

**92nd Dublin City Liffey Swim
Ireland's Premier Open Water Swimming Race
Leinster Open Sea
Post Race Report**

Saturday 18th August



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Swimmers Swimming Past the Custom House

92nd Dublin City Liffey Swim

The 92nd Liffey Swim was successfully run this year on Saturday 18th August 2012. The Liffey Swim is the most prestigious swimming race in Ireland and attracts competitors both nationally and internationally. The Liffey Swim was first run in 1920 when it was devised by Bernard Fagan an engineer in Dublin Corporation to show the citizens the good quality of the water in the Liffey.

Leinster Open Sea brought the date of the race forward before the Tall Ships came to Dublin on Thursday 23 August. Leinster Open Sea had investigated the possibility of running the race when the Tall Ships were in Port, but decided against due to safety concerns.

Leinster Open Sea hoped by bringing the race into August would avoid competing with the All Ireland semi finals and finals of the Gaelic Football and Hurling for press space. Leinster Open Sea also hoped that there is a better chance of a sunny day in August than in September. This thankfully turned out to be the case.



Start of the Men's race underneath the Loop Line Bridge

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Lord Mayor of Dublin, Naoise O'Muirei, talking to Eithne Kenny of Dublin SC at the start of the Ladies' Race

The Race

There were 101 women and 176 men competing in this year's Liffey Swim. In order to compete in the Liffey Swim, swimmers must complete four qualifying races from the Leinster Calendar of Open Sea Races to show that they are capable of swimming the 1,600 metre course.

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The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Naoise O'Muiri, at the start of the Ladies' Race.

Race Course

Because of construction work in the river, this year we swam a new course from Butt Bridge to the O2/ Point Depot. The River Liffey along that stretch is wider and straighter than the traditional course. Leinster Open Sea was worried that the character of the race might be reduced by not swimming under the iconic bridges such as the Halfpenny Bridge and O'Connell Bridge.

The new course met with universal approval of swimmers; perhaps as they did not have to swim as far, or perhaps because it is easier to swim with the flow when there are no bends. The water was certainly cleaner and fresher as there is a greater quantity of sea water. Many of the swimmers have asked to swim the same course next year.

However on the other hand many swimmers would also prefer to revert to the proper length of the Liffey Swim circa 2,400 metre, in which case we could start the race 800 metre further upstream, perhaps in front of City Hall. Provided there is sufficient clearance for safety boats under the new LUAS Bridge we could swim as far as the O2 / Point Depot. This would allow the swimmers to sample the atmosphere of the city centre as well as get the benefit of a cleaner and straight course towards the finish.

Leinster Open Sea will consult with the swimmers as to which course the race will take in 2013 before making any decision.

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Swimming underneath Samuel Beckett Bridge (Photograph Vanessa Dawes)

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Swimming beside the MV Cill Airne on North Wall Quay (Photograph Vanessa Dawes)



Finish Area in front of East Link Bridge and O2 (Photograph Vanessa Dawes)

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Finish Area in front of East Link Bridge

Page below Looking up the river from the Finish Area towards City Centre

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Looking down the Liffey at the Sean O'Casey Bridge and the Jeannie Johnston

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**Lucy McCaffrey presenting fastest time to Sinead Tyrell of Garda SC and Conor
Turner of Aer Lingus SC**

Presentation

Lucy McCaffrey, Chairperson of the Dublin Port Company Limited presented the cups for the fastest times in the men's race to Conor Turner of Aer Lingus SC and the Ladies' Race to Sinead Tyrell of Garda SC.

The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Naoise O'Muiri, presented the winners' cups to Tom Loftus of Eastern Bay Swimming Club and Clodagh Nolan of Carraig Masters.

The presentation took place on the upper deck of the MV Cill Airne on North Wall Quay.

Pat Aherne Award

Leinster Open Sea presented the Pat Aherne memorial cup to Rachel Doyle of Dublin Swimming Club. In January of 2012, Rachel won a gold medal at the world winter swimming competition in Riga, Latvia. In early August, Rachel completed an English Channel Solo Swim.

Ladies' Race

The Ladies' race was won by Clodagh Nolan of Carrick Masters SC.

