

Chapter 6

The Eighties 1980-1989

In the Eighties there were nearly as many crossings as the entire period between 1927-1979. Thirty-two individual and twelve relay swims were completed. (Appendix C,D) Better training methods, navigation and navigational instruments as well as the establishment and control of the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation, (CCSF) assisted in the numerous successes and records.

The era is divided into three sections: 1980 through 1984, 1985 through 1987, and 1988 through 1989. From 1980 to 1984, there were twenty-one individual swims and six relay crossings. In 1981, the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation was formed. This period of swims culminated with the first International Catalina Channel race. The middle Eighties, 1985-1987, has seen the domination of older swimmers. Three different men have broken the oldest record and two relays of six men over the age of sixty have completed swims successfully. The swims of John York and Frank Reynolds will be highlighted for the Eighties. In the late Eighties, 1988-1989, there were two successful individual swims and four relay crossings. The United States National team set the fastest relay record in 7 hours, 2 minutes and 45 seconds.

The Early Eighties

The first swimmer of the Eighties was Kalani Russell. On Friday, August 1, the Los Alamitos swim instructor entered the warm water on Catalina accompanied by teammate Laura Windell. The two women swam for the Seal Beach Swim Club, coached by Mark Nielson and Ross McIntyre. For a year and a half Kalani had trained in both the pool and ocean for the swim. Kalani had been swimming ocean races since she was eight years old. She first thought of swimming Catalina when her fellow teammates made the crossing in 1971. This was intriguing to her even though she was only nine.

The first few hours of the swim were very difficult as Laura kept stopping. Kalani had to tread water waiting for Laura. Finally Laura was pulled from the water at about ten miles. This served as a motivator for Kalani. She had to do well as she was the only swimmer remaining.

At the beginning of the swim she was given clam chowder and crackers to eat. This attracted too many fish for Kalani's wishes. For the rest of the swim she didn't eat or drink very much. When she did, she drank ERG and ate crackers.

Kalani was doing well until she hit the three mile mark off the mainland. The water temperature drop was so severe Kalani tucked her knees under her body trying to stay warm. The current was pushing her south. For every stroke she took she drifted twice as far. Kalani became frustrated. A chocolate candy bar in the last mile was able to motivate her through the current. Twelve hours and two minutes after she began Kalani walked ashore.

Within three weeks of Kalani's swim, fifteen year old Bill Kincheloe swam the channel. His course differed from past swims as Marineland would no longer allow anyone to land on their property. Bill began at Long Point on Catalina and landed at Cabrillo Beach, approximately an additional half mile swim. When the current runs in this direction, to the north, this can be a faster swim. Unfortunately, the current is not predictable.

Bill's swim took twelve hours and two minutes. Conditions were far from ideal. "It was the wrong day to swim,"¹ according to Bill. There was a fair amount of chop. It did not matter, however, as Bill's two years of training with Orca ocean club, coached by Syndi Goldenson, carried him across the Channel.

Bill was the first of three Orca swimmers to attempt the Catalina Channel in 1980. Teammate Carol Hadley waded into the water just five days after Bill's swim, on August 19. Conditions were fine and the swim went well. Carol swam from Doctor's Cove to Cabrillo Beach. According to coach Goldenson, Carol was very positive throughout the swim, and just had a good time. In 1979 Carol had been a crew member on Tami Lavecheck's crossing. She thought it was a fantastic adventure and wanted to do it herself. Carol had completed her sophomore year at Occidental College where she was majoring in Sports Medicine. Her collegiate swimming career was cut short due to a left shoulder and elbow problem. Carol worked on it for a year in preparation for the Catalina swim. She had some pain in the crossing but no major effects afterwards. Carol fulfilled her dream and became the third successful swimmer of 1980.

Throughout the year in 1980 a group of interested swimmers, paddlers, coaches, navigators, and others had been meeting to organize a Catalina Channel Swimming Federation (CCSF). After a year of planning and developing the rules were ratified in January of 1981. Penny Lee Dean was elected president.

The purpose of the federation was to promote the swimming of the Catalina Channel. In addition, the federation was in charge of observing and authenticating the swims, furnishing information, advising those intending to make a swim, and maintaining records of the Catalina Channel crossings.

CCSF maintains records for the fastest crossing, the youngest and oldest in each direction for both individual and relays. The federation presents each successful swimmer with a medallion and certificate of completion at the annual awards banquet held in November. In May of 1981 the federation sponsored a clinic to provide information and assistance to marathon swimmers. Over forty athletes attended. It was a huge success.

The 1981 swim season also began in world record fashion. A group of swimmers from the Santa Monica Masters decided to swim a relay across the Channel. It was the first relay attempt since 1926. A relay is composed of six members rotating each hour in order, until the swim is completed. The relay included three men and three women. They were Richard Marks, Pat Hines, Louise Comar, Linda Terris, Brian Murphy, and Harold Johnson. All but one were experienced ocean swimmers and all were strong pool swimmers.

It was an ideal day for a crossing, with calm seas and limited wind. Surprisingly, for a mid-June day, the water temperature was 68 degrees near Catalina, and only dropped to 62 degrees near Marineland. The crossing went well except for a slight scare when two sharks were sighted.

The relay's time of eight hours fifty-nine minutes set a new world record and held for numerous years. Three of the relay members went on to individual crossings, two of which were in 1981.

After the successful relay crossing and fine performances at the Seal Beach 10 miler, Richard Marks and Pat Hines decided to attempt individual crossings. What made this unique was they decided to swim together but with separate boats. The two extended their training from mid-July until the end of August for the swim.

The swim was supposed to begin before midnight on the thirtieth but small craft warnings delayed the start. Finally at 2 a.m. on Sunday, the 31st, Richard, a 32 year old lawyer and Pat, a 26 year old radio executive, decided to go anyway. Both were expected to work on Monday.

The crossing was very rough. Everyone on board was seasick. The strong currents and high winds pushed them many miles off course. As the hours wore on the lack of preparation began to take its toll. Richard's right shoulder began to throb. Improper nourishment of sandwiches, soup, and water had an effect. The two separated the last few miles and Pat swam on ahead. The severe temperature drop off of Marineland due to the upwelling currents had a further affect on Richard. He did not falter, however. "These last three miles were harder than any of the three Ironman contests or cross mountain bike races I have been in."² Richard completed the swim in eleven hours, twenty-eight minutes, just over ten minutes behind Pat. Both recovered quickly and went to work Monday morning.

In the 1981 season there had been two successful individual crossings and a world record setting relay. There would be six swims in 1982.

Louise Comar, a 27 year old deputy district attorney tackled the Channel on August 10, 1982. After being on the record setting relay in 1981, Comar decided to brave an individual crossing. "I really look at it as an adventure for everyone who is on the boat or swimming with me and it will be an adventure for me."³ Lynne Cox served as Louise's coach. She trained up to fifteen miles a day in preparation for the swim.

The crossing began at Long Point on Catalina. Comar was swimming about two miles an hour. In mid channel she ran into a current which pushed her north. Gradually she drifted two miles off course. Late in the swim Louise's shoulder began to ache. The last two miles were the toughest. Louise had slowed to three quarters of a mile an hour in the 62 degrees water off of Royal Palm Beach. Eleven hours, fifty-nine minutes after she began Louise crawled up the rocky beach. She was in good spirits and stated "I feel great. After about 6 1/2 hours I felt I could make it all the way. At the end, however, I was trying to get out as fast as I could."⁴

The second swim of the summer was accomplished by Norm Albert. Albert, a 24 year old Air Force lieutenant, aborted an attempt at the channel in 1980. "I started to talk myself out of it like two and one half hours into it. The elbow problem started me worrying, but the elbow problem went away. It was just one of these pains that's with you for an hour and a half. . . and then I started thinking, 'Why do I want to be in the water seven or eight more hours?'"⁵ He breezed through the channel on August 26 in 1982. Norm swam from Catalina to the mainland in eleven hours, twenty-five minutes, erasing a two year old debt.

The first amputee to complete a crossing was Tom Clardy on September 24. In 1971 while officer Clardy was giving a car a ticket he was sideswiped by another car and lost his leg. Courage was Tom's middle name. He took up one-legged skiing then returned to the water in 1978. Tom had been a frogman in the service. For three years he had wanted to swim Catalina but poor weather conditions and lack of finances had prevented him. Coached by Penny Lee Dean, Tom trained all year for the crossing. His stroke count ranged from 65 strokes per minute at the beginning to 54 near the end of the swim. Tom ate sandwiches and drank apple juice on the crossing. After fourteen hours and two minutes, Tom crutched ashore on Cabrillo Beach to a crowd and a 15-foot greeting sign. Tom's complete swim was videotaped by a Christian T.V. station.

The final swim of the summer was by Jim McConica. On October 26 the former U.S.C. swim captain set out from Catalina for the mainland. It rained more than a third of the crossing. McConica feasted on milk and chocolate chip cookies. As the night wore on, the water temperature dropped to 60 degrees. Jim began to slip into hypothermia. He had an excellent crossing of nine hours, eight minutes and vowed to return in better shape in 1983.

In May, 1983 the first all women's relay team opened the season. The six women swimmers were from Pomona College. These included junior Kayleen Holloway, senior Jackie Huffman, freshman Cherie Monell, freshman Liane Stevenson, senior Jessica Webster and sophomore Amanda Wright. The idea of swimming a relay came about indirectly. Three of the athletes, who had swum various ocean races, were interested in individual swims across the Catalina Channel. The women felt a relay would be a good experience and preparation for the individual swim. As the women were from all over the U. S. the swim was planned for the week after graduation. This had a big effect as the water temperature in May was 58 degrees and conditions were not favorable. The team began from Long Point on May 18. It was a rough crossing with severe chop. Everyone on the boat was sick. Each swimmer went once, while four swam twice. Jessica Webster ran up Cabrillo Beach nine hours fifty-three minutes after the start.

