

Give The Gift of Inspiration



SEP 13 Posted 1:14pm

Navigator's Log - John Bartlett

Intro

How did I navigate for Diana's swim across those tricky Fl. Straights? VERY CAREFULLY! The main complication is of course, that in the strongest part of those currents, they are flowing across the route, perpendicular, at nearly three times the speed that Diana can swim. Most basically, what that means, is that at any time you let those currents sweep you to the east, the typical direction that they are flowing, further to the east than you want to be at any given location out there, you are finished. Done! In fact, if that current is flowing at that speed, straight or flat east as I call it, you can be done before you even start.

However, fortunately, there is an infinite variety of patterns of flow out there. That conveyor belt of warm water comes up between the Yucatan, and western Cuba, to the left, and all ends up squeezing between Miami, and the Bahamas, up and out to the right, and that never stops. What it does in between, in that middle area, between Havana, and the Fl. Keys and Key West, where Diana (and others) have wanted to cross, is what makes this tricky. The general massive flow can be going straight east (as I have mentioned), not good, or be going even a little south of east, very bad. Sometimes it can be swirling counterclockwise, or sometimes clockwise. Sometimes, however, it can be flowing slightly north of east, and this is when the possibility for a swimmer to succeed really starts.

What we had for Diana's swim this Aug. 31, 2013, was a particular feature in addition to a somewhat northeasterly flow. There had been sitting out to the west of Key West a counter clockwise circulating eddy, one side of which, was turning the big flow in the upper stretches, even more northerly at one point, to 46 degrees on the compass, a full northeasterly direction, right along the edge of our swim path. I knew this, because the master oceanographer, Frank Bohlen, said it was. (he sent me a printout each day for weeks, delineating these features)

We took really accurate current readings going over to Cuba, verifying our assumptions; it was real.

For the swim, I knew we needed to get a little to the west, so that when we got about half way up, we would pick up that northeasterly. (a little further east, that current was no longer present). I plotted it all out in Hemmingway Marina, while I looked out over the ocean, watching for the rest of our fleet to arrive. Sat. morning, Aug. 31, we started by working some to the west, for a cushion, then did get carried some to the east, but found that northeasterly, on the edge of the eddy, for a fast ride. Although Florida was in sight, I was expecting to have trouble hitting Key West, because of a 1.4 kt. flow going just south of east, to 93 degrees, we had observed going over, but we got through it, in the morning darkness, crabbing sideways with the glow of Key West off to our Starboard side.

After sunrise, and through the morning hours, the ocean currents moderated, and the ebbing tide coming out the Key West shipping channel became our concern. We headed diagonally across it, aiming for the center of the land mass of Key West, where the outgoing tide would be the least. We picked that spot on Smathers Beach, which was about to become the landing point for the swimmer completing the greatest epic ocean swim in history. Diana Nyad, Cuba to Key West.

Postscript

This entire expeditionary challenge has been a tremendous learning experience, and time of personal growth for me. The many relationships, by association, and interaction, have broadened my understanding of how people summon their abilities, to communicate and work together toward a common goal. Diana, and the Dream that she had been living, and with her special abilities to relate it to us all, and elements in our own lives, has been the center of it all. I feel that most us, and I speak most assuredly for myself, have been motivated, and challenged to our inner cores, to be the best, and do the best that we could do. It's a high, that in many ways, is what makes life worth while. I want to thank everyone, for being who you are, and working together with us all, like you did. It has been a wonderful path, all the much sweeter for our success. And finally thank you Diana, for leading the way, showing us all what setting a high bar can really mean in life, and for ascending to that height with such a spectacular and impressive performance.

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AUG 31

NAVIGATOR JOHN BARTLETT'S

LOG - 8 PAGES

9 AM START N 23 05.107 W 82 30.242

PLACING TARGET WAY POINT DUE N.

TO WATCH FOR WESTERLY SET.

