

http://diananyad.com/announcement-of-postponement/594/

Go

SEP

OCT

MAY



7 captures

30 Oct 2010 - 21 Oct 2011

2009

30

2010

2011

About this capture

Diana Nyad Extreme Dream

BRAVABODY

PHOTOS

THE DREAM

ABOUT

PARTNERS

SWIMSUIT

BLOG

DONATE!

18
OCT

Announcement of Postponement



It's official. It's heartbreaking, but it's official. The Cuba Swim must now be postponed until next summer. We prepared for every small detail, every major hurdle. I got perhaps in better shape than in my 20's. The Ops Team became an innovative, dedicated, well-oiled machine. The government permissions were tricky but finally came in from all sides.

Frankly, I was so confident back in August. The vision of walking up onto the Florida coast was palpable. I was ready to power for 60 or more hours. We researched every nuance of navigating the complex currents. We developed a 4-part solution that gave me great security in terms of shark protection. It was my year. My lifelong Dream of being the first without fins nor a shark cage to swim from Cuba to Florida was virtually in the palm of my hand.

The considerable effort of training and organizing this expedition, from July '09 to September '10 brought the joy of commitment to all of us involved. We were a proud, tight-knit unit. It was the September/October helpless wait for the unprecedented weather and winds to change that whipped the spirit some days. I will admit to you that I cried some bitter tears over the last few days. I prepared for anything and everything EXCEPT not even having the chance to try. After all this time, never wavering in belief that we could do this, leaving no stone unturned in the preparation, packing up and going home comes with an edge of disbelief.

Yet the spirit is resilient. As the key crew packed up our camp in Key West, bonded by long weeks of keeping each other up, our disappointment already flickered with moments of brainstorming as to how we'll do it better next summer. I'm not ready to dive into long hours of solitary training swims. I need to decompress. But the heart to train hard, to put it all together for 2011 is there. I thought of doing some other swim, while we are dressed up and ready with nowhere to go. Jamaica to Cuba? The length of Eleuthra in the Bahamas? None were in my heart. It was Cuba to Florida 32 years ago. It's still Cuba to Florida.

Two weeks ago, I wasn't even capable of uttering the words: "Postpone to next summer". A few days ago, I had to find some inner calm and accept it. And already today, it doesn't really seem that far away.

As we do with any of our periods of life that mean a lot to us, take a lot out of us, I am now turning to the long, long list of inspiring, positive things that transpired over the course of this first chapter of the Extreme Dream. *** I literally found myself feeling giddy with the high of unconflicted behavior. Difficult as the disciplined training hours were, challenging as all the organizational elements were, it was all easy to do because the motivation was so authentic, so right.

*** The crew developed into an impressively talented and impassioned group of old and new friends. You can't forge a stronger bond than trusting each other, every individual contributing to the nth degree.

*** The original spark toward this Dream, on my part, was to still feel relevant at 60. The pursuit of the Dream pushed me to find such strength and focus that 60 itself became irrelevant. And that's the message that came to me from people all around the world. We all have one life to live. One life only. Don't let any dreams that make you feel alive die in the back of your imagination. If you can Dream it, you can Do it.

Time for me to get out of the sea, back onto dry land. Time to get home and hug my puppy dogs. I've been away from home so long I actually forgot what car I drive the other day. I have a lot of people to thank.....and will post all

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their names on diananyad.com in the coming week. Good people who gave so much. And I'll never forget any of you.

Stephanie Tolleson, for example, a highly successful sports agent and manager, among other professional positions, graciously and unrelentingly took on the marketing of my project. She gathered a team, every one working gratis, every one a top pro in the biz world. They got the Dream funded.

—My friend Marcia Cross came through big-time in donating Public Relations services throughout the project.

—My best buddy Bonnie Stoll virtually gave up her life as normal to direct my training and every detail, from press appointments to product donations.

—One man wrote in to my site to say he's been out of work for a year so wasn't able to give much to the cause but was so inspired that he wanted to at least offer \$10.

Not fair to mention only a few, when the list is so extensive, so I'll get to those thank you's right away.

I ended every communique to our Ops Team over these last few months, when we would run up against an obstacle: "ONWARD!" And now the entire mission has run headlong into a major obstacle. The ocean has dipped all the way down to 77 degrees off Key West. The season is over. I thought we couldn't have done anything at all better. But to train again, to raise the funds again, to secure the government permissions again.....now the bar has been raised even higher. And yet again, I leave you with our mantra here at the Extreme Dream:
ONWARD!

Extreme Dream. For Diana Nyad's representation please contact **Pam Derderian**

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30 Oct 2010 - 21 Oct 2011

SEP OCT MAY
30
2009 2010 2011
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