



MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
News Release

Tourism is Everybody's Business!

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For Immediate Release-July 16, 2014

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WINNERS REPEAT AT SWIMMING FESTIVAL IN MANAGAHA

Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands (NMI) – Kensuke Kimura repeated his winning 2013 form to finish first in the Marianas Visitors Authority's (MVA) 1st Annual Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Race Tournament) on June 28, 2014. Angel Marie Tan placed 1st in the Female Division, finishing in (22:52).

Thirty-three participants from Japan, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands joined the event, with another 19 joining the 500m and 1500m group swim.

Kimura finished in 21:16, followed in the Male Division by Takumi Sugie (22:41) and Daishi Hiroki (24:20). Tan was followed by Angel De Jesus and Miku Tammy (27:59).

“We’re very happy with the results of the festival. Everything went smoothly, and the participants had a safe and enjoyable time,” said Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) Managing Director Perry Tenorio.

In the Male Junior Division, the winners were Jhota Yoshina (00:28:46) for ages 10 & Under, Mark Anthony Maestro (00:27:56) for ages 11-12. In the Female Junior Division, the winners were Sophia Klair Gauran (00:38:02) for ages 10 & Under, Megumi Yoshino (00:28:38) for ages 11-12, and Daime Rivera (00:38:04) ages 16-18.

Takehiro Kashima (00:38:56) placed 1st for ages 30-39 Male, and Hiroshi Tanaka (00:32:01) placed 1st for ages 40-49 Male. In the Female Age Division Category, the winners

were: Juelee Won (00:34:29) for ages 30-39, Miyako Mamana (00:48:39) for ages 40-49, Lorie Hutchinson (00:35:08) for ages 50-59, and Haruko Kawafuji (00:38:04) for ages 60 & Up.

Participants included gymnast and Olympic medalist Takehiro Kashima, who won gold and bronze medals in the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens and a silver medal in the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. Kashima was the guest of Central Sports Co., Ltd., the largest fitness club franchise in Japan and co-organizer of the swimming festival.

Representatives of Japan media Marine Diving Magazine and Music Bird radio will also be on island to cover the event, which requires swimmers to use wetsuits or life jacket and fins along with mask and snorkels.

Event sponsors include Japan Marine Recreation Association, Japan Recreational Diving Industry Association, Japan Scuba Association, Japan Wetsuits Manufacturers Association, University life Sport Education Society, and Northern Mariana Diving Operators Association. Co-sponsors of the event are Delta Air Lines, Japan Saipan Travel Association, Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, DFS Saipan, and the Commonwealth Health Center. The MVA also extended its appreciation to Dept. of Public Safety Boating Safety, Tasi Tours, Smiling Cove Marina, and timers Peter and Emma Perez of Saipan Swim Club.



Participants in the 1st Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Tournament) organized by Marianas Visitors Authority and Central Sports Co., Ltd. on June 28, 2014.



Japanese participants in 1st Annual Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Race Tournament) have a group rally before the event on June 28, 2014.



Overall Male 1st Place finisher Kensuke Kimura strikes a winner's pose after repeating his 2013 winning form on June 28, 2014, during the 1st Annual Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Race Tournament).



Japan Olympian and gold medalist Takahiro Kashima, center, poses with friends after finishing the 1st Annual Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Race Tournament) on June 28, 2014.



Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects Specialist Ryan Calvo checks cap numbers as finishers come in during the 1st Annual Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Race Tournament) on June 28, 2014.



Over forty participants from Japan joined the 1st Annual Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Race Tournament) on June 28, 2014.



Winners of the 1st Annual Swimming Festival in Managaha (formerly the Saipan International Open Water Flipper Race Tournament) pose for commemorative photo on June 28, 2014.

The Northern Mariana Islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are a chain of idyllic islands in the West Pacific, offering a friendly, fun and exciting vacation in paradise. They are an excellent destination for families, adventure and sports-minded travelers, as well as business people looking for a tropical haven. Adventurous travelers from Asia, Australia, Europe and elsewhere looking for new travel discoveries will find them in the Mariana Islands, just three hours travel from most cities in Japan, and four from Asia and Australia. The Northern Marianas are served from Tokyo and Osaka in Japan by Delta Air Lines and Asiana Airlines. From Korea, Asiana provides direct flights from Seoul and Busan. From China, direct flight service from Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Hangzhou and Wuhan to Saipan is available. United Airlines has daily flight connections from nine cities in Japan to Saipan with one stop. United States mainland connections can be made by Delta Air Lines to Saipan via Tokyo Narita, and United Airlines via Guam. For more information visit www.mymarianas.com.

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