

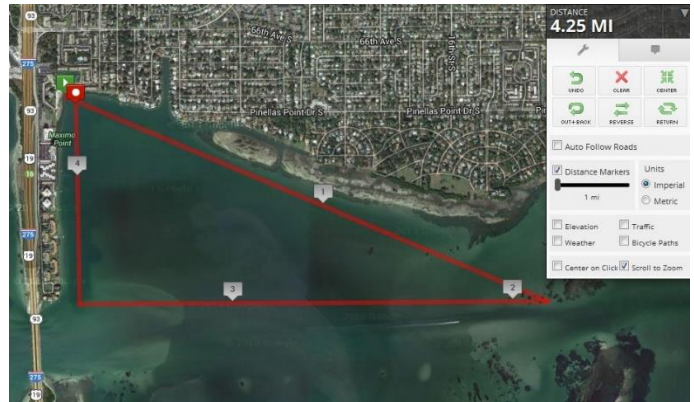
For Immediate Release – April 16, 2016 – Official Results

Swimmers Meet Epic Challenge at the 19th Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

Tampa Bay's marathon swim race is one of the world's longest, covering the length of Florida's largest estuary. The race course was altered and shortened due to wind and waves on the morning of Saturday, April 16th, 2016.

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA, USA - High winds forced an early end to the 19th Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. After battling for almost 3 1/2 hours on an alternate, sheltered course, organizers halted the marathon swim due to safety concerns for the swimmers, boaters and kayakers.

At the time of the race abandonment, all of the swimmers and relays that started the race were still negotiating the moderate chop off Tampa Bay's Pinellas Point. The leader was the pre-race favorite, a 25-year-old that was a distance swimmer at Penn. Stephen Carroll was able to swim 8 miles by the time race was called off, shortly before 11:30am.



Stephen Carroll's support kayaker, Jason Malick, was impressed by the leader, saying, "Right out of the gate, Stephen opened a huge gap on the rest of the field. He has a flawless stroke...if I only had half of his technique in my swimming days!" At the time of the stoppage, Carroll was more than 1/2 mile ahead of the next competitor.



GPS trackers were aboard each of the support boats while they shadowed the swimmers.



There were five solo swimmers and the 6 relay teams that were forced to withdraw from the event, at 3 hours and 23 minutes:

1 Stephen Carroll, 25M, New York, NY, USA

3 Raquel Janes, 16F, Valrico, FL USA

6 Caroline Block, 32F, Baltimore, MD, USA

7 Randy Hill, 57M, Hempstead, NY, USA

9 Meenakshi Pahuja, 38F, New Delhi, India

21 Steyning Stingers Relay

Lawrence Naested, 52M, Partridge Green, W. Sussex, UK

Sarah Cotton, 48F, Steyning, W. Sussex, UK

22 Swim to Honor Relay

Jim Loreto, 43M, Bethesda, MD

Al Chororos, 42M, Washington, DC

31 Mighty Mermaids Relay

Traci Grilli, 59F, Londonderry, NH

Nancy Steadman Martin, 61F, Oceanport, NJ

Christie Ciraulo, 62F, Los Angeles, CA

Veronica Hibben, 59F, Huntington Beach, CA

Karen Einsidler, 60F, Tenafly, NJ

Jenny Cook, 58F, Los Angeles, CA

17 Gorgeous Gorgons Relay

Ann Bowers-Evangelista, 47F, Washington DC

Sharon Larkin, 50F, Acworth, GA

Cheryl Conlin, 47F, Arlington, VA

Megan Hill, 50F, Arlington, VA

James Lutz, 50M, Reston, VA

18 Beach N' Babes Waterbugs Relay

Donna Sumption 52F, Arlington, VA

Jennifer Gibbins 36F, Vienna, VA

Lori Whitehand 55F, Falls Church, VA

Melinda Moore 50F, Arlington, VA

Adele Ratcliff 50F, Springfield, VA

Kris Petersen 51F, Silver Spring MD

41 Orangeburg Pirates Relay

Franklin Fetzer, 58M, South Haven, MI

Stacey Hughes, 47F, Orangeburg, SC

Jeremy Sanders, 37M, Orangeburg, SC

Bradley Holeman, 36M, St. Matthews, SC

Gilbert Miller, 63M, Bamberg, SC

The race has been named one of America's Top 100 Open Water Swims and has been listed as one of the 30 **"World Swimming Majors"** by The World Open Water Swimming Association (WOWSA).

Emma Schaefer and Serbo Simeoni Swim to Victory at the 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon



Emma Schaefer, 26, from West Bloomfield, Michigan, was the Overall Champion at the 18th Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim, finishing in 10 hours, 32 minutes. After rounding Pinellas Point, she was able to move to the front of the pack, while everyone took advantage of a tailwind that pushed swimmers northward towards the finish line.

The water temperature was 82F(27C) and there was a moderate chop on Tampa Bay as the winds ranged from 10-15 kts. Local marathon swimmer Serbo Simeoni, 49, from Safety Harbor, Florida was the Men's Champion, swimming the course in 11 hours, 10 minutes. Relay Champions were Capital Punishment, a 5 member team mostly from northern Virginia, captained by Bill Sullivan, 49, from McLean, Virginia.



The early leader was Katie Scott, 24, a swim coach from Haymarket, Virginia. She was able to power through headwinds leading the field to the turn north at Pinellas Point. At that point, southerly winds aided the swimmers as they traveled to the north end of Tampa Bay, for the finish at Ben T. Davis Beach. One swimmer, Andrew Heinrich, 43, from Orlando, Florida was able to reach the finish line at 1:19am for a time of 18 hours, 9 minutes. Another swimmer, a local from Clearwater, Florida, set a new event record for the "Oldest Female Swimmer" to complete the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. At age 54, she was 5th overall, clocking in just under 12 hours, to finish in 11 hours, 55 minutes.



