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Diana Nyad Xtreme Dream 103 miles. Cuba to Florida. Summer 2011

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Meet Our Xtreme Dream Team Bloggers

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON AUG 6, 2011 IN BLOG | 4 COMMENTS



Candace Lyle Hogan, a close friend of Diana's for 35 years, was part of the Nyad Cuba Swim team in 1978, and is again this time.

We're off to see the Wizard... At LAX now waiting for the flight to Miami then Key West, arriving Sat. morning. Responding to the red alert, ruby slippers in our ready-bag, we far-flung team members of Nyad's Xtreme Dream are flying today. "It's on!" I got the call this morning. In a few days, maybe less than 2, Diana could be stroking over the water, her form of flight, not quite fancy free but then neither is ours. Many on the team left Key West just yesterday (Thurs.) only to have to turn right back around. We don't mind. That's what you do when a weather window opens up. Just a crack, but it may be the only

Twitter Updates



- Sign-up for the Xtreme Dream newsletter. Images and anecdotes that go beyond tweets! Click the icon on the left below Diana's pic!... [about 9 hours ago](#) from [HootSuite](#)
- View from Steve who was one of the observers on the swim. He's been a great supporter and friend all the way through. <http://ow.ly/606uO> 07:52:57 PM August 10, 2011 from [HootSuite](#)
- [@bond_dougbond](#) 103 miles! 06:27:16 PM August 10, 2011 from [HootSuite](#) in reply to [bond_dougbond](#)
- While we waiting for news from the Keys, hope you will all check pics from Xtreme Dream on our FB page! <https://www.facebook.com/DianaNyad> 03:21:32 PM August 10, 2011 from [HootSuite](#)
- "If we all leave this expedition doing the best job we could, we'll have succeeded." - Bonnie. [#diananyad](#) 11:20:03 PM August 09, 2011 from [HootSuite](#)
- New blog post is up! Pass it along! <http://ow.ly/5YU6O> 04:31:37 PM August 09, 2011 from [HootSuite](#)

reasonable conditions before hurricane season hits. Diana never saw a window last year, the rest of the summer passing without the calm waters of her smooth-as-silk 24-hour "training" swim one day in June.

~~Diana knows she's got to be in place to take advantage of any likely window, and this may be it. After I~~

~~got the call, my partner Diane had my ticket booked within the time it took me to get control of my~~

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~~Diana called again after I texted her the confirmation—I am arriving in Key West 9:10 a.m. "We~~

~~may be at the airport at the same time," she said, "only I'll be on the departure level."~~

CandaceBlog1_Aug5

My Time Has Come!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON AUG 6, 2011 IN BLOG | 49 COMMENTS



Photo by Catherine Opie

It's almost midnight Friday night. My time has come. By Sunday at this hour I will have already stepped off the Havana coast and started stroking the long, almost unfathomably long way to Florida. Visions of 1978, those smashing 8-ft seas, flash through my brain. Not this time. Strong memories of the hardships of these past two years make me strong and determined not to waste all that disciplined time put in.

So many good people have taken this journey with me. Intimates and strangers alike. I will never forget the support, the encouraging words, the inspiration showered on me since I announced this Xtreme Dream. I truly hope my arrival on the Florida coast will shine like a beacon of hope to many, many individuals who want to make the most of their lives, want to feel passion and commitment, want to be their best selves, no matter their ages.

I'm excited. And I'm afraid.

It could be 60 hours. Non-stop. It could be more. One thing I know. I'll either be unconscious out in the ocean somewhere... or I'll make it all the way across.

Nothing in between.

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About this capture

Onward!

Diana Nyad

My Time Has Come!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON AUG 6, 2011 IN BLOG, SLIDER | 0 COMMENTS



Photo by Catherine Opie

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Nothing in between.

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Onward!

Diana Nyad

Here are the official rules of the swim!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON AUG 5, 2011 IN BLOG | 1 COMMENT



When is an open water swimmer officially finished with a swim? Officially, the swimmer must 'clear the water' under their own power without assistance from any other individual. This means that all parts of the swimmer's body must be out of the water on a piece of dry land whether it is an island, shoreline, peninsula, beach, coastline, embankment, ledge, harbor, cove, inlet or strand.

The swimmer must independently walk, run, crawl, writhe, drag or pull themselves, or catch a wave or swell in order to clear the water.