Clodagh wrote about the race

“This year was the 21st Anniversary of the Women's Liffey Swim and having completed all swims since 1991, being twice a runner up, I was thrilled and honoured to finally win it. Now I can truly rejoice in being forever immortalised on one of Ireland finest swimming trophies!

The day itself was memorable as it started with a wonderful sunrise, which after a long wet summer was truly welcomed. As I gathered my swimming gear together the sunshine continued which turned out to be a good omen indeed. I set off for the city centre in time to see the start of the men's race. Even before I reached the banks of the Liffey Swim I could feel the excitement building as the familiar sight of the Dublin Liffey Swim Flags were fluttering in the gentle breeze. The crowds were beginning to accumulate along the Custom House Quays and men half-clad were parading up and down the Liffey banks near Tara Street Station in anticipation of the big event. As the men gathered to descent onto the pontoon all the onlookers (including me) watched with eager eyes to see the first swimmers dive into the Liffey. As the roars went up for the first group of men, I knew it would not be long till it was my turn to dive into the dark waters!

As the ladies descended the steps, the chat escalated and word began to circulate that Tom Loftus had won the men's race. The cheers went up, the laughter was infectious and the Lord Mayor, Naoise O'Muiri, nearly got thrown into the water. A rendition of 'Dublin's Fair City'

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could be heard as far as Guinness's and a mighty roar as the first group of eight woman entered the water.

Then it was my turn....I manoeuvred myself towards the outer edge of the pontoon to give myself the best advantage of diving clear of anyone else. I took a deep breath and dived as far as I could, surfacing well ahead of my group. The objective now was to stay ahead and catch a few more...The thrill of passing under the first bridge, the New Sean O'Casey Bridge and down along Sir John Rodgerson Quay was enormous as this was my own city where every day I walk, on my way to work. Each year the thrill remains of the seeing your city from a unique perspective, from inside the river!

As I went under the Samuel Beckett Bridge I thought perhaps I could do it. I passed the Cill Arne and I could hear Lisa Howley's shouting telling me to go for it....and go for it I did. I just had to pass one or two more people and I would be home....I kept telling myself, breath Clodagh breath, I could see the O2 getting closer and I could hear the roars of the crowd and Yes, I had finally done it.. after 21 years.

In the 1920's, the Liffey Swim was considered a celebratory event where all of Dublin could participate, either as a spectator or as a competitor. It is a unique historic swim, one of which is well captured by Jack B. Yeats in his portrait of the Liffey Swim and which I am now honoured to have a copy of hanging in my living room in pride of place. Words cannot describe the thrill of winning this swim, but my smile has not vanished and I take such pride to telling everyone how I won it.

I am eternally grateful to all the volunteers and the Open Sea Committee who make this historic city centre event possible and enjoyable. I am equally grateful to our Sponsor Dublin City Council for their fantastic support in keeping alive this very special city centre swim which is unique, inclusive of all ages and people and which attracts such national and international interest.”

Clodagh Nolan Carrick Masters SC Dublin City Liffey Swim Winner 2012

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Tom Healy of Dublin Fire Brigade

Tom competed in the 92nd Liffey Swim and less than a month later made a successful English Channel Solo Crossing in a very impressive time of nine hours fifty one minutes. Tom joins a group of over twenty swimmers who regularly compete in the Leinster Open Sea Races and the Liffey Swim who have gone on to complete the gruelling 22 mile crossing of the English Channel.

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Paul Emmet oldest swimmer in the Liffey Swim.

Paul Emmet aged 73. Paul has competed in over fifty Liffey Swims. Paul featured in an article “In the Swim” in the Irish Independent earlier this year. The article featured the many “Silver Swimmers”, many of whom competed in this year’s Liffey Swim. Paul competed in this year’s race against his two grandsons!

Finish Area

The Open Sea Committee welcomed the Plurabelle Paddlers, a breast cancer support group, with their Dragon Boats.

The Dublin Port Tugs, the Beaufort and the Shackelton sailed up to the Finish Point beside the Cill Airne and fired their water cannons after the presentation of the winners’ cups.