Solo Results

Emma Schaefer, 26F, West Bloomfield, MI, USA - **10 hours, 32 minutes**
Serbo Simeoni, 49M, Safety Harbor, FL, USA - **11 hours, 10 minutes**
Katie Scott, 24F, Haymarket, VA, USA - **11 hours, 19 minutes**
Katrin Walter, 37F, Buttikon, Switzerland - **11 hours, 53 minutes**
Maureen Montgomery, 54F, Clearwater, FL, USA - **11 hours, 55 minutes**
Neil Leyland, 41M, St. Charles, MO, USA - **11 hours, 58 minutes**
Steve Gruenwald, 53M, Faribault, MN, USA - **12 hours, 53 minutes**
Katie Benoit, 36F, Colorado Springs, CO, USA - **12 hours, 2 minutes**
Andrew Truscott, 34M, St. Helier, Baliwick of Jersey - **13 hours, 11 minutes**
Lesley Fanning, 47F, Mt. Pleasant, SC, USA - **13 hours, 50 minutes**
Andrew Heinrich, 43M, Orlando, FL, USA - **18 hours, 9 minutes**

Relay Results

Capital Punishment - 10 hours, 58 minutes

Bill Sullivan, 49M, McLean, VA
J. C. Boggs, 52M, Washington, DC
Mark Wainwright, 47M, Alexandria, VA
Karen Yankosky, 43F, Arlington, VA
Thomas Schwartz, 55M, Sarasota, FL

The Northwest 2-5-3 Way - 11 hours, 4 minutes

Patrick Carlisle, 29M, Winter Haven, FL
Katy Smith, 33F, Tacoma, WA
Chad Hagedorn, 43M, Tacoma, WA

Orangeburg Pirates - 11 hours, 22 minutes

Franklin Fetzer, 57M, Orangeburg, SC
Gilbert Miller, 62M, Bamberg, SC
Stacey Hughes, 46F, Orangeburg, SC
Jeremy Sanders, 36M, Orangeburg, SC
David Miller, 64M, Brentwood, TN

Results from April 19, 2014

Samantha Simon Claims Victory and Tames a Choppy Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

The Seventeenth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim was held on Saturday, April 19th, 2014. Sixteen solo swimmers, and four relay teams from across the United States and Canada entered The Seventeenth Annual Tampa Bay Marathon Swim.

Samantha Simon, a 24 year old marathon swimmer from Janesville, Wisconsin endured a breezy and choppy day to lead the field, with only 5 of the 16 solo swimmers able to complete the course. Her time of 12 hours, 18 minutes was 2-3 hours longer than expected due to the challenging conditions.

Samantha Simon's first marathon swim was in **Tampa Bay in 2008**, when she was just about to graduate high school as an 18 year old. Not only did she complete that challenge in 8 hours, 59 minutes, she also went on to successfully complete swims of The English Channel (13 hours, 11 minutes), The Manhattan Island Marathon Swim (8 hours, 10 minutes), and The Catalina Channel (9 hrs, 22 minutes) in 2010, at age 20, to become the youngest person to complete the **Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming**.



The race began at 7:04am at the Magnuson Marina Cove Resort, at the foot of the iconic Sunshine Skyway Bridge. With the champion Simon hitting the finish line at Ben T. Davis Beach at 7:22pm, the only other contestant to finish before sunset was **Lisa Hertz**, 28, a school teacher from Winter Haven, Florida. When she cleared the water at 7:50pm, her mother **Charlotte Hertz**, her coach **Dr. Mark Smitherman** and her **Team Windfall** teammates

welcomed her as she finished just before sunset (although behind clouds), which was at 7:53pm. Also coming to the finish line with Lisa was her kayaker **JC Malick**:

The three remaining finishers broke Tampa Bay Marathon Swim records when they reached the finish line in darkness. **Carl Selles**, 67, from Aurora, Colorado arrived at Ben T. Davis Beach at 9:25pm, along with **Ann von Spiegelfeld**, 52, of Tampa, Florida. Since Spiegelfeld was granted an early start time(6:03am), her official time of 15 hours, 22 minutes broke the existing endurance record for the event. But her record was broken at 11:21pm, when **Arnie Bellini**, 54, of Tampa, Florida arrived at the finish line for the new record, 16 hours, 17 minutes:

Of the 4 relay teams that started the event, three teams were able to finish the swim, with the **Bull Shark Open Water Swim Club** finishing with the fastest time of the day, 10 hours, 8 minutes.

Official Results - Solo Swimmers

Samantha Simon, 24F, Janesville, WI - 12 hours, 18 minutes
Lisa Hertz, 28F, Winter Haven, FL - 12 hours, 46 minutes
Carl Selles, 67M, Aurora, CO - 14 hours, 21 minutes
Ann von Spiegelfeld, 52F, Tampa, FL - 15 hours, 22 minutes
Arnie Bellini, 54M, Tampa, FL - 16 hours, 17 minutes

Official Results - Relay Teams

Bull Shark Beach Open Water Swim Club - 10 hours, 8 minutes
Big Donald Lutton, 44M, Miami, FL
Andrew Lutton, 49M, Tampa, FL
Christopher Beach, 44M, Palm Beach Gardens, FL

Bubba Drody, 45M, Coral Gables, FL
Juan Cue, 54M, Tampa, FL
Scott Linebaugh, 53M, Tampa, FL

Delmarva Dogfish - 11 hours, 16 minutes

David Speier, 58M, Bishopville, MD
Jennifer Underwood, 31F, Salisbury, MD
Bill Snyder, 64M, Princess Anne, MD
Jeffrey Benner, 54M, Salisbury, MD
Charles Potterton, 38M, Salisbury, MD
Bruce Anderson, 61M, Salisbury, MD

SYSM Shark Bait - 11 hours, 49 minutes

Fernette Ramnath, 48F, Englewood, CO
Terri Goodman, 54F, Sarasota, FL
Marty Rauch, 49M, Sarasota, FL
Ray Becker, 53M, Sarasota, FL

Start List for April 19, 2014

Samantha Simon, 24F, Janesville, WI
Lisa Hertz, 28F, Winter Haven, FL
Thomas Bell, 45M, Wyomissing, PA
Kevin Joubert, 41M, Towson, MD
Gabriel Viti, 50M, Highland Park, IL
Thomas Hintz, 48M, Marshall, IL
Willy Blumentals, 41M, Secaucus, NJ
Bridgette Hobart, 51F, Lake Hopatcong, NJ
Carl Selles, 67M, Aurora, CO
Ann von Spiegel, 52F, Tampa, FL
Dan Fritz, 50M, Chicago, IL
Arnie Bellini, 54M, Tampa, FL
Bart Cobb, 59M, Tampa, FL
Genevieve Mackwood, 54F, Ottawa, Ontario
Brian Lanahan, 38M, Charleston, SC
Steve Faulkner, 52M, Barrie, Ontario

Bull Shark Beach Open Water Swim Club

Big Donald Lutton, 44M, Miami, FL
Andrew Lutton, 49M, Tampa, FL
Christopher Beach, 44M, Palm Beach Gardens, FL
Bubba Drody, 45M, Coral Gables, FL
Juan Cue, 54M, Tampa, FL
Scott Linebaugh, 53M, Tampa, FL

