

History of Pennypinchers Easter Plett Challenge:

Local Paddlers recognised an opportunity in the paddling calendar for a race that is different. Based on the local time trial route, the local paddlers decided to create a race that challenged a range of paddling skills.

The local band of regular time trial paddlers put the challenge to Pennypinchers local, Sean Gannon who came back with positive news that the race could happen on condition! The conditions were tough but within five weeks they were met.

A World Series race (one star rating) was put together within five weeks and so the Pennypinchers Plett Easter Challenge was born.

The Course:

The course included a mild surf launch with a circuit past the beach offering the crowd some excitement. It went upwind for a few km's and then turned to catch the runs back towards the river mouth. Paddlers had to then negotiate the surf entry to the mouth with a very short respite when in the lagoon. Once paddlers have regained their composure in the lagoon they again brace themselves for a surf entry through the mouth. This becomes interesting as the conditions in the mouth are never the same.

Last years conditions were great. There was a mild Easterly placing paddlers under a little stress when paddling out towards the horizon and then some interesting racing with the runs towards the mouth.

The swell was reasonable with some monsters coming through from time to time. Hank McGregor and Dawid Mocke were not let off the punishment those waves were able to dish out. They both fell out with one of them nearly losing their boat – a real close call that cost precious seconds. In fact many a position changed radically through the mouth, especially when paddlers caught waves from far back to pass guys that were a good 100m ahead of them.

Once out the mouth, the course runs parallel to the beach (opportunity to wave at friends and family) before turning 90 degrees to head past the Beacon Island back towards the horizon. Do not underestimate the paddle parallel to the beach and out passed the Beacon Island. There is a lot of wave refraction off the rocks at wedge and in front of the BI. This offers those who can sniff out a run from nowhere an opportunity to take a position or two. It also provides those who hate choppy conditions some irritation.

Comments from Last Year:

Paddlers enjoyed the race last year. They all commented on how diverse it was and the top dogs were bashful about how much they enjoyed the decent cash prizes. Racing through the surf - in and out of the mouth - really punched some interesting

magic into the mix, and nearly all paddlers groaned about the upwind slog. Nearly all paddlers! There were some of those hard workers who grinned, savouring the almost sadistic pleasure they had when reeling in the bunch that had stolen positions from them at the surf start.

The Sponsor (Pennypinchers)

It is amazing to have input from a sponsor like Pennypinchers. As a sponsor, they bring a different dynamic to us as race organisers. Whilst all race organisers work hard for the sport, Pennypinchers are challenging us to bring a different dynamic to this race. This includes making the sport available to people from all walks of life.

In return, we have asked Pennypinchers to commit to sponsoring the event for a few years. Our discussions for the future include inviting TV and radio personalities to enter the race. This will require clubs from all over the country to commit to preparing these personalities for the race.

The Pennypinchers Plett Easter Surfski challenge will also have their very own facebook blog so all paddlers and visitors to the area can brag to the world and share this amazing place in cyberspace.

In closing the Plett Paddling club would like to thank Pennypinchers for making this World Series race happen.

So guys, enter now on www.surfski.co.za