

A History of the Catalina Channel Swims

Since 1927

by
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Revised 2012, 1996, 1994, 1988

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.¹ 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.²

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 9
2005-2007
The Early Period 2005-2006

In 2005 the number of individual swims successfully jumped to twelve, the most ever. All but one swimmer swam from Catalina to the mainland. Four relays attempted Catalina in this year.

The first two swimmers of 2005 swam together. William Newbern and Andrew Hewitt swam from Catalina to the mainland on July 11th leaving at 11:44 pm from Doctor's Cove. For the first three hours they fed every hour prior to switching the half hour. They fed on Maxim, Celebrex, Tylenol, honey with tea for Will when he didn't feel well. The latter didn't help.

There were numerous pods of dolphins close to the boat. There were also jellyfish and both guys were stung many times. The water was 64 to 66 degrees. The air temperature varied from 61 to 64 degrees according to Observers Carol Sing and Paula Selby.

Will averaged in the 60's for his stroke count while Andrew hovered in the 40's. This was a low stroke count for Andrew.

The night was calm and called "Lake Catalina". It only was rough, 3 to 4 foot waves as the two tried to climb up the rocks for the finish. Nevertheless, they were successful. Their time was 12 hours 48 minutes and 36 seconds.

On July 19th the third swimmer, Phil Garn, entered the water at 11:08 pm. The water was calm at Doctor's Cove where he started but the water temperature was 64 degrees. Through the night it dropped as low as 62 degrees! He was accompanied by a pacer for the first few hours. Phil maintained a stroke count of 70 strokes per minute until the early morning when he descended to 67 strokes per minute. He fed every thirty minutes in the crossing.

Early in the evening the water became very choppy and then there were white caps. This lasted for two hours, chasing the pacer out of the water. Finally, as the moon set, at around four am the water settled down. Every once in a while there were a few waves, then it was calm as could be. This pattern continued through the night. At 6:02 am according to observers David Clark and Paula Selby the sun rose. Soon after, more dolphins were spotted. David Clark kayaked Phil into the finish at Point Vicente. His time was 9 hours 39 minutes and 25 seconds. He was the 111th swimmer to cross Catalina.

Three swimmers swam simultaneously on August 1st at 11:35p.m. They were David Blanke, Elizabeth Fry and Marcia Cleveland. David was from Austin, Texas. Elizabeth was from West Point, Connecticut and Marcia was Winnetka, Illinois. Besides this, there were three observers watching the swimmers: David Clark, Carol Sing and Nora Toledano. It was a nice night with a slight swell but with 10 knots wind. Marcia needed a seasickness pill. Through the evening the swells increased to 1 to 3 feet before lying down in the morning.

The water temperature averaged 69 degrees until the end where it fell to 66 degrees off of the mainland. This did not significantly bother the swimmers but Marcia noticed it and Liz asked for warm fluids. Each had swum numerous open water swims throughout their lives.

Their stroke counts were recorded consistently. David's stroke count was constant at 57. Elizabeth's maintained 68 then dropped to 64 near the end of the swim. Meanwhile Marcia started at 71 and dropped to 64.

Feeding the three swimmers made for a longer break. The group began at 45 seconds but near the end were taking two minutes. They fed on Maxim and Gel. Sometimes they drank protein. They stopped every thirty minutes. On one feeding Motrin was also used.

A large container ship passed in front of their bow. Soon after the sun rose and all the swimmers were ecstatic. Their time was 8 hours, 56 minutes and 10 seconds. This was an excellent time.

Jeffrey Magouirk began his swim on August 22rd. He came from Westminster, Colorado. Jeff entered the water at 11:48.15pm. He swam a few strokes of breaststrokes then switched to freestyle. His stroke counts jumped from 59 to 71 to 66 but averaged 62 per minute. The water temperature dropped from 68 to 65 degrees. According to observer Margaret Clark, the air temperature immediately fell from 72 to 65 degrees then just as quickly to 64 degrees.

This cold air and water temperature can have an effect on a swimmer, but Jeff fought through it. He passed David Cooper who started before him. He stretched many times and swam a few strokes of breaststroke.

Jeff fed every forty minutes after an hour for the first feeding. Finally he switched to thirty minutes. He drank Hammer gel and other unlisted drinks. Jeff breathed to his right side. When he came closer to the boat he said he was dizzy. He wasn't hypothermic. After he told the boat this he seemed to pick it up. He pretended to be a shark. He felt better. In the morning hours he took many breaks. He swam breaststroke or stayed in one place. From 7:14 to 7:45 he took 11 breaks. Everyone thought he would quit. He didn't but he looked cold.

