

A History of the Catalina Channel Swims

Since 1927

by  
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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the book is to develop a history of the swimming crossings of the Catalina Channel since the first swim was completed in 1927.

On January 15, 1927 George Young won the Wrigley Ocean Marathon swim across the Catalina Channel in 15 hours, 44 minutes, and 30 seconds. Within three months of the Wrigley Ocean Marathon, four swimmers successfully tackled the Catalina Channel.

Between 1927 and 1952 only two men conquered the Channel, but from 1952 to 1958 eleven swimmers crossed the Channel. Numerous attempts were made between 1958 and 1970 but none were successful. In the early 1970's and again in the late 1970's, the men's and women's speed records were rewritten. There were twenty-nine crossings by seventeen swimmers in the 1970's. From 1980 through 1989 there were thirty two individual crossings and twelve relay crossings. The book is further broken into the following sections from 1990 to 1999; 2000 to 2004; 2005 to 2007;2008; 2009; 2010; 2011; Around the Island swims and 2012.

In 2011 the overall relay record was broken and in 2012 the women's record and overall record from Catalina to the mainland was smashed. Numerous records were broken, especially that of the oldest person to swim the Catalina Channel (which was broken three times) and the relay record. From 1927 through the 2012 season there were two hundred and fifty-one (251) people who swam Catalina.

#### **The following conclusions were reached:**

1. The 1927 Wrigley Ocean Marathon swim began the long history of Channel swimming in the United States.
2. In the end of 2012 there had been eighty-five relay crossings and two hundred and fifty-one people swam the Catalina Channel.
3. Female swimmers have been as successful as male swimmers in crossing and setting records for the Catalina Channel.
4. Age is a determinant of speed in swimming the Catalina Channel.
5. The establishment of the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation has aided in the development and furtherance of the Catalina crossing and its history.
6. Pool swimming and the inception of the marathon team aided in development of marathon swimmers in the 1970's.
7. The Catalina Channel swim is comparable to the English Channel in conditions, difficulty, distance, and challenge to the swimmer.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Introduction**

On Tuesday, August 23, 1875 after being in the water 21 hours and 45 minutes, Matthew Webb stepped ashore in Calais, France. He was the first person to swim the English Channel successfully. Instantly, he became a hero.<sup>1</sup> The challenge, the mystique, and the possibility of instant fame from swimming the Channel began to attract marathon swimmers from all over the world.

In the summer of 1926, Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to swim the English Channel. She also broke the existing record set in 1923 by Enrico Tiraboschi of 16 hours and 33 minutes, by completing the distance in 14 hours and 39 minutes. Overnight she became a celebrity; New York even honored her with a ticker tape parade.<sup>2</sup>

On the other side of the country one of the interested observers was William Wrigley, Jr. Ederle's swim and all the publicity she received intrigued him. He decided to put on the Wrigley Catalina Island Swim. To insure numerous entrants from all over the world, he offered a \$25,000 purse, winner take all. The race, on January 15, 1927, would go from Avalon to the breakwater at Point Vicente, a promontory landmark on the California coast. The straight line distance of the Catalina, or San Pedro Channel, was twenty-two miles, one mile further than the famous English Channel.

Wading into the chilly waters destined for the mainland were 102 swimmers, 87 men and 15 women. Of these, only one entrant completed the crossing. The swim was very successful, not only in publicity and also financially for Wrigley and the Island, but it touched off a new craze in marathon swimming. There was another Channel for marathon swimmers to conquer. It was no longer necessary for them to travel to England with the Catalina Channel in their backyard. Whether for the challenge or the preparation, swimming Catalina has become as important as swimming the English Channel to such top marathon swimmers as Florence Chadwick, Greta Andersen, Tom Park, Lynne Cox, and Penny Lee Dean, John York, Karen Burton,, Chad Hundebly, Pete Huisveld, Todd Robinson and Grace Van Der Byl.

The record dropped from 15 hours and 44 minutes to 7 hours and 15 minutes set by Penny Lee Dean in 1976. Since the 1927 swim, two hundred fifty other swimmers have successfully braved the treacherous Channel, bringing the total number of successful aspirants to two hundred and fifty-one.

#### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this book is to develop a history of the swimming crossings of the Catalina Channel since the first swim was completed in 1927.

#### **Significance of the Work**

The Catalina Channel is the only major channel crossing on the American continent which compares to the English Channel in both distance and difficulty. Furthermore, very little has been written on marathon swimming and even less on the Catalina crossing. The specifics of the crossings of these two hundred fifty-one athletes needed to be recorded before their contributions were lost. This work will enable present and future generations to see by whom and when the Catalina Channel was crossed and what these crossings entailed.

### **Definition of Terms**

Catalina Channel: The San Pedro Channel, as it is officially named, is the 22 miles of ocean separating the Island of Catalina from Point Vicente, a promontory landmark on the California coast.

Marathon Swimming: The art of swimming continuously a minimum of ten miles in any kind of open water (lake, river, sea, etc.). It is permitted to grease the body before a swim, use goggles, wear a cap, ear plugs, and a bathing suit. However, no artificial aid of any kind is allowed nor is any physical contact by another person allowed.

### **Methods and Procedures**

To gather information necessary for this work, the materials available on the two hundred fifty-one successful crossers was collected at the following libraries: California State Polytechnic University at Pomona; California State University at Long Beach; Honnold Library, Pomona College, Claremont; Long Beach Public Library system; Los Angeles Public Library system; Cabrillo Museum, San Pedro; the Avalon Museum, Catalina Island and the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation logs and interviews.

An attempt was made to contact one outstanding athlete who successfully completed the crossing from each of the following selective chronological periods: the early 1950's, the late 1950's, the early 1970's, the late 1970's, the early 1980's, the middle 1980's, the early 1990's, the late 1990's 2000-2004; 2005-2008; 2009; 2010; 2011; Around the Island; 2012 swims. Florence Chadwick, Greta Andersen, Lynne Cox, Frank Reynolds, John York, Dan Slosberg and Pete Huisveld, Todd Robinson, Hank Wise, and Grace Van Der Byl were some of the swimmers who were interviewed. Other swimmers interviewed included Pam Nickle, Ray Falk, Al Guth, Mike Suttle, Dave Clark, Richard Marks, Pat Hines, Kalani Russell, Suzanne Riedinger and Dale Petranech. The interviews also included people such as friends, coaches, and navigators. Chuck Slocombe, aide on Florence Chadwick's swim; John Olguin, Benny Nawahi's coach; John Sonnichsen, Greta Andersen and Lynne Cox's coach, Syndi Goldenson, a successful crosser and the coach of Orca; Siga Albrecht, original coach of Orca; Chuck Liddell, historian, Catalina Island; Richard Yeo, The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Marathon Swimming Chairman 1976-1978; and Mickey Pittman, one of the navigators, were interviewed.

These people were located and personal interviews were used to collect material as it related to the swimmers' contributions to marathon swimming. Interviews were conducted personally or by telephone, and the material obtained was analyzed as to its relevancy to the work. Many extraneous items came up in the interviews which had nothing to do with the development of this publication. Information was then combined with the available literature. Further, the private newspaper collections of Richard Yeo, Chuck Liddell, John York, and Penny Lee Dean were used extensively. The author relied heavily on personal knowledge and acquaintances derived through forty-two years of local, national, and international competition and coaching in marathon swimming.

Once all material was gathered, it was critically analyzed regarding its relevance to the work, and then it was organized into an understandable and readable form.

## CHAPTER 7

### The Nineties: 1990-1999

From 1990 through the 1999 season there were twenty-three successful swims by twenty people. There were two World Records set for men, one from each direction Catalina to the mainland and the reverse direction and a women's world record from Catalina to the Mainland.

#### The Early Nineties

1990 was an uneventful season for Catalina swims. Of five attempts, only two were successful, Jamshid Khajavi and Rick Barthel.

On August 31st at 8:40 p.m. Jamshid began his Catalina to mainland swim. His stroke count ranged from a low of 52 strokes per minute to a high of 61 strokes per minute. Despite a clear night, there was a strong wind producing some whitecaps. The water was a warm 68-70 degrees throughout most of the swim.<sup>1</sup>

Jamshid fed on power bars, bananas, Exceed and hot water. At two and a half hours, Jamshid had completed only two and a half miles. Due to large swells, the Achilles support craft broke loose three times during the crossing. This created a few frantic moments and delays for Jamshid.