Delmarva Dogfish

David Speier, 58M, Bishopville, MD
Jennifer Underwood, 31F, Salisbury, MD
Bill Snyder, 64M, Princess Anne, MD
Jeffrey Benner, 54M, Salisbury, MD
Charles Potterton, 38M, Salisbury, MD
Bruce Anderson, 61M, Salisbury, MD

Kona Kaizen

Vince Schaper, 49M, St. Paul, MN
Hadar Aviram, 39F, San Francisco, CA
Cynthia Thomas, 65F, Houston, TX

SYSM Shark Bait

Fernette Ramnath, 48F, Englewood, CO
Terri Goodman, 54F, Sarasota, FL
Marty Rauch, 49M, Sarasota, FL
Ray Becker, 53M, Sarasota, FL

April 20, 2013

Chelsea Nauta Claims Victory On A Challenging Day At The Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

Six Swimmers out of a Field of Eighteen Starters Battle Wind and Waves to Complete a 24 Mile Swim of the Length of Tampa Bay



Tampa Bay, Florida - Tampa native Chelsea Nauta was able to fight through swells and a strong headwind to become the Overall Champion at the 16th Annual Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. The three-time FHSAA Swimmer of the Year and USA National Team member was able to finish the swim in 10 hours, 7 minutes to hold off Olympian Brooke Bennett who finished only 4 minutes later.

The Men's Champion was Chris Burke, 51 of St. Petersburg, FL, who completed the course in 12 hours, 16 minutes. He was able to out-duel his friend and training partner, Dr. Mark Smitherman of Clearwater, FL who came to the finish line in 12 hours, 33 minutes. One relay team of six swimmers turned in the quickest time of the day, posting a time of 10 hours, 2 minutes. Starting at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and ending on the Courtney Campbell Causeway in Tampa, the race was held on Saturday, April 20th in celebration of Earth Day and the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary.

Official Results

10 hours, 7 minutes - **Chelsea Nauta**, 24F, Brandon, FL
10 hours, 11 minutes - **Brooke Bennett**, 32F, Clearwater, FL
12 hours, 16 minutes - **Chris Burke**, 51M, St. Petersburg, FL
12 hours, 33 minutes - **Mark Smitherman**, 55M, Clearwater, FL
13 hours, 37 minutes - **Sergio Salamone**, 45M, Buenos Aires, Argentina
14 hours, 37 minutes - **Ann von Spiegelfeld**, 51F, Tampa, FL

10 hours, 2 minutes - **NC State of Mind** Relay Team
Patrick Woodruff, 29M, Durham, NC
Kelly Woodruff, 27F, San Diego, CA
Mary Robbins, 28F, Durham, NC
Greg Sanchez, 55M, Cary, NC
Jack Roney, 25M, Fuquay-Varina, NC
Sarah Sanchez, 15F, Cary, NC

Water Temperature: 77°F / 25°C , Mostly Cloudy, Windy

Here are the 18 solo swimmers, and 3 relay teams that entered the event:

Brooke Bennett, 32F, Clearwater, FL
Chris Burke, 51M, St. Petersburg, FL
Chelsea Nauta, 24F, Brandon, FL
Mark Smitherman, 55M, Clearwater, FL
Gene Kennedy, 53M, Charlotte, NC
Sergio Salamone, 45M, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Lori King, 37F, Rockville Centre, NY
Carl Selles, 66M, Aurora, CO
Dan Richards, 56M, Arlington, TN
Thomas Bell, 44M, Wyomissing, PA
Yuta Tsuboi, 40M, New York, NY
Thomas Tarantola, 18M, Flagler Beach, FL
Pat Marzulli, 64M, Indian Rocks Beach, FL
Bethany Bosch, 28F, Wallingford, VT

Ann von Spiegel, 51F, Tampa, FL
Hadar Aviram, 38F, San Francisco, CA
Arnie Bellini, 53M, Tampa, FL
Michael Miller, 53M, Charlotte, NC

NC State of Mind - Relay

Patrick Woodruff, 29M, Durham, NC
Kelly Woodruff, 27F, San Diego, CA
Mary Robbins, 28F, Durham, NC
Greg Sanchez, 55M, Cary, NC
Jack Roney, 25M, Fuquay-Varina, NC
Sarah Sanchez, 15F, Cary, NC

The Dirty Half Dozen - Relay

Patty Hermann, 53F, Houston, TX
Kimberly Hermann, 23F, Houston, TX
Ted Gregory, 75M, Camp Hill, PA
Mike Tyson, 46M, Alexandria, VA
Richard Schoenborn, 55M, Palm City, FL
Kelly Gentry, 26F, Livermore, CA

Aqua Fury - Relay

Erin O'Leary, 31F, Jacksonville, FL
Brian Lanahan, 37M, Charleston, SC
Lesley Fanning, 44F, Mt. Pleasant, SC

Quotes

"When Grant Hackett and Ous Mellouli entered the global community of open water swimming, it created a quite a stir," said Steven Munatones, founder of the **World Open Water Swimming Association (WOWSA)**. "The participation of these Olympic gold medalists highlight the increasing athleticism at the elite levels of our sport. Year by year, the level of intensity in long distance training and the speed at which the elite athletes race are increasing. This improvement in speed, stamina and strength is seen at all levels of the sport."

Steven Munatones added, "Now Brooke Bennett is training hard and showing her former speed that brought her 14 national titles and 3 Olympic gold medals. Brooke is demonstrating the similar confidence of her illustrious past by entering this year's Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. Her willingness to push through 24 miles swimming the length of Tampa Bay shows a degree of seriousness that will serve notice at the elite echelon of marathon swimmers. It is great to see Brooke healthy and unhampered as she was towards the end of her pool career by shoulder problems. Other 30-year-olds have proven themselves capable of being competitive and I am sure Brooke will be too."

Far away from the tides of the English Channel and the Strait of Gibraltar, removed from the ocean swells of the Molokai Channel and Catalina Channel, distant from the cold water of the Cook Strait and North Channel, different from Windermere and Zurich, the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim still remains a challenge for intrepid marathon swimmers.

The Tampa Bay Marathon Swim has been recognized as one of the **30 "World Swimming Majors"** and the race is now a fixture on the world's ultra-marathon swimming circuit. "The swim can be rough and tough, foggy and warm, where the unexpected can be expected," described Steven Munatones. "The World Open Water Swimming Association wishes the swimmers and the race organization best wishes for a successful 2013 edition."

