

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.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 10

The 2008 Era

There were 25 solo swims in 2008, the largest amount ever. This included one double crossing and four relays.

The first swim of the summer was a mainland to Catalina and back, double by Tina Neill. She started from Palos Verdes on her way to Catalina. She plunged into the water on July 8th at 6:50 pm. It was a windy night with two feet swells. The water temperature was 60.5 degrees at the start. On the initial lap the water temperature raised to 64.7 degrees. On the other hand Tina's stroke count, dropped from 63 to 58 on the first lap. Her feeding was varied with Accelerade, yogurt, grape Juice, Access Bar and chocolate milk.

On a few occasions she also had Advils. Her first lap was 10 hours and 40 minutes.

Tina proceeded from the water, turned around and returned to the water after six minutes of rest. Then Tina started on the second length. The water had calmed down significantly as had the wind. The water temperature stayed a warm 65 degrees.

On the way back Tina held her stroke count at 58 strokes per minute with one 60 and one 59. This was very good. She saw a very large seal and many dolphins at various times. Tina was in a good mood and stayed positive. As she approached shore at Long Point a man walking his dog began clapping for Tina.

She jumped out after 22 hours, 2 minutes and 46 seconds. This was the first successful double in many years. Her second leg, Catalina to the mainland took 11 hours, 22 minutes and 46 seconds.

On July 24 2008, Greg Farrier attempted to swim Catalina. He swam from Catalina to the mainland. Greg began at 11:47.18 pm at Doctor's Cove. Greg set a feeding schedule of every twenty minutes throughout the swim. Most of his breaks were 30 seconds long as recorded by observer Carol Sing. Carol monitored his body temperature by recording when and how many times he peed. If a man can't pee, he is in mild to moderate hypothermia. He has to be watched carefully. Greg was fine! Besides this, the water temperature rose from 68 degrees to 70 degrees. Meanwhile the air temperature was colder from 61 to 65 degrees.

He swam very well, controlling his strokes per minute to an average of 60. His high end was 66 and the low end was 58 strokes per minute. He landed at Pt Vicente by the Black Rocks at 9:41.56, making his time 9:54.38. He was the 141st successful swimmer.

On July 25 Tina Neill was back in the Catalina Channel swimming backstroke from Catalina to the mainland. She took her first step at 11:17.50 pm on July 24th. The water was 66 degrees at the beginning. The water remained this temperature until the last reading when it dropped to 61 degrees. In many ways swimming backstroke if the water is cold is an advantage if the air is warm as the face stays warmer. Unfortunately, if the

air is colder than the swimmer will be colder. No air temperatures were taken on this crossing but on Greg's crossing the same day, they were and they were colder, 61 to 65 degrees. This meant swimming backstroke that night was more difficult than freestyle.

Tina guided off of an eight foot PVC pipe with glow sticks hanging off of it according to observer Forrest Nelson. During the night Tina drank and ate numerous combinations of foods every 50 minutes. These included Cytomax and yogurt, banana, Grape juice, Endurox and Access bar and various combinations of each of these products.

Tina's stroke count averaged 51-52 per minute. Her first and last count was 54 strokes per minute.

During the night the swells calmed as did the wind. This helped Tina and the paddlers. Early in the morning there were many jelly fish on the surface as the sun was rising.

When Tina left the water her time was 10 hours, 37 minutes and 42 seconds. This was very impressive.

Kate Howell set out from Doctor's Cove at 11:48 pm on August 6th. She was a 25 year old from Davis, CA.

Kate fed every 30 minutes. Unfortunately on the first fed she took two minutes. It was suggested she feed faster and she did for awhile. As the time wore on she slipped back to one minute breaks and more.

At 8:30 am dolphins were seen around the boat. Kate had previously been stung by a jelly fish.

The water temperature was 68, then 70 and right near shore dropped to 65 degrees. Conditions were good with a two foot swell and a slight wind. Air temperature was a low of 65 and rose to 70 degrees.

Kate's stroke count moved from a high of 58 at the beginning to a low of 50 at the finish. Kate finished at the beach 1:38.48 pm which made her time 13 hours 49 minutes 53 seconds.