If the swimmers comes upon a sand bar, sandbank, shoal, tombolo, reef, rock or other temporary bit of temporarily exposed geography or man-made construction such as a breakwater, jetty, barrier, embankment, levee, pier, seawall, anchorage, dock, mooring or wharf with water behind it, then the swimmer has not yet finished.

However, if this natural geography or man-made construction has no water behind it, then the finish is recognized at that point. In some cases, it may not be possible to clear the water (by climbing out or up) and a simple touch of this natural geography or man-made construction will suffice.

It is always important to consult with the local or international governing body to confirm the recognized methods of finishing.

Note 1: shore is a general word for an edge of land directly bordering a body of water. A coast is limited to land along a sea or ocean. The coast is the seaward limit of the land and the shore is the landward limit of the sea.

Note 2: in races where the finish is some other kind of designated construction or element, the decisions of the race officials are finish.

Note 3: these guidelines or rules are true for both solo and relay swimmers.

Copyright © 2011 by [Open Water Source](#)

Posted by Steven Munatones

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Soul Searching

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON AUG 3, 2011 IN BLOG, SLIDER | 18 COMMENTS



Photo by Christi Barli

Back in February & March, I had to soul-search. Had to ask myself if I had within what it would take to train again another year, once the visas and hurricanes dashed the Xtreme Dream 2010. The long, sometimes painful, always grueling hours present an undeniable challenge to both body and spirit. I had paced myself through 2010. Gotten in the best possible shape. Never shaved even a minute off any training session, no matter how I was hurting. The pride and joy that came with being ready by summer 2010 was palpable. The 24-hour training swim on July 10-11, 2010, was proof that I had done everything right to make the big crossing from Cuba. Then came the difficulties with government visas. When they finally cleared, it was Labor Day. Then came an unprecedented string of Atlantic hurricanes. Then came the end of October and the water temps fell to the point that 2010 was over. The Dream was not to be. I tried hard to rise above the disappointment, to remind myself that people, many of you I am sure, deal with true tragedies every day, that preparing again for this Dream should seem a privilege, not a burden. But I can tell you that November and December were tough months for me. I felt lost. After all that preparation, all that strength of commitment, involving all those good people, working day and night on all the myriad of expedition organization details, raising all the expense funds, I was home with nothing to show for it all? By the holidays, I made a turn. It wasn't nothing we were all left with. The effort itself was a triumph. I suppose it's much as when a couple calls it quits after many years. The first reaction is the whole marriage was a defeat, a waste of precious time, to coin Bob Dylan's term. But some distance and time later, you remember what you gave, what you got, and it was time well spent after all.

I built my body. I gathered a Dream Team of friends and experts and we were in wonderful synch together throughout the process. There was a public, you, who were inspired and who in turn inspired me with all your writings.

By January, the spirit was back. But the shoulder was bad. With all the overtraining of 2010, I wound up with a torn tendon in the left shoulder. The pain was non-stop. Sleep was difficult. Swimming was out of the question. Even just kicking was painful, keeping the left arm stretched out in front. A top orthopedist in Los Angeles told me I'd "never do it without surgery, the tear was considerable". Yet there was no

time for surgery and recuperation and training, all within six months before summer. Another orthopedist in New York, Dr. Jo Hannafin of Hospital for Special Surgery, had a more optimistic diagnosis. She felt the shoulder tendon tear was more minor and the good news was that it had not widened from July's

MRI to November's. Her physical therapist, Theresa Chaia, gave me a series of exercises which I have every day since. Then my PT in LA, Karen Joubert, looked me in the eye and said I had nothing to

worry about, the shoulder was going to come through like a soldier. And she convinced me to ice it many, many times a day. I now seem like a traveling cryogenics lab. I have ice bags in the car, next to the computer, next to the bed, in the gym. I may ice as many as 12 hours a day, 20 minutes at a time. AND, I met Ous Meloulli, the current world record holder at 1500 meters who has a tear in the exact same place as I do in his shoulder. He also doesn't want to risk surgery before his 2012 Dream Olympics. Ous showed me how to change my stroke, not easy to teach an old dog new tricks, after all these years. But I now dip that left shoulder and extend under water, instead of above.

By February, the shoulder was feeling stronger, able to be tested. But what about the mind? Could I put in all those long, torturous hours....again? I started with 8, then 9, then 10, then 11, then 12, then 13, then 14, then 15. Then multiples of all of those. Countless hours. All in the ocean. By mid-June, after the last long ocean swim at my training camp in St Maarten, I cried hard. It was a tough two years. But I persisted. And now I was in even better shape than 2010.