Through the clouds finally one could see Palos Verdes. One could also see David Cooper a few miles behind Jeff. He climbed the rocky beach at 11:31am on August 23rd. Jeff's time was 11 hours, 43 minutes and 2 seconds. He was the 115th person to swim Catalina. His wife and son met him on the beach and then all returned to the boat.

On August 22nd David Cooper attempted to swim from Catalina to the mainland. David took off from Doctor's Cove at 11:40 pm just before another boat was arriving. As the swim began David had to switch sides as the fumes were bothering him. He fed every thirty minutes. His stroke count was all over the place ranging from 48 to 57 in the first four hours.

There was a clear sky, with many stars and a bright moon. The water temperature started at 68 degrees and gradually receded to 64 degrees. Using Margaret Clark's air temperature it started at 72 and dropped to 64 degrees. Observer Becky Jackman focused on David's stroke count taking many counts during the swim. David departed at 54

strokes per minute and descended to 48 then jumped up to 57 strokes per minute. The next two hours he slowed to 48 strokes per minute (spm) then steadied at 50 spm.

At 7:40 am the boat was surrounded by dolphins. David increased his stroke count when he swam with them.

David wanted to know his distance but not by nautical miles only land miles. He yelled at the best kayaker in California. On all of the next breaks he pleasantly received both land and nautical distances from David Clark. He exited the water by ascending the rocky beach to finish his swim. It took him 13 hours, 19 minutes and 48 seconds.

Paolo Chiarino of Italy swam on August 25th. He embarked upon his attempt to swim Catalina at 11:56pm from Doctor's Cove. Paolo was 39. He picked a great day to swim as the sea was flat as was the wind.

Paolo had an interesting regime of feeding. After settling down he fed every 20 minutes. He drank coffee, Cytomax, gel pack, ate sandwiches made with Nutella and a banana.

His stroke count started out very well at 74 spm. For a couple of hours he held at 66 spm. As the water temperature decreased to 65 so did his stroke count. Near the coast he increased to 71 strokes per minute. The air temperature commenced at 64 degrees and then leveled out at 69 degrees. Paolo was cold and on two occasions was shivering at his breaks but he was alert and could communicate. An extra boat was put in for safety. He was close to finishing.

While approaching the shore there were choppy waves and jellyfish. Paolo's paddler used his paddle to push one out of Paolo's way. In addition, during the crossing, the navigator maneuvered the boat out of the way of a boat heading directly for Paolo. There were no other problems.

Paolo's finishing time was 15 hours, 17 minutes and six seconds.

Bill Hoehn entered the water at 10:50pm on September 6th. There were light winds and some swells of two to three feet high. It didn't bother Bill as he embarked on this event, leaving from Doctor's Cove swimming to the mainland. Paula Selby and Carol Sing were his observers.

Bill's stroke count began at 64 and decreased to 57 when he was doing poorly mentally. The water temperature remained consistent at 68 to 66 near the finish. Bill had a good feeding plan starting at one hour then immediately changing to half an hour for the rest of the swim. He drank Maxim and fructose; tea and Maxim; tea and Gatorade and then a few more courses of tea and Maxim.

As what happens with many swimmers as you get closer you feel as if you haven't moved. Bill asked this of his observers who told him he only had one nautical mile left. Many swimmers dove in to swim with him. His crew helped him finish! Bill exited the water after 12 hours, 57 minutes and 59 seconds. He was the 118th person to swim Catalina.

Richard Knepper swam from the mainland to Catalina. He started at 10:25.50 pm on September 8th. He set out from Cabrillo Beach on the mainland to Long Point on Catalina Island.

He fed on Cytomax or Accelerade every thirty minutes. He had quick feedings throughout the swim.

At the beginning the sea was wild and finally calmed down. Richard needed Ibuprofen to help his pain.

He started with a 59 stroke count and slowly dropped during the night. By early morning he increased his stroke rate to 59 again. This was very impressive for a 56 year old.

Observers David Clark, Paula Selby and Janis Bloomquist monitored the swim and felt it went well.

His time was 11 hours, 56 minutes and 10 seconds.

The final swimmer of the summer was Peter Attia of Canada. He entered the water on October 11th, at 18 minutes past midnight. He was swimming from Catalina towards the mainland.