NOON POS. N 23 09.32 W 82 31.23

TRAVELED 5.36 NM 3HR. 2.05 MPH

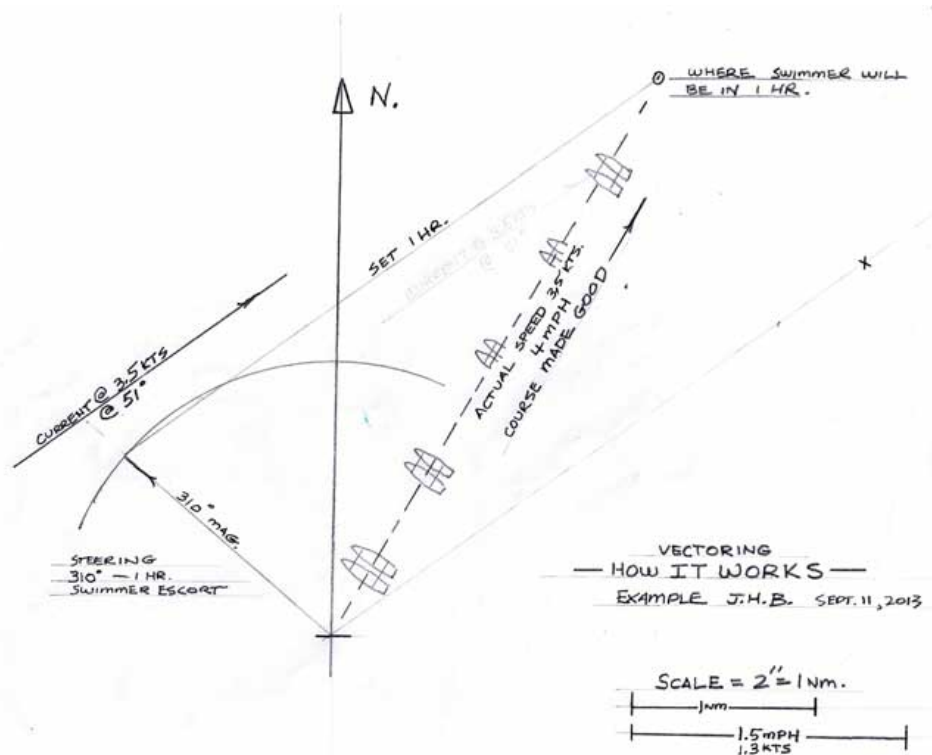
CURRENT AT 1:45 PM 1.3KT TO E., 6.14 H

3 PM POSITION N 23 12.3 W 82 31.4

7.32 NM OUT 8.42 ST. MILES IN

6 HRS 1.4 MPH AD 11.17 8.1 MPH

PDF



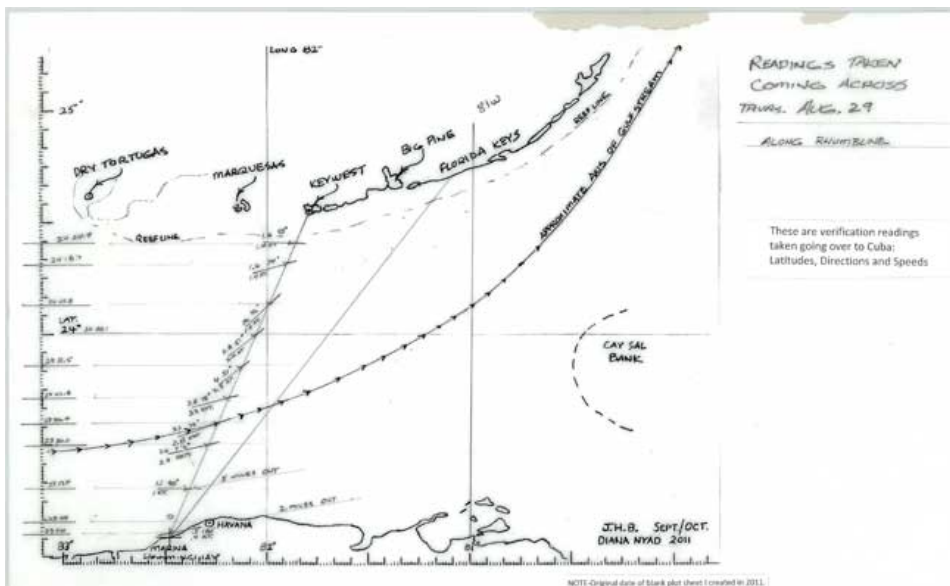
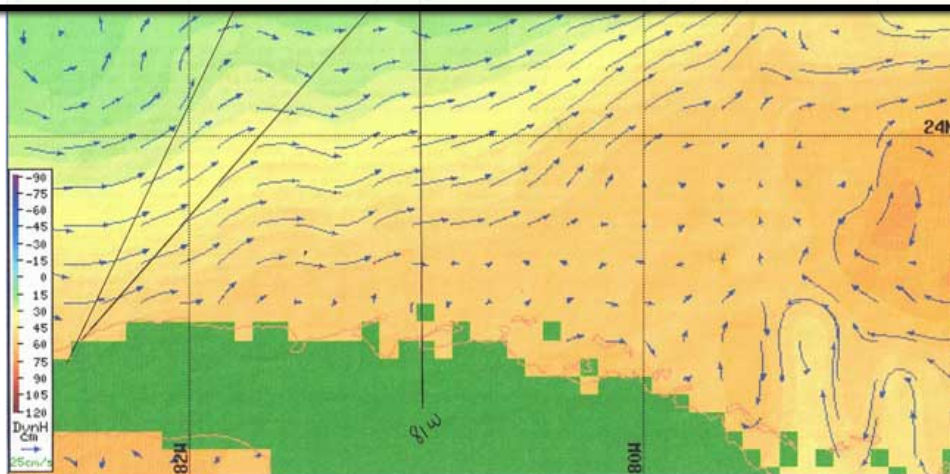