Well, I moved to Key West mid-June. Ready. Confident. The whole team gathering, getting their ends ready as well. June passed. We knew July would bring the flat seas that we are told are common for the Florida Straits mid-summer. Yet July came and went. Unexpected winds. A few calm days but only one or two at a time. Not a long enough stretch for what I need.

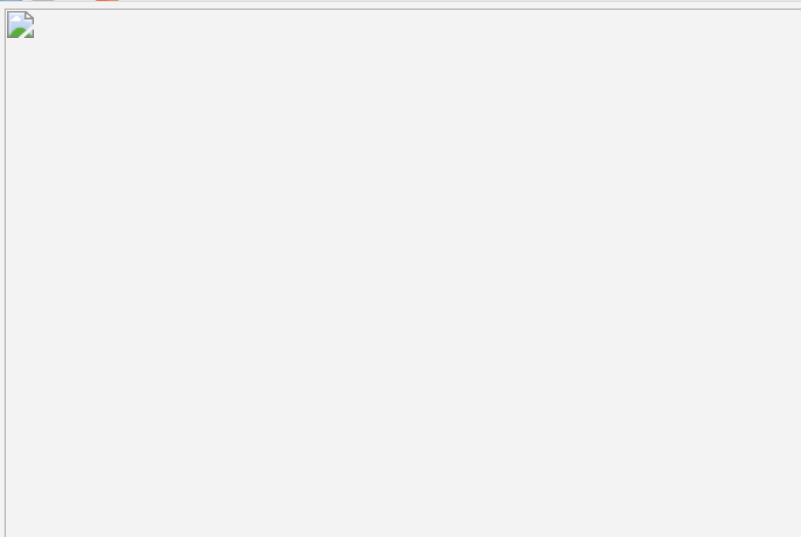
Now it's August. And there is no doubt that this, the waiting, the worrying is far, far harder than any of the long two years of training. I have no control over the weather and logic dictates that I need to let go and just accept whatever the daily forecast brings. But human nature is not logical and thus I do worry. I worry that we will head into last year's scenario again and the hurricanes will begin their stream of activity earlier than usual. I can't sleep. But I need to sleep.

Bonnie is here to keep me up, keep me busy. My close friends check in with words of wisdom. It's easy to find strength when you have control, difficult when you don't. We are waiting. Waiting. Waiting.

- Diana

How Does Diana Stay Nourished?

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 29, 2011 IN BLOG | 12 COMMENTS



The Handlers



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Photos by Christi Barli

Here is OUR boat...VOYAGER! This is our home away from home. The boat that diana will be glancing at, with every breath she takes. Literally. David-our navigator, in gray t shirt. Maya-boat driver extraordinaire-in white shorts and blue t shirt. stuart-head kayaker, in the background, with white long sleeve t shirt. Dee-in the background, with blue sleeveless shirt, another of our boat drivers. Mark, with white shorts and white t shirt, another of our most important boat drivers, and all around MVP.

Below all of these teammates, we have 'the handler section of the boat. This is where diana will come in to feed, every 90 minutes. We feed her a liquid concoction of nutrients, electrolytes and calories. We would like her to drink about 20-26 ounces of this concoction at every stop. She feeds through a Camelbak, as she is not allowed to touch the boat, let alone rest or relax. Diana might also drip some Hammer gel which is both thicker and filled with more nutrients and protein. Every three or four stoppages, diana may have a spoonful of peanut butter, pasta, or bite of bread.

Every 45 minutes, after each 90 minute feeding, diana will have a Camelbak filled with water pulled out to her. She will barely stop her stroke to sip down 10-16 ounces of pure water..

Ya' know how 'ice' is the miracle drug for injuries, so is water the miracle savior for life itself. Funny, they are made up of exactly the same composition.

That orange life preserver hanging on the ladder is there just in case diana wanders off away from 'her white lane'. We hold up the preserver, she sees it and immediately swims a bit closer to the boat.