The first individual swim was accomplished by Norm Albert on August 15th. Norm decided to swim a longer course in 1983. He became the first to swim from Cabrillo Beach to Avalon-over twenty-six miles. Other than experiencing some rain the swim was rather uneventful. Norm was accompanied by a coed relay team from the El Segundo Masters. The members included Brian Cohn, Reynold Kalstrom, Kim Shorkley, Karen Kinaman, Mike Greenburg, and Margaret Warner. Two boats served as escorts. As the relay pulled ahead of Norm the two boats separated. The relay finished in twelve hours, twenty-two minutes. By the time Norm reached Avalon over two thousand people waited on the shore to greet him. Two on the Town television show videotaped the entire swim of fifteen and a half hours.⁶

Inspired by the record setting pace of the 1983 season, Jim McConica reflected on the shore at Cherry Cove on Catalina, determined to set the record in his upcoming crossing. In 1982 he learned the nuances of marathon swimming and the mistakes he had made. Jim trained a year with coach Sandy Nielson for the swim. Jim had one paddler, Tom Dore, who paddled the complete crossing with him. His feeding breaks lasted no longer than ten seconds, and the navigator, Jim Herrin, took a Loran C reading every twelve minutes.⁷ This enabled the navigator to keep Jim on an accurate course and to adjust for the drift immediately. In all the past swims when the Loran was used readings might have been taken on the hour and on rare occasions on the half hour. Every second that could have been saved was saved. Jim shattered the men's record of eight hours forty-nine minutes and broke the womens and overall record in that direction by six minutes. His time was eight hours, twenty-seven minutes. Jim collapsed at the finish from exhaustion. After a few days of rest he was fine. It was an outstanding swim.

The final swim of 1983 was by Pam Nickle of San Pedro. The 31 year old had completed the Seal Beach 10 mile race in a respectable time in late July. Pam had been thinking about swimming Catalina but thought 1984 would be a more reasonable timetable. A sponsor availed her the opportunity to attempt the swim in 1983, however. Pam chose Lynne Cox as her trainer with the understanding that if Cox did not think she could make it Pam would not make the attempt.

Pam was enthusiastic and energetic. She looked for the positive in every situation. "I said before the swim that of all my apprehensions, swimming to daylight was the biggest, but starting off in the dark was my most favorite part of the whole thing. There was so much fluorescence in the water off Catalina Island that as I took each stroke little green sparks were coming off my fingertips. It was really euphoric."⁸

Within the first few hours of her swim Pam's shoulder gave out. For over thirteen hours she struggled with only the use of one arm. Pam did not complain. Her husband, Sparky, helped her make it despite the pain. Luckily, the water conditions were perfect and the temperature was in the upper 60's. After fifteen hours, thirty-eight minutes Pam ran up the shore at Cabrillo Beach. She had made it. It was over two months before she could lift her arm, however.

1983 was one of the most successful years for Channel crossings. The individual record from the Island to the mainland was rewritten by Jim McConica, the first all women's relay swim was made, the first coed relay from the mainland to Catalina occurred, and the longest mainland to Catalina individual swim happened.

In September of 1983 the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation finalized plans for an International race across the Catalina Channel. United States Swimming acted as cosponsor of the event. The course was set at 25.5 miles beginning at the Isthmus, finishing at Cabrillo Beach paralleling the 1927 swim.

For the Catalina race one hundred and fifty people were transported to Catalina Island on Sunday, August 19. The athletes were housed at the U.S.C. marine station in private rooms. There were two large tents with cots and blankets set up to house the support personnel. The support personnel included CCSF observers, coaches, paddlers, boat captains and boat crews with thirteen boats, numerous foreign dignitaries, the press, safety personnel and some spectators.

Sunday evening there was a barbecue for everyone. At about eight p.m. the athletes were transported to the marine station for the evening.

At 4 a.m. on Monday the thirteen athletes were awakened, fed and taken to the beach at the Isthmus for the start. Four men, three women and an International Relay consisting of three Egyptians, two Americans and a Czechoslovakian, lined up for the start. The field was very impressive. The U.S. team consisted of John York, a 23 year old swim coach and holder of three Catalina Channel records, the most impressive being the sixteen plus hour double crossing, Carol Lee-Heltzel a 29 year old dental technician who had crossed the English Channel and Rick Heltzel a 27 year old construction manager from Hawaii who had won the U.S. 16 mile trials. The team was coached by Penny Lee Dean. She was assisted by Dale Petranech, Siga Albrecht and Syndi Goldenson.

The English team consisted of two swimmers. David Morgan, 20, had crossed Loch Ness and at 13 had been the youngest to cross the English Channel. Allison Streeter, 19, had swum various single crossings and was the youngest to complete a double crossing of the English Channel. Both were very experienced. The English team was coached by Charlie Gravett and assisted by Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Streeter.

The Egyptian team also had two swimmers, Mohammed El Wekil and Lamiaa Zahy. Mohammed was a 16 year old student who had competed in races up to thirty miles in length. Lamiaa, 23, had won the Nile 20 mile race and numerous other Egyptian races. The Egyptian team had two coaches and a fifteen member support staff.

The international relay consisted of Jaroslav Novak 43, of Czechoslovakia, Nancy North 16, U.S.A., Tom Hilgen 20, U.S.A., Marien Farid 20, Aimen Saad 20, and Ossama Montaaaz 20, of Egypt. The relay was coached by Syndi Goldenson of the U.S.A. staff.

At 5:48 a.m. the race began. Each swimmer was accompanied by a boat. On each boat there was a navigator and crew, at least three paddlers who rotated shifts every three hours, a Catalina Channel Swimming Federation observer, a coach and other support people.

Ken Jewitt was the head navigator. It was his responsibility to keep all the swimmers on course. He had five support boats which helped to plot the course, keep the boats on course, keep other boats out of the way, transport the medical personnel, press or paddlers to any boat, and deal with any marine life problems.

The publicity and communications were handled by Katy O'Hara. She kept everyone on shore and on the various boats informed on the swimmers' progress and any other developments.

Dottie York was in charge of the paddlers. She assigned them to each boat and found relief paddlers when necessary.

The conditions were amazingly calm, which led to exceedingly quick times. The race went off without any problems.

At the beginning the International relay took an early lead and was never caught. The relay set a new overall record of 8 hours 14 minutes.

In the individual race the Egyptian Mohammed El Wekil took an early lead followed closely by Rick Heltzel and John York. In the women's race Lamiaa Zahy started out quickly followed by Allison Streeter and Carol Lee-Heltzel. Carol had suit problems and had to change within the first forty-five minutes. She had to play catchup the rest of the race. For the first four hours the lead did not change. Gradually Rick Heltzel caught Mohammed and led for two hours then was passed by John York. Allison passed Lamiaa and held her position until Carol passed her in the last two miles of the race.

Everything was running smoothly. There were many fish sightings, however. Around nine a.m., a shark was seen circling Rick Heltzel's boat. The navigator's codeword for shark was "seaweed". All the captains were alerted, the boats moved closer together and extra paddlers were put in the water. None of the swimmers knew what was happening. Seals and dolphins were spotted throughout the day. The only other fish scare occurred when a whale emerged in the middle of the boat pack. It submerged three or four times as it passed the swimmers. One of the English swimmers swore it went right under him.

Each of the swimmers had different feeding patterns and ate differently. Rick Heltzel preferred hot chocolate and ERG with a candy bar. In the seventh hour he began coughing up blood so he was switched to water and fructose. A doctor was brought on board. Rick was fed every half hour. As the day wore on the fluid was heated as Rick was getting cold despite the 70 water temperature. The distance and his getting sick was taking its toll. The coach had him slow down, drink every fifteen minutes and take each fifteen minutes one at a time.

John York ate every hour but took long breaks. In the third hour coach Dean called his boat and asked his breaks to be shortened. John drank ERG, ate grapes, cookies, and candy.

Mohammed El Wekil drank diet 7-Up, fruit juice and glucose. At the beginning he drank every hour but by the third hour switched to a half hour feeding schedule.⁹

Carol Lee-Heltzel had a feeding every half hour throughout the swim. She drank fluids and had solid food each time.¹⁰

Allison Streeter varied her foods. For liquid she drank water, orange juice, and tea and ate Ding Dongs and Milky Way candy bars. Allison fed every forty minutes.¹¹

The logs for David Morgan and Lamiaa Zahy were incomplete.

The stroke counts of the swimmers also varied from John York's 80 to 84 a minute to Rick's 69 to 73, David's 66 to 82, and to Mohammed's of 66 to 90. The women were a little more consistent. Carol ranged from 76 to 80, and Allison was 77 to 79.

Some of the swimmers had personal problems. Rick got sick and this resulted in his getting cold and becoming hypothermic. David's shoulder gave out and he swam with one arm the last few miles. Carol's back and shoulder bothered her. Mohammed went out too quickly and became very weak. It took three hours for his second wind to catch up with him.

The calm conditions, warm water and perfect navigation led to extremely fast times. John York of the U.S.A. emerged from the 25.5 mile swim after eight hours fifty-four minutes. He was very pleased with his swim. It was the first time he represented the U.S.. It was also the first time he competed against an international field. Despite a six year layoff he did very well. John had a harder time training than when he was younger. There was not enough time to work and swim well. The satisfaction was the same, however.

In second place was Rick Heltzel with the time of nine hours, four minutes. Mohammed El Wekil was third in nine hours, twenty-three minutes. Carol Lee-Heltzel was fourth overall and first woman in nine hours, twenty-eight minutes. She was followed by Allison Streeter in nine hours, thirty-three minutes, Lamiaa Zahy in nine hours, fifty-two minutes and David Morgan in eleven hours, twenty-three minutes.

It was a successful day for the CCSF and Catalina Channel history.

Joe Bommarito had attempted the Channel in 1983 but aborted after fourteen and a half hours. On August 22nd, after a year of training and stroke lessons, he entered the water at Catalina. The conditions were good with only a slight chop. Joe maintained his stroke count from 68 to 70 throughout the crossing.

The hardest part of Joe's crossing was the last three hours. He had to stop to urinate but he could not. In the last hour he stopped every five to ten minutes. Joe was in a mild case of hypothermia. His kidneys had altered their function due to the cold.¹² Finally after fourteen hours Joe walked ashore north of Marineland. After a few minutes of warming he was able to relieve himself.