Yet again another swimmer commenced within a few minutes of the first of the evening. Emily Evans set out from Doctor's Cove at 12:01 am time on August 7th. She was attempting a Catalina to mainland swim. The night had a slight wind and a two foot swell. The water temperature began at 68 degrees, rose to 70 degrees and dropped to 64 degrees near the finish.

Emily started out feeding every 30 minutes then quickly switched to 20 minute intervals. What she ate or drank was not recorded.

Her stroke count was erratic for the first two hours. Finally, Emily began stroking at 68 to 69 strokes per minute for the rest of the swim.

Emily landed on the beach with Forrest waiting for her at 9:35.26. This made her final time 9:34.01.

This was an unusual swim as no fish or mammals were visible in the crossing or recorded.

Stephen Junk of Australia set out from Doctor's Cove at 11:52 pm on August 7th. The night was beautiful but in the water there was a small chop. The water was 70 to 71

degrees until the last reading when it read 67 according to observers Tony and Nancy Zamora. The air temperature began at 71 degrees and reached 80 degrees at the end of the swim!

Stephen had a well paced swim. He maintained 60 to 61 strokes per minute with a little drop off and rose at the end. Fumes bothered him early in the swim so he changed sides of the boat and he felt much better.

He fed on Fierce Sports drink, Gel and Gatorade. After one feeding he threw up. There were lots of boats including the Long Beach police, a tanker heading North and a third tanker heading South. With two miles to go tons of dolphins were seen. 2 to 3 turned to Stephen to swim with him to shore. When Stephen was told he had a mile to go he declined the feeding and pushed on toward the shore. Stephen landed at 10:22.26, making his total time 10 hours, 29 minutes and 46 seconds.

The 145th swimmer was Rendy Lynn Opdycke. She swam on August 9th from Catalina, leaving at 5:46 am from Doctor's cove. The sun was just beginning to rise by her second feeding. She fed every 15 minutes throughout the swim. She drank fluids on the 3 times 15 minute breaks and Gu and water on the hour break. She also had a banana.

Her stroke counts were either 66 or 63 throughout the swim.

Water conditions had a small swell and a slight wind. By 7:45 am the wind picked up a bit and this increased the waves. This calmed down in a short time.

At 10am Rendy was half way home. She was on pace for a fast swim. Soon after this a large freighter passed close to the boat but the pilot had called and all was well.

At 12:00 pm she wanted to know how far she had gone. She had 3.8 nautical miles to go. Rendy didn't react. She kept on swimming.

David Clark led her to the finish. She landed south of Long Point at 2:14pm. She had an outstanding time of 8 hours, 28 minutes and 21 seconds.

On August 13th two swimmers from New Jersey swam together. They were Michelle Davidson and Nancy Steadman-Martin. Each embarked at 11:47 pm from Doctor's Cove. The night was clear and the water was calm. Pt Vicente was visible from the beginning of the swim. As with many crossings the water started out warm then gradually decreased through the night. The 69 start was wonderful, yet within nine hours the water was 64 degrees and both swimmers had switched to warm fluid. Sadly, the water dropped to 63 degrees by the finish. The air temperature did the opposite by starting out at 63 and rose to 68 degrees. This would help on feedings. Michelle and Nancy fed every hour. The problem was they took two to four minute breaks. This had to make them cold as the temperature dropped but they only complained about the lights so they were turned off. This made it difficult for the observers to see the swimmers. They had started out taking stroke counts but about two hours they couldn't take them any more until the sun rose. Of those that were taken, Nancy held 70 per minute and Michelle 68 and 66.

At ten in the morning the swimmers decided not to take anymore feedings. The observers were opposed to this but the swimmers swam on. After an hour and a half without a break they finished. Their final time was 11 hours, 46 minutes and 1 second as each rose out of the water together.

The first swimmer from Spain took off at 11:53 pm. His name was Pieter Christian Jongeneel Anderica. He began on August 18th. It was a peaceful night with no wind or swells at the beginning. There was a full moon and good visibility. Until 6:00 am the water was 68 degrees then drastically fell to 60 degrees for the last hour. The air temperature basically held at 66 degrees most of the night. By 3:00 am some long swells appeared and with them—dolphins. Some even approached Christian.

His stroke counts varied from 64 at the start and for the first two hours to 61 to 62 for the next three hours. Finally, the last four hours he fell from 69 to 62 strokes per minute.

