



Diana Nyad Xtreme Dream 103 miles. Cuba to Florida. Summer 2012

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Home » 2012 Training » Response to Heat Drip Dialogue

Response to Heat Drip Dialogue

Posted by Xtreme Dream Team on Jul 20, 2012 in 2012 Training, Blog | 38 comments



I actually do appreciate so many of you weighing in with your opinions on the Heat Drip action we are perhaps planning on using for moments of hypothermia on the way across from Cuba.

When a dialogue is intelligent and thoughtful, it opens everybody's minds to discussion that moves us forward.

Let me first say that I certainly hope that all of you out there know of my pedigree for many years in this sport. I have always upheld the highest ideals. It is the champions who achieve under the purest circumstances whom I respect.....and I have always, proudly, fallen into that category.

I never consider using neoprene or any flotation devices. I of course would never use fins or any large structure that would create a forward motion to help speed.

But many of us in this sport are entering new territory in these swims that have never been done. While respecting the clear rules of no unnatural flotation, no help in forward speed, many of us are inventing as much as we are just plain swimming.

I have been pursuing this Cuba Swim Dream for 34 long years now. And, trust me, I would not want anything I do to sully the achievement, once I reach that Florida shore, at long last.

Archives

Select Month

Diana's Tweets



- XTREME DREAM UPDATE: We are flirting with a possible window for the swim. <http://t.co/pOgbPteV> about 6 hours ago from HootSuite
- Sky high excited about Games.doubt Open Ceremonies can top Beijing...but the swim & track going to be awesome about 7 hours ago from Twitter for iPhone
- @SecretDeodorant Kudos to my Fearless Secret sisters!!! about 7 hours ago from Twitter for iPhonein reply to SecretDeodorant
- @ItsmeTreee I'm flattered..thnx so much about 7 hours ago from Twitter for iPhonein reply to ItsmeTreee
- @julielerman OMG!! Was ak-l-mak prettiest place on Earth? about 7 hours ago from Twitter for iPhonein reply to julielerman

So, let's discuss, openly, this idea of using a hot water drip to hit my body at the solar plexus and the nape of the neck, perhaps for 60 seconds at a time, maybe every 6 hours or so.....once 48 hours into the Swim.

9 captures

28 Jul 2012 - 17 Nov 2023

attempt to keep their core temperature at a safe level.

This quick hit doesn't in any way change their swimming environment. Frankly, it probably is more than anything psychological and doesn't do much good at all.

So in our modern times, we are creating a tube whereby that bucket of water drips for a minute or so, rather than be thrown onto the head all at once.

I ask you, if it's entirely reasonable to try to warm the esophagus, inner chest and inner organs with a hot drink every now and then, is it really different to try to warm the body at the same time with quick heat to the outer body?

In warm swims, just as in hot days of a marathon run or bike ride, athletes take an ice cube or iced cloth to the back of the neck for a few seconds.

Do you consider this some affront to the purity of the achievement?

An athlete doesn't have the right to change the natural elements around her/him, but she does have the right to try to control her body temperature during these short drinking/feeding stops.

I am truly interested in your constructive feedback. This expedition is a work in progress. No doubt there will be methods we use on our way across that ocean water swimmers will adapt for years to come so this isn't just about me, but about the sport in general.

Keep your respectful comments coming, by all means.

Respectfully,

Diana Nyad



38 Comments



david barra

July 20, 2012

i'm going to take the slippery slope argument here; if a hot water drip is okay, would a warm water stream (generated by a support boat) also be okay? would a canopy shielding the swimmer from the sun be okay since swimmers do wear sunscreen? there are already thousands (millions?) of people who have take issue with wetsuited swims... do we really need to blur the line further by adding heating pads and warm water devices to the equation?

i prefer to err on the side of less is better for the future of the sport.

the argument "it doesn't increase speed" ignores the fact that a device that increases the duration of one's comfort is also aid.

Reply



david barra

July 20, 2012

oops.... should read: ... people who have no issue with wetsuited swims

Reply



Mary Watts

July 20, 2012

I have never read anything that led me to believe that Penny Palfrey was cold during her attempt. If anything I think heat exhaustion is going to be your enemy in those temperatures. I have been told you live in California, if so by now you

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28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

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JUL

OCT

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like a bath tub. Swimmers train at temperatures much colder than they anticipate for their swim for the very reason of combatting hypothermia through training. How much swimming have you done in waters below 70F? I know you have done endless miles in waters well above 70F which is also needed for this swim but if you have skipped swimming in water below 70F you have skipped a very critical part of your preparation. This device will forever taint your swim no matter how much you think it won't. The outrage over it is ongoing in the open water swimming community. Such a pity because we all know what this swim means to you and to have such a silly thing taint it would be a pity.

