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VANUATU OCEAN SWIM

Saturday 12 June 2010

About the Swim

There are not many harbours in the world that can boast the clear waters and reefs of those found in Port Vila, Vanuatu and Iririki Island, nestled in the harbour just 350m offshore from Port Vila town, provides a natural and inviting challenge for any swimmer – whether it be to swim across from the town to the island's jetty, or to swim around the island.

The inaugural event, known as the Rossi to Rossi swim, was held in 2002 when 46 swimmers from Australia, New Caledonia and Vanuatu took part. In recent years the event has grown to include over 200 swimmers annually.

The Vanuatu Ocean Swim has spawned an interest in swimming for fitness among Port Vila residents and most weekday lunchtimes & Saturday mornings will see swimmers, the famous "Port Vila Masterbathers", taking to the harbour waters just off Nambawan Café.

The Vanuatu Ocean Swim features a swim clinic with some of the world's top swimmers, welcome functions, unique cultural entertainment and Awards Dinner.

The Course

The Vanuatu Ocean Swim follows a rough diamond shaped 3.2km course around the shore of Iririki Island, a beautiful island nestled in picturesque Port Vila harbour and home to Iririki Island Resort.

Starting at the sea wall adjacent to the craft market and Nambawan Cafe, the first 700m leg takes swimmers south across Port Vila's inner harbour to Iririki Island and another 800m stretch through the deep water yacht moorings in the lee of Iririki to the South Iririki Turn Buoy which guides swimmers over the shallow reef at the southern tip of the island. Here the course turns sharp right and follows the south-west shore of the island for 1000m to the North Iririki Turn Buoy, then another 700m over the deep water channel to the finish back at the seawall.

The 1.5km course follows the same start as the 3.2km to a marker off Iririki Island and follows a triangular course back to the finish at the seawall.



ESPIRITU SANTO AORE SWIM

Tuesday 15 June 2010

About the Swim

Espiritu Santo is Vanuatu's "Big Island", a 55 minute flight from Port Vila. On the southern coast of Espiritu Santo is the port town of Luganville, set on the edge of the Segond Channel which separates the main island from the island of Aore.

The Channel was an important WWII anchorage and staging point for the American push on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, with Luganville transformed from a sleepy one street, two store village to a bustling base housing 40,000 troops, four airfields, cinemas, hospitals and wharves. The eastern end of the channel is home to the President Coolidge, now one of the most famous dives in the world. The Coolidge was sunk after hitting a "friendly" mine.

Modern day Espiritu Santo is one of those slightly off-the-beaten-track places that is full of interesting "discoveries", from the adventure of the Millennium Cave, exploring the famous Blue Holes, soaking up the sun on pristine Champagne Beach, the cultural experience of Vil Vil Village, to the gourmet delights of Oyster Island.

The Course

The course of the Espiritu Santo Aore Swim crosses Segond Channel. It runs from Unity Park in Luganville to Aore Resort. The distance is 2.6km in a straight line.

The swim can be a daunting one with the channel unpredictable, on occasions, south easterlies and strong tidal currents sometimes blowing up rough, choppy conditions. On other occasions, it's seemingly lake-like, calm, but not still, the ever present currents changing direction with the tidal flow through the channel.

The white line shown below depicts the direct route from Unity Park start to the finish at Aore Resort beach. The red line is the course one swimmer (equipped with a GPS device) took during the 2006 swim.