Christian fed every hour and took long feeds, mostly three minutes. At 7:00 am more dolphins approached the boat and the swimmer. At the same time a large Cosco ship passed behind the boat. The water had calmed completely. Christian swam through the kelp bed and landed East of Point Vicente Lighthouse. Pieter proceeded from the water after 9 hours, 14 minutes and 26 seconds.

Dorothy Thomas-Reid commenced her swim on August 20th at 12:07AM .Her husband kayaked the whole swim. Dorothy held her stroke counts from 72 to 70 strokes a minute.

Initially Dorothy drank eight ounces of water, Accelerate and on the hour mark she drank Gu. She did this for 6 hours then on the seventh hour she drank GU. After six hours she switched to warm tea with honey and a shot of Gu for energy.

The water temperature began at 68 degrees hovered there for a few hours, fell to 66 degrees the near the end then further dropped just off the beach where there was an outgoing current. She had to fight this current. She did and accomplished her second crossing. She ran out of the water after 10 hours, 22 minutes and 30 seconds.

Sabrina Buselt-Carlton undertook the Catalina to mainland swim on August 21st. She took her first step at 12:34 am. Within a few minutes, Sabrina had to change sides as the fumes were bothering her. This helped Sabrina immensely.

Sabrina fed every 20 minutes throughout the swim. Some of the things she drank were Gu, Accelerade, water and hot chocolate as listed by observer Carol Sing.

As the night proceeded the swells increased as did the wind. Despite these conditions Sabrina was able to maintain a stroke count of 54 per minute.

The water temperature was 68 degrees until 9:31 am then it began to slowly drop; First to 66 then 64 and then an unbelievable drop to 61 degrees for almost an hour!

As usual the air temperature rose through the night from 64 degrees to 80 degrees when the sun was out. She sprung forth from the water after 12 hours, 34 minutes and 40 seconds.

David Galli slid into the water at Doctor's Cove at 12:10 am on August 22. He had a pace swimmer with him throughout the swim until the last hour. David started out feeding every thirty minutes drinking Hammer Perpetuem, then dropped to twenty minutes of feeding at the 6:30 am hour. It was a nice night with fog but Pt Vicente was

clear as possible.

David began with a 62 stroke per minute gradually dropped to 57 then rose to 62. Some of this could have been influenced by the pace swimmers or just the change in feeding.

The water temperature was a warm 68 degrees until daybreak. Then the water began to get colder. 67, 65, and finally 63 for the last half hour to the finish. Similarly the air temperature varied but averaged 67 degrees.

Due to the water and feeding David had problems urinating and therefore hit mild hypothermia. He changed to more fluids taken more often and this helped him complete the swim. He arrived at Pt Vicente after 10 hours, 35 minutes and 6 seconds. He had mild hypothermia but was able to warm up quickly. He also saw an eight foot shark near the finish which no one else did or reacted to! Luckily, the shark didn't see him or react to him either! Nice job, David!

The next swimmer was Erica Moffett from New York, New York, attempting to complete the Triple Crown (Catalina Channel, English Channel, and Manhattan Island Marathon Swim). She commenced at 11:31 pm on August 21st. Immediately her glow stick came off of her head. This happened again after five minutes. Glow sticks were replaced two more times.

The water was beautiful, calm and no wind. Point Vicente was clear and lights could be seen from the boat.

Erica's intention was to drink every hour for the swim. After the second feed she decided to feed every half hour. This was a good decision. Some of her feedings were hot tea.

Erica swam on the same day as David; he started afterward. The water was 67 degrees until it dropped to 63 for the last two hours.

Erica switched sides of the boat when the waves picked up and a pacer jumped in with her, according to Robert Philipson, the observer. Soon after this dolphins were visible. Erica had 5.5 nautical miles to go. Surprising to everyone Erica stopped and said she didn't think she could make it. She drank hot tea and started again. She stopped again after thirty seconds. She started again. The kayaker relayed that Erica said she was cold.

Erica's stroke count was 70 spm at the outset and first few hours. She plunged to 66 at her first half hour feed. When she stopped to quit, her stroke count dropped to 64 but she held this the rest of the swim. She drank tea every few minutes but she made it. She exited the Channel after 11 hours, 47 minutes and 21 seconds on August 22nd.