Reply



Deirdre Rose

July 20, 2012

"Endurance": the ability to withstand hardship or adversity; especially: the ability to sustain a prolonged stressful effort or activity.

Nowhere in this definition does it say "to the death" or "despite life-threatening conditions". A dead endurance athlete is of no use to anyone except, perhaps, as an example of what NOT to do.

Hypothermia is just as dangerous and deadly as hyperthermia – in the water, hypothermia is a constant, ever-present threat – despite the temperature of the water. As a Water Safety Instructor, I know this to be true, as should anyone who partakes in water sports.

86 degree water, in a POOL, is way too warm for a workout – even though it is lower than normal body temperature. In the ocean, over time, and after having expended tremendous amounts of energy, and particularly at night, it's a very dangerous, potentially deadly situation. Ask any sailor who ever had to endure days in the water waiting for rescue what it was like at night.

No one argues with a runner taking water during a marathon. No one argues with an endurance swimmer taking in nutrition. No one has a problem with an athlete using various cooling-off methods – why, then, have any issue with a swimmer finding a way to stave off hypothermia? As long as the "governing body" has no problem with it, who are we to judge? What's next? Swim the Arctic in a bikini?

Diana, if your method of warming up works for you, do it! If I had to find a concern at all, it might be that, once warmed up, would the water not feel colder by contrast? That's the only thing I could think of...

Good luck, Diana – I'm with you 100%!

Reply



Name

July 20, 2012

Well said David. Deidre as to your comparison of of someone waiting for rescue at sea with Diana swim it is simply ridiculous. Diana will be swimming and burning calories which produce body heat unlike most rescue victims who are

rather stationary and have no caloric intake. According to reports on Penny's swim she still had an incredible stroke rate at the end of 41 hours of swimming. Assuming Diana is stroking at a good rate she should stay comfy in the water. If, however like on her first attempt she spends more time bobbing in the water for whatever reason rather than swimming then yes her core temperature could drop.

I will stick to my premise that smart training in temperatures below 70F would have made this concern a moot point. Yes, Deidre Diana should stick to this concept if she wants her swim to forever go down in history with a big question mark next to it. It seems there are those of us who are trying to help her have a 'clean' swim and those of you who are encouraging her to swim at any cost and the results be damned. With encouragement like yours she will forever have a tainted swim if successful. Is that what you really want for her?

Reply



Deirdre Rose

July 20, 2012

Actually, you couldn't be more wrong. Any water cooler than your core temperature will eventually cause your body to lose heat faster than it can be replaced by metabolic processes, and swimming leads to faster heat loss and exhaustion than if one were stranded and in a "help or huddle" position, therefore my comparison between someone waiting for rescue and Diana swimming is not only not ridiculous, it's accurate. Swimming increases heat loss by 35-50%, so, no, Diana will not be "comfy" on her swim.

If she chooses to use some sort of warming device which is allowed by the observers with her, then the only "tainted" part of her swim will be your uninformed opinion.

Reply



david barra

July 20, 2012

for the record: I take the same position against full coverage "stinger suits". Exposure to the elements is par for the course.

Reply



Ginger

July 20, 2012

I seriously doubt that Diana is going to do anything to compromise the legality of the swim. Too smart, too committed, too important to her. From what I know about her she would never cut a corner or do anything the easy way. There will be an observer on board to make sure that the swim is unaided within the meaning of the rules.

David I am curious to know if you think the shark "shields" are just electronic cages? Are you against them as well? I do respect your purist approach. I am just not quite sure what I think the permissible boundaries are. But I do know that Diana and her team have thought about this for hours and months and years and I respect whatever she decides to do.

Reply

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28 Jul 2012 - 17 Nov 2023



david barra

July 20, 2012

I wouldn't use a shark shield for a swim.

JUN

JUL

OCT

2011

28

2012

2013

About this capture



david barra

July 20, 2012

There is no sanctioning body for this swim nor are there rules established. This swim was completed only by Susan Mahoney with the aid of a shark cage. There is very little mention of this so my assumption is that the extreme dream team dismisses SM's swim as insignificant due to excessive aid.... thus the precedent is set for one to dismiss Diana's swim (assuming its success) if/when it is repeated in a cleaner style.

