

From: BONNIE STOLL [REDACTED]
Subject: wowza
Date: October 10, 2018 at 11:51:21 AM PDT
To: Diana Nyad [REDACTED]

On Oct 8, 2018, at 7:30 PM, BONNIE STOLL <bonniestoll@[REDACTED]> wrote:

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Bonnie Stoll and I was the head handler/trainer for all four attempts from 2010-2012, plus the successful swim from Havana, Cuba to Key West, Florida. I was present for all 52 hours, 54 minutes of the successful swim, just as I was present for every minute of every hour of the previous attempts. I was also present on 90% of Diana's training swims. From 4-24 hours in a pool and 4-24 hour swims in the ocean. My team and I were in charge of Diana's feedings of solid foods and the protein laced liquid concoctions fed to her through Camelbak. The solid food was given to Diana as if she were a seal at SeaWorld. We knew not to touch Diana.

If an 18-hour training swim was on the docket, there was no cutting it short by one second. There was never a day where Diana would cut her swim short. If the weather was awful or the ocean was aroar, the training swim would take place, none the less, at a lagoon or a pool.

Being an ex professional athlete myself, I know what training is and I know everything that goes into the head set of that training, YET, I have never witnessed any athlete work this diligently, or be this focused on one goal. Diana LIVED this dream for 5 very long years. She knew what it would take and she welcomed the pain it may have caused.

My team of three others were on 3 hour shifts....one at a time, to be with me on the lowest rung of the boat for 3 hours, then off to rest and/or sleep on one of the 'helpful' boats.

There were three rules for EVERY person on any of the boats...these rules were repeated every time a new person came on Voyager..which was the only boat that had people that might talk to Diana.

- 1) NEVER tell Diana how many miles she has swum.
- 2) NEVER tell Diana what time it is, or how far she has to go.
- 3).NEVER TOUCH Diana until she is safely on shore in Key West.

EVERYONE on this team of 44 people knew these rules, and the shark divers were reminded EVERY time they were in the water looking for those pesky round eyes of a shark.

I saw, first hand, how exhausting it was to swim with the 'night suit' and mask on,

but if Diana didn't wear this very thin suit..(definitely not a flotation aid in any way...only an obstruction of her perfect stroke,) or silicone mask that the box jellies could not penetrate, I'm not sure I would have been a part of the swim. I watched Diana die for a short time after being stung by the box jellyfish and I was not going to witness this again. Diana would often ask, during the course of the pitch black night, if she could take the suit and mask off...it was very uncomfortable and the mask was so very helpful in keeping out the jellies \but it sure did let an ocean full of salt water into her mouth.

Training in Key West was a very positive experience. The town went overboard (no pun intended) in giving a helping hand or two whenever it was needed. We got most of our shark divers, independent observers, crews and boats from the residents of Key West.

The police, the fire department, and the Coast Guard came to our aid when we needed them most. Upon reaching the shore of Key West, these three local departments, and members of 'our team' formed two lines so that Diana could swim between their lines, until she could walk on shore with none touching her until she was standing out of the water, on sand.

Diana did not want to use a shark cage or have her swim be a 'stage swim'..She wanted and succeeded in swimming, NONSTOP, from Havana Cuba to Key West Florida.

I, personally, have never been more proud or more inspired by any athletic feat. The will of a human being cannot be measured. I promise Diana Nyad has more will than anyone I know or have read about throughout history.

Thank you for your time and call with any questions about ANYTHING to do with this most EPIC swim.

Sincerely, Bonnie Stoll
Head trainer/handler
Nyad swim 2013