

Give The Gift of Inspiration



SEP 13

Posted 1:11am

Independent Observer Report: Janet Hinkle



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We asked two non-Xtreme Dream Team members to serve as Independent Observers on the crossing. **Janet Hinkle** and **Roger McVeigh**, both mature, responsible citizens of Key West, took very seriously their commitment to observe and record virtually every minute of the Swim, with 100% accuracy and objectivity. They would tag team throughout, one of them on my escort boat Voyager, fresh and eyes on me for close observation, the other then resting on mothership Dreams Do Come True to be alert for the next shift. I am indebted to Janet and Roger for their time and their ethical standards. Our Team is indebted to them for recording this moment in history with precision and honor.

- Diana

This is the first of 3 reports from the Independent Observers and the Navigator during the crossing.

by Janet Hinkle, Sept. 11, 2013

Diana swims alone, but not alone. She chose her immediate team and gave them her trust. At 9 am August 31, 2013 she jumped from a rocky shore eleven miles east of Havana, Cuba and let go.

Wearing a swimsuit and goggles, she swam toward The Voyager, her home base for hundreds of hours of training swims. The boat is spare, outfitted with only essentials. One of the boat captains tasked with the difficult chore of keeping the Voyager on course while motoring at a swimmers pace commented upon first seeing the boat, "I feel like I should get you a fern."

That tidbit is noted in my Log - my best effort to do what Diana asked me to do just six hours before the fleet left for Cuba. Steve Munatones, whom she hoped would be available to serve as an observer was out of the country and unavailable. She needed two observers and hoped I could be one. "Can you do this?" she asked. I said I would, and I'm glad I did.

Like many others in Key West, I met Diana Nyad three years ago when she came to train for her third Cuba-to-Florida swim attempt. We get thousands of visitors a year, but at its heart, Key West is a small town. Word soon spread that she was asking for the community's support to realize her dream.

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Diana's message of pursuing your dreams and living life to its fullest resonated with me, a woman in her mid-50s, recently divorced and attempting to build a new life in Key West. A good friend of mine asked if I could help by housing Diana while she was training for the swim. She knew I had a duplex apartment I kept available for family and friends to use when they visit. I said sure. I helped with housing during 2011 and 2012, but not this year. I ran into Diana on the street one afternoon last July. I wished her my best on her fifth attempt. But I didn't see or talk with her again until I got that 11 am phone call on August 29, 2013.

21 captures

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She also asked Key West citizen Roger McVeigh to assist with observer duties. When I wasn't on the Voyager taking notes, Roger was there. I first met Roger, a retired CPA, just hours before leaving for Cuba. We shared about our work on various Key West non-profit boards. Roger worked on finding solutions for the homeless in Key West. I volunteer with Fair Insurance Rates in Monroe (FIRM), The Studios of Key West and the Tropic Cinema. Together we reviewed a brief note from Steve Munatones giving us some tips on observation. Our packages included a spiral notebooks and pens.

I understood my job. I joked that it could be said I was the "most essential, non-essential person on the boat". While the divers dove, the drivers drove, the navigator navigated, the handlers handled, and Diana swam, I . . . observed.

I began the stopwatch on my iPhone when Diana jumped into Cuban waters. During my shifts I noted technical data – time, latitude and longitudinal coordinates, magnetic course of the boat, water temperature, etc. But I also noted, as Steve Munatones had suggested, the mood of the boat and the chatter among the crew as they went about the business of guiding and caring for Diana as she swam from Point A to Point B.

But my most important role was observing Diana – swimming, treading water, eating, complaining, joking with the crew, choking on salt water, vomiting, expressing optimism, expressing fear.

It was important for me to document if anything happened that would help propel her through the water in a way other than her own arms, legs, mind, and personal fortitude. I never witnessed her being pulled by the boat, she never got out of the water and into the boat and, she did not wear fins or buoyant gear. While I was observing, she was not assisted in any way with her swim. Yes, her handlers put food in her mouth and wrapped her ankles with tape at night, kayakers handed her water bottles, divers adjusted the hood on her protective jelly fish suit, and different people smeared anti-jellyfish gel on her face. But that was the extent of any touching.