Reply



cold h2o swimmer

July 21, 2012

the rewarming necklace will not benefit the swimmer and more likely make things worse physiologically. Diana, you don't want to do it. trust me. rewarming by applying warm water to one's skin is the wrong way to go about it. it's like trying to rewarm after a swim in cold by taking a hot shower. yuck. doing so has the effect of dropping your core temperature because warm water on the skin will open foster periperal circulation, which will carry cold peripheral blood to your core, thereby dropping your core temperature. that aside, the amount of heat that it will transfer will be minuscule. ask an engineer to do the heat-transfer calculations. your best bet is to increase the heat content of your fluid intake by either trailing to swallow hotter liquids or understanding/adapting your physiology so that you can drink more hot fluids. the rewarming necklace is a gimmick at best.

+1 at d barra for each of his comments above

signed,

not a blind fan

Reply



Deirdre Rose

July 21, 2012

I agree with you. Surely it's better to try to re-warm from the inside. Using the device around the skin might make things feel worse once the necklace is removed. Thank you for your insight!

Reply



Mary Watts

July 21, 2012

Cold h2O swimmer is right on!

Deirdra, how do you explain swimmers who can withstand 20, 30 or more hours in water that is, if lucky, 60F? They do not use anything but cold water training to accomplish their swims — no wetsuits, no hot water being applied, etc. By your account it should be impossible for them to complete these swims and yet many do. How do you account for the 'ice swimmers' who swim at nothing above 40F? It is called cold water training and it is painful and tedious.

The one thing every open water swimmer knows is that stopping to feed will make you cold. Swimmers practice feeding quickly so they do not lose valuable body heat when feeding. Of course the vast majority of marathon open water swims take place in water with temperatures much cooler than anything Diana will experience on this swim. People are out there in the English Channel in temperatures of 59 as we discuss this topic. The swimmers succeed in these colder temperatures through long hours and many miles of swimming in much colder temperatures and by swimming to keep their body temperature up during the swim. Stopping is the enemy in heat conservation in a marathon swim.

If you are correct in your assumption swimming leads to faster heat loss and exhaustion than if one were stranded and in a "help or huddle" position, then the entire open water swimming community is wrong in their training and beliefs. Do you really think that is the case? Years and years of history, completed swims, testing, knowledge and training say you are incorrect.

Just curious Deirdra how many open water marathon swims you have done?

Diana needs to be concerned with heat exhaustion and not hypothermia assuming she swims and does not have an attempt like her first one in which she bobbed in the water more than she swam

Reply



Bob

July 21, 2012

I like to consider myself a traditionalist with a little bit of common sense thrown in. I guess that means I am not a purist by some people's definition. However, I struggle with trying to understand the usefulness of the device. How is it better than a bicycle squeeze bottle filled with heated water. During the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim I found myself in some very warm water in one place on the course. I had my crew pass me a squeeze bottle filled with ice and cold water which I sprayed on my head. Unfortunately I quickly found that the latex cap I was wearing defeated my efforts. So I sprayed it on the back of my neck, on my face and under my neck. it helped immensely (but not as good as if I did not have a cap on). How is that different from "The Noose"? Frankly, The Noose seems more inefficient. If you find that you can't squeeze warm water out of a bottle onto your face and neck during a swim, you have a problem even The Noose can't solve..

Reply



anna

July 21, 2012

Diana — Has your swim (anti-hypothermia device and all) been approved by any swimming or open water swimming groups, if so which ones?

Are you still planning on going this July?

Reply

9 captures

28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

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July 23, 2012

JUN

JUL

OCT

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28

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2011

2012

2013

▼ About this capture



Assholes!! you just need something real to hate on or get a life, if you don't support this dream, you might as well find something as closed as your minds to

comment on! Diana ROCKS, she's got enough love to achieve anything she wants and HOW she wants it, she doesn't need approval from anyone, she's and angel and has an enduring soul! God Bless Her!

Reply



c-dub

July 23, 2012

Everyone here has been completely civil, except for you.
Please reconsider your use of vulgarities and insults.

Reply



Don McCumber

July 23, 2012

David Barra – Diana was accompanied by Steve Munantones, of the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame. He was there as an official observer. That kind of kills your argument that "There is no sanctioning body for this swim nor are there rules established".