The tenth crossing of the summer was by Suzanne Riedinger, a 39 year old swimmer from Northern California. She was coached by Cindy Cleveland. She was very positive throughout the crossing. At the beginning of the swim Suzanne fed every two hours then dropped to an hour and a half and finally to an hour. Usually she had a glass of ERG and a piece of fruit. For the last two feeds she drank Pepsi.¹³

It was a calm night with smooth seas. In the morning a school of dolphins surfaced near the boat. Suzanne became the fifty-third person to swim Catalina. Her time was ten hours, fifty-seven minutes.

On September 13 a relay team made up of six men over 60 became the oldest to accomplish the swim and the only all male relay to swim from Catalina to the mainland. The Polar Bear's team consisted of Bill Bell 61, Ray Falk 61, Harvey Yurak 64, Al Guth 76, Bob Bowker 63, and Fred Ellis 60. The swim took fifteen hours, nine minutes. Three members had to swim three one hour legs.

The relay began from Long Point on Catalina. A hurricane in Mexico pushed the swimmers to the north, forcing them to land at Portuguese Bend, five miles north of Cabrillo Beach. The water was extremely warm, around 72 degrees. A full moon helped to make it a beautiful crossing.

The last swim of the summer was by a relay team of swimmers from Colorado. Four men and two women completed the swim in eight hours, twenty-eight minutes--the second fastest relay time ever. The team was made up of Amy Siegel, Kimberly Griffes, Kevin Andrew, Rick Samuelson, Mike Suttle, and John Gaudreau. The relay swam the 21.5 mile course from Long Point to Cabrillo Beach.

The 1984 season was the most successful on the Catalina Channel history. There were nine individual crossings and three relays. The International race across the Catalina Channel had gone well and generated a lot of publicity for marathon swimming.

The Middle Eighties 1985 - 1987

The 1985 season began with a world record set by 49 year old John Hill. John became the oldest to cross the Catalina Channel on August 18. His crossing took nineteen hours and fifteen minutes. John was coached by John York and Penny Lee Dean. The crossing was far from ideal. There was a southerly chop for the first four hours. This was discouraging to John. His shoulder hurt from the beginning and he was not able to pull with his left arm. For the first three hours he fed every hour. He drank ERG, ate sandwiches, cookies and had some fruit. At 1 a.m. his feedings were switched to forty-five minutes. He was cold so the ERG was heated. At 2:15 a.m. his feedings were switched to half hours. He was having trouble urinating. As a result starting from 3:10 a.m. he was fed every twenty minutes. At 5:15 a.m. John did not know how much longer he would be able to last. His face was blue, as were his upper shoulders. John did last until 3:49 p.m. when he slowly crawled onto the rocks below Marineland. He was exhausted. He was transported to the hospital by the L. A. county lifeguards.

"There was a point there when I really wanted to quit. I was so cold, so tired. The only thing I looked forward to was going to my hot stuffy car and just sitting in it. . . I didn't want to let down Penny and John, and partly because, in a way, it's much easier to suffer through it than explain why you failed. I think that's true of life in general. People aren't interested in why you fail. Then, if you're like me, you'd have to try again, and it wouldn't necessarily be any easier. I guess I just don't like to fail."¹⁴

Hill's record only lasted eleven days. On August 28 Dale Petranech, 50, from Voorhees, New Jersey set out to become the oldest swimmer to swim the channel. Dale entered the water at Emerald Bay where the water temperature was around 70 degrees. The sea was calm. He feasted on coffee, ERG, raisins and other fruits throughout the swim. He remained in good spirits. There was a major scare on the swim, however. In the early morning hours there was thick fog. At one point on the Loran C, two ships coming in opposite directions and the escort boat were all in the same space. The crew was stationed around the boat to watch and listen for the ships. The paddlers moved Dale closer to the boat but a little ahead of the boat. Everyone was instructed what to do if they were hit. The captain could not raise either ship by radio but kept alerting them of the swimmer in the water. Within ten minutes the first ship passed the stern by three hundred yards. Less than a minute later the other ship crossed four hundred yards in front of it. Dale's stroke count only ranged from 58 to 56 strokes a minute during the crossing. Thirteen hours, twenty-eight minutes after he began Dale emerged east of Point Vicente, establishing a new record for the oldest person's crossing.

Two relay swims occurred in early September. The first, the "Just For Fun" relay, swam on September 5th. The relay members included John York, Syndi Goldenson, Pete Mirich, Pam Nickle, Alan Shilling, and Bob Tierney, Jr. It was a relaxing crossing. Alan and Pete were excited and stayed up most of the night while everyone else slept. The team swam from Catalina to the mainland in a quick nine hours thirty-four minutes.

The second relay saw a return of the Polar Bears. Jurgen Schmidt replaced Robert Bowker; otherwise, Bell, Ellis, Falk, Guth, and Yurak were the same. The goal was a double crossing from the mainland to Catalina and back. The swim began on September 13th. There were quite a few problems. The worst was the boat; the PT 73 died two miles off the Catalina shore. It had too much horsepower for the relay's speed. The double crossing goal had to be aborted. The last swimmer went the last two miles without the boat. Once he touched shore John York had to paddle him back to the boat. The crossing had only taken fourteen hours and thirty-one minutes. This was a record in the other direction for the all male swim and also for the oldest person's swim.

The last swim of the 1985 season occurred on September 18th. Cathy Moore tackled the channel for the second time in 1985. In August she became seasick and had to give up her attempt. She returned a month later to set the record straight. The conditions were perfect and Cathy's spirits remained high. Unlike the first attempt the night swimming did not spook her. Her stroke count was from 62 to 67. She was able to drink water and ERG but her stomach was still upset. Cathy completed the crossing in nine hours, twenty-five minutes, a very respectable time.¹⁵ She became the fifty-sixth person to cross the Catalina Channel.

The 1986 season was composed of four crossings by male swimmers. The first was accomplished by veteran Dave Yudovin. On July 27 he swam from the mainland to Catalina. The purpose of the crossing was as a preparation for an English Channel assault in late August.

The beginning of the swim was very rough. Dave left from Marineland. Within an hour the sea had calmed down. The water temperature was 62 degrees but raised steadily as the crossing progressed. Dave ate cheese sandwiches, Tiger Milk bars and drank fluid. His stroke count was very consistent, sixty for the first five hours. From that point it varied from 55 to 60. Dave had a long smooth stroke.

Dave's spirits dropped a bit in the last hour and a half. He was tired and became cranky. A pace swimmer entered the water to assist him. Finally, he was able to push through his pain with the support of paddler Pam Nickle. Dave became the twelfth swimmer to cross in that direction. His time was thirteen hours and forty-six minutes.

Two days later Frank Fredregill began a swim from Catalina. The first six hours were rough. Most of the people on the boat were seasick. Gradually the sea calmed. Frank was consistently stroking 66 to 70 strokes a minute. The water temperature was in the high sixties.

Frank had a well-organized swim. The only flaw was one of the two paddleboards was too short. The paddler on that board could not keep up with Frank. The board was pulled out and Frank was guided by one board. This is sufficient unless there is a problem with sharks. At 8:43 a.m. two sharks approached the boat. The sharks were circling the boat. Everyone was prepared to pull in Frank if necessary. The navigator felt the sharks were too close and began firing his rifle at them. After a few shots they disappeared. The sharks appeared to be a mother 6-7' and a baby. Frank remained calm throughout the scare and even teased everyone on board.¹⁶ In the last two miles the water temperature dropped as expected. Frank was doing very well. He walked ashore at Marineland. His time was twelve hours eleven minutes.

The next swimmer of the summer was thirty-three year old Mike Suttle. In 1984 he had been a member of the Colorado relay team. That experience made him aware of swimming at night and the routines followed in channel crossings. With the support of channel swimmer and friend Richard Marks, Mike decided to tackle the Channel on August 24. From March through August he doubled his pool training during the week and spent his weekends in the ocean.

The beginning of Mike's swim was rather hectic. The swim began before the rowboat had returned to the escort ship. Usually the swim begins once the support crew are back on the boat and the rowboat is tied up. This error created a major problem. Within a few minutes Mike, enclosed by two paddlers, passed the escort boat. The navigator was yelling to the paddlers which way to guide Mike. It was five minutes before the boat got underway. Mike was swimming in complete darkness except for the fluorescent night sticks each paddler had tied to his arms. Unfortunately, the ship's sea anchor was already in the water. The sea anchor adds extra resistance to the boat so the vessel can stay with the swimmer. The boat could not catch up to Mike. For almost an hour he swam a quarter of a mile in front of the boat in darkness. He was frustrated and disoriented but he did not let these mishaps control him. The boat caught up once Mike took his first break.

From that point on the swim went well. The water was 68-70 and calm. In the morning hours a fog blanketed the sea. Mike maintained a stroke count of 60 except for a slight drop in the middle of the channel. For feedings Mike had made around one hundred peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. On the first break he could not eat the sandwich. He was unable to chew the bread. The salt water had dried up his salivary juices. During the rest of the crossing he drank Body Fuel and water and ate yogurt and Tiger bars. His breaks were limited to one minute.

Mike completed the Catalina to mainland crossing in eleven hours, twenty-three minutes. He was pleased with his time and the crossing.¹⁷

The fourth and final swim of 1986 was by 32 year old Dave Clark of San Diego. On October 5 Dave swam from Catalina to the mainland. The water was calm. As he was not a fast swimmer he drifted two to three miles off course, however. He averaged a stroke count of 50 per minute.

Dave's goal was to get to the other side. As a kid he thought of swimming Catalina as an unbelievable thing to do. Twenty two years later he did it.¹⁸

Throughout the swim Dave drank hot chocolate, Gatorade and grape juice. In the middle of the night he had the liquids warmed. For solid food he ate grapes, bran muffins and cookies. During a feeding he swam backstroke to keep moving. With seven miles to go, Dave's shoulder started aching. He tried to adjust his stroke and to accept the pain. Twelve hours and thirty-four minutes after he entered the water he emerged on the Palos Verdes peninsula. He had made it. Dave was pleased with his swim and felt as if he glowed inside.¹⁹

An interesting note on the 1986 swimmers, none had a coach. Each trained, planned and accomplished the swim by himself, with the aid of excellent support crews.