There are two moments I'll never forget. One took place on Sunday afternoon in a meeting between Navigator John Bartlett and Operations Chief John Berry. I was getting an update when they received favorable news from on land oceanographers about currents up ahead. They both knew what this meant and for the first time, I saw the biggest smiles on their faces. Confidence that Diana could do this soared. I'd like to think this was a moment in time when they too believed this seemingly impossible endeavor was . . . possible.

The next moment occurred later Monday at 2 in the morning. Diana had been swimming for nearly 30 hours. Lois Ann Porter, one of four handlers, was sitting next to me. I had been counting Diana's swim strokes periodically during the swim. This time I asked Lois Ann to count the strokes as I watched my stop watch. We counted 50 strokes per minutes. I was in awe that she still was swimming so consistently.

I did my job – observing and taking notes – to the best of my ability. I am grateful I was there to witness history and Diana's lifelong dream come true.

LOG RECORD of Janet Hinkle: Diana Nyad Swim from Cuba to Key West Saturday August 31 – Monday, Sept. 2, 2013 52 hours, 54 minutes, 18.6 seconds

Sat. 8:15 am

All boats are gathered around a rock face near Marina Hemingway, about 11 miles west of Havana, Cuba. Winds are 4-6 knots, seas are calm and skies above the boat are clear. In the east are Alto Cirrus clouds. Katie says: "It's a great day for Dreams to come true." There was a bit of friendly banter over who wished they had said that first.

The sun suggests it's mid morning. I discuss our route with Captain Jeff Lewis who is related to the explorer Meriwether Lewis. At this point he thinks our route is going to "look like a sawtooth." It will look like we are headed to Mexico but we will actually be moving to the keys. The course will factor in the strong west to east Gulf Stream which can help Diana. Storms, eddies, jelly fish are the unknowns at this point. But today there are perfect conditions.

Sat. 8:59:02 am

Diana jumps into the water and we are off. There is an incoming tide so she will have to work to get out of the waters. Roger McVeigh will take the first shift aboard Voyager. We settle on three-hour shifts with the understanding that we'll modify if needed.

Winds are 4 knots from the south east. Seas are calm and we pray they will stay that way.

Sat. 11:55 am

I step aboard Voyager. We are 2 hours and 58 minutes into the swim and our position is:

N 23.09.527

W 82.31.246

Diana is strong and kayakers are staying close. My personal trip odometer says we are 5.53 nautical miles from Cuba. Stability of the boat at such a slow speed has been improved with the launching of a second drogue.

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"I think that's going to be the perfect amount of drag," said Capt. David, who along with other crew members Dee, Nancy and John, is charged with the difficult task of keeping Diana on course, and second by second dealing with how currents, wave action, and other

variables at such a slow speed can be disruptive to our course heading.

We are averaging in the neighborhood of one knot.

Sat. 12:05 pm

Diana stopped for feeding. Divers are in the water to look for sharks and jellyfish. Diana eating a banana with peanut butter and natural organic energy drink. She requested water. Chafing cream is visible in the neck and under her arms. She treads water between feeding/watering and did not touch the boat.

As she returns to the swim about 10 minutes later, the boats around her cheer her on. She flashes them all a peace sign.

Sat. 12:15 pm

Clear skies above, Havana still in hazy view.

Course altered slightly to 325 degrees and briefly to avoid large freighter boat ahead that appeared to be pulling something. The crew dubs it the HMS Rust Bucket and suggested they were in the process of hazing a new crewmember and that is what was being dragged.

Position:

N 23.10.231

W 082.31.182

Course Heading: 325 degrees.