You are against the use of "stinger suits", and you would not use the electronic shark shields, yet you make the assumption:

"my assumption is that the extreme dream team dismisses SM's (Susan Mahoney's) swim as insignificant due to excessive aid".

I have never heard of Diana Nyad "dismissing" Mahoney's accomplishment in any way. I saw nothing but praise from Diana, after Penny Palfrey's recent near-completion of the Cuba to Florida swim. Since Palfrey and Nyad both employ kayakers with non-lethal shark shields, you would dismiss their accomplishments? Maybe you should SHOW US how it should be done?

In my opinion, swimming the kinds of distances these women have done, while dealing with sleep deprivation, jellyfish stings (despite the use of jellyfish suits and creams), and dealing with the other dangerous creatures that they share the waters with, is admirable. If they have hot drinks or sun showers, and are given food, I'm OK with that. You can take this whole "purist thing" way too far. Your arguments make it seem like you won't be satisfied that anyone earns a record, until they jump in the water in Cuba, and are totally unaccompanied until they walk up the beach in Florida. I can tell you right now, this purist swim will NEVER happen. You'd better be prepared to accept some degree of support for the swimmers, unless, like I said, you want to prove your point, yourself.

Reply



david barra

July 23, 2012

you make a lot of assumptions yourself Don!
kindly post a link to any extreme dream team's reference to

Susan Mahoney's swim... i haven't seen any.

i don't have the time to respond point by point, and if i did, it

would never change anyone's mind anyway. a lot of people
would like to see Diana walk out of the water in FL... myself
included

but... whats the difference if one uses a heating collar or a
wetsuit?

i admit, i have a rather narrow focus when it comes to OW
swimming, and it doesn't include aid beyond certain traditions.
that is not to say others shouldn't do as they please.

meh

Reply

[9 captures](#)

28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

JUN

JUL

OCT



28



2011

2012

2013

About this capture



Amy Stern

July 23, 2012

Marathon runners get cooling showers. Because they need it. If a 'marathon'
swimmer needs a warm 'shower' of water, she/he should get it.

Reply



Bode

July 23, 2012

Running is governed by a completely different set of rules.
You're comparing apples to oranges. The issue is this device
violating the rules of open water marathon swimming. It has
nothing to do with competitive running.

Plus this distance has been swum without this device before
so how is it a "need?"

Reply



Carly

July 23, 2012

Would you people go onto George Foreman's website and talk about Sugar Ray's
accomplishments? Get a little respect and stop talking about Penny...and enough
with the "bobbing" comments too. I double dog dare anyone of you to "bob"
around in the middle of the ocean in the dark of night. Diana Rocks!!!! A class act
for sure!

Reply



Bode

July 23, 2012

Personally I don't believe a "class act" would have gone to the
Cuban government and (unsuccessfully) asked them to deny
permission to any other swimmer wishing to attempt this swim.
This was reported in news articles about Diana's attempt this
summer. You can look it up.

Reply



Mermaid

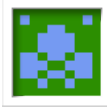
July 23, 2012

Don't believe every written word.

Reply

[9 captures](#)

28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023



Bob

July 24, 2012

At least 2 of the people who have posted comments in this discussion have swam "in the middle of the ocean in the dark of night". Of course I'm sure neither of them, nor Diana, actually swam in the middle. However, they swam through the night in cold water while crossing an ocean channel in excess of 20 miles. I think those credentials are sufficient to establish a strong foundation for their opinions.

Reply



Bob

July 24, 2012

And while David would be the last person to announce his accomplishments David is one of them. He has also swum the English Channel, 28 miles around Manhattan Island and numerous other marathon swims.
(Sorry if this embarrasses you David).

Reply



Carly

July 25, 2012

You do realize that Diana swam the 28 miles around Manhattan 32 minutes faster than Dave right? Heck you could start a fan appreciation page for Dave that'd be wonderful he sounds very accomplished. My point is this is Diana's site...and as a fan/supporter of Diana I think the focus should be on her accomplishments on her own website...just sayin'..Peace

Reply



Carly

July
25,

[9 captures](#)

28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

2012

David

my

apology

no

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JUN

JUL

OCT



28



2011

2012

2013

▼ About this capture



David Barra

July

25,

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JUN

JUL

OCT

2011

2012

2013



About this capture



Lynn

July 23, 2012

I am a runner not a swimmer so I can't comment on whether or not the warm water is necessary but I can compare it to the use of ice packs, wet bandannas, and those cool scarves with the wonderful water retaining crystals. No one looks down on our use of these so I am not sure why it is any different. Also if you look at some of the extreme running races such as the Badwater ultramarathon across death valley or the 350 mile iditarod (not dog powered) sled race, they stop to warm up or cool down as needed.

