continued support for the coming season.

Regards , HORSE

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