There were only two swims in 1987. Both were outstanding and unique. Frank Reynolds broke the oldest swimmer record and Taranath Shenoy was not only the first Indian swimmer but the first deaf person to swim the channel.

At 1:05 a.m. on August 14 Frank Reynolds stood on the shore at Emerald Bay awaiting his third Catalina crossing assault. In 1983 he trained for the crossing but changed his mind two weeks before the swim. In 1986, after being in the water over thirteen hours, he was pulled out delirious only two hundred yards from the finish. His coach, Penny Lee Dean, who had been with him for four years, quietly greased him for the swim.

It was his time. He had worked hard for a year in preparation for the rematch. A nutritionist had worked with his diet for four months.

At 1:14 a.m. Frank entered the water. He looked strong and was able to maintain his strokes at 64 per minute. The water was a little rough for the first four hours. Many on the boat were seasick. There was limited visibility, also. The water was warm, 69 degrees.

For the first five hours Frank had a feeding every half hour. He alternated between Exceed, which is a glucose drink, and Ensure which is a liquid meal. On each feeding he also drank water. The goal was to get a quart of liquids into Frank every hour. From the fifth to the ninth hour he drank every twenty minutes. At the end of the swim he drank every fifteen minutes. The liquids were warmed throughout the swim.

A constant watch was kept on the water temperature and on Frank. His skin color was good until the end of the swim. At four miles out the water dropped to 66 degrees, but the last two miles it was down to 60 degrees. To test Frank's mental capacity every hour he was asked a personal history question. None of these he knew ahead of time. For example: "How many children do you have? Name them." (Frank has seven). "Which children were born outside of the U.S.? What is your dad's middle name?" As the hours wore on the questions got harder. He did not have a problem with any of them.

During the swim a school of dolphins were seen, a shark, a school of pilot whales, and Frank even saw a sting ray. A few boats came a little close but nothing was too dangerous.

Frank's stroke was strong but as he grew tired he lost his leg power and his arm pull shortened. Numerous signals for stroke corrections were given. Frank did not respond.

From 10 a.m. until 11:48 a.m. Frank slowed considerably. With the poor visibility the shore was not easily seen. Frank could not see the shore from the water. He was less than three miles out. He began to doubt the distance and kept trying to look. The water temperature had dropped to 62 degrees and was still dropping.

A rowboat was put in the water with a mile to go. Frank was cold and anxious to finish. As Frank was getting worse he was guided into the nearest point. There was a very strong surge. Frank was thrown upon the rocks, as were many of the support personnel. Frank cleared the water's edge at 11:48 a.m. He had done it in ten hours, thirty-four minutes. It was the eighteenth fastest time in that direction. Frank set the record for the oldest person's crossing. After thirty minutes of warming he was fine.

According to Frank, "I hurt all over, my throat is killing me from swallowing so much sea water, but I finally accomplished my goal."²⁰

Frank's drive inspired all who were part of his swim. He returned until he was successful. It was an amazing feat.

The second swim of 1987 was accomplished by Taranath Shenoy, a 28 year old deaf man from India. He was also only partially sighted.

Taranath had swum the English Channel three times and wanted to swim Catalina. On September 25 he entered the water at Doctor's Cove. He was accompanied by his coach, Ninod Gurujee. With the language barrier there was limited communication with the support crew.

Conditions were perfect and Taranath sailed across the channel in ten hours and fifteen minutes. He became the sixty-first person to swim Catalina.

The Late Eighties

After a very disappointing and unsuccessful season in 1988 there were two individual and four relay crossings in 1989. Both individual swimmers had made unsuccessful attempts earlier in the summer and returned to conquer the channel.

The first of these swimmers was Steve Frantz from San Diego. On Steve's first attempt a large unidentifiable marine life was spotted under the paddler. As it was thought to be either a great white shark or a dolphin, the swimmer was removed from the water one hour and ten minutes into the swim.

As Steve was frightened during the first attempt he decided to swim during the day on his second attempt.²¹ At six thirty three on September 9, 1989 Steve entered the warm waters at Catalina. It was a clam, flat day with a light wind. The water was a comfortable 68.5 degrees. Steve maintained 67-68 strokes per minutes for the first hour and a half. At the hour mark he fed on electrolytes. For the next few hours he fed every forty-five to fifty minutes. Besides electrolytes, he drank high carbohydrate replacement, water and tea. He ate peaches, took vitamins and even ate jelly beans.²²

During the mid morning a shark was sighted. One of the assistants on the swim entered the small support boat in order to provide for extra safety for the swimmer. Luckily, it was only a small blue shark. Gradually everyone calmed down on the boat.

In the fifth hour Steve's break took nine minutes. He took Advil for the pain in his left arm. As the swim progressed Steve's arm barely cleared the water. By the finish he was not recovering above the water with his left arm ²³

In early afternoon the wind picked up, forming a few whitecaps. Steve's stroke count dropped to 60-62 a minute.

By 4:00 p.m. Steve's drink had to be heated. He was in the first stages of hypothermia. Steve began to refuse food and was having problems urinating. This is a common problem for male distance swimmers.

With a half mile to go Steve's spirit was high. He joked and kept stroking with only one arm.²⁴

After thirteen hours and fifteen minutes and forty two seconds Steve painfully climbed ashore. In his second attempt, despite severe pain and hypothermia, Steve Frantz made it.

Vicki Keith, a 28 year old swimmer for Canada entered the Catalina Channel for the second time on September 23rd. In her first crossing she had eight miles to go when she was pulled from the water. She had not made any forward progress for quite some time.²⁵

Vicki's swims are a little unique as Vicki swims butterfly. She does this to get more press coverage. On each of her swims she raises money for various charities.

Her swim began at 1:33 a.m.. She was swimming from Catalina to the mainland. The water was a warm 68 degrees, with a one foot swell.

Vicki averaged 27 butterfly strokes per minute during the first six hours. Similar to swims up to the late 1970's, Vicki utilized a two hour feed pattern consuming hot chocolate, water, peaches, fruit salad and M & M's. Her breaks ranged from six minutes to twelve minutes in length.²⁶

In the early morning hours the wind calmed down, leaving a glassy ocean. Numerous schools of fish and over 50 dolphins were spotted. A few ships passed as she crossed the shipping lane; none were close however.

At 11:30 a.m. the press boat arrived for pictures and news releases. At 12:00 p.m. a photographer went underwater to photograph Vicki as she swam. She still had six and a half miles to go.

The water temperature dropped gradually to 64 degrees. In the last three hours Vicki did not feed. At 4:27 p.m. Vicki became the 63rd person to swim Catalina. Her time was fourteen hours, fifty-three minutes and twenty-six seconds.

It was the sixty first fastest crossing out of eighty six individual swims.²⁷

For the first time there were numerous relays attempting Catalina at one time. Dave Clark from San Diego formed three relay teams. In order to save money the teams swam at one time with one major boat supporting them and a smaller one. The relays were matched by speed so each team would stay together. If one athlete swam ahead he had to wait for the other two swimmers. As it turned out the teams were evenly divided so most of the swimmers did not have to wait. Each athlete swims a one hour leg. The athlete has five minutes to tag to previous swimmer.²⁸

The teams were composed of:

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Steve Frantz | 2. Alberto Chiappa | 3. Bob West |
| Dave Clark | Art Paniagua | Chuck Coleman |
| Rebecca Fishbein | Bob West | Sue McClanahan |
| Steve Frankum | Jack Robertson | Jamshid Khajavi |
| Nancy Howden | Mike Devlin | Tina Moore |
| Mike Gibellino | Janis Bloomquist | Margaret Dickson |

The first three athletes entered the water at 6:43 a.m. at Doctor's Cove in Catalina. The water temperature was 66 degrees. Within a few miles the water warmed up to 70 degrees.

During the relay swims the group tagged with high fives. The water was calm throughout the swim. A few dolphins were seen and quite a few jellyfish but beyond this there was little marine life. The swims were rather uneventful except when one of the swimmers almost touched the boat when he needed a feeding. Luckily, one of the other swimmers yelled a warning just before the man inadvertently disqualified the team.

Each swimmer ended up swimming twice. The finish was a little dangerous. As Janis and Margaret tried to climb over the rocks a wave hit them, knocking them over. Both were cut but managed to emerge from the water together. The three relays finished after eleven hours, forty-six minutes and seven seconds.²⁹

These relays were the tenth, eleventh and twelfth relay to complete the 21 mile crossing.

The final relay of the summer was the United States National team on August 11th. The team swam from the Mainland to Catalina. The swimmers and the order was as follows: Jay Wilkerson, Jim McConica, Martha Jahn, Karen Burton, Chad Hundebly and Erika Reetz. The swimmers ranged in age from 18 to 39 years old.

The swim began at 2:23 a.m.. Jay had to wade ashore through a very thick kelp bed in complete darkness as the boat's floodlight did not work. Despite this, he began very quickly. In his leg Jay swam easily over three and a half miles.³⁰

Jim's leg went smoothly. He covered well over three miles. The water also warmed from 63 to 65 degrees.

During Martha's leg she was a little nervous in the darkness so the paddlers pulled in tight. She covered three miles with an 86 per minute stroke count.

Karen, despite a mild case of seasickness, held 87 strokes per minute and covered three miles.

Chad had a fast leg covering over three and a half miles. During his crossing some jellyfish were sighted. A mild swell also began.³¹

Erika was the sixth swimmer in the water. She swam over 2.5 miles with a 89 stroke per minute average.

Jay reentered the water at 8:23 a.m.. While he was in the water the boat left and found a place to land. Jay swam over 2.5 miles.

With less than 200 yards to go, Jim took over for Jay. At 9:25 a.m. Jim cleared the water's edge. The relay's time was seven hours, two minutes and forty-five seconds. This was a new World Record not only for that direction but the fastest time ever.³²

The 1989 season proved to be one of determination. The swimmers fought early failure, overcame fear and defeated the odds. The result was two successful individual swims and four successful relays, one in a World Record time.