Diana – I think you are amazing so please do not let some of these comments get you down!

Reply



blair

July 23, 2012

just an idle thought, no idea if it is or isn't allowable, or would or wouldn't be significant to stopping hypothermia, but

what about a pocket in your suit mid-chest where you can put a hand-warmer packet?

get one of those tossed to you from the boat every few hours.

Reply



Jess

July 23, 2012

Diana, you are an inspiration to so many!! Whether you use a heat drip or not- in the end you are doing something amazing! The fact that you would be the first to use this new invention has to be really exciting! Whatever happens, It's YOUR swim Diana, please DO YOU and follow your gut on this one 😊

Reply



Mermaid

July 23, 2012

love, honesty , trust , respect, care are the feelings Diana gifts us thru this Dream by allowing discussions such as this.

The Cuba Swim belongs to Diana only!

Reply



Carly
Amen Sister!!

July 25, 2012

Reply

[9 captures](#)

28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

JUN JUL OCT
28
2011 2012 2013
About this capture



non-simmering swimmer

July 25, 2012

Mermaid wrote:

"The Cuba Swim belongs to Diana only!"

really?

Reply



david barra

July 24, 2012

My apologies to Susan Maroney for misspelling her name.

Reply



Leonard Jansen

July 24, 2012

I think this argument really boils down to the following question: What level of recognition will Ms. Nyad be satisfied with for her swim?

Since there are no universally recognized/sanctioned rules concerning what exactly constitutes a "valid" long distance swim, the de facto standard for quite some time has been the English Channel rules. The aforementioned warming device would not be allowed under those rules. Period. A goodly portion of the marathon swimming community believes in those rules and therefore anything not conforming will not be recognized by those people as a "valid" swim.

So, the choice is straightforward: If universal recognition is desired, then it's English Channel rules because I've rarely heard anyone say those were too "easy." If Ms. Nyad doesn't care about the opinion of the segment of the population that believes in the EC rules, then she can go ahead using the warming device with a clear conscience – the distance is the same, the propulsion method is the same, and the person is the same.

I am a strict EC rules person myself. However, this swim is not being done to please me, it's being done to please Ms Nyad and if doing it this way pleases her and gives her the satisfaction and recognition that she desires, fantastic – I'm all for it and eagerly await the day when she does do it. (And she WILL do it.)

"We're not here to turn you on – turn yourself on. We're only here to set you free."
– Frank Zappa

Reply

Leave a Comment

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Mail (will not be published)

Website

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28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

JUN

JUL

OCT



28



2011

2012

2013

▼ About this capture



Your message...

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28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

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

- Take the Pressure Off
- Peaking is Tricky
- OLIVIA sponsors Xtreme Dream
- America's Greatest Olympian
Won't be in London
- 2012 Xtreme Dream T-shirts are
ready!

- Awesome Diana! Sounds lik you
will be well protected and safe!
Now, if those storms will go
away it would seem all systems
go! You rock girlfriend!ra B. on
Peaking is Tricky
- Awesome Diana! Sounds lik you
will be well protected and safe!
Now, if those storms will go
away it would seem all systems
go! You rock girlfriend!ra B. on
Peaking is Tricky
- hey that bird has your laugh!! on
Take the Pressure Off
- non-simmering swimmer on
Response to Heat Drip Dialogue
- David Barra on Response to
Heat Drip Dialogue

JUN

JUL

OCT



28



2011

2012

2013

About this capture



Archives

- July 2012 (14)
- June 2012 (13)
- May 2012 (14)
- April 2012 (12)
- March 2012 (21)
- February 2012 (7)
- January 2012 (9)
- December 2011 (7)
- November 2011 (1)
- October 2011 (17)
- September 2011 (43)
- August 2011 (36)
- July 2011 (20)
- June 2011 (11)
- May 2011 (15)
- April 2011 (4)
- March 2011 (2)
- February 2011 (1)
- January 2011 (2)
- October 2010 (3)
- September 2010 (7)
- August 2010 (14)
- July 2010 (13)

[9 captures](#)

28 Jul 2012 – 17 Nov 2023

JUN

JUL

OCT



28



2011

2012

2013

▼ About this capture