The 152nd swimmer was Michelle Deasy. Michelle embarked at 11:42 pm on August 24th from Doctor's Cove. The conditions were perfect with calm water and a clear night. There were some swells as the night progressed but these were pushing her in her direction of the mainland.

At 45 minutes she took her first feed of protein drink. She was very enthusiastic; her strokes per minute were 76 and the water temperature was 67 degrees. Her feedings stayed at 45 minutes throughout the swim. She did decline her last feeding as she was so close she wanted to sprint to the finish. Besides protein, Michelle drank Cytomax, Gu, a yogurt drink, a blueberry drink, ate a half of a banana, and drank chocolate protein. After

her second protein drink she felt nauseous. Gradually this feeling went away.

As to her stroke count she bounced from 76 to 73 to 70 to 75. Michelle was stronger after each feed. With two nautical miles to go she increased her stroke count to 75-76 and finished strong.

Michelle sprung out of the water after 9 hours and 50 minutes.

On September 3rd Michael Fero left Catalina at 11:55 pm from Doctor's Cove heading for the mainland. The water was choppy and there were infrequent white caps.

Michael drank every twenty minutes. He drank Hammer Perpetuem. When his bottles were empty they were taken to the boat and refilled with hotter bottles. This seemed to help as he was getting cold.

Michael did a good job with controlling his stroke count during the swim. His high was 63 while his low was 59 near the finish.

According to the observer, Forrest Nelson, the water temperature varied little but stayed a comfortable 68 to 70 degrees. As he approached the finish his family jumped in and swam with him. Forrest watched carefully that he wasn't touched and he ascended from the water after 11 hours, 6 minutes and 43 seconds.

Tawny Cothran, at 29, entered the water at 11:48pm on September 4th. She began on a calm, clear night with mild swells. She started out feeding every twenty minutes using Maxim and Endurox, both mixed with water. Early on she asked for Motrin and mouthwash. In the middle of the night she slowed down as she realized the difference of the open ocean and her San Francisco Bay swims. The boat crew tried to encourage her to pick it up. Tawny dropped to 15 minute feeds. By 5:00 am she was using Gu and water for two feeds then had a defizzed Hansen's soda. By 7:00 am Tawny switched her feeding again to Infiniti and Gu. She stuck with this for a few hours. She also took more Motrin.

At 10:30 am Tawny switched her feeding to thirty minutes as she didn't want to lose more ground. Her stops were long but the swells were pushing her towards the mainland. She refused her next feed but she was forced to take it as she was nearing the finish.

The water temperature was a comfortable 67 degrees and actually was warmer at the finish, an oddity.

Meanwhile the air temperature was 64 at the beginning and rose to 69 at the finish according to the observers, Claudia Rose and Dorothy Thomas-Reid.

Tawny began with a spm of 56 and never was lower than 51 until the middle of the night when she hit 49. At 3:53 am she was yelled at to pick it up as she was swimming 43 spm. She bounced back to 50 gradually and finished with a stroke per minute (spm) of 54. She rose out of the water 12 hours, 30 minutes and 20 seconds after she started, just South of Pt. Vicente, by climbing up small rocks.

A Catalina swim from the Island to the mainland was accomplished by Dan Robinson on September 8th. He left from Doctor's Cove at 11:42 pm in the evening.

He fed on Gu and Cytomax for an hour and a half. He stayed with this for a while but also had Red Bull feed and Advil.

His stroke counts didn't change very much. He stayed between 70 and 72 strokes per minutes.

Conditions were fine. The water fell from 69 degrees to 66 degrees at the finish. The air conditions on the other hand, dropped from 72 to 65 degrees. He finished at 9:35. He swam a reasonable time of 9 hours, 57 minutes and 40 seconds.

Two days later Anthony Zamora set out on his attempt to swim Catalina to the mainland. He departed from Doctor's Cove at 10:18 pm. It was an overcast night with two foot swells and five knot winds, not a great night. The water temperature was 70 degrees and through the swim fell to 66 degrees by the end. Similarly the air was 66 degrees at the start but rose to 70 degrees near the mainland as the sun came out.

