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21

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2011

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1,776 captures

3 Jul 2010 - 17 Apr 2026



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Blog

The water temps have arrived!!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 20, 2011 IN BLOG, SLIDER | 4 COMMENTS



Photo by Christi Barli

Dear Ops Team,

We are drawing near!!!!

The water temps have arrived.

We are sending the escort boat that travels closest to me, Voyager, to Havana tomorrow night.

David Marchant, navigator

Maya Marchant, head driver

Dee Brady, driver, Voyager owner

Tim Wheeler, doc filmmaker (our translator in Havana) will all be aboard

David needs several days for surveillance of swirling currents and tricky winds off the Havana coast and

Twitter Updates



- Woman to Swim 60 Hours Straight, Steering Clear of Sharks and Self-Doubt <http://ti.me/nYxpq8> (Thanks so much to @TIMENewsFeed) about 18 minutes ago from HootSuite
- @millerfinch My fans are the ones who keep me swimming through the roughest moments! about 41 minutes ago from HootSuitein reply to millerfinch
- @millerfinch @mcs3000 @cherry_ing @KaiserTR @bsb @morrigan070 Thanks for all the enthusiasm and encouragement! It has not gone unnoticed. about 42 minutes ago from HootSuitein reply to millerfinch
- @eddiebnyc @aikiRUNNER @secondact @Broken Beautiful @Linda_Cope Thanks so much all of your continued support everyone! about 43 minutes ago from HootSuitein reply to EddieBNYC
- @steffitwobits @troycorley @NRDems @Charlesraybeck @donlubach @lisapbs @sharksandlasers @aReyoUiN Thanks for all of your support! about 45 minutes ago from HootSuitein reply to SteffiTwoBits
- @elayneboosler @Fred_Stoller I have a great team that will be helping me, as

will also test the Gulf Stream currents at many points during the crossing. They will leave tomorrow night after sundown and arrive in Havana some time Wednesday morning.

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3 Jul 2010 - 17 Apr 2026

the Club Nautico at Hemingway Marina, Sr. Escrich. Escrich has been given permissions by the Minister of Sports and Minister of Tourism to receive us, conduct press conferences in Havana, and assist our event in every way. Since our personal meetings with him last October, through our many email correspondences throughout this year, it has never once been mentioned that last two weeks of July veritably impossible to conduct any type of outside event in Cuba, due to the sacred celebrations of the Revolution. Last Wednesday, the Commodore wrote to tell us we must wait until Aug 1 for our event.

Frankly, I was close to a nervous breakdown. We have clearly reached the hot Keys weather that produces the Doldrums and I simply could not fathom sitting here and watching a Doldrums occur, with the possibility of none other coming all summer, because we can't start from the Cuban shore last two weeks of July.

Enter our heroine. Kathy Loretta, our good friend from Mexico, who serves as our Havana Ground Ops, flew to Cuba last night and met face to face with the Commodore today. See her email in the scroll below. She diplomatically made a plea to Sr Escrich not to sabotage what we have worked so hard for, waited so long for. Now, the Doldrums may not develop before Aug 1. We next will start waiting for a good long-term forecast. But at least now, if the flat seas develop, we are ready for action.

Thank you, Kathy, a million times over. Bonnie and I opened that email, marked "Great meetings" with breathless excitement.

We are currently scurrying all about town to get Voyager provisioned. Commerce Department License and OFAC licenses prepared to carry on board, Coast Guard both here and in Cuba to be notified. Kayaks delivered by our new kayak team member Buco today from Key Largo, Thanks for the huge effort, Buco.

We have done many "extra" training swims, after finishing in St Maarten, here in Key West and the key crew is finely tuned. Maya, Dee and Mark Sollinger have spent many hours behind the wheel of Voyager. They are totally versed in keeping me on David's navigation setting and handling the boat on course when I'm hydrating or feeding.' Our "lane line" streamer underneath me, white for day, red LED lights for night, is working like magic. I guarantee many an ocean swimmer will adopt this method in the future. Bonnie, my head handler, has experimented with many different ratios of hydration concoctions, how to settle the stomach after many hours in the salt, how to get an extra 4 or 5 ounces of water down every 45 mins, in between feedings, how to signal me efficiently, how to keep the salt-water chafing to a minimum. Bonnie and I have spent two years now, in St Maarten, in Mexico, here in Key West, getting a myriad of subtle and large systems in place. (with Dr. Micahel Broder constantly advising us from L.A.) Liza Eversole, one of our five handlers....and my sister.....arrived last week and worked with Bonnie to get in the rhythm of compassionate communications and instincts as to what I'm needing when. Jon & Deborah Hennessey and Jesse Morris have all been on past swims and will quickly catch up to our new methods.

