



Mercantile Rowing Club takes out The Great Race in Yarra Torrent.

The Yarra was today alive with rowers slogging it out against a heavy rain charged 8.6km course travelling from the city to Hawthorn Rowing Club. While 1737 competitors lined up to start, 1035 competitors in the early race categories had their events cancelled due to the torrential downpour that created turbulent conditions and danger from debris and the raging storm waters.

Following the delayed race start the 78 Crews in more highly experience categories, who were scheduled to start later in the program, were able to take advantage of the change in the weather to provide a wonderful spectacle in the challenging conditions.

Mercantile Rowing Club stroked by Joshua Dunkley-Smith won the Open Men's Section. Starting third on the grid, they rowed through the fancied Sydney & Melbourne University Boat club crews. Despite the heavy stream they completed the course in very quick time of 28:20.84 min a full 27 seconds ahead of 2010 winner and keen rival The University of Melbourne (28 min 47.88 sec) stroked by Tom Hookway and Sydney University Boat Club crew stroked by Fergus Pragnell captain of the Australian Men's Eight (29 min 11.50 sec) in third place.

In the Women's Open Section Mercantile Rowing Club stroked by Canty (33min. 12.09 sec) proved way too strong for the Stephan's stroked University of Melbourne Crew – (34min 32.02 sec) in second place followed by the WA composite Crew stroked by Bignall (36 min 04.84 sec) in third place.

A strong field of interest with interstate and international challenges from New Zealand (2 crews), Queensland (37 crews) and a crew from Partez rowing club in Japan all lined up to start, but sadly less than half of the field of competitors got the opportunity to check out their ability and times against the more senior and elite rowers who were able to take to the course later in the day.

The Annual Yarra River tradition was able to continue despite the weather and disappointing cancellation of the events in the early part of the program.

Ends.....

Full Results are available at:

<http://www.headoftheyarra.com/raceresults.php>

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