We have three watches going at all times. One is continuous running time. One is our own wrist watch letting us know when the hour and 25 minutes is up, to remind us that it's almost time for a feeding. At this point in time, we stand up, put up an open palm and let diana know she has 5 more minutes before her next feeding. Diana lets us know that she has seen our hand by giving us a 'thumbs up' with her

right hand, while she is swimming. At 90 minutes, we blow a whistle loud enough for diana to hear, and in towards the boat she comes. She feeds, we reapply lanolin to her chaffing areas (under the straps of her swim suit, her arm pits, her bicep area and on her neck directly below her cap). We talk to her, as this is her only social time during the entire adventure. We put a Shot Blok in her mouth (this cuts down swelling of her tongue-which, in essence, is soaking in salt water for a very long time).

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The low area where I am sitting is where my team and I will spend all of our time. We will have 3 hour shifts on and 6 hours off. Off time will be used for eating, showering and resting. We all need to be alert and we are all in this for the same reason. We want nothing else except for diana to reach that other shore!!

My team consists of Liza-diana's sister, Jesse-my niece, Jon and Deborah Hennessey-both of whom were an integral part of diana's Bimini swim-some 32 years ago.

I hope this has given you some insight into what The Handler Team will be doing for the Cuba to Key West swim..

Bonnie

Head Handler/Trainer

Nyad Extreme Dream Swim

Diana's Deep Moment

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 28, 2011 IN BLOG | 17 COMMENTS



Diana Nyad

Photo by Christi Barli

This is a deep moment in my life. This Swim will take my body into unknown territory. Nobody has ever known how the muscular, cardiovascular, digestive, endurance systems will respond after 2 1/2 days, maybe even 3, of continuous swimming in the sea. I must have confidence that I've done everything possible over these past two years to make my body believe it can withstand the duress it's about to experience. But I have no doubt that this crossing will be the ultimate test of will. The mind, its desire quotient, its refusal to entertain defeat. This is what will guide me to The Other Shore. I am confident. And I am afraid. In these days, hours, before I step off that shore in Havana, Florida a long, long 103 plus miles away, I am now thoroughly enmeshed in the imagination of what my body, my spirit, will undergo. Yes, I have experience in these extreme feats. Memories of enduring the long, arduous hours from the Bahamas to Florida, way back in 1979. The 42 hours of my first attempt from Cuba in 1978. But this Swim will be much longer. Much, much longer. Eccentric as it may sound, my adrenaline is starting to surge with the challenge of keeping my mind focused, engaged through all the hours of

pressing forward with the strongest stroke I can produce. This is MY TIME. My time to rely on strong shoulders. My time to be propelled by an iron will. My time to be my best self, in every fathomable regard.

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How to Avoid Hypothermia

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 26, 2011 IN BLOG | 5 COMMENTS

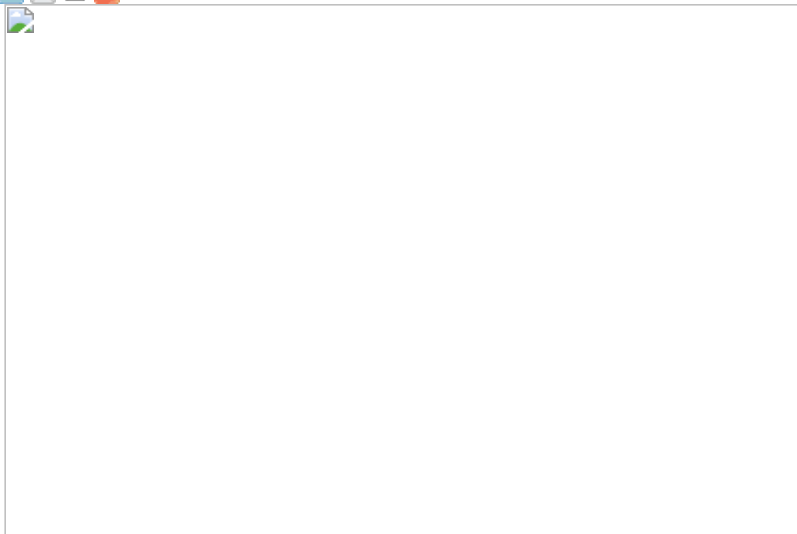


Photo by Christi Barli

Ironical perhaps that I've been waiting for the peak summer temps in the Gulf Stream here and now that they're here, 86-87 degrees, with the occasional reading of 88, hypothermia is one of the pending factors that could possibly mean doom for the Swim. The first half, maybe a day and half, dehydration will be the issue. Drinking water, electrolytes, any kinds of fluids as often as possible, is our goal. During that second half, even very warm water is going to start to make me shiver. You're immersed in a liquid more than ten degrees below your body temperature. Imagine taking a hot bath. You're rested. You're enjoying a magazine. As soon as the temp goes below 98.6, you reach to add more hot water. Well what if you were losing huge numbers of calories, your metabolic rate were dropping. After some 30, 35, 40 hours of vigorous activity, you're going to feel cold. We marathon swimmers are not allowed to wear neoprene wetsuits, as are triathletes. No flotation devices whatsoever. So I'm experimenting with thin rash guards and sprinter's long suits. They are cumbersome. I'd have to be at a desperate point to put this stuff on. These materials aren't even designed for warmth. But at least, if only for psychological comfort, I'll feel I've got something to cover the skin if I'm feeling cold.