At 3 hours and 31 minutes into the swim, Diana is swimming 50 strokes per minute. Kicks her feet occasionally and takes a breath after two strokes.

Sat. 12:43 pm

Course returned to 320 degrees.

Handlers change shifts every four hours but that is always dependent upon circumstances and events. That is the goal.

Pauline just coming off shift said in response to my question about how is she doing:

"Awesome, strong, she's kicking ass, going like a normal practice swim."

This is Pauline's second Cuba swim with Diana and she and her husband, John Berry, have been primary practice boat drivers for her for the last two years.

I asked if there have been any adjustments made in the way she is being handled this trip compared to last. "She is getting more food. It gives her more energy and keeps her from getting nauseous." This was something they experimented with this summer and appears to be working.

Pauline confirmed that there is always a shark diver on top of the vessel looking for sharks, jelly fish, anything dangerous. At night there are two divers on top of the boat.

David, boat driver, is very funny. Someone recalls the first comment after seeing the spare but functional Voyager: "I think I should buy you a fern."

Sat. 1:01 pm

Position:

N. 23.10.231

W. 082. 31.203

Bonnie concerned she may get a headache wearing the mask and asks the doctors if she can give her Tylenol through the night and they approve the dosage and frequency.

Bonnie reports that Diana is "not nearly as chatty". "Very focused."

Sat. 1:12 pm

Driver reports that conditions are excellent with re: waves, wind...

"This is nothing compared to what she has been training under."

Navigator resting. At this time, crew refers to him as "the napigator"

Wind picking up to 6.5 knots.. We are 4 hours 17 minutes into the swim. Havana still visible.

There is a white ribbon that runs parallel the boat about 15 feet away from the boat. At this, this ribbon is replaced with a red streaming light rope. Diana swims to the right of this ribbon and rope. There is a kayaker to her right and also behind her. Each is trailing a "shark shock" to keep predators at bay.

Sat. 1:20 pm

Water temperature is 86 degrees F.

Position:

N 23.11.384

W 82.31.410

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About this capture

Seas are 1 to 2 feet, washboard

There is an easterly current

We are about 7.21 nautical miles from Cuba (by my Garmin)

Sat. 1:33 pm

John Bartlett: "It's going very well now."

Sat. 1:36pm

Whistle warning, short water break from kayakers

Sat. 1:45 pm

Update from John Barlett

7.05 Statute miles off coast of Cuba.

"Last time I calculated, she was moving at around 2 miles per hour which makes us very happy."

"That's on the high end and that's cooking."

"Currents are neither helping nor hurting us at this point."

Sat. 1:49 pm

Diana jokes with Orioles fan Operations Chief John Berry

"Yankees beat the Orioles last night....just sayin"

Sat. 2 pm

Position:

N 23.11.981

W 082.31.410

Seas 1-2 feet

Current: slightly easterly

Boat speed continues at 1 knot

Nancy suggests we put together a shark diver calendar because we have such fine looking divers on the boat..

At this point, John Bartlett is predicting the swim to be 60 hours if everything goes well. "That's more than any human has ever done."

Sat. 2:33 pm

Water break

Sat. 2:38 pm

Jellyfish sighting by one of the entourage boats - Dreams. The entire crew jumps to look as if alarm bells going off. But Voyager boat sees nothing.

Sat. 2:39 pm

5 hours 42 minutes into the swim

Position:

N 23.11.981

W 082.31.414

Course Heading 320 degrees still stroking 50 strokes per minute

Shift ends at 3 pm Roger on board. After my shift I talk with Bonnie and inquire about Diana's cardinal rule.

Bonnie: "First of all, she never wants to know the time....but I promise you...she knows."

Why?

Bonnie: "because somebody could be wrong. It gets in her head. She has her own way of doing things. She has always been that way."

Bonnie cont. "When I used to run with her, she has to go a minute past the time we are supposed to end."

The dream for swim dates back 30 years when Diana was in Ft. Lauderdale. Diana "can't let go of it"

SHIFT ENDS.