There were thirty-two individual crossings and fourteen relay crossings between 1980 and 1989. In the early Eighties the men's and overall speed record from Catalina to the mainland were rewritten by Jim McConica. In the middle Eighties three men set the oldest record for swimming the Catalina Channel with Frank Reynolds at 55 holding the record. The International race in 1984 was very successful with eight individual swims and a relay record. In 1989 the United States National team destroyed the relay record by over an hour.

Chapter 5 References

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Chapter 7

The Nineties: 1990-1996

From 1990 through the 1996 season there were twenty-three successful swims by twenty people. There were two World Records set for men, both from Catalina to the mainland and the reverse direction and a women's world record from Catalina to the Mainland.

The Early Nineties

1990 was an uneventful season for Catalina swims. Of five attempts, only two were successful, Jamshid Khajavi and Rick Barthel.

On August 31st at 8:40 p.m. Jamshid began his Catalina to mainland swim. His stroke count ranged from a low of 52 strokes per minute to a high of 61 strokes per minute. Despite a clear night, there was a strong wind producing some whitecaps. The water was a warm 68-70 degrees throughout most of the swim.¹

Jamshid fed on power bars, bananas, Exceed and hot water. At two and a half hours, Jamshid had completed only two and a half miles. Due to large swells, the Achilles support craft broke loose three times during the crossing. This created a few frantic moments and delays for Jamshid.

At the halfway point, the Achilles accidentally ran into Jamshid. It was being used as a support craft, but the pilot lost sight of the swimmer. Jamshid, although dazed, laughed and remarked, "It was the attack of the Achilles." Fortunately, he was not injured nor did he grab the boat.²

In the eleventh hour, the water temperature dropped to 66 degrees. Jamshid began stopping quite frequently. He had drifted into mild hypothermia and was unable to urinate. He was tired but still swimming well. In order to improve his enthusiasm, a pacer joined Jamshid. This seemed to help his spirits significantly.

As there was a large flock of pelicans, Jamshid swam into them to see what was going on. Much to his surprise, he saw two sharks - a 12 footer and a 7 footer.

With 200 yards to go, Jamshid began to swim butterfly. He stepped ashore after 16 hours, seven minutes and 39 seconds. He became the 64th person to complete the Catalina swim.³

Rick Barthel of Sacramento estimated his swim would take eleven hours, 36 minutes on the ride to Catalina. On September 22nd, under near perfect conditions, Rick walked into the water at Doctor's Cove. It was a beautiful, clear night. The water was 68 degrees, the air was 67 degrees, and the ocean was as flat as a lake.

Throughout the swim Rick fed every thirty minutes. His breaks were quick-rarely over thirty seconds. He fed on baby food and honey.

There were few problems until early morning. Two boats came very close, with a freighter cutting just in front of Rick.⁴

Rick's stroke count varied from 57 to 63 strokes per minute. He maintained his stroke throughout the swim. Rick was positive and focused during the swim. He never complained. He was very determined. In the early morning hours he took an unusually long break-one and a half minutes. The crew cheered wildly.⁵

At 11:45 a.m. in the morning, Rick landed one half mile west of Point Vicente. His time eleven hours, thirty-six minutes and 43 seconds. He was very pleased but tired. He had predicted his time exactly. Rick's time is the twenty ninth fastest from the Island to the Mainland.(Appendix F)

The two swims in 1990 were completed in differing conditions. Regardless, both men met their goals and became the 64th and 65th persons to swim the Catalina Channel successfully.

There were four successful individual crossings in 1991. Each athlete chose to swim from Catalina to the mainland. There were four relay crossings also.

The first successful swim of the summer was by 55 year old Bob West of San Diego. Bob entered the water at 9:53 p.m. on August 3rd. There were small craft warnings for the evening. The sea was very rough. Within an hour everyone in the crew was sick. Kayaker Mike Diolon had to paddle the first nine hours as everyone else was too ill to paddle.

For the first five to six hours of the swim Bob was throwing up five times an hour. He drank Gatorade fluid replacement for two feedings then a feeding of Gatorade every twenty minutes. He drank Pepsi and tea with honey to calm his stomach but nothing worked.⁶

As the sun rose everyone felt better. The crew was able to paddle and numerous swimmers paced Bob. At 2:08 p.m. on August 4th, after sixteen hours and fifteen minutes in the water, Bob West completed the swim.⁷ He became the oldest man by a few months to swim Catalina.(Appendix E)

Thirty-six year old Timothy Cheesman entered the water at 2:46 a.m. on August 17th. The conditions were ideal. The water was like glass. The temperature was 65 degrees.

In the swim, Tim drank Exceed. Tim maintained a stroke count in the mid 50s. His spirits were high throughout the swim, he was constantly joking.

With one mile to go in the swim, Tim had a cup of tea with his parents. He had the tea in a fine bone china cup. His parents, who accompanied him on the boat, came from England specifically for the swim.⁸

After ten hours, forty-eight minutes and forty-six seconds Tim emerged from the water. He became the sixty-seventh person to tackle Catalina.⁹

The third successful swimmer of the summer was 34 year old Dan Angress. He waded into the flat water at Catalina a little more than a half an hour after midnight. It was a calm clear evening.¹⁰

By 2:30 a.m. a slight wind created a mild chop. The water temperature was a steady 65 degrees. Between 4:30 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. numerous ships were visible. Nothing seemed to bother Dan. He maintained his speed and stroke.¹¹

Navigator Bob Hill recorded his location every hour. He adjusted his course with the assistance of radar and the Loran.¹²

About an hour from the finish, approximately 1.5 kilometers from shore, the water temperature dropped two degrees. Despite this, Dan finished the swim in ten hours, eight minutes. This is the nineteenth fastest swim in this direction.

The final swimmer of 1991 was Pete Kelly. He began his swim at 12:17 a.m. at Doctor's Cove on Catalina on September 13th. Initially the water was choppy but gradually the wind and then the sea calmed down. Pete's stroke count was consistent throughout the swim. It ranged from 47 to 50 strokes per minute.¹³

Throughout the swim Pete drank fluids every half hour. During the night, in addition to paddlers escorting Pete, he had a few swimmers jump in with him. This seemed to motivate him.

Pete had a fine swim, finishing in thirteen hours, forty-five minutes and thirty seconds. This was excellent, especially because one of the boat's engines went out. The Zodiac followed Pete while his navigator frantically repaired the engine.¹⁴

Besides four individual crossings, four relays crossed the Catalina Channel in 1991. These, in actuality, were two relays which swam from the mainland to Catalina and back to the mainland on July 5th-6th. All four represented the La Jolla Cove Swim Team. The first relay consisted of: John Skogland, Wally Nidziko, Steve Frantz, Tim Cheesman, Eric Olson, and Bob West. The second team consisted of: Cyrise Calvin, David Clark, Jackie Huffman Hammond, Peter Blake, Tina Moore, and Peter Urea. Both teams swam from the Mainland to Catalina in twelve hours, thirty-two minutes and twenty-nine seconds. On the return the teams took eleven hours, eleven minutes and six seconds. This was an excellent year for Catalina swims.

In 1992 there were four individual crossings of Catalina. Jamshid Khajavi returned to tackle the channel. In addition Pete Huisveld broke John York's fourteen year old record from the mainland to Catalina.

The first swimmer of the 1992 season was 28 year old Cyrise Calvin from San Diego. She began at 1:09 a.m. on July 19th after a welcome from a curious seal. The sea was calm and warm at 68 degrees. Within an hour the sea became choppy. The boat was rocking severely.¹⁵

Cyrise's stroke count ranged from a low of 78 to a high of 88 despite the tougher conditions. Cyrise drank Gatorade every half hour. At times she ate a Power Bar. These breaks lasted from 45 seconds to 2 and a half minutes. At 6:04 a.m. Cyrise told the escorting paddler she was throwing up everything she ate and drank.¹⁶ Within an hour she became cranky. At 7:19 a.m. a large ship passed within 75 yards of the swimmer. This seemed to calm Cyrise a bit after panicking everyone on the boat.¹⁷

Gradually the sea calmed down and Cyrise began to retain her food. By 9:30 a.m. the water conditions were good despite a change in water temperature. This had an effect on Cyrise. She was cold. She adjusted her feeding to warm tea.¹⁸

At 12:09 a.m. Cyrise left the water. She became the seventieth person to swim Catalina. Her time was ten hours, 59 minutes and twenty-two seconds.

The second swimmer of 1992 was forty year old Pete Huisveld. After earning a spot on the U.S. National Long Distance Team in June, Pete decided to conquer Catalina. At 10:54 a.m. on August 11th Pete ran into the water at Doctor's Cove on Catalina.

The water temperature ranged from 70 degrees to 72 degrees. Throughout the evening there was a wind. Despite this, Pete was able to maintain a stroke count between 75 and 79 per minute. He sprinted across the Channel. His spirits remained high throughout. He fed every fifteen minutes. By four a.m. it was evident Peter was on the men's world record pace. The wind finally calmed and Pete raced ashore at 6:31 a.m. in the morning.¹⁹

Pete's time was seven hours, thirty-seven minutes and thirty-one seconds. This was a new men's Catalina to the mainland record by four minutes. This was the second fastest swim ever.

On September 18th, 1992 Steve Hoberg began a swim across the Catalina Channel. Steve was an age group, high school, and college swimmer. He retired until 1976 when he began Master's swimming. At 46, he decided to swim the Catalina Channel.

Steve entered the water at 12:23 a.m. guided by Mickey Pittman, the Navigator of the Wild Wave. Initially, Steve maintained 66 strokes per minute. The sea was calm and all was going well. Within the first hour the wind picked up. Steve was having problems seeing the paddlers and the escort boat. He was confusing his right and his left. His stroke count dropped to 60 per minute. As the wind calmed, he seemed to do better.²⁰

Throughout the swim Steve fed at the half hour. He did not have any complaints about the food or how he felt.

In the morning hours the water temperature began to drop from 68 degrees to 63 degrees due to the upwelling currents off the Mainland. This severely affected Steve. His stroke count dropped to 58 per minute. Despite the cold Steve continued.²¹

At 10:50 a.m. he emerged from the water. He became the seventy-second person to swim the Catalina Channel. His time was ten hours, twenty-seven minutes and twenty-four seconds.