Anthony's spm began at 64 and jumped continuously throughout the swim, reaching a high of 65 and a low of 61 spm. As the swim wore on Anthony's legs began to drop, making his arms do most of the work.

His feedings were on the hour exactly until right at the end of the swim. He drank Accelerade and its Gel, Gu and sometimes he wanted his drink heated. This seemed to help him according to observer David Clark.

Some interesting boats were seen in the swim. There were squid fishing boats nearby during the swim and again at the finish. There was also a sea lion. It circled the boat and then swam away.

The ocean calmed down as did the wind, making for a nice swim. Anthony jumped out in 11 hours, 43 minutes and two seconds at the beach on the base of Cardiac Hill.

Christopher Roberts was the 157th swimmer to cross the Catalina Channel. He began at 1:11 am from Doctor's Cove on the Island. It was a clear night with a visible moon but the wind was between 10 and 15 knots. He fed every half hour throughout the swim. Chris drank eight ounces of Cytomax, used Gu or had Motrin during the swim.

With the choppy ocean it was hard for Chris to maintain his initial stroke count of 66. The water was so rough he bounced from 66 to 55 spm. This is a large difference but not with the conditions.

Luckily, the water was 69 to 70 degrees throughout the swim and the air was 65-66 degrees during the swim.

There were problems with paddlers but Chris followed the boat perfectly. At one point a paddler fell off three times and there had to be a switch. Because of conditions the next paddler took 12 minutes to catch up. It didn't seem to bother Chris according to the two observers. Chris kept swimming.

Chris had a few pace swimmers which made it easier and he was glad and said so at one point. Pacers are an important part of a swim if used when the swimmer needs special help.

A large freighter crossed in front of Chris during the swim as the sun rose. About the same time it was decided to land at Cabrillo Beach to take advantage of the wind, swells and tide. This was a good decision instead of fighting to land at Pt. Vicente. For over thirteen and a half hours Chris fought the chop. His final time was 13 hours, 50 minutes and 56 seconds. He landed at Diver's Cove.

Elaine Kornbau Howley tackled the Catalina Channel on September 22nd. She left from Doctor's Cove and walked ashore on the mainland, 10 hours, 57 minutes and 44 seconds later. Elaine was from Waltham, Massachusetts. She entered the water at 13 minutes after midnight. Initially she had to swim through some kelp and she had some difficulty navigating in the darkness. The latter she adjusted to rather quickly and the former was just near the Island.

Elaine had a smooth stroke count. She began at 72 and maintained that for six hours. As she approached the coast her spm dropped to 66. This was probably due to the temperature drop near the coast. The water was 68 degrees at Catalina whereas it fell to 62 degrees for the last twenty minutes. This is a huge difference and can bring on hypothermia immediately. It did not however, which means she was well hydrated, trained for cold water and long distance!

She drank eight to thirteen ounces of CarboPro, had 2 Cliff Blocks, ¼ Power Bar, Ultima, Slimfast with water, granola chunks with water, ibuprofen, shot blocks, hot tea and peaches with syrup on various breaks. She had really experimented a lot to know what worked for her.

Many people were calling in messages which were written on a white board to help motivate her. The crew also inspired her with pacing, mooning and cheering. Elaine landed near the two caves at 11:11.19 am.

Dan Richards attempted the Catalina to the mainland swim on September 23rd, one day after Elaine.

He left from Doctor's Cove with lots of glow sticks on his kayak. It was a calm night without any swells. The stars were extremely visible which made for a nice swim.

Dan fed every twenty minutes throughout the swim with the exception of one time when the paddler of the kayak fell over and then took a while reboarding and catching up.

His swim count according to observer John York, averaged 56 strokes per minutes. The high was 60 while the low was 54 strokes per minute.

The water was 68 degrees at the Island but descended to 62 by the mainland. Dan didn't seem to mind this. He did ask how his ashen wife was. Obviously, he saw her throwing up at some point before or during the swim. The way over on the support boat to start the swim was fast, rough and bouncy. (Some swimmers avoid this by flying over early that morning or taking the large Catalina Express so he or she has time to recover before the swim. There is a hotel at the Isthmus.)

At one point in the swim, a seal was right next to the paddler. Later a pod of dolphins was completely surrounding the boat.

