

MARATHON SWIMMER DIANA NYAD

As a child growing up in Fort Lauderdale, Diana Nyad was a champion pool swimmer. She later trained off of this beach and became one of the best ocean swimmers in the world. At age 24, she was the first person to swim north to south across Lake Ontario. The record swim took 18 hours and 20 minutes. In 1975, 26-year-old Nyad swam around Manhattan Island in 7 hours, 57 minutes, breaking the previous record by over an hour. In 1979, she swam 102.5 miles from Bimini in the Bahamas to Jupiter, Florida, in just over 27 hours. But it was Nyad's first attempt to become the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida, a 42-hour endeavor in 1978, which secured her place in the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame. She pursued the dream of a Cuba-to-Florida swim for 35 years, attempting the 110-mile swim five times. In 2013, after 52 hours, 54 minutes of continuous swimming, Nyad's tenacity prevailed. She made history as the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida without a shark cage. As she emerged from the sea in Key West, she declared: "Never ever give up." Nyad's story serves as inspiration to millions around the world. The Fort Lauderdale native's achievements are a testament to the power of the human spirit.

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