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## Newsletter of the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation September 2008

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Through the years, 152 solo swimmers have crossed the Catalina Channel. The busiest was 2006, when a total of 13 completed a successful swim. Now let's put August 2008 into perspective: In one calendar month, we witnessed 11 swimmers (from 3 nations) as they became Catalina Channel crossers.

We congratulate (chronological order): Emily Evans. **Kate Howell**. Stephen Junk. **Rendy Lynn Opdycke**. Michelle Davidson tandem with Nancy Steadman-Martin. **Pieter Christian Jongeneel Anderica**. Sabrina Buselt-Carlton. **David Galli**. Erica Moffett. **Michelle Deasy**.

The Catalina Channel community will honor these swims, along with all the 2008 solo and relay swimmers at the annual banquet. Look for your invitation in a couple of weeks. In the meantime, mark your calendar for brunch on **Saturday November 1st**.

A special THANK YOU goes to **Paula Selby**, who spent long hours securing paddlers & official observers for each attempt in August. Your volunteer support on the water is greatly appreciated. Many of you made significant sacrifices this past month. Behind the scenes, Paula organized each support team. But we're only halfway through the season. There are at least another dozen swim attempts in September & October.

The last time the Catalina Channel was this busy, you'd have to look back to another Olympic year: 1984. One week following the close of the Los Angeles Games, the CCSF organized an international race featuring marathon swimmers from Egypt, England, Czechoslovakia and the United States. Seven solo racers and a relay.

**Rick Heltzel** remembers the event as a spectacular flotilla of boats, paddlers and swimmers. They mimicked the 1927 Wrigley race, starting at the island Isthmus with the finish at Cabrillo Beach. Rick, who initially trained under legendary coach Sherm Chavoor, was one of 3 United States solo swimmers. Mid-Channel, Rick was told he was ahead of record pace. But the exertion (and an old injury) seemed to get to Rick, and he started to cough blood. Penny Lee Dean changed his fuel and Rick ultimately altered his goal. Despite leading at the time, he just hoped to finish the Catalina Channel. He reached Cabrillo only 10 minutes behind the winner of the race: John York.

Rick Heltzel continues to train in Hawaii. Two weeks later in 1984, he was the overall winner of the Waikiki Roughwater. Rick still dominates his age group at Waikiki and enjoys racing the younger open water swimmers. Just as he did this past Labor Day.

Observers & kayakers are encouraged to **make a commitment** with Paula Selby. Even if you feel inexperienced, Paula ( [Support@SwimCatalina.org](mailto:Support@SwimCatalina.org) ) will pair you with a qualified observer. The CCSF appreciates and compensates our observers.

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**IMPORTANT CCSF CONTACTS:** Swimmers apply by writing [Info@SwimCatalina.org](mailto:Info@SwimCatalina.org)  
Observers please reach Paula Selby [Support@SwimCatalina.org](mailto:Support@SwimCatalina.org)  
Carol Sing is the Annual Banquet coordinator [CarolSing@SBCglobal.net](mailto:CarolSing@SBCglobal.net)  
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