

ROWING – Cape Coastal Rowing Club

On Freedom Day, Cape Coastal Rowing Club turned out in record numbers for the Freedom Paddle, a 27km jaunt for paddlers, rowers, SUPs around Robben Island, now in its 9th year. We fielded three quads and two singles in the long course, as well as two doubles and a Lawhill quad in the short course. It was also wonderful to see the new Hout Bay Rowing Club out in force, with a quad, doubles and singles adding to the spirit of the day. The conditions were not kind: a big swell, challenging sea and a wind that gave rowers very little help. But Cape Coastal prevailed.

Our Swift quad of Pete, Harriet, Greg, Ivan and Jamie delivered an outstanding overall win, finishing in 3h15 in exceptionally tough conditions. Second place went to Dave, Jaco, Mandi, Tess and Kobus — another superb performance. Both CCRC Swift quads rowed away from strong university crews, who may have had rowing proficiency on their side, but perhaps less familiarity with an inhospitable sea.



The crew in Tata also weathered the conditions very well, finishing among the younger scullers and doubles. On the short course, Tommy and Liam won the 10km race — a brilliant result in equally testing water.

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Tata crew (above) of Ann-Marie, Seema, Trevor, Ant and Geordie

There were many firsts and standout moments. For the first time, CCRC women entered the single sculls race, with Sasha and Hayla spending more than five hours on the water — a display of some grit. Our two 85-year-olds, Derrick and Pete, showed just how inspiring masters rowing can be. And the Lawhill students, coxed at the last minute by Rob, held their nerve through two near-capsizes and a collision that was not their fault. Above all, the day captured what Cape Coastal rowing is about: fearless, generous, full of fun, and living and loving rowing to the full.

We will bring you more pics in the next issue!