The final swim of 1992 was the second swim for Jamshid Khajari. After a successful swim in 1990 he decided to swim in the opposite direction in 1992. Jamshid, a swimmer from

Iran, set out to swim from the Mainland to Catalina. Most swimmers contend that this is the more difficult way as one has to swim into the prevailing currents and wind. Jamshid was unsuccessful but vowed to return in 1992.

Jamshid began his quest on September 19th at 7:38 p.m.. It was a calm, starry night. Jamshid fed every half hour. He alternated between a carbohydrate concentrate called "Squeezy", Cytomax and a Power Bar. At times he also ate a banana. He "felt good."²²

At times while he fed he spoke to the paddler in a Persian language. His attitude was positive. Similarly, his stroke count ranged from 64 strokes per minute at the beginning to 55 strokes per minute near the end of the swim. The further he went the stronger he felt. In the meantime, the kayaker capsized. The kayaker had to be rescued while Jamshid followed the boat. He was doing well.²³

In the early morning Jamshid's stomach began to bother him. He drank 7-Up in order to calm him down. In addition he began to feed every twenty minutes. Within an hour he requested a candy bar and Nuprin. He had two more candy bars within the hour then needed more 7-Up.²⁴

As the sun rose, Jamshid's stroke count decreased. He seemed to be swimming well, however. At eleven a.m. the water was still calm. At 1:40 a.m. he cleared the water's edge.

Jamshid's swim took eighteen hours, one minute and forty-one seconds. He had accomplished his goal. He became the eighth swimmer to swim the Channel in both directions.

1993 was a successful year for both individual and relay crossings. Five swimmers completed the crossing from Catalina to the mainland. One was in record time. Four relays were also successful. Two women's only relays set records.

Dailza Ribeiro decided to swim Catalina in late June. The 35 year old woman from Brazil entered the water at 12:50 a.m. on June 28th. Despite the early time of the season the water was a comfortable 69 degrees. Dailza was able to maintain 65 to 68 strokes per minute throughout the swim. She drank a mixture of banana, oatmeal and honey.

At four a.m. Dailza got lanolin on her goggles and her face. She tried a new pair but had it on her hands. She was thrown a towel but she was unable to remove the lanolin.²⁵

Throughout the crossing marine life was evident. Seals, two sunfish, smelt and even a whale were visible. At the same time the boat had mechanical problems. The paddlers went ahead with the swimmer while the navigator Mickey Pittman attempted to do repairs. This became an on again, off again problem. Finally the Zodiac was put in the water with Dailza. A new boat was sent to assist as the Wild Wave returned to port.²⁶

To prevent Dailza from getting upset numerous swimmers paced her throughout the problem hours. This helped to relieve her fears. She began feeding every half hour and finally every twenty minutes.

At 2:38 p.m. after fourteen hours, twenty-five minutes and forty-three seconds in the water, Dailza reached San Pedro. She became the seventy-third person to swim Catalina.

The second successful swimmer of the summer was Jamie Schnick. On August 24th he raced into the water at Catalina at 12:50 a.m.. He began in a fast pace of 72 strokes per minute. He drank fluid replacement and/or high carbohydrates. He was able to limit his feedings to 5-10 second breaks.

The water was calm and warm at 69 degrees. In the early morning hours Jamie felt queasy. Sprite seemed to calm his stomach. His stroke count dropped to 59 until he felt better.²⁷

At 5:15 a.m. a pacer entered the water. This did not seem to help him. His stroke and body position began to change. His stroke count further dropped to 57. He wanted to quit but was talked out of it.²⁸

Gradually Jamie was able to refocus and push himself through the pain. He had pacers most of the morning and this helped. As the sun rose his spirits returned.

At 9:35 a.m. he climbed the rocky beach at the mainland. His time was an excellent one, eight hours and forty-five minutes.

On September 24th, Chad Hundebly, the 1991 World Champion for long distance swimming, ran into the water at Doctor's Cove on Catalina. Chad has been the top marathon swimmer in the world for three years.

In 1989 Chad was afraid to swim at night in the U.S. Nationals team's relay. He was afraid of sharks. In 1993, at 22, he began his swim at 12:22 a.m. in bad weather. Within twelve minutes Chad sighted a shark.²⁹

Chad's stroke count ranged from 80 to 86 strokes per minute. Initially he fed every fifteen minutes. By the end of the swim his feedings had dropped to eight minutes. He drank 4-8 ounces of Exceed at each feeding. Each feeding took 6 to 8 seconds. In the early part of the swim Chad threw up. The water was calm but there were long swells. The water temperature was 65 to 68 degrees, a bit chilly.³⁰

At 5:53 a.m. Chad was nervous about sharks. He was beginning to show some signs of hypothermia. At 8:05 a.m. Chad saw another shark. He felt he was being followed. No one on board could see anything, however. Gradually he seemed to calm down.³¹

At 8:37 a.m. Chad walked ashore. His time was 8:14:46, a new World Record by 12 minutes 38 seconds. He became the seventy-fifth person to swim Catalina.

The fourth swimmer to tackle Catalina was David Yudovin. He had conquered Catalina in the 70's but returned in 1993 to swim it again.

David began at 12:28 a.m. from Doctor's Cove, Catalina on October 7th. The water was a comfortable 68 degrees, surprisingly warm for October.

Throughout the swim David maintained a 58-61 stroke count. He drank juice every hour and ate parts of a Tiger Milk bar. As the hours wore on he fed at the half hour.³² At 2:27 a.m. David saw a large marine life under him. He could not tell what it was, however. The navigator, Mickey Pittman, turned on the boat lights but no one was able to see anything.³³

In the morning it was overcast and the water turned bumpy with a slight swell. Numerous freighters were seen. Besides this, the swim was uneventful.

At 12:18 p.m. David landed at the mainland. He completed his third crossing in eleven hours, forty-nine minutes and thirty-seven seconds.

The final swim of 1993 was accomplished by Carlos Costa on November 7th. Despite having only one and a half legs, Carlos vowed to conquer Catalina. At 21 he did not let his handicap slow him down.

Carlos slid into the water at 6:04 a.m. at Emerald Bay on Catalina. The conditions were excellent with calm seas and extremely warm water for November. The water temperature ranged from 65.5 to 68 degrees.³⁴

Carlos initially fed at the one and a half hour mark. He drank Ensure, hot chocolate and ate Power Bars and chocolate. As the swim progressed he fed at the hour. His stroke count ranged from 53 to 61 per minute.

The crossing was a little unique as Carlos was accompanied by a paddler, a Boston Whaler, a large power boat and a sailboat. The support crew was on the large boat, which stayed a half a mile in front of Carlos.³⁵

Carlos landed at 9:07 p.m.. His swim took fifteen hours, three minutes and two seconds. His crossing was the one hundredth and first. Carlos was the seventy-sixth person to swim Catalina.

There were four successful relays in 1993. The first was on January 30th. It was called the First Annual George Young Memorial Relay. The team consisted of David Clark, Paul Arnold, Gary King, Peter Urrea, Eric Olsen and John York. The team swam from the Mainland to Catalina in 14 hours, 5 minutes and eight seconds.

On July 6th, two relays swam side by side from the mainland to Catalina in 11 hours, 34 minutes and 38 seconds. The first team, Bondaless De Curitiba, consisted of six women: Cyrise Calvin, Dailza Ribiero, Karin Janz, Julie Pedace, Paula Selby, and Carol Sing. This team set a women's only record from the mainland to Catalina. The second team, La Jolla Cove Swim Team, consisted of six men: Steve Frantz, Mike Meany, Vince White, John Darauche, Dave Clark, and Bob West.

The final relay of the summer, on September 9th, was the Over the Hill Gang. The team included: Janis Bloomquist, Jo Lamott, Carol Sing, Dubley Wood, Mary Beth Egloff, and Janet Lamott. The team swam from the Mainland to Catalina in eleven hours, one minute and twenty-nine seconds, erasing the women's only record set in July by 33 minutes.

1993 was an excellent year with five individual swims and four relays. In addition a new men's record was set and two relay records for women.

In 1994 there were four individual swims and a relay swim. The first swim of 1994 was completed by Peter Blake, a 37 year old, on his second attempt. In 1992 he was pulled from the water suffering from hypothermia. This did not deter him but encouraged him to conquer the Channel.

He swam on a calm evening with flat seas and no wind. During the swim Pete drank Gatorade every twenty minutes. On one feeding he drank Ensure for an extra burst of energy. Pete's stroke rate ranged from 66 to 74 on the swim. According to his coach, Dave Clark, he maintained a strong stroke throughout the swim.

After Pete was in the water for over seven hours the navigator spotted two six foot sharks. Neither swam close to Pete but everyone prepared for a problem. Finally, the sharks disappeared.

Within the last two miles of the swim the wind began to blow. The water temperature was 66-68 degrees. Pete didn't have any problems with the water temperature.

By 10:30 a.m. Pete's crew could see not only the shore but another boat escorting a channel aspirant. Samantha Silva, a 17 year old from Long Beach had started two hours before Pete. As both were aiming for the same point of land a race developed at the finish. Pete was able to pass Samantha. He finished after eleven hours, one minute and thirty five seconds. Pete became the 77th person to swim the Catalina Channel.³⁶

Samantha began her swim at 10:42 p.m. on September 25th. She maintained a stroke rate of 66 to 74 throughout the swim. She felt strong through the first seven hours. At seven hours she was cold and was a bit frustrated. To alleviate the cold her coach, Kalani Caldwell, who swam the channel in 1980, warmed her feedings from then on in the swim. Her feeding pattern was a little erratic. She began drinking every hour then dropped to a half hour. Finally she fed at the twenty minutes. During her breaks she only drank two to five ounces of fluid. As the swim progressed she drank more fluids. In the last two hours she ate some candy for a mental break.

After thirteen hours and two minutes the Long Beach City College freshman emerged from the water, shivering and crying with joy for completing the swim. Samantha was the 78th swimmer to swim the channel.³⁷

The third swimmer of the year was Karen Burton. The 32 year old from Colorado had swum on the 1989 U.S. national team relay which had set the overall record. She had swum the English Channel, finished third at the 25k world championships in 1991 and won numerous professional marathon races. As she entered the flat seas on October 10th her goal was to break the overall record from Catalina to the Mainland.