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There was an art exhibition by Wicklow artist, Joan Morton, on the MV Cill Airne. The exhibition was based on a work Joan did on the Liffey and the Liffey swim.

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92nd Liffey Swim

Ireland's Premier Open Water Swimming Race

Community Benefits of the Liffey Swim

The Liffey Swim is one of thirty Open Sea Races run by Leinster Open Sea in conjunction with the swimming clubs of Leinster. The Liffey Swim is the premier race on the calendar and draws many people into the sport of swimming. Open Sea Swimming is a low cost sport and Leinster Open sea work to keep the cost of participation down, especially in these difficult economic times. The Liffey Swim provides benefit to the community by:

- encouraging people of all ages and all backgrounds to participate in the sport of swimming;
- encouraging people to join a swimming club and to train all year round;
- encouraging people to use and respect the great amenity of the River Liffey and Dublin Bay which is on Dublin Port's doorstep;
- providing entertainment and brightens up an often forgotten yet important part of our capital for the day;
- generating interest in the Liffey Swim both nationally and internationally; and
- showing that the public sector and community groups can work together to provide low cost sport and recreation for the greater good.

92nd Liffey Swim

Ireland's Premier Open Water Swimming Race

Acknowledgments

Leinster Open Sea would like to thank and acknowledge the contribution the following made in running the 92nd Dublin City Liffey Swim:

- Naoise O'Muirí Lord Mayor of Dublin;
- Lucy McCaffrey, Chairperson of Dublin Port Company Limited;
- Mr. Alan Shatter, Minister for Defence;
- Captain David Dignam Dublin Port Company;
- Captain Fergus Britton Dublin Port Company;
- Mr. Tony Farrell, President of Swim Ireland;
- The crew of the Dublin Port Company's Tug Boats Beaufort and Shackleton;
- Mary McMorrow, Secretary Swim Ireland;
- Mr. Jimmy Reilly, Race Referee;
- Mr. Martin Monks Honorable Handicapper;
- Cosaint Shibhialta (Civil Defense);
- An Cór Innealtoiri (Irish Army Engineer Corps);
- An Garda Síochána;
- Dublin Fire Brigade;
- Mr. Gus Cooney Event Manager;
- Mr. Gerry Cooney Electrician;
- Mr. Pat Nash;
- Mr. Joe Gavaghan Start Manager;
- Over 40 Stewards from the swimming clubs of Dublin;
- Dollymount Sea Scouts;
- Mr Neil Nissen, owner of Blade Runner;
- Mr Nick Roche, owner of the Merryfisher;
- Plurabelle Paddlers;
- Dublin Docklands Authority; and
- Jon O'Neil of Dublin River Cruises and the Jeannie Johnston.

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Coverage of the race appeared in the following publications:

Wednesday 15th August

- Irish Independent

Friday 17th August

- Today FM Radio Interview
- Dublin FM Radio Interview

Saturday 18th August

- Coverage on RTE TV news

Sunday 19th August

- Sunday World
- Sunday Independent
- Sunday Times

Monday 20th August

- Irish Times
- Irish Daily Star
- Metro Herald

Friday 24th August

- Dun Laoghaire Gazette
- Dundrum Gazette
- Castleknock Gazette

Monday 27th August

- Fingal Independent

Other Press Coverage

- Tallaght Echo
- Ballyfermot Echo
- Wicklow People
- Liffey Champion
- Drogheda Leader

Other Media Coverage

- Interview Donncha O Siadhail on Raidio na Life
- Interview Clodagh Nolan Winner on Ryan Turbidity Show

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- 98FM Big Red Bus

Irish Independent 15th August



Choppy waters no obstacle to Liffey swimmers

FORECASTERS might be predicting into the worst storms the country has seen in a quarter of a century but a number of hardy souls will dive into the capital's main river for the 92nd

Dublin City Liffey Swim this Saturday.

The event will start at the Loop Line Bridge, beside the Customs House, and finish at the East Link Bridge.