Peter had a unique stroke count. He commenced at 48 for numerous hours and then improved to 51. He had an improvement through the night.

Peter had a cold night with 61 degree air temperature and 65-66 degree water temperature. The only good news was it was a beautiful night. The observer, Margaret Clark, was seeing lots of planets and stars.

As the night wore on the lights on the boat went off but then the stars were more visible. Soon the diesel took effect on the swimmer and Peter moved to the other side of the boat.

In the early morning Peter switched to backstroke. It seemed to relax him. Dolphins crossed in front of the boat and then returned. Two large tankers also passed in front of Peter.

Peter requested a pacer to help him swim faster. The photographers filmed from Bubba. There were ten people on the rocks as Peter crawled ashore to finish his swim. Peter swam the channel in 10 hours, 34 minutes, and 51 seconds.

2005 Relays

There were four relays in 2005. Three were from La Jolla Cove Swim Club:

Steve Royce	Bill Crane	Steve Mosely
Robert Philipson	Cat Moore	Jay Greeson
Chris Waggoner	Carol Sing	Rich Henry
Becky Jackman	Kim Darling	Cindy Walsh
Jo Lamott	Donald Van Cleve	Debbie Peckman
Janis Bloomquist	Steve Dockstader	Janet Lamott

The three relays commenced their swim at 3:06 am on August 11th 2005. The water temperature was a warm 68 to 70 degrees. The air averaged 65 degrees. No stroke counts were taken nor did any one feed on the swim while in the water. The group supported each other. The water was clear, calm and warm. In the distance some tall

ships could be seen heading to San Diego. Soon after this, a Cosco tanker was seen heading North. Finally there were dolphins.

The relays finished together after 10 hours, 30 minutes and 37 seconds.

The final relay swim of the summer was September 15, 2005. The name of the relay was the Holy Cross (HC) Alumni Swimmers + 1.

The members were:

Len Conti	Frank Bongiorno	Chris O'Connell
Kerry Brainard	Bob Somma	Mike Toner

This relay swam from the mainland to Catalina Island. As the swimmers were drifting too far from the boat the captain used a horn to pull them back to the boat. Stroke rates were taken every 15 minutes throughout the swim by the observers, Jim McConica and Linda Bamford. The current pushed the relay members so much there was concern they would miss Long Point. The swimmers did very well and landed after 14 hours, 47 minutes and 37 seconds. This was the 54th relay across Catalina.

2006

Thirteen swimmers tackled the Catalina Channel in 2006. There was only one relay.

On July 7th, the 2006 season began. Marc Lewis swam from Catalina to the mainland. He embarked from the floating deck on Doctor's Cove. He dove in and swam to shore for the start. Margaret Clark was his observer. He plunged into the water at 00:08:56, just after midnight.

Marc fed every 20 minutes and held his feedings to under 30 seconds. Usually he had faster feeds. He took liquid Motrin early in the swim as he was seasick. He did a good job maintaining his stroke count. He started at 57 strokes per minute and only for a short period dropped to 54 spm then returned to 57 for the finish.

The water temperature varied from 70 to 66 degrees as he approached the shore. The difference in this did not affect Marc. The air temperature on the other hand, rose from 64 to 68 degrees, during the swim helping to keep Marc warm.

The ocean was calm at the initial phases of the swim but gradually the swells increased adding to seasickness on the boat. One of the pacers treated a paddler with an herbal solution to help his seasickness. Everyone seemed to get better when the sun rose.

During the night, sea lions and flying fish crossed in front and by Marc. In the morning, a container ship crossed the bow of the ship. A bottle with a message in it was thrown in the water.

As Marc approached the finish, the skiff with the observer went in to find a safe landing beach. Marc left the water and walked ashore after 9 hours, 44 minutes and 18 seconds.

Andrew Alan Voisard of San Diego swam Catalina to the mainland on July 18th departing at 6 minutes after midnight. He plunged into the water at Doctor's Cove. The

water temperature in mid-July was between 68-70 degrees. Similarly, the air temperature was a comfortable 67 degrees.

Andrew fed at one hour then decreased to a half hour for the rest of the swim. At most of his feedings there were Pacific White Sided Dolphins according to observers Carol Sing and Paula Selby. He had short breaks of 30 seconds or less and then would take a three minute break. Most breaks he had Ibuprofen and caffeine until he stopped the caffeine at 6am. He did drink tea after the coffee which is actually stronger than coffee. He emerged after 11 hours, 26 minutes and 47 seconds just North of Palos Verdes.