At the halfway point, the Achilles accidentally ran into Jamshid. It was being used as a support craft, but the pilot lost sight of the swimmer. Jamshid, although dazed, laughed and remarked, "It was the attack of the Achilles." Fortunately, he was not injured nor did he grab the boat.<sup>2</sup>

In the eleventh hour, the water temperature dropped to 66 degrees. Jamshid began stopping quite frequently. He had drifted into mild hypothermia and was unable to urinate. He was tired but still swimming well. In order to improve his enthusiasm, a pacer joined Jamshid. This seemed to help his spirits significantly.

As there was a large flock of pelicans, Jamshid swam into them to see what was going on. Much to his surprise, he saw two sharks - a 12 footer and a 7 footer.

With 200 yards to go, Jamshid began to swim butterfly. He stepped ashore after 16 hours, seven minutes and 39 seconds. He became the 64th person to complete the Catalina swim.<sup>3</sup>

Rick Barthel of Sacramento estimated his swim would take eleven hours, 36 minutes on the ride to Catalina. On September 22nd, under near perfect conditions, Rick walked into the water at Doctor's Cove. It was a beautiful, clear night. The water was 68 degrees, the air was 67 degrees, and the ocean was as flat as a lake.

Throughout the swim Rick fed every thirty minutes. His breaks were quick-rarely over thirty seconds. He fed on baby food and honey.

There were few problems until early morning. Two boats came very close, with a freighter cutting just in front of Rick.<sup>4</sup>

Rick's stroke count varied from 57 to 63 strokes per minute. He maintained his stroke throughout the swim. Rick was positive and focused during the swim. He never complained. He was very determined. In the early morning hours he took an unusually long break-one and a half minutes. The crew cheered wildly.<sup>5</sup>

At 11:45 a.m. in the morning, Rick landed one half mile west of Point Vicente. His time was 11 hours, 36 minutes and 43 seconds. He was very pleased but tired. He had predicted his time exactly. Rick's time is the twenty ninth fastest from the Island to the Mainland.

The two swims in 1990 were completed in differing conditions. Regardless, both men met their goals and became the 64th and 65th persons to swim the Catalina Channel successfully.

There were four successful individual crossings in 1991. Each athlete chose to swim from Catalina to the mainland. There were four relay crossings also.

The first successful swim of the summer was by 55 year old Bob West of San Diego. Bob entered the water at 9:53 p.m. on August 3rd. There were small craft warnings for the evening. The sea was very rough. Within an hour everyone in the crew was sick. Kayaker Mike Diolon had to paddle the first nine hours as everyone else was too ill to paddle.

For the first five to six hours of the swim Bob was throwing up five times an hour. He drank Gatorade fluid replacement for two feedings then a feeding of Gatorade every twenty minutes. He drank Pepsi and tea with honey to calm his stomach but nothing worked.<sup>6</sup>

As the sun rose everyone felt better. The crew was able to paddle and numerous swimmers paced Bob. At 2:08 p.m. on August 4th, after sixteen hours and fifteen minutes in the water, Bob West completed the swim.<sup>7</sup> He became the oldest man by a few months to swim Catalina.

Thirty-six year old Timothy Cheesman entered the water at 2:46 a.m. on August 17th. The conditions were ideal. The water was like glass. The temperature was 65 degrees.

In the swim, Tim drank Exceed. Tim maintained a stroke count in the mid 50s. His spirits were high throughout the swim, he was constantly joking.

With one mile to go in the swim, Tim had a cup of tea with his parents. He had the tea in a fine bone china cup. His parents, who accompanied him on the boat, came from England specifically for the swim.<sup>8</sup>

After ten hours, forty-eight minutes and forty-six seconds Tim emerged from the water. He became the sixty-seventh person to tackle Catalina.<sup>9</sup>

The third successful swimmer of the summer was 34 year old Dan Angress. He waded into the flat water at Catalina a little more than a half an hour after midnight. It was a calm clear evening.<sup>10</sup>

By 2:30 a.m. a slight wind created a mild chop. The water temperature was a steady 65 degrees. Between 4:30 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. numerous ships were visible. Nothing seemed to bother Dan. He maintained his speed and stroke.<sup>11</sup>

Navigator Bob Hill recorded his location every hour. He adjusted his course with the assistance of radar and the Loran.<sup>12</sup>

About an hour from the finish, approximately 1.5 kilometers from shore, the water temperature dropped two degrees. Despite this, Dan finished the swim in ten hours, eight minutes. This is the nineteenth fastest swim in this direction.

The final swimmer of 1991 was Pete Kelley. He began his swim at 12:17 a.m. at Doctor's Cove on Catalina on September 13th. Initially the water was choppy but

gradually the wind and then the sea calmed down. Pete's stroke count was consistent throughout the swim. It ranged from 47 to 50 strokes per minute.<sup>13</sup>

Throughout the swim Pete drank fluids every half hour. During the night, in addition to paddlers escorting Pete, he had a few swimmers jump in with him. This seemed to motivate him.

Pete had a fine swim, finishing in thirteen hours, forty-five minutes and thirty seconds. This was excellent, especially because one of the boat's engines went out. The Zodiac followed Pete while his navigator frantically repaired the engine.<sup>14</sup>

Besides four individual crossings, four relays crossed the Catalina Channel in 1991. These, in actuality, were two relays which swam from the mainland to Catalina and back to the mainland on July 5th-6th. All four represented the La Jolla Cove Swim Team. The first relay consisted of: John Skogland, Wally Nidziko, Steve Frantz, Tim Cheesman, Eric Olson, and Bob West. The second team consisted of: Cyrise Calvin, David Clark, Jackie Huffman Hammond, Peter Blake, Tina Moore, and Peter Urrea. Both teams swam from the Mainland to Catalina in twelve hours, thirty-two minutes and twenty-nine seconds. On the return the teams took eleven hours, eleven minutes and six seconds. This was an excellent year for Catalina swims.

In 1992 there were four individual crossings of Catalina. Jamshid Khajavi returned to tackle the channel. In addition Pete Huisveld broke John York's fourteen year old record from the mainland to Catalina.

The first swimmer of the 1992 season was 28 year old Cyrise Calvin from San Diego. She began at 1:09 a.m. on July 19th after a welcome from a curious seal. The sea was calm and warm at 68 degrees. Within an hour the sea became choppy. The boat was rocking severely.<sup>15</sup>

Cyrise's stroke count ranged from a low of 78 to a high of 88 despite the tougher conditions. Cyrise drank Gatorade every half hour. At times she ate a Power Bar. These breaks lasted from 45 seconds to 2 and a half minutes. At 6:04 a.m. Cyrise told the escorting paddler she was throwing up everything she ate and drank.<sup>16</sup> Within an hour she became cranky. At 7:19 a.m. a large ship passed within 75 yards of the swimmer. This seemed to calm Cyrise a bit after panicking everyone on the boat.<sup>17</sup>

Gradually the sea calmed down and Cyrise began to retain her food. By 9:30 a.m. the water conditions were good despite a change in water temperature. This had an effect on Cyrise. She was cold. She adjusted her feeding to warm tea.<sup>18</sup>

At 12:09 a.m. Cyrise left the water. She became the seventieth person to swim Catalina. Her time was ten hours, 59 minutes and twenty-two seconds.

The second swimmer of 1992 was forty year old Pete Huisveld. In order to earn a spot on the U.S. National Long Distance Team, Pete decided to conquer Catalina. At 10:54 pm on August 19th Pete climbed down the rocks into the water at Marineland heading to Catalina.

The water temperature ranged from 70 degrees to 72 degrees. Throughout the evening there was a heavy wind. Despite this, Pete was able to maintain a stroke count between 75 and 79 per minute. He sprinted across the Channel. He fed every fifteen minutes. His spirits remained high until his shoulder broke down. He thought he hadn't gone more than half way because of the horrible conditions swimming into six foot

waves with white caps. John York realized he had crashed. He told David Clark to tell him on the next feeding he only had 3 ½ nautical miles to go. When David told him this his response was, "You've gotta to be shitting me." He gulped 8 ounces of Shaklees performance sport drink, looked at the Island and sprinted off. By five a.m. it was evident Peter was on the men's world record pace. The wind finally calmed and Pete raced ashore at 6:31 a.m. at Doctor's cove.<sup>19</sup>

Pete's time was seven hours, thirty-seven minutes and thirty-one seconds. This was a new men's mainland to the Catalina record. This was the second fastest swim ever.

