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A letter from Bonnie to the Handler Team

Posted by [Xtreme Dream Team](#) on Aug 6, 2012 in [2012 Training](#), [Blog](#) | [12 comments](#)



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Dear Jon, Deborah and Allison (HANDLER TEAM)

I trust you are all well.

I've been down here in Key West the past few weeks with Diana, training....and being.

Let me start out by saying The Swimmer is READY, in every way possible.

We, as the Handlers, need to be as prepared as Diana is. We need to be on the same page. So let me break down what I think are the basics for our collective focus.

Our shifts will be 4 hours each. I would like to work with each of you alone for your first shift. I realize you all know the basics but the plan is to spend that first day or so getting the details refined.

Diana's getting across to the other shore is going to depend on us to keep her physical and mental strength on course. Her hydration, nutrition and overall well-being are our responsibility. We are the ONLY ones who have Diana's ear.

It gets tough at this point knowing how many hours to train each day. We figured peak condition would come 5 to 7 hours after the 24-hour Swim, which was 13th and 14th of June. From there, we tapered down and Diana was in the pool for 5 to 6-hour swims. Then to Key West July 1. Since then, we've been doing mostly 6 hours (with a couple of 8's thrown in) here in the ocean.

There's been a small crew here to help with training on the boat Voyager.

Dee Brady, driver.

John Berry, driver

Nancy Jordan, driver (was formerly with Bob of Sunluver)

Pauline Berry, John's wife, a nurse and general great help

John Bartlett, our genius navigator who splits time between here and his home West coast of FL

Everything is being fine-tuned down here so that when the swim does come (and it will), we can be most efficient in our job. The jellyfish suit, the special cream Sting Stopper for the places the hoodie, the booties and the body suit doesn't cover...this get-up only has to be worn between dusk and dawn. We have been practicing putting it on and taking it off at least once each training

swim. We're down to under 4 minutes.

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Navigator John will be residing in the new cabin on Voyager, right behind our station. It is imperative to keep all of Diana's stops to the most efficient, shortest time possible. The Gulf Stream will tug her East, when we need to go North. Our goal is to take care of her each and every time somewhere between 2 to 6 minutes.

Please do not forget that EACH OF YOU NEED YOUR OWN CHRONO WATCH. We will bring Diana in every 90 minutes for fluids, food, reapplication of lanolin, lip balm, and whatever else she may need. Every 45 mins we will whistle signal her to swim to the floating camelback for a quick hit of water. The boat comes to neutral while Diana sips and gets back to swimming above the streamer. This only takes 10-15 seconds.

I have a whistle and a miner's head flashlight for each of you.

Everything we use will be in a plastic bag and labeled. Extra goggles, nighttime lights on goggles, extra caps, goggles with music, etc. CRUCIAL that once some gear comes off Diana and will be used again (for instance, day gear comes off and will be needed again in the morning) is rinsed with fresh water and put back in its original bag. Diana NEEDS all her gear organized EXACTLY as she originally packs it in her yellow bag. We need to find replacement items quickly, have them rinsed, dried, and in perfect shape when we reach for them. That bag will be stowed in John Bartlett's cabin, right behind our work station.

I, like you, can hardly wait to get this going.

The chances are that I will have left for Cuba via air by the time you arrive in Key West. Call me, write me, or text me with any questions or concerns.

There are hand signals. There are specifics about what we give Diana, in what ratio, in what amounts. But those specifics are what we will refine all together when I spend those first shifts with each of you. I will have a laminated schedule sheet for each of you.

Okay, handlers-

Lets be the very best TEAM possible..

ONWARD and UPWARD,

Bonnie



[Gear Up & show your support for Diana!](#)



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1.

[Don McCumber August 6, 2012](#)

[You've got it, Bonnie! Great pep talk. I'm sure you understand how frustrating it is, for everybody on the team... all of this waiting...](#)

[But we're ready – ONWARD!!!](#)

[Reply](#)

2.

[holly August 6, 2012](#)

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EXCELLENT

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3. Nancy August 6, 2012

the best head handler anyone could ever have!

[Reply](#)



4. Ian August 6, 2012

Bonnie, your letter spells out success! 😊 Diana is in excellent hands! 😊
ONWARD TO VICTORY!

[Reply](#)



5. Joseph Taboada August 7, 2012

Onward

[Reply](#)



6. Jean August 7, 2012

Bring IT!!

[Reply](#)



7. [BRAD FISHER](#) August 8, 2012

BONNIE...MAKE HER DREAM COME TRUE AND THEN
COME HOME !!! YOU ARE MISSED.
ILOVE YOU AND I'M VERY PROUD OF BOTH OF YOU.
GO GET IT !!!

[Reply](#)



8. Ginger August 8, 2012

I'm voting for Bonnie for President!!

[Reply](#)



9. LAURI August 9, 2012

THERE'S ONLY ONE BONNIE....THERE'S ONLY ONE DIANA, PUT THAT ENERGY, THAT STRENGTH, THAT PASSION, THAT LOVE, THAT TALENT, THAT UNIQUENESS TOGETHER AND THERE IS NO STOPPING THE DREAM! WE ARE ALL SO LUCKY TO SWIM IN THE SAME LIFE WATER AS THESE TWO. YOU GO ONWARD WITH ALL THE LOVE AND POSITIVE ENERGY

SURROUNDING YOU. I LOVE YOU BONNIE SUE AND SO PROUD ALWAYS

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10.



Jean golden August 9, 2012

We place Diana in your capable hands. Godspeed, Bonnie.

[Reply](#)

11.



[peter d](#) August 13, 2012

yo bonnie – hope you and ms d are well – sounds like something an ol racquetball coach would say – love to you both – psd

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Diana Nyad's Xtreme Dream

"Diana is more than a swimmer. She's a beacon of hope to us all that we can dream big, live life large, and look back at all of it with no regrets whatsoever."

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Xtreme Dream. For Diana Nyad's representation please contact [Pam Derderian](#)