The third swim was done by 32 year old Christian Tuskes. He swam on July 24th from Doctor's Cove on Catalina to the mainland. He left at 18 minutes after midnight.

Chris decided to feed at 40 minutes for the first feed, then to drop to every 20 minutes for the rest of the swim. This worked very well for him. He drank 4 ounces of chocolate Ensure alternating with 4 ounces of water. He took this well. He didn't get sick. He did, however, slow down after six hours.

It was a beautiful night with one foot waves and warm water ranging between 72 and 73 degrees. According to observer David Clark, "this was the warmest water temperature I have ever seen in the Catalina channel."

Similarly, the air temperature stayed in the 70's all night. This made for a great swim as conditions were so nice.

Chris maintained a favorable stroke count of 58 to 61 until he seemed to need more food. His stroke count decreased to 52. As he looked cold he was checked for his orientation. Various personal and other questions were asked to make sure he was alert. He responded immediately. It helped that the marine layer had burned off and the sun was out. The wind had picked up but Chris was persistent. Chris crawled out over the rocky beach and completed his swim. Christian finished in 15 hours, 57 minutes and 23 seconds.

The first Australian to swim Catalina to the mainland occurred on July 31st. Gemma Jensen was twenty years old when she accomplished this feat.

She departed from Doctor's Cove on the Island with Boy Scouts cheering in the background. She embarked in the water at 11:34.35pm. The water was a warm 72 degrees while the air temperature held around 68 degrees. Observer David Clark called conditions as "Lake Catalina."

Gemma had worn dark glasses so had to have them switched to clear goggles. This made it easier to see.

Besides this, there were no problems. She enjoyed the Catalina swim very much.

As for her stroke count, hers began at 86 and every 20 minutes seemed to drop one stroke count. At 1:57 am count was down to 81.

Gemma fed every thirty minutes through the first part of the crossing, then lowered to 20 minutes. Her feedings were fluids. They usually lasted 20 to 30 seconds.

Her time was the second fastest female to swim in this direction. Gemma swam a fast 8 hours, 20 minutes and 48 seconds, completing the swim on August 1st.

Stanley Leventhal swam on August 3rd from Catalina to the mainland. He began

at 11:49 pm. Stanley had attempted Catalina at an earlier time but he was back to conquer it. The water was calm at the start however there was a paddler problem. One went ahead and the other was behind and both were right.

David Clark tried to explain to them what to do but neither was listening and Stanley was getting upset. There was an angry exchange over food and how to lead but gradually everything settled down.

Stanley fed every twenty minutes. He started with short breaks then had longer ones, over two minutes. At his breaks he varied from Gatorade and applesauce to solid food, to hot apple cider. He changed over time. By 5:30 am his feedings were not supplying him with the energy he needed. His stroke changed. He lost his kick and finally his stroke count dropped to 53 from 57. Strangely, his stroke count improved with the sun clearing at 10:30 am. It wasn't consistent but it was higher, even reaching 60.

As he approached the shore there was only a steep rocky beach. Stanley stood up and climbed the rocks before he fell. He turned around and swam back to the boat as both kayaks had flipped over on the rocks. Observers David and Margaret Clark sent the one kayaker back with an extra paddle to help the stranded kayaker. Finally all were on the boat. Stanley emerged from the water after 16 hours, 15 minutes and 15 seconds becoming the 125th swimmer of the Catalina Channel.

Aditya Santosh Raut of India swam the channel on August 5th. He began at 12:18 am from Doctor's Cove on the Island. His coach was Vinnie Raut. He watched the swimmer constantly throughout the swim.

He fed every thirty minutes, usually a protein bar, two cookies, and drank 5 ounces of fluids. His breaks were very quick, 10 to 15 seconds each.

The night was beautiful. The water temperature was 72 degrees at the beginning.

According to observer John York around 8:24 am he was cold. He shivered around his mouth and hands. His right arm was dragging. John was watching him carefully. He had approximately 2.5 miles to go. There were several blue whales in front of the boat. Even though the sun was up the water temperature was dropping first to 68 then 67.8 degrees.

John York jumped in to swim with Aditya. He finished at 11 hours, 38 minutes and 49 seconds. He was the second swimmer from India.