Sat. 6 pm

Back on board Voyager. While I was gone, wind got up to 7.5 knots but is now 6 knots. 1-3 foot chop against a current of 1.3, 11.85 statute miles into the swim.

Position:
N 23.15.38
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About this capture

Heading: 320 degrees.

John Bartlett: "We are right where we want to be right now." Diana is starting to feel some tingles, could be sea lice. This is first time she has mentioned this.

Sat. 6:09pm

Diana's swim stroke clocked at 51 strokes per minute. I checked twice. She is very rhythmic and consistent.

Sun beginning to set behind the clouds.

Water temperature: 86 degrees

Sat. 6:33 pm

Five minute warning whistle

Jellyfish expert Angel is in the water looking for jelly fish.

Diana very quiet asking for Angel to give her a report and wanting to know if it is time for the mask. Feeding her pasta. She says: "I feel like I need to eat something with a lot of calories."

As dusk approaches she puts on the suit. She instructs the diver:

"I cannot be held up but if I have trouble with the suit you can pull it up.

Nico is assisting her with the suit. Bottom of the suit and socks are tightly taped with dark aqua tape to prevent any jelly fish venom from reaching in the crack between her feet and ankles.

Bottom of suit and socks are taped together with dark aqua tape. Assisted by handlers. Very stressful scene - water getting to her as she attempts to get suit on. Arduous task.

She is receiving an inhaler treatment and expressing worry about the security around the zipper of the suit.

The mask is going on. When it is on she looks like a robber with a mask.

Diana remarks: "Give me all your money."

She is back swimming at 7:09. It took about half hour to completely suit up.

She is stroking 40 strokes per minute. Apparent she must reach higher for a breath compared to no mask.

Sat. 7:21 pm

Red light rope is broken; fortunately crew planned for the possibility and a back up is quickly installed. The test was done prior to sundown and easily switched out in the dusk light.

I have a wonderful conversation with Nico about his diving business. He spear fishes and sells his fresh catch to Richard Hatch for his restaurants.

Sat. 7:38 pm

Calm seas, some dark clouds around us.

Course heading: 310 degrees.

We are 10 hours and 40 minutes into the swim. I'm clocking her at 47 strokes per minute. She must be getting into a rhythm and returning to her 50 stroke average.

How is Diana feeling I ask one of the handlers:

"Good but not her usual jovial self. We are feeding her more during the day because it is very difficult to get any nutrition into her with the mask.

Sat. 7:53 pm

John Bartlett reports we have crossed into international waters.

"This is the first time she has reached international waters without a crisis," said Bonnie Stoll, noting that Diana is getting her personality back and sense of humor.

Angel requests that boats with white lights on mast move to port side of Voyager or kill their lights. Concerned about anything that might attract the jellyfish.

Sat. 8:09 pm

Position:
N 23.27.924
W 082.29.356

Course heading 310 degrees. Calm seas. No waves

Averaging 1.5 knots, good signs all around...

Sat. 8:40 pm

Nourishment break..

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About this capture

Angel and divers in the water looking for sharks and jelly fish.

Switched to red light from green light on her swim cap per Angels direction. Divers out of the water.

Interviewed Angel: "I am seeing fireworms but no box jellyfish."

"It's a beautiful thing," a crew person says.

Sat. 8:55 pm

Position:

N 23.27.924

W. 082.29.356

Course heading 310 degrees. Calm seas.

SHIFT ENDS.

Sun. 1:47 am

BACK ON BOARD Voyager

Position:

N.23.24.256

W 82.24.783

Diana in water, course heading 300 degrees (a shift of 10 degrees)

Bonnie and Lois Ann on duty; both John's resting.

Strokes in keeping with what's expected with mask on.

Sun 2:02 am

Water break - get's water from kayakers

Angel tells me risk of jellyfish higher between 2 and 3 am -

Sun. 2:10 am

John Bartlett reports:

Average last two hours 1.44 mph - better than the previous two hours. We are anticipating even better currents three miles ahead.