Stuart Knaggs came in from St Maarten for a week to get our Kayak Shark Protection Team organized. Buco became a new member of the kayakers at that time.

Alyce Torsden, Ground Ops here in Key West and in Havana, has busted to find crew housing for us, negotiate on kayaks, scan documents, and more countless, helpful tasks. Alyce will be your lifeline as you start making your way to Key West. Assisting Alyce will be our friend from Philly, Nancy Machinist.

When you get the Red Alert to get here PRONTO, you will book your flight (you might want to book one way.....or make sure you will have a minimum change fee for your return), Alyce will be the one you will

they do now, to put out live updates!
about 48 minutes ago from HootSuitein
reply to ElayneBoosler

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7 hours ago
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- RT @cnnhealth: @diananyad ready to try Cuba-to-Key West record swim again #CNN will cover it live. Coming soon! <http://t.co/yPt3hxB> about 10 hours ago from HootSuite
- @elayneboosler Glad you tuned in and enjoyed it! about 11 hours ago from HootSuitein reply to ElayneBoosler
- @elayneboosler It's at: [facebook.com/diananyad](https://www.facebook.com/diananyad) about 11 hours ago from HootSuitein reply to ElayneBoosler

notify of your flight. She needs to know when you're coming into KW. She will have you picked up, taken to

your housing, apprised of your departure time and your departure boat. REMINDER: You may likely be

traveling over to Havana on a boat other than the one

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3 Jul 2010 - 17 Apr 2026

JUN JUL SEP
2010 2011 2012
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WE URGE YOU to get here as quickly as possible once the Red Alert is given. Three vessels will travel to Key West for the start. (Bonnie and I will fly over). If you miss all three boats' departures, you will come on a boat called Sunliver to the 12-mile International Water line off the Cuban coast and join the convoy and start working as we swim out.

Alyce will be contacting you to get your specific food issues for the trip. Vegetarians, need one hot meal per day. Whatever.

We are just now finally planning which Mother Ship each of you will be assigned. In Havana, you may actually wind up sleeping in your quarters on that vessel. If all you've got is a couch or cushioned area for the Swim, we will hotel you in Havana. Some of you, by virtue of your position on the Team, will move from vessel to vessel throughout. Others will probably only go from Voyager to your Mother Ship and back.

Again, Cuba accepts no American credit cards. We don't know yet, of course, how many nights we might be there, but expect to bring enough cash for about \$80/night hotel and \$80 per day for meals and incidentals. I apologize profusely for asking you to lay out your expenses. Please keep receipts and records

for your plane fare and all your other expenses. We will try to get you reimbursed as quickly as possible once back home.

We will have continual, secure housing here in KW while we're in Cuba. If you need to leave some of your gear that you won't need on the Swim, it will be here right where you leave it when you return. We will have housing for you when we do return to KW for as long as you want to stay. We don't know now where we will finish, if not in Key West. Therefore, we don't know how long it will take us to boat back to KW, how long it might take me to recuperate to the point of having a wild-ass party. But we surely hope that will be the plan and that all of you can get that party started.

By the way, our Social Media and Public Relations crew has been sterling every step of the way. Web master Jen Baers and FB/Twitter maestros Matt Ray and Evan Urbania are keeping a daily flow of great content streaming at diananyad.com and my FB fan page. Our photographers on the ground here in KW, Chrisi Barli and Angie Sollinger, have produced great work for a solid month now. Our bloggers, Candace Hogan and Elaine Lafferty will keep the story fresh and updated throughout the Swim Public relations reps Alex Crotin and Heidi Slan of 42 West have been A Plus. Check out today's front page of NY Times.com, followed by tomorrow's front page of NYTimes Science Section.....as well as tomorrow's Morning Edition story on NPR. Major coup of People Magazine. Interview tomorrow. Follow News area of diananyad.com for all media postings.

I have been told all my life that briefer is better (George Bernard Shaw: "I would have written you a shorter letter, but I just didn't have the time.") But, alas, it seems I'm not capable of brevity.