The only problem during the swim occurred during the fifth hour when the paddler reported Dan was throwing up. Immediately, Dan was given Coke to calm his stomach. He drank this for three feeds, then he seemed to feel better. As he was saying this a large ship passed in front of him. Dan had three and a half miles to go. At 9:20 he drank coffee, a coke and had a bun to eat.

Dan had pacers for the time he didn't feel well until he approached the finish. At this time a large blue whale swam near Dan. Everyone on the boat was excited. Dan took

his last feed and came out of the water in 10 hours, 10 minutes and 45 seconds after he embarked on the swim.

James Fitzpatrick swam from Catalina to the mainland. This was his second swim across the Catalina Channel; the first was in 2001. He finished in 14 hours, 59 minutes and 23 seconds. He chose to alter his course and swim from the cement plant on the Island to Newport Beach on the mainland.

James fed every thirty minutes. Besides liquid he had ibuprofen and Advil when necessary. At the beginning of the swim many of the people on the boat were getting seasick as there were lots of wind and whitecaps. Within two hours the wind died down. The water became Lake Catalina by the two observers John York and Carol Sing. The air temperature was 84 degrees throughout the night. At one point, Jim complained the feed was too warm but it hadn't even been heated. That was the conditions.

The water, on the other hand, hung around 68 degrees for four hours. Slowly the water became colder until it hit 65 degrees, a reasonable temperature.

His stroke count ranged from 49 at the lowest to 54 at the highest. The latter was when the sun came up.

James exited the water 200 yards south of the Newport Pier. Everyone jumped in and finished with him.

On October 6th Cindy Walsh slipped into the water at 26 minutes after midnight. She left from Doctor's Cove on Catalina. With her was Kevin Anderson but he ended up getting sick and getting out of the water.

This was Cindy's second time to swim Catalina; the first time was August of 2007. Cindy fed every twenty minutes in the swim. The water was a comfortable 68 degrees for the first three hours, 67 degrees for four hours and dropped drastically to 63 degrees for the last hour and a half, as recorded by observer Becky Jackman.

All of Cindy's stroke counts were over 71 per minute and as high as 74 per minute. In the early part of the swim the stroke counts were not taken as there were two swimmers and problems with one.

Dolphins were everywhere on this swim—circling the boat, under Cindy, by her and even chasing her. During the swim Cindy wanted hot water to pour over her head, tinted goggles and was a very chatty swimmer. This seemed to make her swim easier. From the time the sun rose the water was flat and there was no wind making for nice conditions for those on the boat and those in and on the water.

Cindy was led through the kelp by the kayaker and climbed over the rocks to a sand beach to take her three steps and complete her swim. Her time was 9 hours and 55 minutes. With one unfortunate mistake when she tried to climb back over the rocks into the water, she was thrown around and ended up breaking her tailbone. Cindy swam a relay shortly after her solo, and she endured the relay despite a broken tailbone.

Michelle Macy, from Beaverton, Oregon, set out from Catalina at 11:19 pm, one day after Cindy's swim. There were mild swells, Santa Ana winds (warm winds from the East), a clear night and visible marine life. Michelle planned her crossing very well. For the first three hours she fed every hour, drinking Carbo Pro and Whey protein. For the

rest of the time she planned to feed every half hour with the same feeding as above. She did, however, alter this as follows. She just drank water then added ibuprofen and Advil for shoulder pain and stomach cramping in the morning hours. She had done this on her English Channel crossing. She fed from the boat, not from the kayak, as that was what she was used to doing.

Michelle's stroke count jumped all over the place. She began at 60 spm rose to 64 and plummeted to 59 spm.

The Santa Ana winds were not very warm as the record states. The winds averaged 66 degrees at the departure then tumbled to 62 and 63 degrees for the rest of the swim. This is very unusual.

Meanwhile the water temperature similarly began at 66 degrees fell to 65 and ultimately declined to 60 degrees, a very cold temperature for Catalina. Michelle knew exactly when the water hit 61 degrees, by commenting about the colder water. The observer responded with "She's right." She had two more hours to go. It took Michelle 10 hours, 12 minutes and 31 seconds to complete the crossing.

