

# 10th Annual Biathlon

By Gerry DeBenedetti

The 10th annual Waikiki Swim Club-Mid-Pacific Road Runners Club run-swim Biathlon was held on February 21 at Ala Moana Park. The run was 2.7 miles around the park and Magic Island, and the swim was 800 meters, the length of the beach. There were 602 entries and 545 finishers, with a winning time of 25:56. Previous course record was 26:23. OCC's Jimmy Dean came in third overall in 26:59.

Even though this is an event combining running and swimming, there were, unfortunately, many runners who did not have the swimming ability. They were observed "wading" in neck-deep water close to the shoreline, proceeding on foot toward the finish line, whereupon they entered the deeper water to go around the turn flag, and come over the finish line. Needless to say, to enter a swimming event and use your feet on the ocean floor is the equivalent of a runner "cutting across the park" instead of going around it. One has to wonder if these "swimmer-waders" really ran the entire course or if they also cut across the park. And if they did both, why did they bother to enter? There are plenty of fun runs where you don't need to swim, and plenty of swimming events where you don't have to run, and we all know that cheaters never win.

Unfortunately, those who chose to run the entire course, and swim the entire course, see themselves finishing way down the list of entrants, knowing that at least 24 of those people did not really swim, and perhaps as many, or more, did not really run.

This has been pointed out in the form of a protest to both the Parks and Recreation Department of the City and County as well as to the Waikiki Swim Club's chairperson of the event. Unfortunately, this Biathlon is listed as a "fun event" and course monitors are difficult to come by; reactions were the usual—about how those who finished the event by both swimming and running have the satisfaction of knowing they did it, etc. That satisfaction is there, true, but it is definitely diminished by "watching" someone walk

through a swim, while the salt water is burning your eyes and you've swallowed another mouthful. It must be similar to the same satisfaction you get while driving the speed limit, watching someone cross a double line, change lanes, speed ahead and drive out of sight, and you wonder where the cops are!

Protests aside, we did have some OCC swimmers and workers there and not a single one was observed misbehaving. They ran, swam, worked with integrity in the Outrigger tradition! In addition to Jimmy Dean, others placing were Joe Teipel, 8th in the 20-29 age group; Ian Emberson, 3rd in the 30-39 age group; Leighton Taylor, 2nd, Billy Al Bengston, 3rd and Tom Merrill, 6th in the 40-49 age group; Eve Anderson, 7th in the women's 40-49

age group. Other Club entrants were Diane Guild, Susan Rose, Gerry DeBenedetti, Grant Senner and Robbie Taylor.

"Juicemen" Jim Anderson and Matt Anderson were mixing juice at 7 a.m., Richard Sylva was registering and Gerri Pedesky was catching cast-off shoes, shirts, socks, and holding assorted towels, watches, etc. at the beach. Everybody needs a manager!

The following words are taken from the entry form for the event: "... this run-swim combines two sports that provide a unique and challenging competition. Participation is encouraged to bring together members of both the running and swimming communities for this annual fun event..." And we will add: "If you can run and swim both, please enter. If not, don't."

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When at the Outrigger...



just say  Natural  !

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