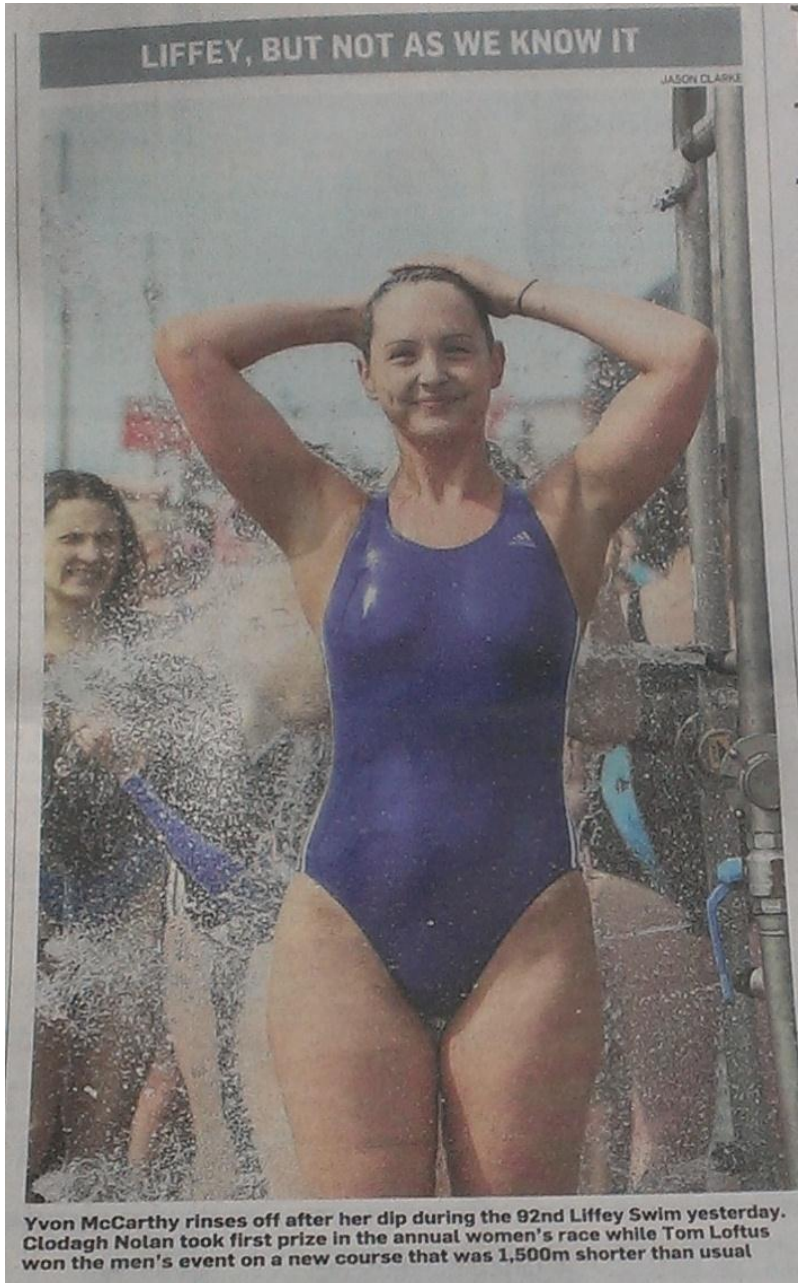
Our picture, by Jason

Clarke, shows Gareth Quigley, Ger Philpott, Claire O'Dwyer, Lucy Gaynor, Sinead Tyrrell and Rory McGlynn taking a dip in the Liffey yesterday to launch the event.

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Sunday Times 20th August



92nd Liffey Swim
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Metro Herald 20th August



**To cap
it all**

Some of the 174 brave souls who took part in the 92nd Dublin City Liffey Swim don their hats and goggles and get ready to take the plunge on Saturday

PICTURE: JASON CLARKE

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Sunday World 19th August

THAT WAS SUN DAY FOR A SWIM

By NEIL FETHERSTON ● Pics: CONOR O'MEARAIN

OVER 300 swimmers made the most of the cracking sunshine yesterday morning to embark on the annual Dublin City Liffey Swim.