The Tampa Bay Marathon Swim - 2012 Official Results

All 16 solo swimmers and 3 relay teams were forced to withdraw due to inclement weather at the 15th Annual event on April 21, 2012

Sarah Thomas of Englewood, Colorado maintained a lead throughout the race, and was the leader of the pack when inclement weather forced an early end to the race. After swimming in Tampa Bay, battling wind and waves for 6 hours, 25 minutes, approaching lightning ended the event before any of the swimmers were able to reach the finish line.

GPS devices were activated by most of the escort boats, and fans were able to follow the race on-line in real time. Please note that the GPS boat tracking data is provided for informational and entertainment purposes, and not all escort boats carried a functioning device.

Sixteen solo swimmers, and the three relay teams entered the 2012 race:

SWIMMER, AGE, HOMETOWN

1. Brad Denton, 48M, Scottsdale, AZ
2. Chris Burke, 50M, St. Petersburg, FL
3. Greg Larson, 43M, San Rafael, CA
4. Sarah Thomas, 29F, Englewood, CO
5. Rob Kent, 47M, Oakville, Ontario
6. Dan Boyle, 46M, New York, NY
7. Katie Brooks, 23F, Asheville, NC
8. Mauro Giaconia, 40M, Palermo, Italy
9. Mark Smitherman, 54M, Clearwater, FL
10. Patti Bauernfeind, 44F, Dublin, CA
11. Tibor Molnar, 19M, Shelton, CT
12. Bart Cobb, 57M, Tampa, FL
13. Alan Barry, 48M, Asheville, NC
14. Pat Marzulli, 63M, Indian Rocks Beach, FL
15. Steve Gruenwald, 50M, Anchorage, AK
16. Arnie Bellini, 53M, Tampa, FL

17. Angry Fish Relay

Chris Kirwin, 46M, Overland Park, KS
Jordan Lewis, 54M, Minneapolis, MN
Dan Snyder, 44M, Los Gatos, CA
Rob Benson, 43M, Mt. Dester, ME
Jim Kirkland, 64M, Alexandria, VA
Jen Raymond, 46F, Stanford, CA

18. Team Hammerhead Aquatics Relay

Bill Korey, 48M, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Andrea Woodburn, 48F, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Jonathan Olsen, 49M, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

19. Five Mermaids and a Shark Relay

Patty Hermann, 52F, Houston, TX
Kimberly Hermann, 22F, Houston, TX
Marcy Olsen, 21F, Houston, TX
Caitlin Healey, 29F, Needham, MA
Lauren Tharaud, 30F, Hoboken, NJ
Ted Gregory, 74M, Camp Hill, P

Official Results: The 2011 Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

The Fourteenth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim was held on Saturday, April 23, 2011. Evan Morrison, 31, from Chicago was the overall champion, completing the course in 8 hours, 59 minutes. The women's champion was Barbara Held, 57, from San Diego, CA who swam the length of the Bay in 10 hours, 21 minutes. The fastest time of the day was by a team of swimmers from Davidson College, calling themselves "The Dream Team," finishing in 8 hours, 21 minutes. Swimmers battled a 12 knot easterly headwind as they headed toward Pinellas Point, with an official starting time of 7:17am.

Relay swimmer for The Dream Team, Drew Onken, 19, from Marietta, GA, quickly distanced himself from the field, followed by eventual solo champion Evan Morrison, and relay team Holiday in Cambodia. As they made the turn north, the pack was spread out along the western shore of Tampa Bay, due to the current caused by the incoming tide and the easterly wind. As the leaders approached the Gandy Bridge, the winds had settled to 5 knots, but the swimmers still had to cope with the moderate chop and warm temperatures. Typically, marathon swimmers prefer water temperatures in the 60s, so the unseasonably warm 81F on the race course was uncomfortable for most of the competitors. The Dream Team, a relay of 3 varsity collegiate swimmers, eventually came ashore at Ben T. Davis Beach, registering a time just 38 minutes faster than the solo champion Evan Morrison. After the event, Morrison admitted that he kept an eye on the 2 person relay team from St. Petersburg, FL, Holiday in Cambodia, who trailed him closely from behind and finished only 5 minutes later. The calming waters in the north regions of the Bay eventually saw 15 of the 19 soloists, and all 9 relay teams reach their final destination to complete the marathon swim. The women's champion, Barbara Held, led a strong contingent of competitors from Southern California. She reported that conditions were choppy and hot, but her approach was very methodical and consistent as she powered her way to the end. Currently the oldest woman to successfully complete the swim from Catalina Island to the California mainland, her next competition will be the Manhattan Island Marathon Swim on June 18th.

Perhaps the most remarkable story of the day is that of Flavia Zappa, 44, from Minneapolis, MN. On her 7th attempt to complete the event, she swam the length of Tampa Bay with an expert crew that included defending champion Craig Lenning, 31, who returned this year from Denver, CO solely to help Flavia complete the swim. As is custom with this type of event, Flavia set a new record for "swimming the longest", finishing the swim in 15 hours, 10 minutes. Previously, that record was held by Laura Collette, who spent 14 hours, 23 minutes swimming the race in 2003. Tampa CBS affiliate WTSP's Beau Zimmer filed this report, including footage from the start, near the Gandy, and at the finish of the swim.

Here are the official results for the 19 solo swimmers and the 32 relay swimmers:

SOLO SWIMMERS

Evan Morrison, 31M, Chicago, IL –8 hours, 59 minutes
Tom Sherry, 43M, Asheville, NC –9 hours, 40 minutes
Kevin Anderson, 51M, Jamul, CA –9 hours, 56 minutes
Frank Kriegler, 45M, Asheville, NC –10 hours, 5 minutes
Barbara Held, 57F, San Diego, CA –10 hours, 21 minutes
Scott Richards, 51M, San Marcos, CA –10 hours, 35 minutes
Douglas McConnell, 53M, Barrington, IL –10 hours, 44 minutes
Cynthia Walsh, 48F, San Diego, CA –10 hours, 50 minutes
Anthony McCarley, 51M, Berwyn, PA –11 hours, 26 minutes
Bob Needham, 58M, Lake Oswego, OR –11 hours, 26 minutes, 15 seconds
Bridgette Hobart, 48F, Lake Hopatcong, NJ –11 hours, 51 minutes
Jennifer McCormick, 28F, Cheshire, CT –12 hours, 16 minutes
Michelle Nelson, 39F, Lake Worth, FL –12 hours, 19 minutes
Alan Morrison, 49M, New York, NY –14 hours, 23 minutes
Flavia Zappa, 44F, Minneapolis, MN –15 hours, 10 minutes
Eric Arndt, 33M, Bloomington, IL –DNF due to sickness near the Gandy Bridge
Willy Blumentals, 38M, North Bergen, NJ –DNF due to sickness near the Gandy Bridge
Kimberly Plewa, 28F, Rahway, NJ –DNF due to hypothermia near the Gandy Bridge
Don Macdonald, 49M, Barrington, IL –DNF due to shoulder pain near the Gandy Bridge