Jersey Island of the UK sent Sally Minty-Gravett, and Dennis Dressel came from Connecticut. On August 9th they set out together from Catalina towards the mainland at 11:32pm. They left from Doctor's Cove where the water was a warm 73 degrees. Observers David Clark and Carol Sing recorded it was a beautiful night but a bit bumpy. Dennis's stroke rate was 53 while Sally's was 52.

At one hour they fed for one minute. At 1:30 Sally was disoriented and Dennis was sick. At 2:30 he decided to get out. He was fine other than the sea sickness. Sally changed sides because of the fumes. By 3:30 the sea had calmed down. As the morning rose there were dolphins everywhere. Two blue whales crossed in front of the boat.

Sally has cold water induced asthma. She had to be careful as she approached the coast as that is where the water temperature drops significantly. Sally did very well. Nothing bothered her except the fumes. Her time was 9 hours, 51 minutes and 23

seconds. This was an excellent time.

The 128th swimmer was Claudia Rose. She set out from Catalina at 3:42 am on August 10th. Claudia maintained 54 strokes per minute for the first hour. The water was calm and the temperature was 69 degrees. Claudia skipped her first feeding. She was stopping and looking around. Finally after an hour she fed. She fed again after twenty minutes. She did happen to vomit. Claudia saw a sea lion according to observer Alexia Nalawaik. Her stroke rate had lowered to 52 per minute.

By the 5:42 feeding the paddlers complained of fumes so Claudia was moved to the other side of the boat.

Claudia was still maintaining 52 strokes per minute. The wind picked up and changed direction so Claudia changed to the port side of the boat again. At 7:03 Claudia wanted to quit. For the next 40 minutes her stroke count dropped to 42 per minute, she swam some breaststroke and she talked a lot. She fought through mentally. Her stroke count increased to 50, she took off her swim top and drank green tea and crackers. This seemed to work. Next, dolphins appeared. She maintained a 52 stroke count.

The water temperature increased to 73 degrees. There were five paddlers who rotated through the swim, supporting Claudia. After this, Claudia walked ashore after 11 hours, 33 minutes and 20 seconds.

Anna Ray DeLozier from Sierra Vista, Arizona raced across Catalina to the mainland. She departed at 34 minutes after midnight on August 17th. She dove in at Doctor's Cove. It was a calm night. She chose to feed every 25 minutes. Her feedings lasted 10 seconds. She started out at 68 strokes per minutes. As the water temperature dropped, so did her stroke count. The Water went down to 68, stroke went down to 65. Fifty to eighty dolphins were around Anna. Near the finish she dropped to 62 strokes per minute. She landed East of Pt. Vicente. She climbed ashore in 8 hours, 35 minutes and 44 seconds.

The next swimmer of the summer was Grant Currie, a 30 year old from San Pedro. He walked into the water at 11:55pm on September 8th. He started near Arrow Point. After 24 minutes he asked for Vaseline since he forgot to put it on his neck.

He fed on 4 ounces of water at 30 minutes. Later he drank Gu, then Gatorade and water.

He varied stroke counts from 66 to 63 to 61, then dropped to 60, to 59, 56 and then raced back to 59.

The water temperature also bounced all over the place. It ranged from 68.8 to 70.9 to 66 near the shore. With three miles to go Grant was very cold. He struggled but Grant emerged after 15 hours, 59 minutes and 27 seconds.

Lynne Smith chose to swim Catalina on September 13th. She entered the water at 31:15 after midnight at a small beach just west of Long Point on Catalina heading for Cabrillo beach. The water was 68 degrees at the start of the swim but as the night and day continued, the temperature dropped to 61 degrees. Meanwhile the air temperature was 63 in the middle of the night and rose only to 66 degrees during the day.

It was a cloudy night. There was a marine cover and 1 to 2 foot swells. There was, however, a 10 knot wind. As the diesel smell was strong Lynne passed up calm water, for clear air and more swells. This was a tough trade off.

Lynne had rigged a line with three bottles hanging from the boat to feed herself at the break time. The first bottle had carbohydrate fluids. The second had water and the third had mouthwash. This worked for most of the swim and could be moved from side to side. It was an ingenious plan. There was a point where it fell into the water and had to be rescued.

Lynne fed every thirty minutes. Her breaks varied in time based on what she drank and if she spoke.

Another time the kayaker and swimmer went in front of the boat and then went 40 meters to the port. Lynne said she didn't like this. (Few swimmers would.)