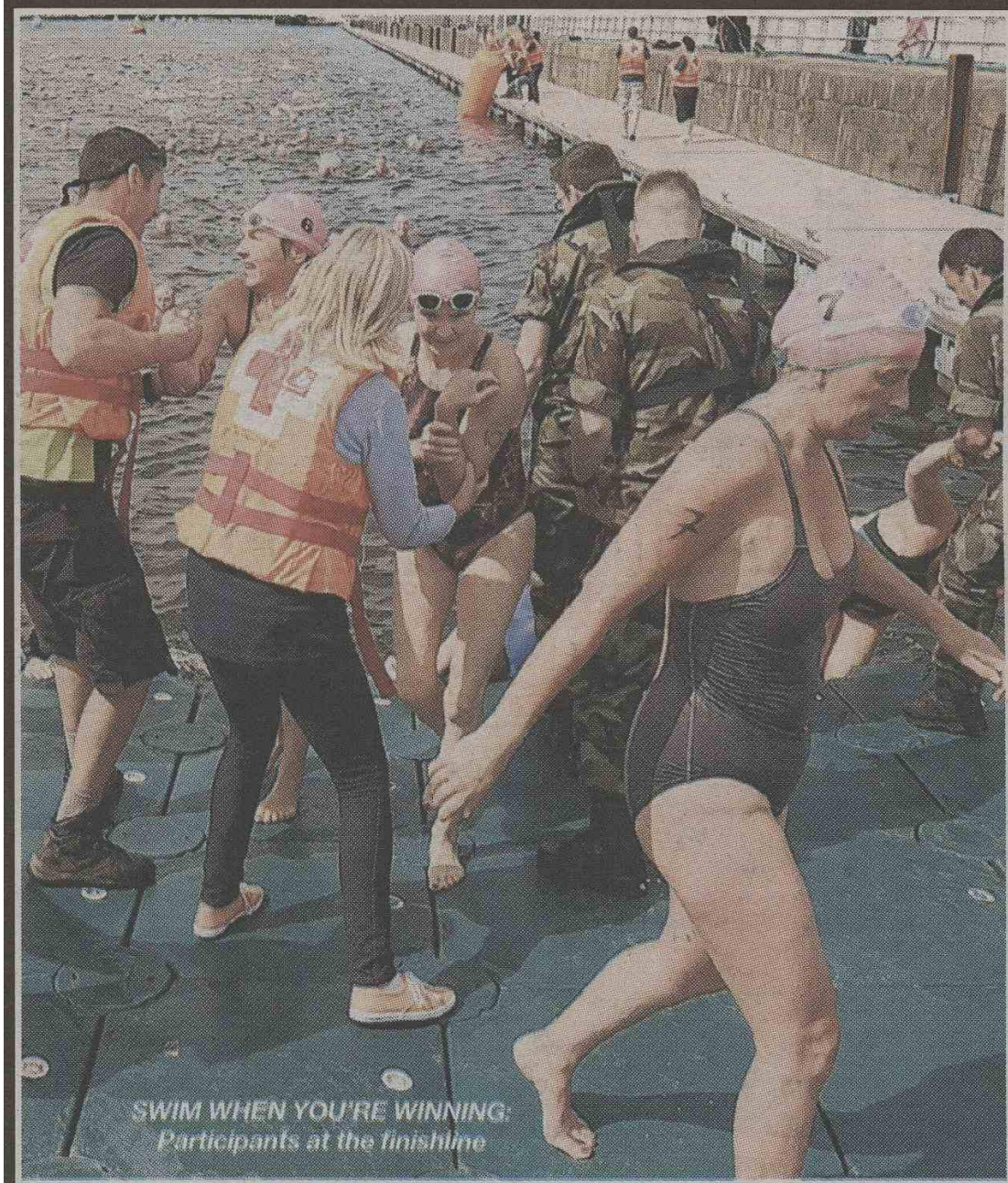
The sun made a rare appearance for the beginning of the event that traditionally starts at Butt Bridge near the city centre.

Participants then make their way towards the East Link Bridge, just over 1.6km away.

People of all ages and abilities take part in the event that has become increasingly popular since it was first held in July 1920.

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Irish Daily Star 20th August



Different strokes...