More details, hopefully in bulletin, not paragraph form, day by day to come.

OMG! We're almost there!!!!

ONWARD!!

Addendum:

Ops Team

Turns out Voyager did not in fact leave for Havana tonight as planned. They hustled all day for a sundown departure, only to be

thwarted by an innocent note I wrote to a contact at the US Interests Section in Havana, to ask her to

help us with things such as emails and phone calls while they are in Cuba. This woman in turn notified the US Coast Guard in Havana and now the Team is filling out piles of bureaucratic paperwork to obtain permits to leave the US. Will let you know when they do leave.

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Best possible news from Kathy Loretta after her return to Mexico from her meetings in Havana. Not only did we swim out during the last two weeks of July but even during the days we thought were still

in question, the Revolution time of July 24-27, we can still go.

So now it's just weather. Reports on that tomorrow.

Big day for press. NY Times front page. NPR. ABC News Tonight. Interview with People Mag for publish possibly next week.

Good night.

I Miss Scout and Teddy

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 18, 2011 IN BLOG | 6 COMMENTS



I always wonder what my dogs are doing while I'm away on this long sojourn. My dear friend Cynthia, who is taking care of Scout and Teddy for me, evidently cajoles them into the shower for a bubble bath every now and then. Hard to tell if they like it...or they're paralyzed with fear. Wow, I miss them. ESPN reporter here last week who says sore subject between her and her husband, that she seems to miss more than him when they're apart!!!!

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3 Jul 2010 - 17 Apr 2026

Our social media photographers extraordinaire!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 15, 2011 IN BLOG | 2 COMMENTS



Meet Christi Barli and Angie Sollinger, sisters and our social media photographers extraordinaire. It has been pointed out by many that it is perhaps ironic that these two good-lookers are BEHIND the camera on this gig. It started with Angie in St Maarten during training and now Christi has joined us in Key West....these two have been shooting hundreds of photos for our social media purposes (both here at FB and on our site at diananyad.com). They're both great story-tellers and are chronicling the entire journey of our Xtreme Dream Team. Christi and Angie will be with us every stroke of the way, in Havana, all the way across, right to the end finish line moment. Thank you, my friends, for such dedicated and beautiful work!

Diana Needs Your Help!

POSTED BY ADMIN ON JUL 13, 2011 IN BLOG, SLIDER | 6 COMMENTS





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3 Jul 2010 – 17 Apr 2026

It takes an army to make this dream come true. Many people have asked what they can do to help. Here's what you can do. Buy Team Nyad gear or make a donation through our official Non-Profit, Spire. Thank you! You're support is so appreciated!

Donate!

Buy Gear!



This pole has changed my life

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 12, 2011 IN BLOG | 4 COMMENTS



This pole has changed my life. Our crew designed it because I can't for the life of me track the boat and stay right on its course hour after hour.

My mind drifts....and then I drift far away from the boat. Have got to stay right on course if I want to make this 103 miles. So this pole gets lowered horizontally out from the bow. Then a white sailcloth streamer trails out as we start moving, about 18 feet from the starboard side, about 5 feet underwater. I swim right on top of that streamer, almost like following a pool lane line below. At night they switch out the white cloth for a bright red streamer of LED lights. For the first time in my marathon swimming career, I am swimming exactly parallel to the boat, not hundreds of yards out to sea. Genius!!!



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3 Jul 2010 - 17 Apr 2026

JUN JUL SEP
◀ 21 ▶
2010 2011 2012



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3 Jul 2010 – 17 Apr 2026

JUN JUL SEP
2010 21 2011 2012



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Photos by Christi Barli

Diana's email to her Crew!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 11, 2011 IN BLOG | 7 COMMENTS



Photo by Julie Milligan

Dear FRIENDS

Key crew arrived here in Key West on June 28, thinking that we might be a week, maybe 2 from a GO.

Warmer than usual weather of May and early June gave us that prediction.

But since then there have been tropical disturbances coming through with rain and constant cloud cover, meaning the water temps that were rising nicely tapered off and have stalled around 84. I need a minimum 86, with 87-98 inside the Gulf Stream, in order to make it all the way across.

The first half will bring potential dehydration, due to the extremely hot water temps. But the second half danger will be hypothermia as I start losing weight and am immersed in a liquid much below normal body temps.