On September 18th, 1992 Steve Hoberg began a swim across the Catalina Channel. Steve was an age group, high school, and college swimmer. He retired until 1976 when he began Master's swimming. At 46, he decided to swim the Catalina Channel.

Steve entered the water at 12:23 a.m. guided by Mickey Pittman, the Navigator of the Wild Wave. Initially, Steve maintained 66 strokes per minute. The sea was calm and all was going well. Within the first hour the wind picked up. Steve was having problems seeing the paddlers and the escort boat. He was confusing his right and his left. His stroke count dropped to 60 per minute. As the wind calmed, he seemed to do better.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout the swim Steve fed at the half hour. He did not have any complaints about the food or how he felt.

In the morning hours the water temperature began to drop from 68 degrees to 63 degrees due to the upwelling currents off the Mainland. This severely affected Steve. His stroke count dropped to 58 per minute. Despite the cold Steve continued.<sup>21</sup>

At 10:50 a.m. he emerged from the water. He became the seventy-second person to swim the Catalina Channel. His time was ten hours, twenty-seven minutes and twenty-four seconds.

The final swim of 1992 was the second swim for Jamshid Khajavi. After a successful swim in 1990 he decided to swim in the opposite direction in 1992. Jamshid, a swimmer from Iran, set out to swim from the Mainland to Catalina. Most swimmers contend that this is the more difficult way as one has to swim into the prevailing currents and wind. Jamshid was unsuccessful but vowed to return in 1992.

Jamshid began his quest on September 19th at 7:38 p.m.. It was a calm, starry night. Jamshid fed every half hour. He alternated between a carbohydrate concentrate called "Squeezy", Cytomax and a Power Bar. At times he also ate a banana. He "felt good."<sup>22</sup>

At times while he fed he spoke to the paddler in a Persian language. His attitude was positive. Similarly, his stroke count ranged from 64 strokes per minute at the beginning to 55 strokes per minute near the end of the swim. The further he went the stronger he felt. In the meantime, the kayaker capsized. The kayaker had to be rescued while Jamshid followed the boat. He was doing well.<sup>23</sup>

In the early morning Jamshid's stomach began to bother him. He drank 7-Up in order to calm him down. In addition he began to feed every twenty minutes. Within an hour he requested a candy bar and Nuprin. He had two more candy bars within the hour then needed more 7-Up.<sup>24</sup>

As the sun rose, Jamshid's stroke count decreased. He seemed to be swimming well, however. At eleven a.m. the water was still calm. At 1:40 a.m. he cleared the water's edge.

Jamshid's swim took eighteen hours, one minute and forty-one seconds. He had accomplished his goal. He became the eighth swimmer to swim the Channel in both directions.

### 1993

1993 was a successful year for both individual and relay crossings. Five swimmers completed the crossing from Catalina to the mainland. One was in record time. Four relays were also successful. Two women's only relays set records.

Dailza Ribeiro decided to swim Catalina in late June. The 35 year old woman from Brazil entered the water at 12:50 a.m. on June 28th. Despite the early time of the season the water was a comfortable 69 degrees. Dailza was able to maintain 65 to 68 strokes per minute throughout the swim. She drank a mixture of banana, oatmeal and honey.

At four a.m. Dailza got lanolin on her goggles and her face. She tried a new pair but had it on her hands. She was thrown a towel but she was unable to remove the lanolin.<sup>25</sup>

Throughout the crossing marine life was evident. Seals, two sunfish, smelt and even a whale were visible. At the same time the boat had mechanical problems. The paddlers went ahead with the swimmer while the navigator Mickey Pittman attempted to do repairs. This became an on again, off again problem. Finally the Zodiac was put in the water with Dailza. A new boat was sent to assist as the Wild Wave returned to port.<sup>26</sup>

To prevent Dailza from getting upset numerous swimmers paced her throughout the problem hours. This helped to relieve her fears. She began feeding every half hour and finally every twenty minutes.

At 2:38 p.m. after fourteen hours, twenty-five minutes and forty-three seconds in the water, Dailza reached San Pedro. She became the seventy-third person to swim Catalina.

The second successful swimmer of the summer was Jamie Schnick. On August 24th he raced into the water at Catalina at 12:50 a.m. He began in a fast pace of 72 strokes per minute. He drank fluid replacement and/or high carbohydrates. He was able to limit his feedings to 5-10 second breaks.

The water was calm and warm at 69 degrees. In the early morning hours Jamie felt queasy. Sprite seemed to calm his stomach. His stroke count dropped to 59 until he felt better.<sup>27</sup>

At 5:15 a.m. a pacer entered the water. This did not seem to help him. His stroke and body position began to change. His stroke count further dropped to 57. He wanted to quit but was talked out of it.<sup>28</sup>

Gradually Jamie was able to refocus and push himself through the pain. He had pacers most of the morning and this helped. As the sun rose his spirits returned.

At 9:35 a.m. he climbed the rocky beach at the mainland. His time was an

excellent one, eight hours and forty-five minutes.

On September 24th, Chad Hundebly, the 1991 World Champion for long distance swimming, ran into the water at Doctor's Cove on Catalina. Chad has been the top marathon swimmer in the world for three years.

In 1989 Chad was afraid to swim at night in the U.S. Nationals team's relay. He was afraid of sharks. In 1993, at 22, he began his swim at 12:22 a.m. in bad weather. Within twelve minutes Chad sighted a shark.<sup>29</sup>

Chad's stroke count ranged from 80 to 86 strokes per minute. Initially he fed every fifteen minutes. By the end of the swim his feedings had dropped to eight minutes. He drank 4-8 ounces of Exceed at each feeding. Each feeding took 6 to 8 seconds. In the early part of the swim Chad threw up. The water was calm but there were long swells. The water temperature was 65 to 68 degrees, a bit chilly.<sup>30</sup>

At 5:53 a.m. Chad was nervous about sharks. He was beginning to show some signs of hypothermia. At 8:05 a.m. Chad saw another shark. He felt he was being followed. No one on board could see anything, however. Gradually he seemed to calm down.<sup>31</sup>

At 8:37 a.m. Chad walked ashore. His time was 8:14:46, a new World Record by 12 minutes 38 seconds. He became the seventy-fifth person to swim Catalina.

The fourth swimmer to tackle Catalina was David Yudovin. He had conquered Catalina in the 70's but returned in 1993 to swim it again.

David began at 12:28 a.m. from Doctor's Cove, Catalina on October 7th. The water was a comfortable 68 degrees, surprisingly warm for October.

Throughout the swim David maintained a 58-61 stroke count. He drank juice every hour and ate parts of a Tiger Milk bar. As the hours wore on he fed at the half hour.<sup>32</sup> At 2:27 a.m. David saw a large marine life under him. He could not tell what it was, however. The navigator, Mickey Pittman, turned on the boat lights but no one was able to see anything.<sup>33</sup>

In the morning it was overcast and the water turned bumpy with a slight swell. Numerous freighters were seen. Besides this, the swim was uneventful.

At 12:18 p.m. David landed at the mainland. He completed his third crossing in eleven hours, forty-nine minutes and thirty-seven seconds.

The final swim of 1993 was accomplished by Carlos Costa on November 7th. Despite having only one and a half legs, Carlos vowed to conquer Catalina. At 21 he did not let his handicap slow him down.

Carlos slid into the water at 6:04 a.m. at Emerald Bay on Catalina. The conditions were excellent with calm seas and extremely warm water for November. The water temperature ranged from 65.5 to 68 degrees.<sup>34</sup>

Carlos initially fed at the one and a half hour mark. He drank Ensure, hot chocolate and ate Power Bars and chocolate. As the swim progressed he fed at the hour. His stroke count ranged from 53 to 61 per minute.

The crossing was a little unique as Carlos was accompanied by a paddler, a Boston Whaler, a large power boat and a sailboat. The support crew was on the large

boat, which stayed a half a mile in front of Carlos.<sup>35</sup>

Carlos landed at 9:07 p.m. His swim took fifteen hours, three minutes and two seconds. His crossing was the one hundredth and first. Carlos was the seventy-sixth person to swim Catalina.

### 1993 Relays

There were four successful relays in 1993. The first was on January 30th. It was called the First Annual George Young Memorial Relay. The team consisted of David Clark, Paul Arnold, Gary King, Peter Urrea, Eric Olsen and John York. The team swam from the Mainland to Catalina in 14 hours, 5 minutes and eight seconds.