● MORE than 300 brave souls made a splash yesterday as they took part in the 92nd Dublin City Liffey Swim. The 1.6km course began at the Custom House and finished at the East Link Bridge. It was 1,500m shorter than usual because of works on a city centre new bridge.

● Despite the route change, it all went swimmingly — and the eager competitors just dove right in.

SWELL TIME: The men's race (above) gets started; Yvonne McCarthy (right) enjoys a shower at the end of the women's race (far left) and (left) Danika Duggan and Rachel Nevins

Irish Times 20th August

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Annual splash: braving the elements for 92nd Liffey swim



Taking the plunge at the start of the men's race during the Annual Liffey Swim at the weekend. More than 350 men and women took part in this year's event.
Photograph: Brenda Fitzsimons

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Dundrum Gazette 24th August

Splashing out: Having fun at the Liffey Swim

MEMBERS of the Glenalbyn Master Swimming Club, from Stillorgan, were in great form at the recent 92nd annual Liffey Swim in the city centre, which saw hundreds of competitors splash out in the popular event.

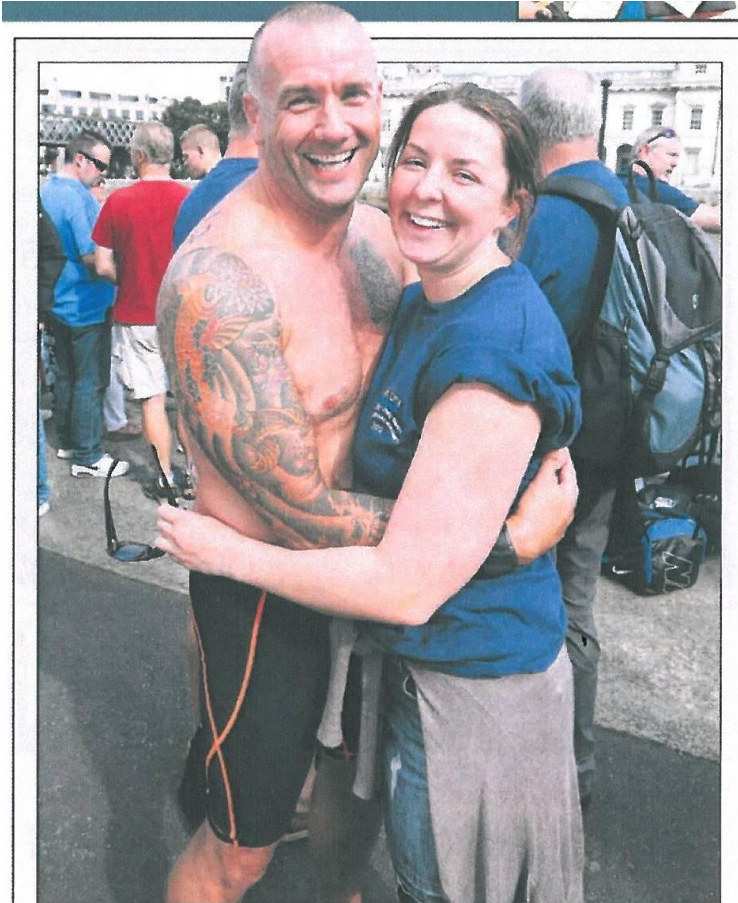
This year, the course was shorter than usual, reduced to 1.6km from its usual 2.4km length, due to construction of the new Marlborough Street bridge. However, the smaller length of the course couldn't reduce the smiles from participants, as the Stillorgan swimmers' faces show.



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Dun Laoghaire Gazette 24th August



Splashing out: Having fun at the 92nd annual Liffey Swim

TOM Healy, from Malahide, and Susan Dillon, from Dun Laoghaire, were in great form as they joined hundreds of other competitors at this year's annual Liffey Swim, which was held recently.

This year, the 92nd swim took part

on a shorter course, reduced to 1.6km from its usual 2.4km length, due to construction of the new Marlborough Street bridge. However, the smaller length of the course couldn't reduce the smiles from participants.