Karen entered the water just after midnight. It was a beautiful night with calm seas and no wind. There was phosphorous in the water. This caused the water to look blue.

During the swim Karen drank every 15 to 20 minutes. She drank eight ounces of Shaklee and on some occasions she drank hot chocolate. Her breaks lasted from four to fifteen seconds. The longer ones were caused by Karen taking time to stretch her back and shoulders. Karen had bad shoulders and had pain during the swim. She took nine Advils during the crossing, attempting to dim the pain.

Throughout the night numerous fish and mammals were sighted. Initially a 12 foot mammal passed under Karen. Later in the swim two dolphins were sighted and finally a seal swam near Karen.

Pete Huisveld acted as her coach on the crossing. He wrote her stroke counts on a dry marker board and other important notes. He then held a flashlight up to the board so Karen could read the board. Karen maintained a stroke count of 85 to 89 on the swim.

As the sun rose over the water the shore and finish were visible. After seven hours forty-three minutes and six seconds Karen climbed up the rocks on the Mainland. She had broken the women's record by fifty minutes and the overall Catalina to the Mainland record by thirty one minutes. Karen's swim was the fourth fastest swim of all time.³⁸

The next day the fourth individual swim of the summer occurred. Alan Freeman from San Luis Obispo entered the water at Catalina just after 1 a.m.. Actually this was the second start as initially he didn't clear the water's edge so he was stopped and restarted.

The water was very flat and again the phosphorous was amazing. It lit up the water.

During the crossing Alan maintained a 46 to 54 stroke count. He drank a mixture of Carboplex, Gatorade and water. He tried to drink 8 ounces but was only consuming 4 to 6 ounces.

After five hours Alan needed to stretch his lower back and legs. He was nauseous from the fourth hour on in the swim. Dave Yudovin entered the water to provide support as a pace swimmer. This seemed to help and Alan picked up his pace.

In the seventh hour the crew was concerned about Alan's mental state. Gradually personal questions were asked of him to make sure he was aware of where he was and if he was in control. For safety more pace swimmers entered the water to help motivate Alan and to keep an eye on him.

A slight swell blew up for an hour then the ocean calmed down. Alan was doing well. He wasn't cold but was cramping slightly. He was able to urinate, however. The water temperature ranged from 69 to 71 degrees.

In the latter hours of the swim Alan paused to rest before he took the fluid. After drinking he swam a few breast strokes before returning to freestyle. This seemed to stretch and relax him. An L.A. County lifeguard boat followed Alan the last hour for safety. Eight swimmers jumped in the water and swam ashore with Alan. After twelve hours, twelve minutes and seven seconds Alan walked up the beach. He became the 80th swimmer to cross the Catalina Channel.³⁹

There was one relay crossing in 1994, a women's team from Pomona Pitzer Colleges. The team was comprised of Judy Van Atta, Pam Reece, Heather Royer, Lesley Pelton, Erin Moore and Camille Patton. Judy Van Atta entered the water at 11:22 pm on August 18th in complete darkness off of Point Vicente. It was a calm night; conditions were ideal. Throughout the swim each swimmer had a feeding every fifteen minutes of ERG. As the swimmers were not in top condition this was designed to help their energy level for the hour swim. Judy held her stroke count from 82 to 88, Heather maintained 80 to 82, Erin was from 78 to 80 and Lesley's was 70 to 72. During Lesley's leg a huge flying fish jumped next to her but she did not see it. Camille was the fifth leg and maintained only a 57 to 60 stroke count. The sixth leg was swum by Pam Reece. Her stroke count ranged from 60 to 67. While she was in the water Pete swam next to her as she was afraid of the darkness. Once she began she relaxed and did well, swimming 2.2 km on her leg. The sun gradually appeared during Judy's second leg. This not only helped everyone's enthusiasm but relieved some of the swimmer's and support crew's seasickness. During Heather's second swim six dolphins were spotted. Erin swam the final leg and landed on Catalina after eight hours and twenty-seven minutes. This was the fastest crossing by an all women's relay in either direction.⁴⁰

In 1995 there were four individual swims and five relay swims. The latter crossings were unique as two relays swam together and then three later in the summer.

Jamshid Khajavi decided to tackle the Catalina Channel for the third time on August 3rd. He entered the water at 10:23 p.m. on a breezy, overcast night.

During the crossing Jamshid drank fluids every twenty to thirty minutes. Initially he drank a mixture of Exceed and Gatorade. He then switched to soup and ate bananas while drinking the high carbohydrate every other feeding. As the swim entered the thirteenth hour Jamshid switched to drinking Coke and broth. The caffeine helped to keep him awake but was not as nutritionally helpful as the fluid replacement or the high carbohydrate. He also increased the amount of fluids he drank the first few hours as compared to the last fifteen hours of the swim. This was beneficial to his successful crossing.

Throughout the crossing numerous types of sea life could be spotted. At one point a sea lion seemed to be following Jamshid. This sea lion stayed with him for almost an hour and swam under the kayak support numerous times. Dolphins were visible near the boat three times during the crossing. In addition, a huge ship crossed in front of Jamshid's path on its way to L.A. harbor.

By the eighth hour the wind had stopped and the water was calm. Just about this time the engine of the boat had problems so Jamshid and the kayak swam ahead while the captain repaired the boat. Unfortunately the swimmer headed off course even though there was a compass on the kayak. It took seven minutes for the boat to be fixed and to catch up to the swimmer.

Jamshid had some pain during the crossing and took Advil to relieve the discomfort. He also had goggle problems but a few switches and this was alleviated. His crew was very supportive.

By 1 p.m. Jamshid's stroke began to decline in efficiency. He was lifting his head and this caused his legs to drop.

He only had a short period of mental frustration where he wanted to see the land but could not due to the overcast sky. As this disappeared not only did his spirits improve but his stroke did as well.

As he approached the Mainland a plane was skywriting messages of support for Jamshid. Unfortunately the fog made the messages disappear quickly. After 20:47.31 he landed on the Mainland. He completed his third crossing of Catalina at age 42.41

The next successful crossing was on September 15th by Noel Wells, a fifty year old from Yorba Linda. The swim was begun at 10:06 p.m. from Doctor's Cove on Catalina Island. It was a beautiful, starry night with no wind and calm seas.

There was some fog rolling into Catalina but the rest of the Channel was clear.

Noel drank 8 to 10 ounces of Gatorade every thirty minutes for the first four hours of the swim. He then switched to drinking every twenty minutes.

After the first half an hour of calm seas the wind picked up creating a 1 to 3 foot chop. Even with the fog layer moving in the wind didn't die so the crossing conditions were less than ideal for Noel. Despite this he stayed positive and kept stroking. He averaged 45 to 54 strokes a minute during the crossing. He was able to maintain stroke efficiency throughout the crossing even with choppy conditions.

At 7:37 a.m. during a paddler change Noel made a turn and was actually heading back to Catalina. In the darkness it is very confusing to the swimmer and his instincts aren't always correct. The kayakers quickly corrected his course and made sure they led him. Within an hour the boat also changed course from Cabrillo Beach to White Point as Noel was being pushed there anyway. In the long run it would be a shorter swim.

At three miles Noel seemed to pick up his pace as he knew he would become the 81st person to swim Catalina. At 12:03 p.m. he landed at White Point. His crossing took thirteen hours fifty seven minutes and nine seconds, a very respectable time.⁴²

The third individual crossing of the summer was completed by 26 year old Alexia Nalewaik. She also swam from Catalina to the Mainland. The night was calm and the water was a warm 68 degrees.

Initially Alexia had a swim pacer and a kayaker to swim with her. After a half hour the pacer left the water. At four hours Alexia requested another pacer and this seemed to help.

Alexia drank every twenty minutes on the swim. She only had positive comments during her quick breaks. On one feeding she had something to eat; otherwise she just consumed fluid.

Two different problems arose on the crossing. First, a huge ship was heading for Alexia but finally altered its course to go around the swimmer. This occurred at 4 a.m.. At 8:32 a.m. the boat found a rocket floating in the water near the swimmer. The Coast Guard was called and came to pick up the rocket.

At 9 a.m. another swim pacer entered the water to support Alexia. She stayed with Alexia for three hours. Again this crossing was blessed with a supportive crew of pacers and paddlers.

Twelve hours forty-seven minutes and eight seconds after Alexia began her swim she landed at the base of Cardiac Hill just north of Marineland. She became the 82nd person to swim Catalina.⁴³

The final crossing of the summer was by Dave Yudovin. At 44 he was attempting his fourth Catalina crossing, the first attempt being in 1976. He had two successful crossings-in 1986 and 1993.

Dave entered the water on October 17th at just after 11 p.m.. The night was perfect with many stars and a calm sea. Dave had the navigator turn off the spot light on the boat. This allowed Dave the opportunity to enjoy the phosphorescence in the water. It did make it somewhat challenging for the crew to keep track of Dave in the darkness.

For the first two hours of the swim Dave fed at the hour mark. He drank 4 to 6 ounces of fluid and sometimes ate half of a Tiger Bar. After these feedings Dave drank every half hour.

The wind had been calm at the beginning of the swim but began to kick up after an hour and a half. This created some chop.

As this was a late swim the water temperature had dropped significantly since the end of August. At the three hour mark Dave stated the temperature had dropped 4 to 5 degrees and he was getting cold.

His stroke ranged from 52 to 62 strokes per minute throughout the swim. Finally the wind began to drop and this helped Dave's stroke.

At the four and a half hour mark a dolphin was spotted from the boat. Within an hour and a half there were two to three dolphins swimming right next to Dave. By 5:30 a.m.

there were lots of dolphins in the water. Everyone on the boat could hear the dolphins talking and there was a fair amount of fish in the water. Near the end of the swim more than twelve dolphins were swimming close to Dave.

Beyond the mammals in the water two huge freighters were moving into the same path as Dave. The extra lights had to be turned on as an extra precaution. Neither passed dangerously close, however.