Lynne asked if she had gone halfway. It took two breaks to get the correct mileage which was 9 miles. After this Lynne swam backstroke, breaststroke and stopped to look at her arm. It was surmised she was stung by a jellyfish.

She began retching after the 8:06 break and this lasted for an hour. She complained her shoulders hurt and stopped feeding but she kept swimming. Her stroke count which began at 66 dropped gradually to 63 but once her shoulders hurt the stroke count plummeted to 54 strokes per minute.

For the last two miles Lynne didn't feed. Her stroke count increased to 61 by sure will and determination.

Lynne climbed out of the water in front of the lifeguard tower on Cabrillo Beach. Lynne was looked at by the lifeguards. She was taken care of by Baywatch.

Lynne's final time was 11 hours, 27 minutes and 29 seconds.

James Pittar of Australia did the 12th swim of the summer. He left at 11:51 pm on September 15th. James was blind which makes this feat even more impressive. The crew used whistles to keep him in place. Luckily, the ocean was calm but a bit cold.

His stroke rate began at 66 per minute and only dropped to 59. He fed at the one hour mark and after that from the one and a half mark. He exited after 11 hours, 36 minutes and 50 seconds.

The final swim of 2006 was swum by Scott Richards. He swam from the Island to the mainland.

He entered the water at 12:20 am from Doctor's cove on Catalina. There were rough conditions for the first four hours. At one point the boat had lost the swimmer as the kayaker was sick and led the swimmer off to the North after a break. It took the boat 40 minutes to find Scott in the darkness.

In his interview Scott thought the toughest part of the swim was the mental part as there was no sea life, he was lost and he had to keep pushing himself through the pain.

He fed on 6 ounces of Gatorade for the first four hours. Then he added electrolytes and Gu. He fed at one hour then 45 minutes, and then he dropped to 30 minutes.

Scott hit the wall after five hours into the swim. He was depressed and wanted to quit. He didn't, he persevered. Mentally he celebrated when the dawn was visible. He

made it through the darkness.

Scott's elbow and shoulder began to hurt. Again he fought the pain and pushed onward to the finish.

His stroke count fluctuated from low 70's to mid 60's and back up. When he felt sorry for himself the stroke count dropped and when he overcame the pain the stroke count increased.

The water was 68 at the start and fell to 63 for the finish. Scott knew that this meant he was almost done. He was given landing instructions and finished after 10 hours, 39 minutes and twenty seven seconds. He was the 133rd person to swim the Catalina Channel.

2006 Relay

The only relay of the summer was on July 21, 2006 the RBAC Masters. The relay swam from the mainland to Catalina. The team was made up of:

Louis Caron
Jason Fox

Jill Keenan-Boline
Peter Hixson

Michael Scannell
Forrest Nelson

The relay plunged into the water at 5:58 am from Cabrillo Beach. There were some white caps but at least there was no darkness. The observer was John York. He took stroke counts on each leg of the relay and monitored the water temperature. The water temperature rose from 65 to 72 degrees.

This was the 55th relay to conquer the channel.

The Late Period 2007

There were eight individual swims in 2007. Each swim went from Catalina to the mainland.

Karl Jacobs was the first swimmer. He swam on July 9th. He began at 11:50pm at Doctor's Cove on an excellent night. The crossing was very smooth. The water temperature began at 68 degrees, lowered to 66 and raised to 69 degrees. Meanwhile, the air temperature went from 65 degrees to 70 degrees. Both were unusual for July.

Karl held his stroke counts to 59 to 60 throughout the swim. According to three observers, David Clark, Paula Selby and Jim Fitzpatrick, Karl held a strong, powerful stroke.

Karl drank every thirty minutes. Each break was 40 seconds long. He drank Maxim mixed with Green tea and water to make a total of 300 ml.

At one point in the swim there were dolphins next to Karl. Karl had to swim through kelp but it meant he would land at the closest beach, between Pt Vicente and Long Point. He sprung from the water after 10 hours, 7 minutes and 58 seconds.

The second swimmer was Tina Neill from St. Paul, Minnesota. She swam on July 22nd leaving at 11:55pm. The night began as a cloudy night with some stars then the rain hit. This calmed the ocean. Tina drank every 45 minutes. She had two six ounce glasses of sport drink. She also had half a banana, an Advil, and an Access Bar.

In the swim Tina had a descending stroke count from 64 to 59 strokes per minute

and up to 60 for the last three hours.