92nd Liffey Swim

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Castleknock Gazette 24th August



Getting along swimmingly: Local ladies enjoy 92nd Liffey Swim

PICTURED at the 92nd Liffey Swim sponsored by Dublin City Council and Dublin Port were Noelle McDonald, Leanne Masters, Michelle McEvoy and Jackie O'Connor, NAC Masters Swimming Club from Blanchardstown. The 92nd Dublin City Liffey Swim, sponsored by Dublin City Council, took place on August 18. Dublin's Lord Mayor Naoise O'Muirei officially fired the starting gun for the men's race at 11.15am, and the women's race an hour later at 12.15pm. 274 swimmers took part in this year's race - 174 men and 100 women. The Men's Race was won by Tom Loftus from the Eastern Bay Swimming Club and the Women's Race was won by Clodagh Nolan from Carraig Masters Swimming Club.

92nd Liffey Swim

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Fingal Independent 27th

NEW COURSE FOR ICONIC DUBLIN SWIM



■ Mother and daughter Marjan and Yvon McCarthy from The Ward.

Fingal swimmers take on the Liffey

FERGAL MADDOCK

THE ANNUAL Liffey Swim attracted a strong contingent from Fingal as almost 300 men and women took to the waters of the popular race.

Some 274 swimmers took part in this year's race, comprising 174 men and 100 women. The race was held over a shorter 1.6 kilometre course from the Butt Bridge (Tara Street), beside the Custom House, to the East Link Bridge.

The Men's Race was won by Tom Loftus from the Eastern Bay Swimming Club and the Women's Race was won by Clodagh Nolan from Carraig Masters Swimming Club.

Traditionally the race takes place over a 2.4 kilometre course from Watling Street Bridge, beside the Guinness Brewery, to the Dublin Docklands (Custom House Quay). The changed course is as a result of construction work taking place in the River Liffey for the new Marlborough Street Bridge.

The swim was open to competitors of all ages, abilities and nationalities, with teenagers pitting their strengths against 70-year-olds and club swimmers from all over the country competing against each other. Each of the competitors is assigned a time handicap, according to their level of proficiency.

Lord Mayor of Dublin Naoise O Muiri said the Liffey Swim was a truly Dublin city institution and the consistently large number of competitors taking part each year attests to its longevity and appeal.



■ Rachel Nevins from Donabate and Danika Sugrue from Malahide, both from Aer Lingus Swimming Club.

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These 'silver swimmers' are finding a weekly dip in the sea makes them feel and look younger, writes **Chrissie Russell**

IT'S almost 10 o'clock on a blustery Sunday morning. The sky's low and colour of concrete and the sea churns uninvitingly in Dublin Bay. As a biting wind whips another wave against the rocky shore of the 40ft a steady stream of bathers are slowly making their way into the water.

Most of the country is probably still in bed or at the most gearing up for a lazy amble to the shops for the papers. But every week, rain, hail or snow, hundreds of open-sea swimmers plunge into the icy waters around Dublin.

All ages are welcome, but at many established bathing spots, like the 40ft in Sandycove where swimmers have been going for more than two centuries, many of the

hard dippers are 'silver swimmers' over 60.

The health benefits associated with sea swimming are impressive. Regular cold water swimming is shown to boost the immune system, improve circulation and help the body flush out toxins while releasing endorphins.

As well as improving fitness, regular dips in the ocean are also purported to help with reducing stress, hydrating the skin and aiding sleep.

We asked some buoyant, and very young-looking, silver swimmers why the healing powers of the sea are worth giving up a warm bed for.



PAUL EMMETT (73)
THE HALF MOON SWIMMING CLUB, POOLBEG, DUBLIN

I started sea swimming in 1972 when I did my first Liffey Swim. From the first time I got in the water, I loved it. "There's something so refreshing about salt water. "I don't swim outside in the winter anymore - I've retired from that! - but from

the end of May I'm out for a plunge every Sunday at the Half Moon.

"It's bitter at first but relaxing after. I feel fantastic. I still compete in swimming galas and at 73 I'm still winning medals.

"I'm going strong. "I think sea swimming helps my health and fitness generally but especially my heart.

"About four or five years ago I had a stroke but the day after I was able to get myself up, washed and shaved. "I remember the consultant

couldn't believe how quickly I'd recovered - but I but it down to being active and swimming.