On July 6th, two relays swam side by side from the mainland to Catalina in 11 hours, 34 minutes and 38 seconds. The first team, Bondaless De Curitiba, consisted of six women: Cyrise Calvin, Dailza Ribeiro, Karin Janz, Julie Pedace, Paula Selby, and Carol Sing. This team set a women's only record from the mainland to Catalina. The second team, La Jolla Cove Swim Team, consisted of six men: Steve Frantz, Mike Meany, Vince White, John Darauche, Dave Clark, and Bob West.

The final relay of the summer, on September 9th, was the Over the Hill Gang. The team included: Janis Bloomquist, Jo Lamott, Carol Sing, Dudley Wood, Mary Beth Egloff, and Janet Lamott. The team swam from the Mainland to Catalina in eleven hours, one minute and twenty-nine seconds, erasing the women's only record set in July by 33 minutes.

1993 was an excellent year with five individual swims and four relays. In addition a new men's record was set and two relay records for women.

### 1994

In 1994 there were four individual swims and a relay swim. The first swim of 1994 was completed by Peter Blake, a 37 year old, on his second attempt. In 1992 he was pulled from the water suffering from hypothermia. This did not deter him but encouraged him to conquer the Channel.

He swam on a calm evening with flat seas and no wind. During the swim Pete drank Gatorade every twenty minutes. On one feeding he drank Ensure for an extra burst of energy. Pete's stroke rate ranged from 66 to 74 on the swim. According to his coach, Dave Clark, he maintained a strong stroke throughout the swim.

After Pete was in the water for over seven hours the navigator spotted two six foot sharks. Neither swam close to Pete but everyone prepared for a problem. Finally, the sharks disappeared.

Within the last two miles of the swim the wind began to blow. The water temperature was 66-68 degrees. Pete didn't have any problems with the water temperature.

By 10:30 a.m. Pete's crew could see not only the shore but another boat escorting a channel aspirant. Samantha Silva, a 17 year old from Long Beach had started two hours before Pete. As both were aiming for the same point of land a race developed at the finish. Pete was able to pass Samantha. He finished after eleven hours, one minute

and thirty five seconds. Pete became the 77th person to swim the Catalina Channel.<sup>36</sup>

Samantha began her swim at 10:42 p.m. on September 25th. She maintained a stroke rate of 66 to 74 throughout the swim. She felt strong through the first seven hours. At seven hours she was cold and was a bit frustrated. To alleviate the cold her coach, Kalani Caldwell, who swam the channel in 1980, warmed her feedings from then on in the swim. Her feeding pattern was a little erratic. She began drinking every hour then dropped to a half hour. Finally she fed at the twenty minutes. During her breaks she only drank two to five ounces of fluid. As the swim progressed she drank more fluids. In the last two hours she ate some candy for a mental break.

After thirteen hours and two minutes the Long Beach City College freshman emerged from the water, shivering and crying with joy for completing the swim. Samantha was the 78th swimmer to swim the channel.<sup>37</sup>

The third swimmer of the year was Karen Burton. The 32 year old from Colorado had swum on the 1989 U.S. national team relay which had set the overall record. She had swum the English Channel, finished third at the 25k world championships in 1991 and won numerous professional marathon races. As she entered the flat seas on October 10th her goal was to break the overall record from Catalina to the mainland.

Karen entered the water just after midnight. It was a beautiful night with calm seas and no wind. There was phosphorous in the water. This caused the water to look blue.

During the swim Karen drank every 15 to 20 minutes. She drank eight ounces of Shaklee and on some occasions she drank hot chocolate. Her breaks lasted from four to fifteen seconds. The longer ones were caused by Karen taking time to stretch her back and shoulders. Karen had bad shoulders and had pain during the swim. She took nine Advils during the crossing, attempting to dim the pain.

Throughout the night numerous fish and mammals were sighted. Initially a 12 foot mammal passed under Karen. Later in the swim two dolphins were sighted and finally a seal swam near Karen.

Pete Huisveld acted as her coach on the crossing. He wrote her stroke counts on a dry marker board and other important notes. He then held a flashlight up to the board so Karen could read the board. Karen maintained a stroke count of 85 to 89 on the swim.

As the sun rose over the water the shore and finish were visible. After seven hours forty-three minutes and six seconds Karen climbed up the rocks on the Mainland. She had broken the women's record by fifty minutes and the overall Catalina to the Mainland record by thirty one minutes. Karen's swim was the fourth fastest swim of all time.<sup>38</sup>

The next day the fourth individual swim of the summer occurred. Alan Freeman from San Luis Obispo entered the water at Catalina just after 1 a.m. Actually this was the second start as initially he didn't clear the water's edge so he was stopped and restarted.

The water was very flat and again the phosphorous was amazing. It lit up the water.

During the crossing Alan maintained a 46 to 54 stroke count. He drank a mixture

of Carboplex, Gatorade and water. He tried to drink 8 ounces but was only consuming 4 to 6 ounces.

After five hours Alan needed to stretch his lower back and legs. He was nauseous from the fourth hour on in the swim. Dave Yudovin entered the water to provide support as a pace swimmer. This seemed to help and Alan picked up his pace.

In the seventh hour the crew was concerned about Alan's mental state. Gradually personal questions were asked of him to make sure he was aware of where he was and if he was in control. For safety more pace swimmers entered the water to help motivate Alan and to keep an eye on him.

A slight swell blew up for an hour then the ocean calmed down. Alan was doing well. He wasn't cold but was cramping slightly. He was able to urinate, however. The water temperature ranged from 69 to 71 degrees.

In the latter hours of the swim Alan paused to rest before he took the fluid. After drinking he swam a few breaststrokes before returning to freestyle. This seemed to stretch and relax him. An L.A. County lifeguard boat followed Alan the last hour for safety. Eight swimmers jumped in the water and swam ashore with Alan. After twelve hours, twelve minutes and seven seconds Alan walked up the beach. He became the 80th swimmer to cross the Catalina Channel.<sup>39</sup>

### **1994 Relay**

There was one relay crossing in 1994, a women's team from Pomona Pitzer Colleges, coached by Penny Lee Dean. The team was comprised of Judy Van Atta, Pam Reece, Heather Royer, Lesley Pelton, Erin Moore and Camille Patton. Judy Van Atta entered the water at 11:22 pm on August 18th in complete darkness off of Point Vicente. It was a calm night; conditions were ideal. Throughout the swim each swimmer had a feeding every fifteen minutes of ERG. As the swimmers were not in top condition this was designed to help their energy level for the hour swim. Judy held her stroke count from 82 to 88, Heather maintained 80 to 82, Erin was from 78 to 80 and Lesley's was 70 to 72. During Lesley's leg a huge flying fish jumped next to her but she did not see it. Camille was the fifth leg and maintained only a 57 to 60 stroke count. The sixth leg was swum by Pam Reece. Her stroke count ranged from 60 to 67. While she was in the water Pete Huisveld swam next to her as she was afraid of the darkness. Once she began she relaxed and did well, swimming 2.2 km on her leg. The sun gradually appeared during Judy's second leg. This not only helped everyone's enthusiasm but relieved some of the swimmer's and support crew's seasickness. During Heather's second swim six dolphins were spotted. Erin swam the final leg and landed on Catalina after eight hours and twenty-seven minutes. This was the fastest crossing by an all women's relay in either direction.<sup>40</sup>

### **1995**

In 1995 there were four individual swims and five relay swims. The latter crossings were unique as two relays swam together and then three later in the summer.

Jamshid Khajavi decided to tackle the Catalina Channel for the third time on August 3rd. He entered the water at 10:23 p.m. on a breezy, overcast night.

During the crossing Jamshid drank fluids every twenty to thirty minutes. Initially he drank a mixture of Exceed and Gatorade. He then switched to soup and ate bananas

while drinking the high carbohydrate every other feeding. As the swim entered the thirteenth hour Jamshid switched to drinking Coke and broth. The caffeine helped to keep him awake but was not as nutritionally helpful as the fluid replacement or the high carbohydrate. He also increased the amount of fluids he drank the first few hours as compared to the last fifteen hours of the swim. This was beneficial to his successful crossing.

Throughout the crossing numerous types of sea life could be spotted. At one point a sea lion seemed to be following Jamshid. This sea lion stayed with him for almost an hour and swam under the kayak support numerous times. Dolphins were visible near the boat three times during the crossing. In addition, a huge ship crossed in front of Jamshid's path on its way to L.A. harbor.

