



The West Australian

mind & body

ROTTO
here we come

inside:

- 3 FROCK ON!
- 3 BIG WALK
- 4 LONG HAIR



This is ballot week for the 2012 HBF Rottnest Channel Swim. **Alecia Hancock** reports on an iconic event.

Francy a swim from Cottesloe . . . to Rotto? Crazy? Perhaps, but the HBF Rottnest Channel Swim, supported by *The West Australian*, is now in its 22nd year and is so popular that a ballot is needed to decide which teams and duos will compete.

Rottnest Channel Swim event manager Stacey Herbertson said it was important that people applying for the ballot began training, if they hadn't already.

"At this stage, we're really wanting to make sure people are adequately prepared for the event, they will put in the effort to train and take it seriously," she said.

"It's not like a fun run where you can get up one day and go, you need a support boat organised and people need to be experienced with open-water swimming.

"Open-water swimming is different from a pool as the buoyancy is different. We also don't know what conditions will be like on the day.

"I'd suggest all entrants participate in some of the open-water swims we hold in the lead-up to the event."

Rottnest Channel Swim lead safety official Murray Glaskin has completed 10 solo swims and competed in a duo and a team. He said the most important thing competitors could do was respect the distance.

"To respect the distance you need to put the work in; if people don't they think it'll be right on the day but they have no idea of tides and sea breezes," he said.

"Right now swimmers should be mixing up their pool stuff and ocean stuff, as well as having swims in the afternoon among sea breezes."

Mr Glaskin said if he had to choose just

one thing to advise swimmers on the day, it was having the right skipper on your safety boat.

"He's in charge of the swimmers and the skipper on the boat must have life jackets, all the gear on board if someone gets cold, and he must know all the rules," he said.

"You need someone that's got a boat and someone who is prepared to take the time to come to the briefing and learn the rules, because it is so important on the day."

First-time swimmers and teams need to also ensure they rehydrate and have plenty of sun protection on board their boat.

Originally from the Eastern States, Ms Herbertson said she loved how much the Perth community got involved in the event.

"It is so popular there's not one person over here in WA who doesn't know what the Rottnest Channel Swim is," she said. "I also find the solo swimmers amazing with the dedication they put in."

Although most entrants are aged between 35 and 45, Ms Herbertson said the event attracted a wide range of people.

"This is for anybody who is up for a challenge and who wants to take part in one of Western Australia's most iconic events," she said.

Mr Glaskin agreed. "I don't think it matters about age or anything like that, anyone can have a crack at it if they put in the work," he said.

Entries for the swim are online from today at 8am until November 7 at 5.30pm at rotnnestchannelswim.com.au. Solo entry nominations remain open until November 14 at 5.30pm.

INSIDE: A team in training.