"My reflexes and reaction times are also better than a lot of other people my age.

"It's impossible to describe the feeling. When you get in the water your whole body tingles, it's very invigorating.

"I've swam in warmer waters in the Canaries and Florida but you don't get the same impact and sensation, there's nothing to beat it."

CLAIRE O'DWYER (70)
THE 40FT, SANDYCOVE, DUBLIN

I grew up in Dalkey and the sea was our back garden so I've been a swimmer for 55 years.

"From May onwards I'm in the water at the 40ft every Sunday. But my big passion is competing in the 23 Open Sea races that take place around Ireland every summer.

"Last year I only missed two and still managed to rank third best swimmer overall. Competing is addictive and I often won't book holidays away in case I miss a race.

"I love how in the sea I'm not a granny or a pensioner, I'm just a swimmer. Races are handicapped so even if I'm up against someone much younger or faster, I'm still in with a chance of winning. I don't feel old.

"As a redhead I don't tend to take a tan but my skin certainly gets a great glow from being in the water and every season I lose a few pounds.

"You get hooked on it. There are some hazards, some swims aren't the cleanest, sometimes you can get stung by jellyfish but you just carry on because the pleasure of taking part in a challenge outweighs that and the social side - its great meeting people.

"At the moment I'm training six days a week in the pool for the World Masters Swimming Championships this June in Italy and I feel absolutely brilliant."



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JERRY KIERSEY (60)
EASTERN BAY SWIMMING CLUB
HIGH ROCK, PORTMARNOCK

Years ago when I was in the navy I had a bad accident and broke my back. After that I found a lot of exercise like running was too hard - that's when I got into swimming.

"I remember my first sea swim, 15 years ago, off the Bull Wall. I thought I was going to die. I was hyperventilating because it was so cold but I kept coming back and from the sixth swim I was hooked.

"I swim all year at Portmarnock and I swim competitively. I'm just back from Latvia where I won a gold medal after swimming 450m in waters that were minus two degrees without wearing a wetsuit. Swimming in Ireland doesn't seem so cold after that!

"I train in the pool during the week for fitness but swimming in the sea is for pleasure. There's something very therapeutic about being at one with nature, especially if the sea's rough.

"I feel great, sleep well and have no health complaints. I work in road transport and it makes me work better as I'm more alert and energetic.

"I eat well and find that I drink less because I don't want to take away from swimming the next day."

WILLIE TRACEY (60)
THE PHOENIX SWIMMING CLUB AT THE 40FT

For years I scuba dived and loved it but 25 years ago I nearly died during a diving incident off the Donegal coast and I lost my confidence in the water. A few years ago a friend persuaded me to do part of a relay in a sea swim and it re-ignited something.

"Being in salt water is so relaxing. It's addictive. Once I'd done that relay I got involved with the Phoenix Club and now I swim every Sunday at 10am at the 40ft.

"I always feel better after a swim. It's a great cardio-vascular work out and I'd hold with the idea that cold water boosts the immune system because I haven't had a cold or sore throat in years.

"I think part of why open swimming makes me feel good is partly down to the social aspect and partly because it allows me to set challenges for myself.

"I think that's what keeps you young and able. I know guys my age who walk and talk like old men, if you want to stay alert you must keep challenging yourself."



EILEEN CANTWELL (60)
HIGH ROCK, PORTMARNOCK, DUBLIN

The sea is never the same. Some days Portmarnock can be like glass, other times the water's rolling and it's like swimming in a washing machine.

"I've swam at the south wall when it's been foggy, in the Liffey with the buildings reflected in the water, at Bray past the Aquarium - its much more interesting than doing lengths in the pool.

"It's also a challenging environment that keeps you on your toes. I've never been involved in any unfortunate events - touch wood - but you can't be complacent.

"I swim for fitness, not to be social, but I still enjoy the fact that everyone looks out for everyone else in the sea. If you've left your togs at High Rock, someone will make sure you get back to them.

"I swam throughout the year last year, but the year before when it was bitterly cold I just couldn't bring myself to do winter swims."