AUG-30-2013

20 captures

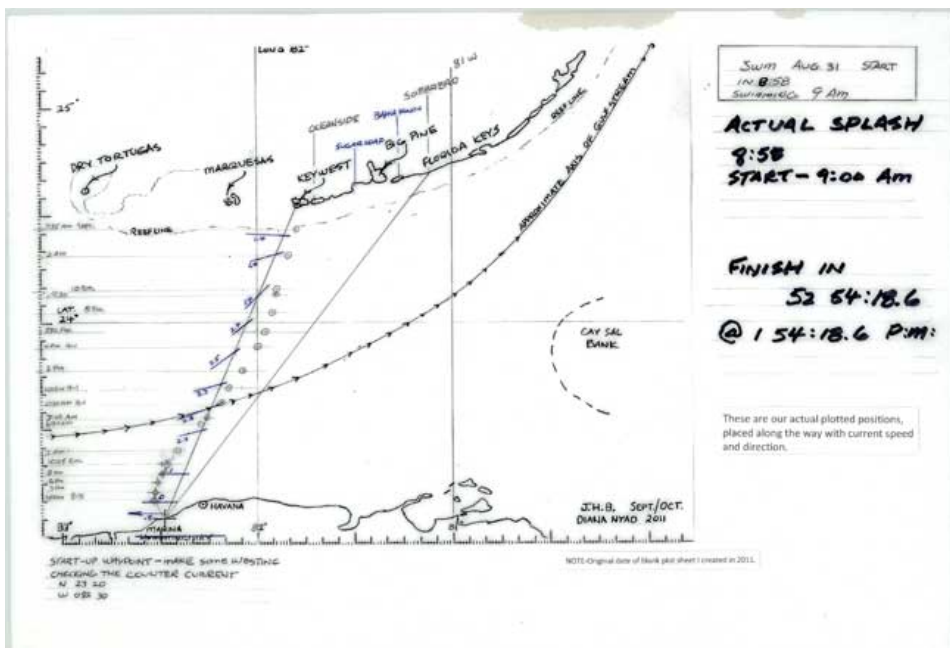
22 Sep 2013 - 21 Mar 2023

DEC MAR MAR
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2015 2016 2022

About this capture



NOTE: Original date of blank plot sheet created in 2011.



NOTE: Original date of blank plot sheet created in 2011.

