

Freedom Day Swim 2016

I would like to thank everyone for all of the support for this year's Freedom Day swim. The total amount of money raised so far is R15,000. This money will go to one of the NSRI's campaigns called Water Wise. The Water Wise project teaches children to be safe and careful around water.

Two weeks before the swim I picked up a flu/gastro bug and spent 4/5 days in bed and not eating and due to this unfortunately had to miss Level 3, which was very disappointing. I lost most of my fitness which was not ideal. The week leading up to the swim I swam every day just for an hour. On Thursday there was race briefing at the Big Bay lifesaving club house which was great as I was able to meet and chat to friends/competitors. The race organizers provided us a lot of interesting and relative information about the swim. This year there was a total of 180 swimmers that took part in the swim, including relay swimmers.



On the morning of the swim we had to be at the clock tower in the Waterfront by 7 o'clock for registration. The weather was really gloomy and looked as if it was going to rain. There was a slight delay as the ferry was late, which was a bit frustrating as the race organisers were hoping to try and start 30mins earlier. The trip to the island was not pleasant as there was a big swell which came from all

directions and there were a few people that "fed the fish". On the way into the harbour we passed all of the support boats which were waiting for us.

On the island we changed and got ready to get going. There were two groups, solo Speedo swimmers and solo wetsuit as well as relay swimmers. I was in the second group with my wetsuit. We watched the Speedo swimmers set off the jetty inside the harbour and then it was our turn. We then had a further short delay as we had to wait for two ferries to dock in the harbour. Ram counted down the start and we were off. The water temperature was a "warm" 14 degrees C. It was overcast with a few patches of sunlight which were



most welcome. This year the swim was very eventful as there were a huge number of jellyfish. There was also the odd piece of seaweed which I swam into which gave me a huge fright! I found the last part was the toughest as I was really really tired, coming into Big Bay was tricky as there were some huge swells that we had to get past and a wave even knocked my goggles off of my face, luckily I was able to grab them just in time. The best part was walking the last part, on the beach where my friends and family were waiting to congratulate me.



I would like to thank everyone for all the amazing support and all the encouragement. I would also like to give a special thanks to everyone that went out of their way to meet me on the beach. Another thanks must go to Neville, Liam Hyde and my Dad who risked life and limb out on the boat seconding me! A final word of thanks to Derick, Ram and the organising committee for all their efforts in organising the event.