The air temperature rose from 64 to 71 degrees in the swim. Similarly, the water temperature commenced at 67 and hit 71 degrees near the finish. Tina climbed out after 9 hours, 26 minutes and 45 seconds, finishing on the 23rd of July.

The third swimmer was Cindy Walsh. On August 14th she started her swim at 3 am. The conditions were rough the whole night and day. The water temperature was 60 degrees.

Cindy drank Gatorade and fruit juice.

Cindy came out after 13 hours, 56 minutes and 5 seconds.

John Graass was the next swimmer of the summer. He began at 11:30 pm from Doctor's Cove on Catalina on August 19. At the beginning, the boat rammed the swim dock but there wasn't any damage. The kayaker also forgot the feedings.

At 45 minutes John had his first break of eight ounces of Gatorade. He drank quickly and with no problems.

The water was 72 degrees while the air was 64. John's first stroke count was 59 strokes per minute. The water had two foot waves and a few knots wind from the East.

After the second feed, he asked for a pace swimmer. The pace swimmer ended up getting sick and had to get out. The wind increased again, probably to 9 knots. All of a sudden, according to observer Forrest Nelson, dolphins were swimming around John. Gradually the wind died to 4 knots. The sky was so clear the people on the boat could see shooting stars.

At the 4:00 am feeding John didn't feed a full eight ounces. He asked for another pacer but he was limited in paddlers and pacers. He didn't bring enough people. The crew was concerned with his needing a pacer so often. No one planned for this.

At the 6 hour break he drank well and was upbeat. The water temperature was down to 70 degrees. His stroke count was at 61. There was another swimmer that night and her boat could be seen.

John was peeing a lot which is a good sign. This shows he is not in hypothermia. When he has trouble then there is a problem. On the next feeding he only drank 4 ounces of Gatorade. At 7:30 am he said he was cold according to the observer. This led to a pacer swimmer jumping in with him. The water had moved to long two foot swells. This situation helped John pick up his pace.

Whales and dolphins were swimming towards John in the morning. He was still maintaining 61 strokes per minute. He had his last feed at 9:52 am. He said he was cold as the water had slipped to 68 degrees near the coast. John ascended the water after 10 hours, 31 minutes and 22 seconds.

Andrew Alan Voisard swam Catalina for the second time on September 16th. He embarked at 11:45 pm from Doctor's Cove. He was being escorted by the Bottom Scratcher, piloted by Greg Elliott. The observers were Carol Sing and Paula Selby. He had a great crew.

At the first feeding he drank for 15 seconds. By the third feeding he asked the feedings to be heated and every thirty minutes the rest of the way. He also ate bananas,

and took Ibuprofen and Advil, to help with the pain.

Alan knew to do this as the water was cold. The water was 60 degrees, rare for Catalina. By his fifth feeding it had dropped to 59 degrees. Luckily, it didn't drop any more.

As to his stroke count, Alan jumped all over the place. He ranged from 64 to 68 to 65 to 66. Basically 66 was his most common count. He had a strong stroke.

The night was calm with a slight swell and a light wind. It did not increase during the night.

At the last feed he told everyone to go hard. He landed up from the lighthouse. Alan sprung out after 8 hours, 51 minutes and 51 seconds. He made a massive improvement of over three hours!

September 17th the second swimmer of the night was Michele Santilhano of South Africa. She set out from Doctor's Cove at 12:46 am. The water was 65 to 66 degrees all night. There was a slight wind and a swell. Michele started out fine but gradually had some problems. She fed every 20 minutes throughout the swim. She drank Gatorade, tea with sugar, bananas, peppermint tea, diluted Gatorade, apple juice and Ensure.

At about three hours Michele became dizzy, probably from too much sugar. She wanted to vomit but was unable to. At 4:53 am she said according to observer Forrest Nelson, "I feel awful. I want to call it." But she didn't. Michele fought through the pain and kept going. She switched her feeding to 1/3 Ensure and water. She was more than half way.

Her stroke counts during the swim had varied from 72 to 68. She averaged 69.

After 7:30 am she seemed to feel better minus some hand shivering. Michele also began to stutter. She was cold and in mild hypothermia. She was watched carefully by the observer.

There was some traffic in the shipping lane. Dolphins also appeared in the morning. The sun came up, which helped.

Michele had bladder problems. This is a major sign of hypothermia. She had trouble peeing. At least the swell was from behind her pushing her towards the shore. She landed at the former Marineland. Michele emerged from the water after 13 hours, 8 minutes and 35 seconds. She had mild hypothermia and was warmed up quickly.