Sun 2:21 am

Water temperature 84 degrees.

Sun 2:37 am

Food break for about 5-7 minutes. Divers in the water. Later Nico reports he saw one round, clear, small jelly with tentacles streaming down.

They are coming up; Angel making sure all divers are completely protected.

17 hours, 55 minutes into the swim.

Position:

N 23.25.419

W. 082 23 322

Course setting is 300 degrees.

Sun 3:09 am

Water break, Angel and Nico in the water - Absolutely NO JELLYFISH spotted..this is excellent news.

Apparently Diana not suffering from headache, however lots of saltwater ingested.

Sun. 3:37 am

Position:

N 23.25.419

W. 082.23.322

Course heading 300 degrees.

Sun 3:50 am

Divers down "No jelly fish, nothing," reports Nico

Large rolling waves are making boat steerage a challenge.

Sun 4:12 am

Kayaker Darlene is seasick. Diana swimming.

Position:

N 23.27.085

W 082.21.432

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About this capture

Janet, this is me thinking: "I am in awe of what I am witnessing.. I am taking in the moment. I am so grateful for the privilege of being in the midst of such a loving and generous group of people.

Sun 4:50 am

Diana in distress. Vomiting. (Diana) has requested some Coke.

Back swimming but took some periodic breaks.

Sun 6:01 am

Diana continuing to throw up. Complains of feeling weak. Requests physicians. Physicians are in another boat and effort underway to get them to Diana.

Position:

N. 23.30.529

W 082.18.799

Sun 6:06 am

Back swimming. Still no reports of jellyfish.

Sun 6:17 am

Bonnie wants to give her solid food and tells Diana she must remove the mask to receive a banana peanut butter concoction. Diana resists taking off mask. Very concerned that if we take too long a break it will throw us off course. We are 21 hours 24 minutes into the swim.

Sun 6:42 am

Sun beginning to show light on eastern horizon. Diana swimming.

Sun 6:43 am

Diana stops, is coughing.

We are moving at 2.5 knots - E-NE, just crossing the rumb line. Diana is taking off the mask to adjust.

SHIFT ENDS.

Sun. 12:14 pm

Back on Voyager

Seas 3-5 feet. Wind 2 to 3 knots from S.E.

Position:

N 23.41.426

W 082.08.351

27.16 hours into the swim.

Diana wearing her swimsuit this morning.

49/50 strokes per minute.

Clear skies, cirrus clouds on horizon.

Bonnie and Pauline on duty as handlers

Course heading: 260 degrees.

Learned Diana sang Happy Birthday to Roger during his shift.

NOON STAT Report from John Bartlett

Diana swimming strong, riding the swells. 3-5 foot swell out of the east which is right behind her. 47.61 statute miles in 27 hours. 1.76 mph for swimmer.

Over the last few hours have entered a more favorable current. (1.44 at 2 am. 1.68 at 10 am)

"getting into more favorable current." John Barlett

Still steering at 260 degrees but course made good is 42 degrees - we are in 3.8 knots of current right now. "54 degree current is running which is in our favor."

What we've always hoped for.

Where will we land?: Thinking Sombrero Beach in Marathon but will know better 10 miles out (from the keys). If tide is coming out, we will steer away from the cuts and bridges. If the tide is coming in, we will take advantage of the cuts and bridges and bring her in."

Interviewed Bonnie: It got pretty tough last night, probably more of same tonight." Predicting 12 knot winds.

On the chart table was a typed list of rules (covered in plastic)

"Don't ever tell me, or let anyone else tell me how far we have gone or how far we have to go."

"Emerging shark episode is the only reason I would be allowed out of the water until shark divers deem it safe to return. No storm will disrupt the swim. We have a definite storm contingency."

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About this capture

At night, no solid food. Pauline's shake for nutrition. Can drink Jamba Juice, Coke, Water...No shot blocks with mask on.