RELAYS

Dream Team –8 hours, 21 minutes
Casey Gemunder, 22F, Bethesda, MD
Jessica Delgehausen, 21F, Rogers, MN

Drew Onken, 19M, Marietta, GA

Holiday in Cambodia –9 hours, 4 minutes

Tim Kennedy, 54M, St. Petersburg, FL

Chris Burke, 49M, St. Petersburg, FL

Angry Fish –9 hours, 43 minutes

Tom McEvoy, 57M, West Chester, PA

Chris Kirwin, 45M, Overland Park, KS

Jordan Lewis, 53M, Minneapolis, MN

Mike Regan, 50M, Cumberland, ME

Barb Good Toohey, 50F, Hanover, MA

Dan Snyder, 43M, Los Gatos, CA

The No Names –9 hours, 54 minutes

Pat Marzulli, 62M, Indian Rocks Beach, FL

Mark Smitherman, 53M, Clearwater, FL

Joe Lain, 57M, Clearwater, FL

Kentucky Girls Swim Barefoot –10 hours, 40 minutes

Nancy McElwain, 44F, Louisville, KY

Linda Fijol, F, Hadley, MA

Christina Norris, 55F, Louisville, KY

Ashli Collins, 38F, Crestwood, KY

Sally DiLaura, 53F, Louisville, KY

Susan Ehringer, 42F, Louisville, KY

3 Y's Guys Swim for Richard –10 hours, 35 minutes

Paul Kiell, 80M, Far Hills, NJ

William Raynes, 22M, Basking Ridge, NJ

Michael Raynes, 24M, Basking Ridge, NJ

Douglas Munch, 64M, Cambridge, MA

Bart 'n' Arnie –10 hours, 58 minutes

Bart Cobb, 56M, Tampa, FL

Arnie Bellini, 52M, Tampa, FL

Fear No Distance –10 hours, 59 minutes

Lori Carena, 57F, Brooklyn, NY

Julie Sheldon, 39F, Summit, NJ

Team Impromptu –11 hours, 51 minutes

Mo Siegel, 59M, Piermont, NY

Suzie Dods, 50F, San Francisco, CA

Ric Nadel, 43M, Westport, CT

Terri Pyle, 46F, Orlando, FL

Thirteenth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

Official Results

CLEARWATER, FL- Swimmers enjoyed near-perfect conditions at the 13th Annual Whiskey Joe's Tampa Bay Marathon Swim on Saturday. Craig Lenning was overall champion, as he swam the Bay in 10 hours, 17 minutes, while a relay team of 6 UNC Tarheel swimmers were able to finish ahead of the entire field with a very fast time of 8 hours, 6 minutes.



The 24 mile ultra-distance race starts at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and ends at Whiskey Joe's Bar & Grill on the Courtney Campbell Causeway in Tampa in a race that covers the entire length of Tampa Bay. The event is held each year to celebrate Earth Day and the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary and is the longest race that is sanctioned by United States Masters Swimming.

Since this event was first staged in 1998, it has drawn competitors from across the United States, Great Britain, Guatemala, Italy, Australia, Dominican Republic, Germany, India, Canada, and the Cayman Islands.

Here are the results for the seven solo swimmers and the 25 relay swimmers that entered the event:

SOLO SWIMMERS

1. **10 hours, 17 minutes - Craig Lenning**, 30M, Denver, CO - Overall solo champion
2. **10 hours, 49 minutes - David Barra**, 45M, High Falls, NY
3. **11 hours, 10 minutes - Darren Miller**, 27M, Delmont, PA
4. **11 hours, 54 minutes - Terry Laughlin**, 59M, New Paltz, NY
5. **DNF - Jim Meier**, 65M, New York, NY - Forced to withdraw near the Howard Frankland Bridge after swimming 12 hours
6. **DNF - Flavia Zappa**, 43F, Bradenton, FL - Forced to withdraw near the Gandy Bridge after swimming 12 hours
7. **DNF - Jacqueline Eastridge**, 49F, Wynnwood, PA - Forced to withdraw near the St. Pete Pier after swimming 10 hours

RELAY TEAMS

1. **8 hours, 6 minutes - Tar Heel Alumni** - Patrick Woodruff, 26M, Durham, NC, Greg Sanchez, 52M, Cary, NC, Tucker Shade, 33M, Raleigh, NC, Kelly Woodruff, 24F, Raleigh, NC, Erin Cutrell, 25F, Raleigh, NC
2. **9 hours, 1 minute - The Angry Fish** - Kathryn Kirmayer, 46F, Silver Spring, MD, Bill Couch, 46M, Watertown, NY, Rob Benson, 41M, Mount Desert, ME, Chris Kirwan, 44M, Overland Park, KS, Jordan Lewis, 52M, Minneapolis, MN, John Young, 34M, Davidson, NC
3. **9 hours, 8 minutes - Masters of Our Own Domain** - Tim Kennedy, 53M, St. Petersburg, FL, Brian Rimel, 43M, St. Petersburg, FL
4. **10 hours, 22 minutes - Barracudas** - Pat Marzulli, 61M, Indian Rocks Beach, FL, Robert Aldrich, 61M, St. Petersburg, FL, Cyle Sage, 44M, Tampa, New Port Richey, FL, Terri Pyle, 45F, Casselberry, FL, Bob Beach, 79M, St. Petersburg, Flavia Zappa, 43F, Bradenton, FL
5. **10 hours, 44 minutes - Team Endurance Trust** - Kim Plewa, 27F, Rahway, NJ, Michelle Nelson, 38F, Lake Worth, FL
6. **11 hours, 18 minutes - 3 Y'S Guys Swim for Richard** - Paul Kiell, 79M, Far Hills, NJ, Doug Munch, 63M, Morristown, NJ, Martino Caretto, 59M, Basking Ridge, NJ

Saturday, April 18, 2009 - 11:01pm Eastern Time

For Immediate Release

SOURCE: Distance Matters, Inc.