Sunshine last two days and we need more.

After a week of training here, 10 of us, thought we got here way too early. But the details that need to get organized are many and we now realize we have needed all this time to be ready. How to clear

customs without going to the Coast Guard station in Key West after being in Cuba? Housing for the entire crew of 25 as they come into town? Which boats, how to charter? Expand teams of shark divers and kayakers as there were recent aggressive

moves on a swimmer in the Caymans, even though she had two electronic shark shields with her.

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3 Jul 2010 - 17 Apr 2026

make it down. I realize some of you may not want to come out on the water but be at the beach at the end. But some of you do want to make it to Key West to get on the FRIENDS boat and come out to be part of it. Hard to predict your plans when we can't give you hard dates. We have now pushed to latish July as reasonable guess.

Please keep in touch with me if as you have ideas as to whether you might realistically make it down.....or not.

Will be extremely hot and sunny. Sunblock and hats necessary.

As for plans/housing after the Swim, we haven't begun to work that out yet.

More later.....ONWARD!! Thank you, my good friends. Thank you! What a thrill it will be to see your faces, hear your voices, as we pursue this Xtreme Dream!!!!

Chafing Problem Solved! Here's How!

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 9, 2011 IN BLOG | 4 COMMENTS



Photo by Christi Barli

See this green strap velcroed onto the right side bathing suit strap? Well, my genius friend Anita Van Reingold designed this for me. I have never, ever solved the issue of deep, bloody abrasions from salt-water chafing. Tried every lubricant, tried sewing the bathing suit seams on the outside, tried liquid silicone, etc. Anita made me a variety of soft, silicone-treated, water-repellent fabrics which wrap around the suit straps by velcro. FIRST TIME in my swimming career that I am having no chafing whatsoever. And this solution just now, right before the big Cuba Swim.

HUGE THANKS TO ANITA!!!

Xtreme Dream historical, physical and psychological insights

POSTED BY ADMIN ON JUL 8, 2011 IN BLOG | 1 COMMENT

(Factoid: Diana swam around Manhattan Island October 6, 1975)

There are so many interesting aspects to Diana's swim. I am not sure to whom to ask these questions, but Diana's Xtreme Dream is not only going to be an incredible and historical physical and psychological endeavor, but her swim can help shed a lot of new insights into oceanography, science and medicine.

Oceanography

When I observe marathon swims around the world, I also often observe small eddies in the ocean. I do not know what causes these inconsistent flows in the general direction of the ocean currents, although I assume winds and differences in the gradient of the ocean floor may have something to do with it. Even in an 8-lane pool at the Olympics, we now know the flow of water is inconsistent in a static pool (e.g., a swimmer in lane 1 faces different flows that the swimmer in lane 4 does). So it would make sense that in the Caribbean Sea or any body of water, water does not always flow the same way or direction. As a reporter of open water swimming and observe of this swim, I would love to talk to the oceanographers and marine specialists who are assisting Diana on her swim. I think they can shed light to those in our global open water swimming community who can benefit from learning this knowledge.

Science

I just observed 48-year-old Penny Palfrey's 40 hour 41 minute solo swim from Little Cayman to Grand Cayman in the Cayman Islands. The water temperature ranged from 80 – 82°F. She started in pre-dawn hours and swam through one complete night, finishing after 10 am on her second day in the tropical water that I assume will be similar to what Diana will face. She encountered a variety of marine life, but what was most striking was the change in her soft tissue in and around her mouth (i.e., tongue and lips). We know of the concept of Third Spacing, but I would love to talk to the medical staff who are assisting Diana on her swim. I am hopeful they can shed light to those in our global open water swimming community who can benefit from learning this knowledge.

Medicine

In Penny's swim (and most other warm-water marathon swims), we know the swimmers usually gradually become more and more dehydrated. In Penny's case, we estimated that she needed 800-1000 ml of hydration per 60 minutes, but she was only taking in 600 ml as this appears to be her intake limit. I assume Diana has some of the world's finest sports medicine doctors and nutritionists helping them. It has been my observation that the best hydrated athletes are often those who perform the best, even at the shorter 1-2 hour swims at the world championships, Olympics and sprint triathlons. Learning what Diana's medical advisors are suggesting and preparing for Diana would be great to share with the global open water swimming community.

