

FJ @ FJ

The Waikato River's legendary Full James rapid serves up perfect conditions for the annual Freestyle Jam

By Sophie Hoskins

20th and 21st of March were the dates for this years FJ @ FJ event. It was a blast. Saturday saw a huge crowd of people enjoying surfing the wave at a great flow. There were coaching sessions from beginner to advanced and keen kayakers practised for Sunday's freestyle jam and NZ team selections.

Sunday rolled around and a steady flow of people rocked up to the lovely smell of bacon, eggs and hash browns on the BBQ to fill hungry bellies and raise money for the NZFKA (New Zealand Freestyle Kayak Association). MASSIVE speakers were cranking great sounds and the competition got underway. Kayakers could enter for open men and women, novice men and women and junior men and women. Stars of the day were Andi O'Connell, who consistently threw big moves and took out the open men's, and Courtney Kerin a 16 year old from Oamaru. As the only junior woman she held her own to finish 4th in the open women. After a day in the sun, warm water and plenty of great moves it was time for prize giving.







A huge thanks goes out to Andy Fuller from Day Two, Canoe & Kayak Taupo and the Okere falls store for helping out with the spot prizes also to Te Awamutu College for the use of their awesome sound system. Thanks to all the others who helped out with this event.

Results were...

Open Men: 1st Andi O'Connell, 2nd Josh Neilson, 3rd Brendan Bayly, 4th Greg Nicks, 5th Bradley Lauder

Open Women: 1st Polly Green, 2nd Toni George, 3rd Louise Urwin, 4th Courtney Kerin.

Novice Men: 1st Dan Riley, 2nd Gavin Lodge, 3rd Mike Gerrand.

Novice Women: 1st Izzy Jull, 2nd Anke Lebesmuehlbacher, 3rd Katherine Lucas.

Junior Men: 1st Andre Sperling, 2nd Stuart Johnson, 3rd Jaxon Paraki Webber.

Junior Women : 1st Courtney Kerin.



All photos courtesy of:
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Prize giving:
Top left: Lu Urwin, Izzy Jull, Anke Lebesmuehlbacher, Katherine Lucas



Top right: Andi O'Connell (holding daughter Niamh), Josh Neilson, Brendan Bayly, Greg Nicks, Bradley Lauder



Bottom left: Lu Urwin, Toni George, Polly Green



Bottom Right: Dan Riley, Gavin Lodge, Mike Gerrand.

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