On October 12th Antonio Arguelles attempted to swim Catalina to the mainland. He was from Mexico and had swum Catalina once before. Antonio's time was 13 hours, 10 minutes and 30 seconds. He commenced the swim at Doctor's Cove at 11:40 pm. It was windy and there were two foot swells from the outset.

His feeding plan was to drink every hour for two hours then switch to half hours. This worked well. He did have problems with navigation. Antonio finally fed off of the boat. As the sun rose at 6:15 am, the navigational problems disappeared as Antonio was able to see. His stroke rate as reported by observers David Clark and Carol Sing descended from 60 near the finish to 52 just before the fastest stroke rate. He averaged 57 strokes per minute throughout the swim.

The water temperature was not consistent with most temperatures on swims. Doctor's Cove was a cool 64 degrees and within two hours it had climbed to 66 degrees. As the sun was trying to rise the water plunged to 61 degrees. Antonio immediately remarked it was colder. Observer David ask him some questions and the crew was put on alert for possible hypothermia. Antonio answered all of the questions correctly but being prepared was necessary. At 7:41 am the water temperature tumbled to 60 degrees. At the same time the swells were increasing in size but Antonio was very alert. He had two swimmers/trainers who swam with him to the finish. The last water temperature was 59 degrees.

He navigated the kelp and climbed the rocks to reach the beach. This was the last individual swim of the summer of 2008.

2008 Relays

There were four relays in 2008. The first one was the George Young Memorial Relay swim on January 15 2008, swimming from the mainland to the Island. It was the 60th relay to cross Catalina. The members were:

Alexia Nalewaik	Don Van Cleve
Diana Corbin	Davina Walker
David Palomino	Greg Farrier

The relay embarked on the swim from Cabrillo Beach at 2:01 am. The first swimmer, accompanied by a kayaker, swam out to meet the boat, just off the beach. Most of the time there were smooth transitions. Just before 6:00 am dolphins were everywhere. At 9:45 am the swimmers and boat were surrounded by whales. As stated by observer Carol Sing and David Clark “more whales, Amazing!”

What makes this relay unique is the water temperature. The swimmers swam a one hour leg in cold water. It was 53 degrees at the start and gradually hit 56 degrees off of Long Point. Most swimmers had to swim twice. That would be the tough part; getting warm then having to jump back into the cold water for your second leg. Nice job!

The next relay, Coco’s RC and Friends, swam from Catalina to the mainland. The members included:

Bill Braun	Chris Johnson
Dave Jones	Mark Kachigan
Oscar Fricke	Stacie Messner

The first swimmer entered the water at 1:12 minutes before midnight on September 13th. The water temperature was 67 throughout the swim.

A Coast Guard helicopter circled the boat then the swimmer twice. They were looking for a lost vessel as the record states by Forrest Nelson. Besides this mishap, the relay was held up by a few freighters in the edge of the fishing lane. The current swimmer had to tread water until the OK was given and the swimmers raced towards the finish. All six swimmers entered the water to swim the final meters to Marineland. The team finished in 12 hours 21 minutes and 27 seconds

The last two relay swims of the summer were named Trudgeon I and Trudgeon II made up of the following:

Tom Hecker	Barbara Held
Guy Buchanan	Andy Hewitt
Steve Coopersmith	Karl Jacobs
Kenny Jacob	Carol Sing
Kevin Anderson	Cindy Walsh
Will Newbern	Joel Barnett

The first two swimmers entered the water at 11:57 pm on October 6th. The two relays were swimming from the Island to the mainland, leaving from Doctor's Cove. Immediately, the observers discovered that the thermometer was not functioning, meaning no water or air temperatures could be taken during the crossing. Descriptive analysis was what the observers, Carol Sing and Mark Stell, had to rely on.

It was a sloppy night with winds between 15-20 knots. By the second hour these calmed down. Swimmer Andy Hewitt felt the water was 66 to 67 degrees. The rest of the swimmers agreed with this temperature.

By 5:00 am the water was calm. At 8:00 am the traditional bagpipes were being played by navigator Greg Elliott.

The sun had come out and it was the start of a beautiful day.

At 10:45 am the swimmers reached the shore. This made the total time for both relays 10:48.29; for relays number 62 and 63.

In 2008 there were the most individual swims for a single year. There were 24 solo swims and four relays. This was an amazing improvement.