

Walliams and Allsopp pick up H2Open Awards

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H2Open (<http://www.h2openmagazine.com>), the world's only dedicated open water swimming (<http://www.h2openmagazine.com>) magazine, announced the winners of the inaugural H2Open Awards at a ceremony forming the final activity of the H2Open Day event at the Reading Lake Hotel on 28 April. The winners included David Walliams, who won the 'Charity Swim of the Year' award for his epic 140 mile Thames swim, and Roger Allsopp, who collected the 'Inspirational Swim of the Year' award after becoming the oldest person ever to swim the English Channel last September.

Walliams, who couldn't attend the ceremony as he was out of the country filming, was represented by Stephen Meadows of Comic Relief, who project managed the Thames swim. Meadows read out a statement from Walliams, who thanked the thousands of supporters who lined the Thames and gave so generously to his campaign as that helped maintain his motivation through the swim.

Allsopp, from Guernsey, attended the ceremony in person and received his trophy from Cassandra Patten, bronze medallist in the 10km marathon swim in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Earlier in the day he demonstrated his fortitude by taking part in a 750m swim in the lake around the hotel. He was one of only a handful of participants who braved the 12 degree water without a wetsuit.

Other winners of the Awards, which were created in partnership with events company Triathlon Racing Inc and designed to celebrate achievements in open water swimming, included Colin Hill, Ambassador of the Year, Oliver Wilkinson, Swimmer of the Year and Bernd Berkahn, Coach of the Year. As well as the trophies, all the individual winners were awarded VIP entries to the British Gas Great North Swim.

Nova International, organiser of the British Gas Great Swim series, picked up the prize for Best UK Event, while the Lorne Pier to Pub, a 1.2km sea swim in Australia won 'Best International Event'. The final award, 'Innovation of the Year' went to swim equipment specialist Finis for their AquaPulse, a device that clips to the earlobe and monitors a swimmer's heart rate.

The awards, designed to celebrate achievement in open water swimming, received over 200 nominations from H2Open readers across the eight categories. A distinguished panel of judges (see below) then reviewed all nominations and short-listed the top four in each category. Each judge reviewed and ranked the nominations independently.

The judging panel consisted of:

- Cassandra Patten, Bronze medallist, 2008 Beijing Olympics Marathon Swim
- Duncan Goodhew, Olympic Gold medallist and swimming ambassador
- Steven Munatones, former 25km open water swimming world champion and founder of open water source
- Kate Rew, founder, Outdoor Swimming Society
- Nick Adams, President, Channel Swimming and Piloting Federation
- Colin Hill, Marathon Swimming Technical Manager for the London 2012 Olympics

For more information contact Simon Griffiths, Publisher and Editor, H2Open Magazine.

Simon.griffiths@h2openmagazine.com / 07958 312607

For the full list of winners see: <http://www.h2openmagazine.com/2011/and-the-winners-are.html>

Editors Notes:

Image: Roger Allsopp (centre) collects his trophy from Cassandra Patten and Simon Griffiths.

About H2Open Magazine

Launched in February 2011 by independent publisher ZG Publishing Ltd, H2Open is the world's first dedicated open water swimming magazine. Designed to appeal to all lovers of open water from freedom loving wild swimmers to competitive masters and English Channel aspirants the magazine offers a mixture of inspirational features, training advice, gear reviews and nutritional tips. www.h2openmagazine.com.

About Triathlon Racing Inc (TRI) Ltd

TRI works in partnership with high-profile companies to deliver quality professional services and products to triathlon and its discipline sports. Established in 2008, TRI is the founder of the Lakeside Triathlon organised in partnership with One Step Beyond Promotions and founder of the SwimFesT Open Water Swim Series organised in partnership with SwimForTri.