Stomach settling concoction:

3 caps pink stuff (Pepto Bismal?)

3 Tbs Hammer Sustained Energy

9 tiny spoonfuls of Electrolyte Powder

3 tsp ginger extract

good dose of honey - fill rest with water.

Sun. 12:57 pm

Whistle blown for break.

Diana reports that "it might be psychosomatic, but feeling pressure in lungs."

Diana sees me and acknowledges my presence with a wink.

Position:

N. 23.42.970

W. 082.07.001

Clears skies, sunny. Divers in water...Ice on Diana's lips.

Doctors are here. Diana reports her lungs are constricted.

"I'm tired, last night almost broke me." she said.

"I do feel a better sense of well being....but there is heaviness in my lungs." Again, wonders if it's psychosomatic. Doctors listen to her chest and measure her heart beat. They report her heart is beating 71 beats per minute and "lungs are clear"
They tell me mid 60s to low 70s is a normal heart beat.

Sun. 1:13 pm

Back swimming - I note this was a 16 minute break.

Sun 1:32 pm

Position:

N 23.44.642

W 082.05.564

Funny David back as boat driver after his break: "That three hours of sleep I got was the best ten hours of sleep ever."

Sun 1:59 pm

Whistle blow, Nico in the water looking for sharks.

"Diana feeding - she reports feeling strong but her mouth is hurting from the mask. The mask is chafing. Diana shuns suggestion of orajel or other pain relievers - fearful it will reduce effectiveness of mask.

Doctors suggest Vaseline or lanolin. They have given her Zofran for the nausea. It is only anti-nausea that will not sedate her. They report it has helped. Doctor: "If (mouth soreness) is her main complaint, we are in good shape."

The catamaran Dreams Do Come True pulls close and the crew encourages Diana on with cheers.

Diana jokes: "What are they all excited about.?"

Diver adds: "And why are they following us?"

Bonnie suggests testing the netting to see if it could replace the mask? Diana expresses skepticism. "Penny Palfry tried this." "We'll try it again," says Bonnie.

"Let's try it for five minutes and see what happens."

Did not work. Water coming into Diana's mouth. She removes netting.

Sun 2:17 pm

Back swimming.

Course heading 330 degrees - course made good still working.

Sun. 2:25 pm

Water temperature 88 degrees - a bit warmer than previously reported.

Sun 2:35 pm

I clock Diana at 50 strokes per minute and once again at 52 strokes per minute.

Sun 2:38 pm

Possible good news (from sources on land) about the absence of eddys...John Barlett calling Lee to confirm Frank's latest email.

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Sun. 2:45 pm

Trip is full of highs and lows. News of a favorable current brings smiles all around to the navigator and crew. Diana still stroking 50 strokes per minutes, the same steady stroke she began nearly 30 hours ago.

Sun. 3:03pm

Whistle blows for break. The two physicians took a turn diving in the water and looking around.

Diana reports mouth still irritated from the mask experience. She is occasionally vomiting. Bonnie tells her: "Sometimes it's good to vomit..that said... let it come up."

Sun. 3:11 pm

Diana tells Bonnie: "I've got to figure out how to get calories...I don't want to eat anything." Bonnie is feeding her a peanut butter (like) substance with a spoon. Diana has a red sore on the right side of her mouth.

Sun. 3:19 pm

Back swimming.

Sun. 3:20 pm

Course heading 330 degrees

Position:

N 23.50.616

W 082.01.580

Pauline Berry interviewed on the sat phone. Bonnie works with Dreams boat to make ice cubes out of jamba juice concoction "This is pretty much going to be her sustenance through the night."

Sun. 3:50 pm

Diana takes bathroom break.

There is a possible moon jelly sighting. Angel is called over to make a perimeter check.

John Barlett is giving social media update. Diana is next to the boat, wading. She asks for sandwiches and is eating with a good attitude.