The final individual swim of the year was undertaken by 48-year-old Elizabeth Lee. On September 18 she took her first step in the water at 10:51pm at Doctor's Cove.

Beth fed every 15 minutes on the swim. Most of the feeds were short, less than thirty seconds but a few were longer. She drank fluids, ate food, bananas and had Advil for the pain. Beth had 36 feedings on the swim.

It was a dark night and Beth had a problem with this. She asked for more glow sticks a few times. Finally, Beth was moved up next to the wheel house and she liked this a lot. The observer, John York, thought it looked like Christmas lights.

The water was 67 degrees and lowered to 65 at the end. There was a mild wind and a light swell.

Beth held a 61 stroke count until the finish when she dropped to 58 as she was looking towards the shore.

Beth was strong and positive throughout the swim. 10 hours, 10 minutes and 59 seconds after she began, Beth exited the water on the mainland.

2007 RELAYS

There were 4 relays in 2007. These were the Valor Swim, Wet & Wild, and Menlo Plus.

The Valor relay swam a mainland to Catalina and back. The team consisted of:

Angie Rodriguez	Amy Migliazzo
Barrett Wilson	Louis Boehle
Lindsey Eastman	Garrett Miller

The swim commenced at Cabrillo Beach on April 19 at 8:32 pm. The water temperature was a brisk 53 degrees at the beginning. Gradually it increased to 57 degrees then rose to 59 before falling to 54.8 degrees. This was a tough swim. Similarly, the air temperature was cold. The members of the relay were able to deal with the cold.

There were swells and white caps. Unfortunately, four people on the boat were sea sick. When Lindsey swam she asked for warm water. In her leg the wind died down and the sea was calm. Garrett entered next and immediately was approached by a Harbor Seal. According to observer John York the two were playing with each other. At 6:50 am the sun rose. Garrett landed at Moonstone Beach on Catalina after 11:41.57. He spent 7 and ½ minutes on shore collecting rocks and peeing then returned to the swim.

It was a nice, sunny day with little wind. At 1:30 pm dolphins were everywhere. By 2:25pm the wind picked up and the swimmer entered the shipping lane. No problems with the ships however. As the hours crept on the sun went down and it became dark. The Baywatch followed the swimmer, Garrett to the finish. After 23:29.27 the Valor relay completed their double crossing at 8:01 pm on April 20. This was the 56th relay to swim Catalina.

The second and third relays of the summer swam together. The members were:

Wet	Wild
Leslie Nanninga	Wiley Hemphil
Nicole Vandobben	Sabrina Buselt-Carlon
Emily Nanninga	Madison Lanz
Carrie Nanninga	Catherine Miller
Jennifer Frese	Jaclyn Fritzer
Rebecca Minjarez	Robert Sablove

On July 31st, at 3:03 am, the relays departed from Catalina. It was a calm night with no wind, a full moon and a slight overcast. The first two transitions went well. By the third transition dolphins were everywhere. A problem arose as one of the swimmers was sick and her place was taken by the alternate. The breeze was picking up. The rest of the transitions were fine.

The water temperature was from a low of 70 to a high of 74 according to observers Carol Sing and Rebecca Jackman.

The air temperature rose to 77 degrees by the mid morning.

The last two swimmers landed after 9:15.17. The rest of the swimmers followed them into the shore.

The final relay of the summer was Menlo Plus. This relay swam from Catalina to the mainland. The members were:

Michele Santilhano
Emily Evans
Lorraine Sneed

Marianne Brems
Virginia Justus
Mike Fero

The relay of five women and one man departed on August 11th at 11:48 pm from Doctor's cove. There was a clear sky, no moon, less than one foot of swell and lots of shooting stars. As it was a warm summer night the water was 68 degrees at the beginning. Gradually the temperature fell to 66 and at the finish hit a low of 64 degrees. The air followed a similar pattern of 68 degrees and dropping to 64 degrees at the end.

The swimmers had their stroke counts taken. As the dawn rose the wind increased and the swells also increased. Michelle started the swim and Virginia finished the relay. Others jumped in to escort Virginia up the rocks to the beach at the finish. The relay made the swim in 10 hours three minutes and 8 seconds.

From 2005 through 2007 there were 33 solo swims. There were numerous relays and many countries were represented. This lead to individual years for each chapter as there were so many more swimmers tackling Catalina each year.