Swimmers Battle Epic Conditions at Whiskey Joe's 12th Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

TAMPA BAY, FL-- Forty-eight swimmers fought through 3-4 foot swells as they headed north to the finish line at Whiskey Joe's today at one of the world's most grueling open water swim races. The 24 mile ultra-distance race started at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and ended at Whiskey Joe's Bar & Grill on the Courtney Campbell Causeway in Tampa in a race that covers the entire length of Tampa Bay. The event is held each year to celebrate Earth Day and the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary.

Here are the official results for the 11 solo swimmers, and the 11 relay competitors in the event:



SOLO SWIMMERS

10 hours, 14 minutes - Ramses Rodriguez, 37M Port St. Lucie, FL
10 hours, 22 minutes - Boris Fernandez, 35M, Key Biscayne, FL
11 hours, 7 minutes - Gilles Chalandon, 52M, New York, NY
12 hours, 7 minutes - John Muenzer, 47M, Elgin, IL
12 hours, 36 minutes - Michael Tschantz-Hahn, 41M, Chicago, IL
12 hours, 38 minutes - LaurieJo Hall, 32F, Marietta, OH
13 hours, 18 minutes - Yesenia Cabrera Fuegos, 36F, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Swimmers forced to withdraw due to seasickness after turning north around Pinellas Point:

Giaconia Mauro, 37M, Palermo, Italy
Flavia Zappa, 42F, Bradenton, FL
Mike Embry, 61M, Tampa, FL
Rondi Davies, 38F, New York, NY

RELAY TEAMS

8 hours, 57 minutes - DF3 - Polly Surhoff, 44F, Cockeysville, MD; Andy Cosgarea, 48M, Owings Mills, MD; Rob Long, 48M, Huntersville, NC

9 hours, 12 minutes - TBD - Kathryn Kirmayer, 45F, Silver Spring, MD; Melissa Kirmayer, 42F, Seattle, WA; Laura Kirmayer, 39F, Sunnyside, NY; William Grant Johnston, 36M, Washington, DC; Matt McShane, 45M, Olney, MD; Tommy Kaufman, 28M, North Bethesda, MD

9 hours, 30 minutes - PIRATE BOOTY NBAC - Lisa Rapuano, 43F, Towson, MD; Scott Breza 38M, Phoenix MD; Gil Mandel, 42M, Pikesville, MD; Tobi Limke, 34F, Lowell, MA; Suzanne Kirincic, 40F, Lutherville, MD; Wendy Quitasol, 46F, Towson, MD

9 hours, 58 minutes - HARPS (Hopefully Approaching Retirement Pretty Soon) - Robert Aldrich, 60M, St. Petersburg, FL; Pat Marzulli, 60M, Indian Rocks Beach, FL; Cyle Sage, 44M, Tampa, FL; Carl Selles, 62M, St. Petersburg, FL

10 hours, 21 minutes - TAMPA BAY AQUATIC CLUB - Tom Rawls, 41M, Tampa, FL; Bart Cobb, 54M, Tampa, FL; Jeff Feldman, 37M, Tampa, FL

10 hours, 48 minutes - THE J SQUAD - Jana Rempalski, 26F, Austin, TX; Jen Baker, 32F, Falls Church, VA; Julie Oplinger, 32F, Arlington, VA

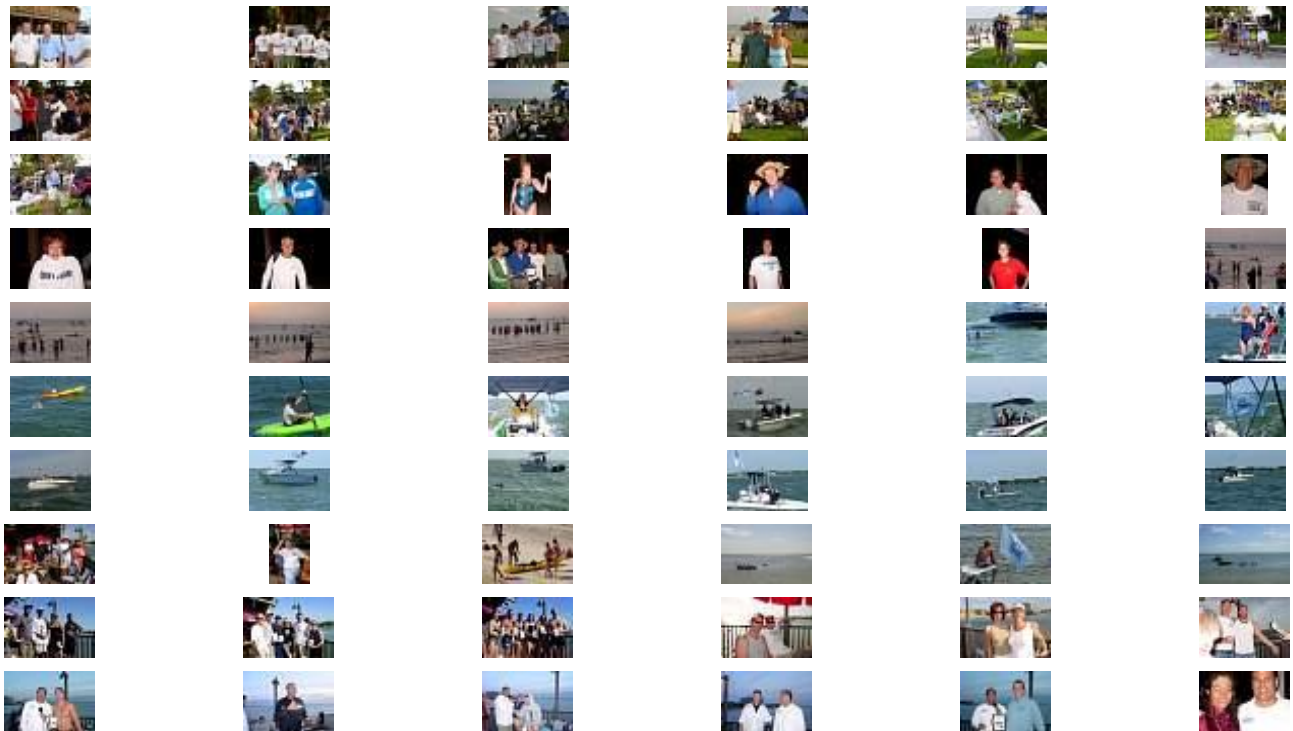
11 hours, 24 minutes - FIRST AMERICA BANK - Tim Kennedy, 52M, St. Petersburg, FL; Jeffrey Logsdon, 38M, Bradenton, FL; Keith Nelson, 44M, Treasure Island, FL

11 hours, 46 minutes - ALTERNATE IMMERSION - Terry Laughlin, 58M, New Paltz, NY; Rachel Golub, 32F, Astoria, NY; William Miller, 44M, Marlboro, NY

11 hours, 47 minutes - DOS CONQUISTADORES - Jonathan Farber, 42M, Brooklyn, NY; Cristian Vergara, 50M, Brooklyn, NY

12 hours, 42 minutes - CONEY ISLAND WHITEFISH - David Barra, 44M, High Falls, NY; Patricia Sener, 45F, Brooklyn, NY

13 hours, 25 minutes - TEAM AMERICA - Willy Blumenthals, 36M, North Bergen, NJ; Amy Wu, 33F, New York, NY



Press Release

SOURCE: Distance Matters, Inc.