Diana and Jackie Onassis

POSTED BY DIANA NYAD ON JUL 25, 2011 IN BLOG, SLIDER | COMMENTS OFF





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Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis declared her “My hero” when they first met in person, a moment that took up the entire front page of the *New York Post* the following morning. She was everybody’s hero for swimming around Manhattan Island in 1975. But Diana Nyad had a bigger dream, something never done before that few thought possible to do: crossing 100 miles of shark-filled openwater.

The night of the day she accomplished “the impossible,” the CBS Evening News opened with a single word —“Magnificent!”—followed by her name. Diana Nyad had swum the farthest distance shore to shore than any woman or man in history ever had before. That was August, 1979.

Emerging from the water onto the front page of the *New York Times* was nothing new for Diana. Virtually every news entity in the Western World and beyond had been following her quest for two years before that, in following her training for her dream to become the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida.

Sponsors were easy to find for the 1978 Cuba Swim.

Benihana, Perrier, DANONE Yogurt...even Woody Allen...wanted to be associated with Diana’s mission of courage, adventure, and empowerment.

She wanted the longest swim in history to be the Cuba Swim—and fought a raging sea for 41 hours, 49 minutes in the attempt—but it didn’t work out. Then the following August, at the age of 30, she did make history swimming from the Bahamas to Florida.

After that, Diana didn’t swum a stroke for 30 years but last August as her 60th birthday approached, she was struck with the inspiration: She could capture that lost dream of long ago, the original Cuba Swim.

This summer, at the age of 60, Diana Nyad is going to stroke her way, a grueling 100 miles, from Havana to the Florida coast. Again, millions of people will be cheering her on, but this time over the Internet, no one will miss it. And when she walks up onto the far shore, no one will ever look at a 60 year old quite the same way again.

For decades, Diana has been at the heart and soul of the baby boom generation, many of whom are feeling irrelevant, lacking in vitality, and dejected that their best days are behind them. This summer, the imagination of the American public will once again catch fire. The authentic message, the walk that Diana walks, will resonate with millions of baby boomers looking for renewal, parents hoping their children spark to inspired lives, and women searching for proof that middle age is their prime, not the beginning of the end.

Written by Candace Lyle Hogan

Candace was on the Cuba attempt of ’78...and will be on the boat again this year

Good Weather News From Our Weather Experts!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 23, 2011 IN BLOG | 2 COMMENTS



Explanation needed of course!

Chart 1: is the ocean area from Cuba to the Florida Keys. The straight line from Cuba to Key West is her rhumb line but I hear that might change due to the current not flowing in a favorable direction. The chart shows the location of the Loop Current (LC) that flows in a clockwise loop in the Gulf of Mexico and exits at the Florida straits to join the Gulf Stream Current. The flow averages 2-3 knots towards the East and Northeast in the swim area. The numbers on the chart are the sea surface temperatures in degrees F. Since they are in the upper 80's now, they are swimmable for Diana. Hypothermia can occur any time the sea temps are below body temp so she will still be losing some heat but not as much as if she tried to swim with sea temps in the low 80's.

Chart 2: is the same as chart 1 with the estimated currents superimposed in different false colors. The 1 knot vector is false colored in blue while the 3 knot line is false colored in red. The 2 knot line is false colored in green. Note that the current increases quickly over a short distance near the northern side of the current. The ½ knot line in light greenish brown shows the approx location of the adverse counter current flowing toward the West just north of Cuba.

Chart 3: is the same as chart 2 with the deletion of the ocean analysis so you can see the estimated current structure with respect to Diana's rhumb line. (Rhumb line is the straight line between two points).

Jenifer Clark

Satellite Oceanographer

<http://www.erols.com/gulfstrm/>

gulfstream@comcast.net

410-286-5370

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