

Blog

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Day Before the Start: Why Again?

Day Before the Start: Why again? reported by Candace Lyle Hogan

At Marina Hemingway in Cuba the day before the start: Speaking mostly in Spanish to the Cuban press during a 4 pm press conference, Diana Nyad knew what the first question would be: Why? This is the fifth attempt--the first was at age 29 in 1978 (over 42 hours in the water); the next three, more than 30 years later and even more impressive, twice in 2011 and the last one before this, in 2012, the swim was 50 hours long. It's been grueling and she's been thwarted, if not by allergies and deadly jellyfish, then by turbulent squalls and unpredictable weather, current, and wind conditions.

"You are probably thinking OMG, she's back here again," Diana told a crowd of about 50 from the Cuban press, "so I appreciate that you're interested, and so polite and so gracious.

"People who go to Mt. Everest...sometimes it takes them 20 years to make it, after mounting expedition after expedition. No one has ever done this before without a shark cage, swum across the Florida Straits from Cuba to Florida, though people have tried since the 1950s. It's more than 103 miles in open water, a navigational nightmare, with variable winds and Gulf Stream currents, not to mention swarms of jellyfish at night now more than ever before. It's not enough to be a strong swimmer; you need a lot of luck, too.

"So here I am for my fifth—and last—time. It's a fine line between having the grace to let go of something you don't have control over and just can't beat....and I could be in that place ...except I had to ask myself, Is there a way? So I've made preparations to try to protect myself fully from the box jellyfish. I have the best support team ever and have trained consistently and rigorously for four years now. I feel stronger and more prepared than I've ever been. It's a fine line between having the grace to see things are bigger than you are and there's another fine line, an edge, where you don't want to ever give up.

"Teddy Roosevelt said something like, don't criticize the person who gets in the ring. Don't berate the one who gets dirty and bloody and then fails—at least they are there; they are not timid. I want to be in the ring and be bold and just go for it." One last time.

DO THIS NOW ...

To see Diana's location in REAL TIME visit DianaNyad.com. For the latest updates follow Diana on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

If you liked this post, "Like" it and share it with your friends. Leave Diana a comment or ask a question below.

P.S. Have you signed up for my 7 Day Reboot? Hop in! It's Free!

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Every Stroke Hurts. Every Breath Heals.

The Other Shore follows world record holder and legendary swimmer Diana Nyad, 63, as she comes out of a thirty-year retirement to re-attempt an elusive dream: swimming 103 miles non-stop from Cuba to Florida without the use of a shark cage.

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