Penny Palfrey Sets New Women's Record at the 10th Anniversary 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

CLEARWATER, FL-- Australian Penny Palfrey opened an early lead over the field and finished with a 1/2 mile advantage to set a new women's record at the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim on Saturday, April 19th, 2008. Palfrey, 45, from Townsville, Queensland, Australia, completed the 24 mile race in 7 hours, 51 minutes, 24 seconds to break the women's record that was held by Gail Rice of Miami, Florida. In 1999, Rice swam the course in 8 hours, 34 minutes, 24 seconds in a solo effort that featured a pod of dolphin that shadowed her during the final 3 hours of her swim. The race course covers the entire length of Tampa Bay and is held each year to celebrate Earth Day and the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary.

Jose Serra, 34, from Guatemala was the men's champion, finishing in 8 hours, 9 minutes, 15 seconds. All day long, Serra jockeyed for position against the top three relay teams while trying to chase down Penny Palfrey. North Baltimore Aquatic Club swam the bay in 8 hours, 2 minutes, 29 seconds to repeat as relay champions. They were followed by teams from Ft. Lauderdale and St. Petersburg who finished in a virtual dead heat with only 6 seconds separating the two relays when they crossed the finish line at Ben T. Davis Beach.

Weather conditions generally favored the swimmers, aided by an incoming tide and a 10 knot tail wind that persisted all day. A light, 1 to 2 foot chop pushed the competitors towards the finish line as they enjoyed extremely fast times for the event.

Shortly after 11:00am, Support Boat Coordinator / Communications Director Marv Siple held a brief moment of radio silence to remember Dave Parcels, the swimmer who succumbed to cardiac failure after completing the first 9 miles of last year's race. Also in tribute, the paramedic that patrolled the course carried a "Parcels Pack" which included a first aid kit and AED.

Penny Palfrey has become one of the world's best known marathon swimmers. In 2007, she was the overall winner at the Manhattan Island Marathon Swim in New York, NY (28.5 miles), the South Head Roughwater Swim in Sydney, Aus. (11k), the Sri Chinmoy National Capital Swim in Canberra, Aus. (8k), and was the women's champion at the Rottneest Channel Swim in Perth, Aus. (20k). Also in 2007, she received the gold medal for the year's fastest swim across the English Channel (9 hours, 7 minutes), awarded by the Channel Swimming Association. She is the oldest female to have crossed the Cook Strait in New Zealand, and may plan to attempt a rare double-crossing of the English Channel sometime in the near future.

Since this event was first staged in 1998, it has drawn competitors from across the United States, Great Britain, Guatemala, Italy, Australia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Germany, India, Canada, and the




Cayman Islands. Forty swimmers participated in this year's event, swimming as soloists or as a part of a relay team. Here are the results for the eight solo swimmers and the ten relay teams that competed for honors:


Solo Swimmers - Name, Age/Sex, Hometown


 **Penny Palfrey** , 45F, Townsville, Queensland, Australia - 7 hours, 51 minutes, 24 seconds


 **Jose Serra** , 34M, Guatemala City, Guatemala - 8 hours, 9 minutes, 15 seconds

 **Chris Palfrey** , 50M, Townsville, Queensland, Australia - 8 hours, 49 minutes, 24 seconds

 **Samantha Simon** , 18F, Janesville, WI, USA - 8 hours, 59 minutes, 12 seconds

 **Dan Richards** , 51M, Arlington, TN, USA - 9 hours, 11 minutes, 12 seconds

 **Paolo Chiarino** , 41M, Cremella, Italy - 10 hours, 16 minutes, 19 seconds

 **Kim Plewa** , 25F, Rahway, NJ, USA - withdrew near the St. Petersburg Pier

 **Flavia Zappa** , 41F, Bradenton, FL, USA - withdrew near the St. Petersburg Pier

Relay Teams

North Baltimore Aquatic Club - 8 hours, 2 minutes, 29 seconds - Gil Mandel, 41M, Baltimore, MD; Suzanne Gedney, 39F, Lutherville, MD; Wendy Quitasol, 45F, Baltimore, MD; Todd Hetzer, 36M, New Freedom, PA; Scott Breza, 37M, Phoenix, MD; Polly Surhoff, 43F, Cockeysville, MD

Rip Tide - 8 hours, 11 minutes, 2 seconds - Tim Kennedy, 51M, St. Petersburg, FL; Brian Rimel, 41M, St. Petersburg, FL

Team Hammerhead - 8 hours, 11 minutes, 8 seconds - Bill Korey, 44M, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; David LeClair, 40M, Boca Raton, FL; Larry Caldwell, 43M, Oakland Park, FL; Dan Boyle, 42M, New York, NY; Dale LeClair, 38M, Boca Raton, FL; Andrea Woodburn, 44F, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Team Leisure Suits aka Manhattan Marauders - 8 hours, 45 minutes, 45 seconds - John Humenik, 33M, New York, NY; Erica Moffett, 38F, New York, NY

Tampa Bay Aquatic Club - 8 hours, 50 minutes, 49 seconds - Tom Rawls, 40M, Tampa, FL; Joe Solak, 43M, Tampa, FL; Bart Cobb, 53M, Tampa, FL

Dos Conquistadores de Brooklyn - 9 hours, 27 minutes, 49 seconds- Cristian Vergara, 49M, Brooklyn, NY; Jonathan Farber, 41M, Brooklyn, NY

Team Chum - 9 hours, 41 minutes, 7 seconds - Pat Marzulli, 59M, Indian Rocks Beach, FL; Bob Aldrich, 59M, St. Petersburg, FL; Chris Burke, 45M, St. Petersburg, FL; David McCord, 59M, Largo, FL; John Cox, 73M, St. Petersburg, FL