By the eighth hour the wind had stopped and the water was calm. Just about this time the engine of the boat had problems so Jamshid and the kayak swam ahead while the captain repaired the boat. Unfortunately the swimmer headed off course even though there was a compass on the kayak. It took seven minutes for the boat to be fixed and to catch up to the swimmer.

Jamshid had some pain during the crossing and took Advil to relieve the discomfort. He also had goggle problems but a few switches and this was alleviated. His crew was very supportive.

By 1 p.m. Jamshid's stroke began to decline in efficiency. He was lifting his head and this caused his legs to drop.

He only had a short period of mental frustration where he wanted to see the land but could not due to the overcast sky. As this disappeared not only did his spirits improve but his stroke did as well.

As he approached the Mainland a plane was skywriting messages of support for Jamshid. Unfortunately the fog made the messages disappear quickly. After 20:47.31 he landed on the Mainland. He completed his third crossing of Catalina at age 42.41

The next successful crossing was on September 15th by Noel Wells, a fifty-year-old from Yorba Linda. The swim was begun at 10:06 p.m. from Doctor's Cove on Catalina Island. It was a beautiful, starry night with no wind and calm seas. There was some fog rolling into Catalina but the rest of the Channel was clear.

Noel drank 8 to 10 ounces of Gatorade every thirty minutes for the first four hours of the swim. He then switched to drinking every twenty minutes.

After the first half an hour of calm seas the wind picked up creating a 1 to 3 foot chop. Even with the fog layer moving in the wind didn't die so the crossing conditions were less than ideal for Noel. Despite this he stayed positive and kept stroking. He averaged 45 to 54 strokes a minute during the crossing. He was able to maintain stroke efficiency throughout the crossing even with choppy conditions.

At 7:37 a.m. during a paddler change Noel made a turn and was actually heading back to Catalina. In the darkness it is very confusing to the swimmer and his instincts aren't always correct. The kayakers quickly corrected his course and made sure they led him. Within an hour the boat also changed course from Cabrillo Beach to White Point as Noel was being pushed there anyway. In the long run it would be a shorter swim.

At three miles Noel seemed to pick up his pace as he knew he would become the

81st person to swim Catalina. At 12:03 p.m. he landed at White Point. His crossing took thirteen hours fifty seven minutes and nine seconds, a very respectable time.<sup>42</sup>

The third individual crossing of the summer was completed by 26 year old Alexia Nalewaik. She also swam from Catalina to the Mainland. The night was calm and the water was a warm 68 degrees.

Initially Alexia had a swim pacer and a kayaker to swim with her. After a half hour the pacer left the water. At four hours Alexia requested another pacer and this seemed to help.

Alexia drank every twenty minutes on the swim. She only had positive comments during her quick breaks. On one feeding she had something to eat; otherwise she just consumed fluid.

Two different problems arose on the crossing. First, a huge ship was heading for Alexia but finally altered its course to go around the swimmer. This occurred at 4 a.m.. At 8:32 a.m. the boat found a rocket floating in the water near the swimmer. The Coast Guard was called and came to pick up the rocket.

At 9 a.m. another swim pacer entered the water to support Alexia. She stayed with Alexia for three hours. Again this crossing was blessed with a supportive crew of pacers and paddlers.

Twelve hours forty-seven minutes and eight seconds after Alexia began her swim she landed at the base of Cardiac Hill just north of Marineland. She became the 82nd person to swim Catalina.<sup>43</sup>

The final crossing of the summer was by Dave Yudovin. At 44 he was attempting his fourth Catalina crossing, the first attempt being in 1976. He had two successful crossings-in 1986 and 1993.

Dave entered the water on October 17th at just after 11 p.m. The night was perfect with many stars and a calm sea. Dave had the navigator turn off the spot light on the boat. This allowed Dave the opportunity to enjoy the phosphorescence in the water. It did make it somewhat challenging for the crew to keep track of Dave in the darkness.

For the first two hours of the swim Dave fed at the hour mark. He drank 4 to 6 ounces of fluid and sometimes ate half of a Tiger Bar. After these feedings Dave drank every half hour.

The wind had been calm at the beginning of the swim but began to kick up after an hour and a half. This created some chop.

As this was a late swim the water temperature had dropped significantly since the end of August. At the three hour mark Dave stated the temperature had dropped 4 to 5 degrees and he was getting cold.

His stroke ranged from 52 to 62 strokes per minute throughout the swim. Finally the wind began to drop and this helped Dave's stroke.

At the four and a half hour mark a dolphin was spotted from the boat. Within an hour and a half there were two to three dolphins swimming right next to Dave. By 5:30 a.m. there were lots of dolphins in the water. Everyone on the boat could hear the dolphins talking and there was a fair amount of fish in the water. Near the end of the swim more than twelve dolphins were swimming close to Dave.

Beyond the mammals in the water two huge freighters were moving into the same path as Dave. The extra lights had to be turned on as an extra precaution. Neither passed dangerously close, however.

As Dave approached the finish a seal swam close to analyze Dave. He jumped around and finally disappeared. At 9:50 a.m. Dave emerged after a ten hour forty-six minute and twenty-seven second swim. His crossing was the 110th across the Catalina channel. 44

### 1995 Relays

The first two relays of the summer occurred on July 21st. There were two teams called *Over the Wave*, one for men and one for women. For the men's relay the participants' ages ranged from 54 to 60 and consisted of Peter Urrea, Bob West, Steve Frantz, Frank Reynolds, Tony Joseph and Dave Lamott. On the women's side all of the women were between 53 and 59 so just by finishing the swim the women would set a record for their age group as it was the first attempt by an all women's group, 50-59. The women on the relay included Carol Sing, Debbie Peckham, Janet Lamott, Betsy Jordan, Sandra Vickers and Dudley Wood.

Unlike the individual swims it was decided to swim the relays in the morning. The first swimmers walked into the water at 5:00 a.m. at Doctor's Cove at Catalina. The water was very calm and a warm 68 degrees. Carol Sing began for the women and Peter Urrea for the men. Their stroke counts were 57 and 66, respectively. Both wore glow sticks as it was still dark and this made it easier to see the swimmers. The next swimmers were Debbie and Bob. Each maintained a 65 stroke count. While they entered the water a school of dolphins swam by the bow of the boat. Within five minutes of their entering the water the sun rose and the sky was clear but the wind began to pick up, creating white caps on the water.

Janet and Steve took over at 7:00 a.m. Fifteen minutes into the swim hundreds of dolphins emerged and surrounded the boat, then went on their way. Steve maintained a 67 stroke count while Janet Lamott had a 58.

The fourth legs were Betsy and Frank. The wind decreased slightly but chops were still visible. Frank had a 64 stroke count to 54 of Betsy. Forty-seven minutes into their leg of the swim another pod of dolphins approached the boat. The dolphins were very friendly so this was a little worrisome.

Tony and Sandra swam the fifth leg of the relays. It was a quiet leg without any extra mammals; just strong swimming by each. Tony had a 61 stroke count to Sandra's 59.

The sixth leg was swum by Dudley and Dave. Again the relays were visited by hundreds of dolphins. In addition, the water calmed down. Once the sixth hour was over the first two swimmers entered the water for a second leg. Peter maintained a 60 stroke count while Carol held a 57. A huge tanker passed in front of the swimmers. A baby seal emerged half way through their swim. It swam onto the swim step and hung around for quite some time.

During Bob's and Debbie's second swim the swimmers swam close to a buoy which was occupied by numerous seal lions. The sea lions stood up and made a lot of noise. Neither swimmer ventured too close to the buoy.

Steve and Janet jumped back in at 1 p.m. Just four miles from shore the swimmers swam into a marine layer.

The water temperature seemed to increase.

Frank and Betsy entered the water with two miles to go. Frank still maintained a 64 stroke count while Betsy dropped to 53 to 54. While these two swam a swim pacer jumped in for a while.

Finally Tony and Sandra entered the water for the last leg of the swim. The captain altered the course to hit a closer beach than the lighthouse. When Dave stopped to hear the captain Sandra panicked and swam in front of the boat. She thought there was a shark but there wasn't.

At 3:52.23 the two swimmers emerged on the shore. The relays swam the crossing in ten hour fifty minutes and thirty-one seconds. The women's relay set a new record for women between 50 and 59.45

The final relays of the year were three at one time, representing Lakewood, Surfside and Manhattan Beach.

The teams were made up of the following swimmers:

Lakewood:

Amanda Heintzelman	Teneale McCullough
Kristie Nash	Samantha Silva
Allison Strangeland	Catherine Wiggs

The members of this all women's team ranged in age from 13 to 18.