Angel is in the water. Upon her return reports there is a thermal plane 30 feet down but no jelly fish.

Sun 4:07 pm

Diana swimming.

John Bartlett gives me a report as of 4 pm

Position:

N 23.52.7

W 82.00.4

63.25 Statute miles from Cuba starting point. 31 hours since start of swim. Averaging 2.04 miles per hour, anticipating the average will increase as day progresses because "Diana is in a favorable current."

Diana still swimming strong. 1.5 to 1.6 miles per hour – there is current advantage. Average speed over the bottom is 4 mph.

"We are farther along than Diana has been on any of her previous three attempts."

("We are) significantly farther north."

The trending currents up head are not eddys but a horseshoe like hump..that's 11 miles ahead of us right now.

"Could be another 29 hours, things going very well right now..could be 60 hours total trip.

"We're looking pretty good."

"we are five miles east of a straight line from Key West to Cuba."

"At 6:15 we're going to be at a point where a few course changes will be contemplated."

"She insists on using statute miles verses nautical miles.."

Sun. 4:38 pm

(Diana) stops for a feeding.

Diana: "My motivation is good but I'm not getting enough nutrition... I feel it."

Position:
N.23.55.024
W. 081.59.000

Course heading 330 degrees

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About this capture

swimming at 4:50 pm

SHIFT ENDS.

Mon. 1:26 am

Diana wearing jellyfish suit but no mask.

Back on boat, red light out. Kayakers in place.. encouraging words coming from Bonnie.

"I see a lot left in you." Bonnie says.

Diana appears a bit delirious. She is bobbing in the water.

"Free style... you are so close...you have no idea," says Bonnie.

Kayakers begin encouraging words: "Come on Diana." Take you to my party.

John Berry discussing strategy with Angel. Diana yells: "Woo, woo."

I sense a lot of stress. Diana is back stroking.

I learn about the storm protocol that was invoked late last night. "We were prepared, we had a plan, and it worked." John Berry tells me. Sharks shields worn around the ankles of Nico, Jay, Ben and Cal who were all in the water with Diana.

Bonnie yells to Diana. "We are going to Key West for breakfast."

John Bartlett yells: "I'm going to have lobster Benedict and you're buying."

Doctors are concerned about the swelling.

Lots of encouragement coming from all in the boat and among kayakers:
"Diana...come on...this is just a six hour training swim....you can do it." Bonnie says.

Mon. 1:37 am

Diana is always veering right, away from the boat and many voices direct her back to the light and the boat. More confusion than I've witnessed before. Everyone constantly bidding her to swim toward the red rope light and nearer the boat.

Bonnie: "Come on Diana, take us home."

Angel reports no jelly fish sighted. "Nothing," she says.

(my notes difficult to read here) but I think we discussed the importance of the insistence that she get on dry land before it is over."

Minutes later (did not note time)

I note the words: "coherent." "she's strong" She is behind the boat and there is concern she has gotten under the boat. Nico jumps in to find her behind the boat. He coaxes her back to the red rope light.

Doctors examine and report: "She is unbelievably swollen in her mouth." They use the words "angiodema" Bonnie talking with Dr. Derrick "She's swollen..100%

Diana is lucid and asking specific questions.

Mon. 2:19 am

Diana swimming. Handler Lois Ann counts the strokes while I watch the stopwatch. She is swimming 50 strokes per minute.

Position:
N24.19.203
W.81.56.457
Course heading 340 degrees

Mon. 2:20 am

Lots of encouragement from everyone around Diana

"Take us home."

Bonnie asked Dee, who was at the helm, "Am I making you nuts Dee? (with her yelling at Diana) Dee said: "No."

Mon. 2:37 am

Diana switched to breast stroke...she then stopped and asked: "Are we there?"

She then told Bonnie that she wanted to change into a different swimsuit or something like that. Everyone noted that was a good sign. She's thinking about how she wants to arrive in Key West.