As Dave approached the finish a seal swam close to analyze Dave. He jumped around and finally disappeared. At 9:50 a.m. Dave emerged after a ten hour forty-six minute and twenty-seven second swim. His crossing was the 110th across the Catalina channel. 44

The first two relays of the summer occurred on July 21st. There were two teams called Over the Wave, one for men and one for women. For the men's relay the participants' ages ranged from 54 to 60 and consisted of Peter Urrea, Bob West, Steve Frantz, Frank Reynolds, Tony Joseph and Dave Lamott. On the women's side all of the women were between 53 and 59 so just by finishing the swim the women would set a record for their age group as it was the first attempt by an all women's group, 50-59. The women on the relay included Carol Sing, Debbie Peckham, Janet Lamott, Betsy Jordan, Sandra Vickers and Dudley Wood.

Unlike the individual swims it was decided to swim the relays in the morning. The first swimmers walked into the water at 5:00 a.m. at Doctor's Cove at Catalina. The water was very calm and a warm 68 degrees. Carol Sing began for the women and Peter Urrea for the men. Their stroke counts were 57 and 66, respectively. Both wore glow sticks as it was still dark and this made it easier to see the swimmers. The next swimmers were Debbie and Bob. Each maintained a 65 stroke count. While they entered the water a school of dolphins swam by the bow of the boat. Within five minutes of their entering the water the sun rose and the sky was clear but the wind began to pick up, creating white caps on the water.

Janet and Steve took over at 7:00 a.m.. Fifteen minutes into the swim hundreds of dolphins emerged and surrounded the boat, then went on their way. Steve maintained a 67 stroke count while Janet Lamott had a 58.

The fourth legs were Betsy and Frank. The wind decreased slightly but chops were still visible. Frank had a 64 stroke count to 54 of Betsy. Forty-seven minutes into their leg of the swim another pod of dolphins approached the boat. The dolphins were very friendly so this was a little worrisome.

Tony and Sandra swam the fifth leg of the relays. It was a quiet leg without any extra mammals; just strong swimming by each. Tony had a 61 stroke count to Sandra's 59.

The sixth leg was swum by Dudley and Dave. Again the relays were visited by hundreds of dolphins. In addition, the water calmed down.

Once the sixth hour was over the first two swimmers entered the water for a second leg. Peter maintained a 60 stroke count while Carol held a 57. A huge tanker passed in front of the swimmers. A baby seal emerged half way through their swim. It swam onto the swim step and hung around for quite some time.

During Bob's and Debbie's second swim the swimmers swam close to a buoy which was occupied by numerous seal lions. The sea lions stood up and made a lot of noise. Neither swimmer ventured too close to the buoy.

Steve and Janet jumped back in at 1 p.m.. Just four miles from shore the swimmers swam into a marine layer.

The water temperature seemed to increase.

Frank and Betsy entered the water with two miles to go. Frank still maintained a 64 stroke count while Betsy dropped to 53 to 54. While these two swam a swim pacer jumped in for a while.

Finally Tony and Sandra entered the water for the last leg of the swim. The captain altered the course to hit a closer beach than the light house. When Dave stopped to hear the captain Sandra panicked and swam in front of the boat. She thought there was a shark but there wasn't.

At 3:52.23 the two swimmers emerged on the shore. The relays swam the crossing in ten hour fifty minutes and thirty-one seconds. The women's relay set a new record for women between 50 and 59.45

The final relays of the year were three at one time, representing Lakewood, Surfside and Manhattan Beach.

The teams were made up of the following swimmers:

Lakewood:

Amanda Heintzelman, Teneale McCullough, Kristie Nash, Samantha Silva
Allison Strangeland, Catherine Wiggs

The members of this all women's team ranged in age from 13 to 18.

Surfside Swim Club:

Matt Kadowaki, Tim Kadawaki, Paul Kidwell, Bob Martinez, Casey Willeman,
Amy Wood

The members of this relay ranged from 13 to 17 years old and there were four males and two females.

Manhattan Beach:

Tony Aimone, Julie Beeles, David Ferry, Kathryn Gregg, Olivier O'Connell,
Jeremie Simkins.

The members of this relay were four males and two females ranging from 16 to 18 years old.

The first three swimmers entered the water at 6:00 a.m. on August 15th at Doctor's Cove on Catalina Island. These were Samantha, Matt and Tony. The water was very calm but a little chilly, 64.5 degrees. By swimming during the day the sunlight seems to help to take the chill off of the temperature. In this first leg numerous birds were in the water around the swimmers sunning themselves.

Teneale, Paul and David swam the second leg. The first two began with a 72 stroke count while David maintained a 50 count. The day was slightly overcast. In the second stroke count Teneals' stroke rate decreased while both Paul and David increased their rate.

Amanda, Tim and Jeremie entered the water for the third leg. While these began the paddler tipped the kayak and had to turn it over and catch up to the swimmers. A sea lion was spotted off the starboard side of the boat. It did not bother the swimmers. Amanda had a stroke count of 73-75, Tim held 69 while Jeremie was 63 to 64 during each swimmer's hour leg.

The fourth leg was swum by Kristie, Bob and Kathryn. Everyone was awake and excited on the deck by this leg of the swim. The sea was still calm with a long swell. Kristie held a 70 to 72 stroke rate, Bob jumped from 63 to 68 and Kathryn had a 60 count each time.

Cathy, Casey and Julie swam the fifth leg. As these three entered the water the relays were well over half way, on way to a potential overall record. During their leg a huge tanker turned into the swimmer's path. At what seemed the last minute the tanker passed in front of the swimmers. The water temperature was still in the mid sixties but the sun finally broke through the clouds and it was becoming a beautiful day. Cathy bounced from an excited 80 strokes to 71 near the end of the hour. Casey and Julie maintained their rate, 67 and 63 respectively.

The sixth leg was swum by Allison, Amy and Olivier. The boat began heading to Cardiac Hill as this was the nearest point and there didn't seem to be any current. These girl's stroke rates ranged from Allison's 68 to 71, Amy's 56 to 59 and Olivier's 50 to 52. Near the end of this leg Allison switched her stroke to butterfly just to be different.

The first group of Samantha, Matt and Tony re-entered the water knowing there was a chance they could finish in their leg of the relay. There was just over two plus miles to finish the swim. Conditions were still ideal, flat water and the water had warmed to 65 degrees. For two of the swimmers, Samantha and Matt, their stroke rates increased. Samantha ranged from 72 to 80 while Matt increased from 72 to 78. Tony's stroke rate started at 73 and dropped to 66 during the swim.

At 1 p.m. Teneale, Paul and David entered the water to complete the swim for each relay. There was less than four hundred yards to go. Each sprinted to the edge and at 1:04 p.m. climbed ashore at Cardiac Hill. The finish time was seven hours four minutes. This was the fastest crossing from Catalina to the Mainland. It was the second fastest relay time ever. Finally, the all women's relay broke the overall record and the under 20 record. It was a beautiful day and there were three successful crossings of swimmers all under the age of 19. The success must be attributed to their coaches, John York and Kalani Caldwell.⁴⁶

1996 was not a successful year for Catalina swims. Despite numerous attempts only a relay was successful. Team 252, which was the total number of years of the members added together, swam a double crossing from the Mainland to Catalina and back in record time. The total time was 15 hours, thirty minutes and six seconds. This was the third double crossing relay. Both of the individual legs were impressive in their own right.

The six swimmers and their order included Jim McConica, Jamie Schnick, John Lobdell, Dave Matthews, Alan Freeman and Jim Isaac. Their ages ranged from 33 to 45.

Jim entered the 66 degree water at 7:26 p.m. on October 17th at Long Point on the Mainland. There was a one foot swell and a slight wind. Jim looked strong and maintained a stroke count between 76 and 80 for his first hour.

Jamie, the second swimmer, was quickly joined by quite a few dolphins. The dolphins frolicked around him and the paddlers for over ten minutes. This was very attractive to the camera crew who were filming a segment for Beach Patrol.

Jamie maintained a stroke count from 74 to 76.

The third swimmer, John, had problems holding a course. The swimmer was able to guide the paddler instead of the other way around. Once John removed his goggles this fixed the problem and both did well. He maintained a 70 stroke count through most of the hour.

Both Dave's and Allen's leg was uneventful. Each maintained a 66 stroke count. Conditions were still calm but gradually the night sky had become covered with clouds. This did help the water conditions.

The sixth swimmer was Allen, who held a 64 stroke count through the hour. He did well and gladly tagged off to Jim, at three or so miles off the Island. During this leg a second group of dolphins approached and circled Jim. This seemed to inspire him and his stroke rate increased from 72 to 76, a significant increase. A small boat came too close to the swimmer and was ordered out but it followed for quite some time.

Jamie entered the water with just less than a mile for the finish of the first leg. After 7 hours 19 minutes and one second Jamie cleared the water's edge. He returned immediately to the water. Within a few minutes he swam into a large school of anchovies. A drunken sailor stopped for directions but it was determined that he was searching for a port thirty miles away.

In John's second leg he felt colder because the water temperature dropped to 58.6 degrees. This took its toll upon John and he wanted his leg to be over.

Dave swam into a few jellyfish on his second leg. He was stung numerous times. Luckily the colder water seemed to help numb the pain.

Allen swam a strong second leg. The water was still cold but as the sun was rising it seemed to help make it feel warmer. Near the end of his leg another school of dolphins swam near the swimmer but quickly disappeared.

Jim began his third leg as the darkness was completely replaced by sunlight. The dolphins returned to analyze Jim. A few minutes later a sea lion and later even a blue shark were spotted near the boat. Despite all the marine activity Jim maintained a 72 stroke count.

Jamie's final leg was dangerous as a large ship was seen bearing down on him. Ten minutes later it passed a half mile in front of the swimmer. The ship saluted the swimmers by blowing its horn.

John entered the water at 9:26 a.m., just over three miles off of the Mainland. He swam well with a stroke count of 71 to 74. The water temperature had increased to 67 degrees. This seemed to please the marine animals as several dolphins were frolicking in the area.

Dave was the final swimmer and entered with just over a mile. He knew he had to sprint to the finish. A seal swam closely to find out what was going on then swam away. After fifteen hours thirty minutes and six seconds Dave cleared the water's edge. The second leg of the crossing took seven hours eleven minutes and five seconds. This was a new world record for the double crossing relay.⁴⁷

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