Surfside Swim Club:

Matt Kadowaki	Tim Kadawaki
Paul Kidwell	Bob Martinez
Casey Willeman	Amy Wood

The members of this relay ranged from 13 to 17 years old and there were four males and two females.

Manhattan Beach:

Tony Aimone	Julie Beeles
David Ferry	Kathryn Gregg
Olivier O'Connell	Jeremie Simkins

The members of this relay were four males and two females ranging from 16 to 18 years old.

The first three swimmers entered the water at 6:00 a.m. on August 15th at Doctor's Cove on Catalina Island. These were Samantha, Matt and Tony. The water was very calm but a little chilly, 64.5 degrees. By swimming during the day the sunlight seems to help to take the chill off of the temperature. In this first leg numerous birds were in the water around the swimmers sunning themselves.

Teneale, Paul and David swam the second leg. The first two began with a 72 stroke count while David maintained a 50 count. The day was slightly overcast. In the second stroke count Teneale's stroke rate decreased while both Paul and David increased their rate.

Amanda, Tim and Jeremie entered the water for the third leg. While these began the paddler tipped the kayak and had to turn it over and catch up to the swimmers. A sea lion was spotted off the starboard side of the boat. It did not bother the swimmers. Amanda had a stroke count of 73-75, Tim held 69 while Jeremie was 63 to 64 during each swimmer's hour leg.

The fourth leg was swum by Kristie, Bob and Kathryn. Everyone was awake and excited on the deck by this leg of the swim. The sea was still calm with a long swell. Kristie held a 70 to 72 stroke rate, Bob jumped from 63 to 68 and Kathryn had a 60 count each time.

Cathy, Casey and Julie swam the fifth leg. As these three entered the water the relays were well over half-way, on the way to a potential overall record. During their leg a huge tanker turned into the swimmer's path. At what seemed the last minute the tanker passed in front of the swimmers. The water temperature was still in the mid sixties but the sun finally broke through the clouds and it was becoming a beautiful day. Cathy bounced from an excited 80 strokes to 71 near the end of the hour. Casey and Julie maintained their rate, 67 and 63 respectively.

The sixth leg was swum by Allison, Amy and Olivier. The boat began heading to Cardiac Hill as this was the nearest point and there didn't seem to be any current. These girl's stroke rates ranged from Allison's 68 to 71, Amy's 56 to 59 and Olivier's 50 to 52. Near the end of this leg Allison switched her stroke to butterfly just to be different.

The first group of Samantha, Matt and Tony re-entered the water knowing there was a chance they could finish in their leg of the relay. There was just over two plus miles to finish the swim. Conditions were still ideal, flat water and the water had warmed to 65 degrees. For two of the swimmers, Samantha and Matt, their stroke rates increased. Samantha ranged from 72 to 80 while Matt increased from 72 to 78. Tony's stroke rate started at 73 and dropped to 66 during the swim.

At 1 p.m. Teneale, Paul and David entered the water to complete the swim for each relay. There was less than four hundred yards to go. Each sprinted to the edge and at 1:04 p.m. climbed ashore at Cardiac Hill. The finish time was seven hours four minutes. This was the fastest crossing from Catalina to the Mainland. It was the second fastest relay time ever. Finally, the all women's relay broke the overall record and the under 20 record. It was a beautiful day and there were three successful crossings of swimmers all under the age of 19. The success must be attributed to their coaches, John York and Kalani Caldwell.<sup>46</sup>

## 1996

1996 was not a successful year for Catalina swims. Despite numerous attempts only a relay was successful. Team 252, which was the total number of years of the members added together, swam a double crossing from the mainland to Catalina and back in record time. The total time was 15 hours, thirty minutes and six seconds. This was the third double crossing relay. Both of the individual legs were impressive in their own right.

The six swimmers and their order included Jim McConica, Jamie Schnick, John Lobdell, Dave Matthews, Alan Freeman and Jim Isaac. Their ages ranged from 33 to 45.

Jim entered the 66 degree water at 7:26 p.m. on October 17th at Long Point on the

Mainland. There was a one foot swell and a slight wind. Jim looked strong and maintained a stroke count between 76 and 80 for his first hour.

Jamie, the second swimmer, was quickly joined by quite a few dolphins. The dolphins frolicked around him and the paddlers for over ten minutes. This was very attractive to the camera crew who were filming a segment for Beach Patrol. Jamie maintained a stroke count from 74 to 76.

The third swimmer, John, had problems holding a course. The swimmer was able to guide the paddler instead of the other way around. Once John removed his goggles this fixed the problem and both did well. He maintained a 70 stroke count through most of the hour.

Both Dave's and Allen's leg was uneventful. Each maintained a 66 stroke count. Conditions were still calm but gradually the night sky had become covered with clouds. This did help the water conditions.

The sixth swimmer was Alan, who held a 64 stroke count through the hour. He did well and gladly tagged off to Jim, at three or so miles off the Island. During this leg a second group of dolphins approached and circled Jim. This seemed to inspire him and his stroke rate increased from 72 to 76, a significant increase. A small boat came too close to the swimmer and was ordered out but it followed for quite some time.

Jamie entered the water with just less than a mile for the finish of the first leg. After 7 hours 19 minutes and one second Jamie cleared the water's edge. He returned immediately to the water. Within a few minutes he swam into a large school of anchovies. A drunken sailor stopped for directions but it was determined that he was searching for a port thirty miles away.

In John's second leg he felt colder because the water temperature dropped to 58.6 degrees. This took its toll upon John and he wanted his leg to be over.

Dave swam into a few jellyfish on his second leg. He was stung numerous times. Luckily the colder water seemed to help numb the pain.

Alan swam a strong second leg. The water was still cold but as the sun was rising it seemed to help make it feel warmer. Near the end of his leg another school of dolphins swam near the swimmer but quickly disappeared.

Jim began his third leg as the darkness was completely replaced by sunlight. The dolphins returned to analyze Jim. A few minutes later a sea lion and later even a blue shark were spotted near the boat. Despite all the marine activity Jim maintained a 72 stroke count.

Jamie's final leg was dangerous as a large ship was seen bearing down on him. Ten minutes later it passed a half mile in front of the swimmer. The ship saluted the swimmers by blowing its horn.

John entered the water at 9:26 a.m., just over three miles off of the mainland. He swam well with a stroke count of 71 to 74. The water temperature had increased to 67 degrees. This seemed to please the marine animals as several dolphins were frolicking in the area. Dave was the final swimmer and entered with just over a mile. He knew he had to sprint to the finish. A seal swam closely to find out what was going on then swam away. After fifteen hours thirty minutes and six seconds Dave cleared the water's edge. The second leg of the crossing took seven hours eleven minutes and five seconds. This was a new world record for the double crossing relay.<sup>47</sup>

## 1997

1997 consisted of three Catalina swimmers: Carol Sing, Mara Wells, Peter Urrea; and seven relays.

At 1:20 a.m. Carol entered the water at Doctor's cove. Immediately there were fumes so Carol was switched to the other side of the boat. It was calmer on the lee side of the boat. Throughout the swim there were one to two foot waves, a mild ocean. Her first feed was at forty minutes and only took ten seconds to drink diluted fruit juice. Throughout the swim she rotated her feedings between twenty minutes and forty minutes and fruit juice and Gatorade drink.

There was no wind but the fumes could be smelled. Carol was moved forward of the boat but without any wind the fumes sat on the water. The wind picked up so Carol could swim on her right but the fumes were bad. After many changes she moved away from the fumes. She was swimming well and able to see the finish at Palos Verdes. The ocean was still glassy. Her third feeding only took eight seconds.

Carol was 55. Despite this age she was maintaining a nice 61 strokes per minute. In the morning hours Carol's paddlers switched and some pace swimmers jumped in one at a time. She was so excited as she only had four miles to go. Soon after this happened a large merchant ship was several miles off her hull. Next a Cosco container passed in front of her.

Her pacers and paddlers reported she was not drinking all her fluid on each feeding. Her shoulders were aching so she had two Tylenol. In the next hour she seemed to be doing well and even picked up the pace. She switched to fifteen-minute breaks, drinking as she was a bit cold. She did this for the last hour and felt better. Her stroke count increased to 63 strokes per minute. She smiled when she landed 100 yards West of Pointe Vicente lighthouse on a rocky beach in 10 hours, 38 minutes and 20 seconds. She was the first successful swimmer of the summer and in a very decent time.