Secondly, it will also be interesting to compare the effects of Diana's upcoming swim with the effects she encountered back in 1978. How does the human body interact with the elements under such extreme conditions – when one is under 30 years old and when one is over 60 years old? We have never had two such extreme data points on the same individual – 30 years apart. Do differences in body fat percentage, weight, muscle mass, etc., have any affects – positive or negative? All

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3 Jul 2010 – 17 Apr 2026

interesting to the increasing number of individuals who continue to swim in their 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s.

Thank you very much for listening.

Steven Munatones

Editor In Chief, [The Daily News of Open Water Swimming](#)

Before a 9-hour training swim

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 7, 2011 IN BLOG | 4 COMMENTS

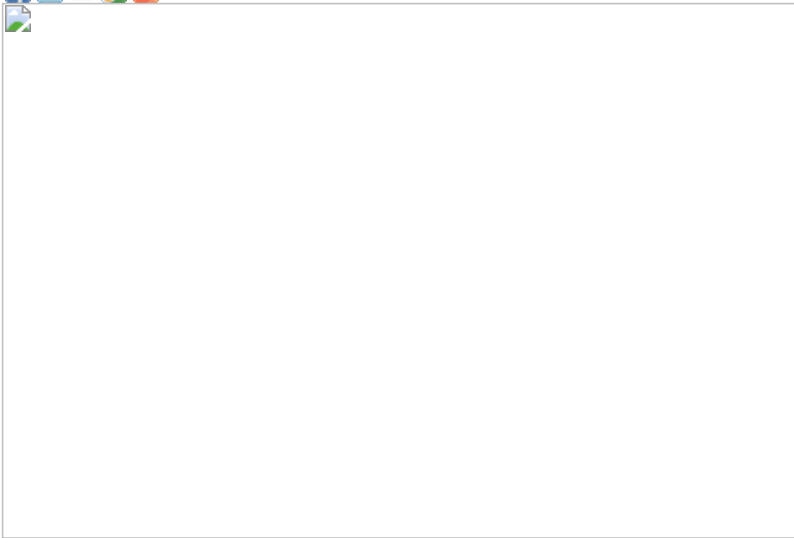


Photo by: Christi Barli

This photo just a few minutes before a 9-hour training swim. If I'm just about to enter the ocean in Havana to try to swim some 60 non-stop hours, you might ask "Then 9 hours must seem like child's play at this point, right?" Never. Yes, my muscles are in great shape now. 9 hours does not make me sore or wipe me out to the point of utter exhaustion any more. But 9 hours, every time, never an exception, still command my respect, my concentration, and a need to treat them with focus and desire. Those 9 hours just can't be treated lightly. They don't go by so quickly. I have to get into a head set to settle in, not look forward too much as to where the sun is, how much time has passed...why aren't we done yet???? It's a tough sport, this extreme version of marathon swimming. I am very proud to have put in these two years' of discipline.

I'd have to check my journal and count the hours but, aside from the hundreds of hours in the pool, the multiple ocean swims of 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 hours have required my best self, every single one of them. Not many to go. The countdown is ON!!

Jellyfish Stings

POSTED BY XTREME DREAM TEAM ON JUL 7, 2011 IN BLOG | 2 COMMENTS





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3 Jul 2010 – 17 Apr 2026

Photo by: Christi Barli

Swimming through massive beds of seaweed can be nasty because jellyfish have often been caught up in the tangle.

Just the other day, I was stung in this seaweed mass. It wasn't a dangerous Portuguese Man of War, which can cause nausea, even convulsions, even hallucinations, but the sting was sharp and made me stop for 2 or so minutes to grit my teeth until the pain subsided. Most jellyfish sting the surface of the skin. It's not pleasant, to be stung, but it's not dangerous. The Man of War, on the other hand, is dangerous. They actually send a venom into the central nervous system, the idea being that they're trying to paralyze a fish. We human beings are too large to go all the way to paralysis from the amount of venom they emit, but we can be terribly sick from a Man of War sting, especially from a swirl of multiple tentacles.

My Team has on board next to me some ammonia-based products to squeeze directly onto the sting areas and our Team doctor will have injections of Benadryl on hand, just in case I am experiencing some level of shock from a Man of War sting. I can't get out of the boat to be treated. Nor can any of the Team hold me up in the water. But I can approach the boat and be very close to them as they treat me for whatever I'm going through.

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