Mon. 2:52 am

Diana asks for John Bartlett what time we are getting to shore. He says six hours (puzzling) but I don't follow up.

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About this capture

Mon. 2:57 am

(Diana is) back swimming.

Several stops and starts – switching from breast stroke to free style...

Mon. 3:37am

Angel in the water putting sting stopper on Diana's face – she is not wearing the mask

Position:

N 24.22.375

W 081.49.875

No spotting of any jelly fish...all clear...Diana resting for a minute...divers in water to stay close.

Mon. 3:49 am

(Diana) begins swimming again with breast stroke.

Driver comments: she still has good form.

Mon. 4:22 am

Position:

N 23.23.772

W 81.29.419

Water smooth – glassy – no wind. Diana back swimming strong...50 strokes per minute. Clear skies, lots of stars out

Lights of Key West in the distance.

Mon. 4:39 am

(Diana) takes a break; getting new goggles

Mon. 4:45 am

(Diana is) back swimming, breast stroke.

Heading 340 degrees.

John Bartlett: "We know exactly what distance, big unknown is how much stoppage time she needs (from here on out) "She's running on fumes now."

The trip will be 112 statute miles – 35 miles longer than any human being has ever swam. Appears Smathers Beach could be done sometime in late afternoon 4 to 6 pm.

Diana is stopping.

Lots of encouragement from kayakers trying to keep her on course. "Go left Diana, swim to the light."

For some reason, she swims to the right and she must return to the boat on her left to stay on course – Kayaker Don McCumber: singing a mantra over and over and over and over...

Mon. 5:10 am

(took video) Kayker singing: :Follow the light. Follow the light. On-ward to Flor-i-da..Find a way..follow the lights to Flor-i-da..Find a way to Flor-i-da ...onward to find a way....Onward, onward, to Flor-i-da

Diana stopping and starting...periodically asking for water and nourishment...effort is to just keep her going...I recall now that she was very apologetic to divers for throwing up.. They respond..."don't worry, it's just fish food."

Key West lights getting brighter on the horizon. No jellyfish sighted.

SHIFT ENDS.

I assumed a position on the bow of Dreams Do Come True and monitored progress of the swim. (Roger on boat as official observer)

She is swimming strong – appears to be at her 50 stroke pace.

(from the video I took, not in notes) 10:40 am – The entire fleet is gathered around (Diana). She thanks everyone for helping her accomplish this feat. "I'm about the swim the last two miles in the ocean....I am surrounded by some of the most intimate friends of my life and some I just met on Friday."Thank you, thank you so much for your generosity."

John Berry reminds everyone to make sure Diana is not touched until she is out of the water and Bonnie will be the first person to touch her.

I was taken to the beach in a dinghy. When Diana stepped on dry land I stopped the stop watch on my Iphone 4. Her swim log time was 52 hours, 54 minutes, 18.6 seconds.

POSTSCRIPT:

About six hours before the boats headed for Cuba I was asked by Diana to join this historic trip. I was acquainted with a few members of her crew. I was meeting everyone else for the first time. The professionalism that surrounded Diana was apparent. The course researched, planned, executed and charted by John Bartlett, the navigator, was critical to the success of

this swim. I was particularly impressed with John Berry – ground zero for interaction with everyone. His calm demeanor, kindness, and judgment played a critical role in bringing out the best in everyone participating in the swim. The stars truly aligned for Diana – a favorable course and stream, no jellyfish, no sharks. Her hours and hours of training paid off in her ability to swim for over 54 hours. All the information contained above was recorded to the best of my ability. Diana did not leave the water. She was never buoyed up or supported in any way. She never held onto the boat or kayak or anything that would have assisted her through the water. I continue to be in awe that she could sustain the 50 strokes per minute pace.

Respectfully submitted:

Janet B. Hinkle
Key West, Florida

21 captures

17 Sep 2013 – 20 Mar 2026

JAN

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