Next was Mara Wells from Paso Robles, CA, being supported by the Golden Doubloon and Captain Greg Elliott. Despite being only 21 Mara swam from Catalina to the mainland. She was accompanied by flying fish and sea lions at the beginning of her swim. She began at 11:55.13p.m. There were light clouds so the people on the boat could see all the way to the finish. There was a mild wind which created a slightly bumpy sea. Her stroke count began at 62 and jumped to 68, back to 58 and up to 68.

Mara drank every 30 minutes. She drank 6 to 8 ounces of Carbofuel. Mara averaged 20 seconds on her feeding, a respectable time. She only had one kayaker so she swam on her back while he put everything away. This took up to two minutes.

Mara yelled her first two hours were hard but that she felt better at the two hour break. She increased her stroke count to 68 and yelled "good". The crew held up a sign which said GO MARA.

When there was a paddler switch Mara ran into the boat. She was getting frustrated and wanted more cheerleaders. At 4:30am, she asked when her father was going to swim. She needed some more support before the sun came up, a normal situation for most swimmers. Then the kayaker fell off and Mara stopped. The dingy was used to help rescue the kayaker and Mara said she was tired. Then she started swimming again

and looked good even though her stroke count was low. She went to feeding every 15 minutes. She complained of dizziness but to everyone on the boat she looked fine.

A pace swimmer entered the water to help Mara as she was fatigued. Her stroke count dropped to 48 then increased to 63. At the next feeding her spirits were up. Amy, the pace swimmer stayed in an hour. Both swimmers began getting stung by jelly fish but they didn't let it bother them. Mara had conquered the pain wall. She had 7 miles to go.

The crew was yelling constantly, the pacer was really supportive and the new kayaker did well. Each rotated and kept Mara happy. She fed every 15 minutes and then abruptly stopped, when a pilot whale passed under her. The water was 71 degrees so the pilot whale surfaced in front of her.

When Mara was told she had an hour to go she screamed but carried on and finished in 10 hours 32 minutes and 42 seconds. She had a good swim with a supportive crew.

Peter Urrea was the third swimmer of the summer. He began at 2:19 am from Doctors cove on the Island. It was a warm, calm evening. Tina Moore was the observer. There was a slight drizzle at his first feeding. He drank Cytomax. His feedings were fast and every twenty minutes. He maintained 53 to 55 stroke counts in the first few hours.

Peter was followed by a sea lion and dolphins. He could hear them talking. It was very cool. The lights from Los Angeles were visible. He was in good spirits, especially with the dolphins near him. After two hours the kayakers switched.

He commented on the food being great and luminescence in the water. In ten minutes the sun came up and a breeze. With this came fumes so he was moved to the other side of the boat. His tummy was weak but he pushed on. A pod of dolphins returned and lifted his spirits. There was a big set of swells, but Peter pushed on. In the morning the thermometer broke. By 7:20 am he had swum six nautical miles with twelve to go.

Paddlers switched and Peter's attitude was strong. He needed an Advil for his shoulder and his stroke count increased to 58. At 9:32 he reached the half way point. He also began to see freighters. Peter had three Advil and Cytomax and sweets at 10:40. He was doing so well and the navigator, Greg Elliott of the Golden Doubloon, had set a wonderful course.

At 11:45am Peter asked if he would make it. He was swimming well but worried as the day crept on. It was only 12:00pm He had snacks and Cytomax. Bob West and the rest of the boat encouraged him. He dropped his feeding to fifteen minutes and worked on his stroke. He had two miles to go. He looked happy and pushed onward. Peter asked if he was swimming uphill, a very normal feeling at the end of a swim.

At 2:45 another swimmer joined him besides the kayak. This made Peter feel better. At 3:43pm Peter landed on a rocky beach east of Marineland. He had a great swim. His total time was 13 hours 24 minutes and 54 seconds.

### 1997 Relays

The relays of the 1997 season began with three relays swimming simultaneously. The relays were:

Studly Sixties	FlashyFifties	Whippersnappers with a Flash
Bob West	Carol Sing	Peter Urrea
Frank Reynolds	Warren Haviland	David Yudovin
Janet Lamott	Debbie Peckham	Cathy Moore
Betsy Jordan	Kaiti Bailie	David Clark
Tony Joseph	Mike Meaney	Paula Selby
Dave Lamott	Dudley Wood	Will Newbern

The first three relays of the summer swam from the mainland to Catalina on July 7, 1997. The swim began at 5:08.32. The three swimmers stayed together for the entire swim. If one fell behind the others waited for the swimmer to catch up. Soon after the swim began, the swimmers moved to the other side of the boat to have the lights and to get away from the fumes. By 8:00 the wind had calmed down and the ocean had flattened. Soon dolphins could be seen. At one point in the swim a boat was approaching very quickly and the swimmers were separated. The navigator didn't think it was a problem. The swimmers tried to stay closer together after that. The swimmer entering the water had to tag the swimmer already swimming. Most of the tags went very well. Some of the swimmers put on fins to take pictures from under water. One swimmer unfortunately became seasick as the ocean became choppy. The weather changed significantly. It was raining and there were tons of dolphins. Everyone was getting cold. Dave Yudovin paddled ahead to find the landing beach. Finally the last three swimmers finished in daylight and raised their arms linked together at 20:03:57 in 14 hours, 55 minutes and 28 seconds.

On August 25<sup>th</sup> three relays set out together to swim from the mainland to Catalina. These were:

Humuhumu	Nukunuku	Apua'a
Anna Ray DeLozier	Brandon Farris	Matt Kincade
Amy Migliazzo	Kelly Swanson	Kristen Vesnaver
Doug Parish	Alan Freeman	Kevin Watkins
Jaime Riley-Akers	Mara Wells	Maritza Kelley
Kerry Forsyth	Lanor Messenger	Nicole Tetrault
Sylvia Glenn	Leonore Messenger	Pete Kelley

These relays began at Cabrillo Beach on the Golden Doubloon and with a kayak for support. The swims started at 10:49 pm. The observer, David Clark, took stroke counts of every swimmer, on each leg throughout the swim. This gave the swimmers useful information for their second swim.

On the first leg, one of the swimmers saw a bat ray. The night was clear but breezy. There were one to two foot waves. Dolphins were spotted as were flying fish and a squid. Unfortunately, several people were seasick. One swimmer had a breathing problem in the water and had to stop which disqualified the relay. The boat had to stop

with her and the other relays for eight minutes until she could be taken out of the water and rescued. She was fine after a few minutes.

As the night went on there was a kayak capsize and another paddler switch. The wind had picked up to 15 knots with one to two foot swells. The swimmers were doing well but the boat fumes were beginning to be a problem. Diesel smell from the motor was being blown into the swimmers, thus making the swimmers move to the front of the boat. It was so bad a second swimmer wasn't able to swim his leg and the Apua's relay was disqualified.

There was a nice sunrise and calmer morning as the last relay swam toward Long Point. The other relay members still swam their legs. From the boat everyone could see Avalon and the Casino. Anna DeLozier, representing the Humuhumu, finished at Descanso Bay after 12 hours, 16 minutes and 31 seconds.

The last relay of the summer consisted of one relay swimming a two way crossing. The name of the relay was the Top Guns. It was made up of: Dan Veatch, Lisa Hazen, Jim McConica, Mike Shaffer, Jane Cairns, and Leslie Robinson. The two crossings was very impressive. The first leg from the mainland to Catalina was swum in 7 hours 16 minutes and 20 seconds. The Catalina to the mainland took 7 hours 30 minutes and 36 seconds making the overall crossing 14 hours 46 minutes 56 seconds. This was the fastest double crossing for a relay. The swim was swum on October 4th, 1997 and finished on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October.

It started out as a cloudy, breezy night with a wind from the West. There was a three foot swell which within an hour dropped to a half foot. One of the problems on the swim was there were no lights on the sides of the boat. The swimmers had to guide off of the kayak. Some swimmers swam between the boat and the kayak. The people on the boat had trouble seeing the swimmer in the water. The stroke counts ranged from 76 of Dan, Lisa 75, 78 for Jim, 71 for Mike, Jane was 76, and Leslie was 74. As the swimmers approached the Island they began to be stung by jellyfish. It was making some of the swimmers sick. Lisa finished on a rock and then dove back in. Once the swimmer cleared the Island there were less jellyfish stings and the water was calmer. The water was 72 which was why there were jellyfish.

Dolphins, seals and ships were near the swimmers. It was morning so most people were awake and made faces at the swimmer in the water. They were moving toward the finish. Jim McConica landed safely in a double relay record.

## 1998

1998 was the year of the relays. There were four individual swimmers and nine relay swims.

The first individual swimmer of the summer was Jamshid Khajavi of Iran. He swam from Catalina to the mainland on July 31<sup>st</sup>. After 14 hours, 52 minutes and 45 seconds he landed at the mainland, completing his fourth swim.

The second swimmer was Bob West who also swam from Catalina to the mainland. It was his second crossing. Bob's swim lasted 15 hours, 49 minutes, and 49 seconds.

The third swimmer was Michael Stanton, swimming from Catalina to the mainland on September 26. There were dolphins throughout his swim. The water was 68. He drank 12 to 16 fluids of Cytomax, gel, power bars. He maintained a stroke count of 60. The water temperature ranged from 64 to 68 degrees. He had cramped so he drank more fluids. There were one to two foot swells. Michael maintained good spirits throughout the swim. His paddler, Brent Thompson played the harmonica to encourage Michael. It worked. Michael finished in 14 hours 10 minutes, and 58 seconds.

The last individual swimmer was Heather Royer. At 23 this was her longest swim. Heather began from Catalina at 1:48am on October 1, 1998. She was born in Alaska, attended college in southern California where she was interested in open water swimming. She was coached by Penny Lee Dean. Heather drank Cytomax tropical and gel. She drank every 15 minutes. The conditions were perfect. Her stroke count was from 74 to 80 per minute. She had two swim paddlers and a kayaker. She finished in 8 hours, 42 minutes, 57 seconds. This was the fourth fastest woman's swim in this direction.

### 1998 Relays

The 1998 relays started with three relays. The first was the Up Chuckers. This relay included Ginny Farmer, Amy Magliazzo, Leiah Masi, Matt Gibbons, Jaine Riley-Akers, and Kathi West. The second relay was Chumleys made up of Rick Graves, Kelly Swanson, Kristin Vesnanver, Cooper Johnson, Nicole Tetreault, Duane Leib. The third relay Bloodletters consisted of Courtney Brigham, Matt Kincade, Becca McLean, Daniel Gibbons, Kerry Brainard, and Sylvia Glenn. The relays were swimming from the mainland to Catalina. It began at 11:58pm on August 27 and landed at 12:29pm on August 28<sup>th</sup>, swimming in a total time of 12 hours 31 minutes. The swimmers were all cold on the crossing. This may have been since they left from the mainland which is colder than by Catalina. The water was 62 near the mainland and slowly warmed up to 74 degrees by Catalina. Stroke counts ranged from 56 to 82 during the swim. All three relays completed the swims together.

The next two relays swam together on August 30 from the mainland to Long Point on Catalina. The members of the relays were:

Disorganized	Confused
Karen Burton	Lisa Hazen
Dirk Bouma	Regan Scheiber
Terri Walters	Jane Cairns
Jana Lang	Pete Huisveld
Elise Melberg	John Hallman
Russ DeFusc	John York

The relays began at 10:12pm from Cabrillo Beach. It was a calm swim. Only one swimmer had problems with seasickness. The boat, the Bottom Scratcher was a 65 footer. It was difficult to transfer swimmers and paddlers from the boat. The swimmers landed at Catalina at 6:52am on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Their time was 8:00 hours.

The sixth relay of the summer was the Blues Turning Gray. The members were all over sixty.

Dudley Wood  
Janet LaMott  
Dave LaMott  
Betsy Jordan  
Peter Riddle  
Tony Joseph

The relay started at 4:05am on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. The temperature ranged from 71 near Catalina to 64 near the mainland. The water was choppy. In the early morning as the sun was rising, dolphins appeared. The water calmed down but the dolphins stayed with the swimmers. The wind picked up near the finish. The relay finished after 13 hours 8 minutes and 47 seconds. This was a world record for over sixties.

The final relays of the summer were the Solo Wannabe's I and II. They consisted of 30 to 40 year old mixed relays. The swimmers were:

Wannabe's I	Wannabe's II
Becky Jackman	Jo Lamott
John Lapp	Carol Sing
Jill Lapp	Shannon Di Martino
Cathy Ruff	Ron Leithiser
Mac Hall	John Skoglund
Kevin Eslinger	Mike Meaney

The Wannabes started at 1:28 am from Catalina, on a beautiful night. There were lots of seals and flying fish in the water near the boat. For the first exchange John and Carol jumped off the side of the boat for a faster exchange.

The water was a comfortable 72 degrees and the air was 69 degrees at the beginning but dropped through the night. As the clouds appeared and night disappeared, Kevin did a front flip to get in the water while Mike jumped in for his leg. All the transitions with the swimmers in and out of the water and the kayakers were excellent. This made for a faster swim.

When Jill and Shannon did their second leg, there were lots of dolphins swimming close to them. The sun was out but the water temperature was dropping due to the upwelling currents near the shore. Carol rode in the dingy to find a safe landing place. Jo and Becky cleared the water's edge in 12 hours, 6 minutes and 29 seconds.

### 1999

In 1999 there were three individual swims swum by Antonio Arguelles, Nick Olmos-Lau and Scott Zornig.

Antonio was from Mexico and a very accomplished athlete. He had run the New York Marathon, the Boston Marathon, completed the Hawaii Ironman, and the Manhattan

Island Marathon Swim. In 1999 he decided to swim Catalina. On July 12, at 5:17pm he entered the water at Long Point on Catalina heading for Cabrillo Beach. He used two boats, one in front and one at his side. His coach was in the lead boat. Antonio's stroke count ranged from 57 to 62 during the swim. Bob West, the observer, took his stroke count, the air and water temperature every thirty minutes just after Antonio fed. He drank Gatorade and a carbohydrate-protein drink. At times he drank coffee, tea with sugar and water. He ate grapes, chocolate chip cookies, cheese and Metrix. His breaks lasted 10 seconds to 58 seconds.

The night started out calm and gradually became rough with strong winds pushing him south of Cabrillo Beach. As he approached the mainland the water temperature dropped to 61 degrees compared to the 71 at the start. He was not cold or tired. Antonio finished at the point near Cabrillo Beach after 12 hours, 25 minutes and 43 seconds.

The second swimmer of the summer was Nick Olmos-Lau, also from Mexico. He swam from Catalina to the mainland on September 1<sup>st</sup>. At just after mid-night, Nick, at the age of 53, entered the water. His coach was David Clark. The water had one foot of swell. Nick was feeding every fifteen minutes, drinking Gatorade or having snacks. He had short breaks. His stroke rates started out at 60 and dropped to 47. Nick was seasick but he kept swimming. He was asked to drink more fluids which he did. The wind picked up and the air temperature dropped almost 10 degrees. Nick's spirits were high, even though he was not feeling well. After 12 hours, 40 minutes and 17 seconds Nick walked ashore.

The last swim of the summer was completed by Scott Zornig, a 39 year old from Southern California. On September 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:10.24 Scott entered the water at Doctor's Cove on Catalina. The water was 64 degrees, his stroke rate was 71 and the air was 60 degrees. The water was flat. He fed on Gatorade every 20 minutes at the beginning.

A boat was on collision course at one point but the navigator honked the boats horn and everything was fine. There were sea lions, dolphins and finally a sighting of a shark. The swimmer was moved closer to the boat and the captain revved the engine of the boat to scare away the shark. This seemed to work as the shark wasn't seen again.

In the Northbound traffic lane a large commercial vessel passed in front of the boat. The swimmer was safe. In the lane, the wind picked up to 10 knots and Scott began taking longer feeding breaks. Scott's stroke count was dropping with every feeding from 71 to 59 as the water hit 62 degrees.

For the last hour and a half Scott was cold and taking longer breaks which made him colder. Then he began skipping breaks without communicating with anyone.

At 9:18 am Scott finished West of Point Vicente after 10 hours 8 minutes and 34 seconds on September 27<sup>th</sup>.

There were four world records set in this period, 1990-1999. The first was by Pete Huisveld from the mainland to Catalina in 7 hour 37 minutes and 31 seconds. The second was by Chad Hundebly from the Catalina channel to the mainland in 8 hours 14 minutes and 46 seconds. The third and final solo record was set by Karen Burton from Catalina to the mainland in 7 hours 43 minutes and 06 seconds. A relay of all women from Pomona Pitzer College set a mainland to Catalina record of 8 hours 27 minutes.