Miles to Go - 10 hours, 14 minutes, 27 seconds - Lori Carena, 54F, Brooklyn, NY; Willy Blumentals, 35M, North Bergen, NJ

The Tortoise and the Hare - 11 hours, 12 seconds - Mike Tschante-Hahn, 40M, Chicago, IL; Abe de la Houssaye, 60M, New York, NY

Team McClusky - 13 hours, 9 minutes, 24 seconds - Orin McCluskey, 57M, New York NY; Mandy Miller, 46F, Ft. Lauderdale, FL



Released on Monday, April 23, 2007 - 7:00pm

The Tenth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

Tampa Bay, FL-- Swimmers braved headwinds and waves during the Tenth Tampa Bay Marathon Swim on Saturday, April 21. Four solo swimmers and seven relay teams finished the swim of the entire 24 mile length of Tampa Bay. The event has been held every year since 1998 in celebration of Earth Day and the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary.

Solo Swimmers - Name, Age/Sex, Hometown

9:44 - Jimmy Welborn, 52M, Chattanooga, TN - Overall Champion

10:34 - Anne Schuster, 40F, Dallas, TX - Women's Champion

10:36 - Shannon Mingo, 24F, Bethesda, MD - First Place, 20-24 Women

11:13 - Ken Eckelkamp, 47M, St. Petersburg, FL - First Place, 45-49 Men

Relay Teams

9:35 - North Baltimore Aquatic Club - Janice Bonner, 40F, Baltimore, MD; Scott Breza, 36M, Phoenix, MD; Wendy Quitasol, 44F, Baltimore, MD; Gil Mandel, 40M, Owings Mills, MD; Suzanne Gedney, 38F, Lutherville, MD; Tobi Limke, 32F, Seven Valleys, PA

9:54 - Yo Salinity Sam - Van Hoffman, 43M, Arlington, VA; Paul Doremus, 46M, Potomac, MD; Matt McShane, 43M, Olney, MD; Scott Moffet, 39M, Ellicott City, MD; Kathryn Kirmayer, 43F, Silver Spring, MD; Lynn Wymelenberg, 51F, Olney, MD

10:01 - Tampa Bay Aquatic Club - Tom Rawls, 39M, Tampa, FL; Bart Cobb, 52M, Tampa, FL; Joe Solak, 42M, Tampa, FL; Clara Reynolds, 37F, Tampa, FL

11:00 - Dos Conquistadores de Brooklyn - Jonathan Farber, 40M, Brooklyn, NY; Cristian Vergara, 48M, Brooklyn, NY

11:08 -Konrad's Comrades - Konrad Euler, 71M, St. Petersburg, FL; Pat Marzulli, 55M, Indian Rocks Beach, FL; Zack Pruitt, 33M, Tampa, FL; Bob Beach, 76M, St. Petersburg, FL

11:12 - Team McCluskey - Orin McCluskey, 56M, New York City, NY; Sarah Chu, 29F, New York City, NY; Tom Newman, 40M, New York City, NY

11:25 - Dynoswim of Palm Coast - David Petkousek, 42M, Palm Coast, FL; Dakin Fromhold, 47M, Palm Coast, FL; Scott Nieminem, 40M, Palm Coast, FL; Sheryl Watkins, 42F, Palm Coast, FL; Amy Britton, 35F, Palm Coast, FL; Diane Bixler, 35F, Palm Coast, FL



Please forgive the delay in posting race results and pictures as we mourn the death of our friend Dave Parcels. He was swimming with us during the race and withdrew after swimming the first nine miles. He got onto his escort boat and had traveled about 15 minutes along the shoreline toward a boat ramp when he collapsed and emergency responders were called upon to save his life. Despite the efforts of his crew, the United States Coast Guard, the St. Petersburg Fire Department, and St. Anthony's Hospital, Dave passed away due to coronary failure.

We extend our condolences to his family, friends, and to everyone in our marathon swimming community. Very few people outside of our circle understand the commitment, the dedication and the entire lifestyle that is required to swim a double crossing of the English Channel. We are honored that Dave Parcels came to do the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. This was his 8th time participating in the event.

Tributes have already started to appear on-line regarding Dave's amazing athletic accomplishments and philanthropic interests. To see more information on this great individual, you can Google Marathon Swimmer Dave Parcels.

24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim - 2006

The Ninth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim was held on April 22nd, 2006 to celebrate Earth Day and the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary.

Official Results

Brad Denton from Scottsdale, Arizona was the overall champion, finishing in 11 hours, 15 minutes. The seas were relatively calm until a strong westerly wind picked up in the afternoon that caused a moderate chop for the swimmers. Denton will now concentrate on his upcoming English Channel attempt in August after gaining confidence and experience swimming the entire 24 mile length of Tampa Bay.

The Men's Relay Champions were "**The Sharks**" from Ohio who covered the course in a record time of 7 hours, 39 minutes. The Mixed Relay Champions were "**Team Hammerhead**" from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida who also set a new record, finishing in 7 hours, 53 minutes.

At 400 square miles, Tampa Bay is Florida's largest open-water estuary, a term that describes areas where fresh and saltwater meet. Just 30 years ago, Tampa Bay was so polluted many considered it beyond salvage. That it has come back to life is a testament to the resiliency of nature, and the continued dedication of hundreds of citizens, scientists and elected leaders who recognize it as a resource worth saving.

The organizers are especially thankful for event sponsor Passport Marine of St. Petersburg, Florida. Emergency and media personnel patrolled the race course in a Formula 400 SS (40-foot Sun Sport) provided and piloted by **Passport Marine**.



Solo Swimmers

1. **Brad Denton**, 42, from Scottsdale, AZ finished in 11 hours, 15 minutes
2. **Michelle Santilhano**, 35 from Yuba City, CA retired at 20 miles
3. **Flavia Zappa**, 38, from Bradenton, FL retired at 18 miles
4. **Jessica Weather**, 22, from Jacksonville, FL retired at 8 miles

Relay Swimmers

1. **The Sharks** were the first overall finishers swimming the course in 7 hours, 39 minutes
Team members: Chris Zingarelli, 29, Dayton, OH; Doug Gale, 35, Centerville, OH; Jay Wilkerson, 37, Springboro, OH
2. **Team Hammerhead** were the mixed relay champions, finishing in 7 hours, 53 minutes
Team members: **Andrea Woodburn**, 42, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Jonathan Olsen, 42, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; **Bill Korey**, 42, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
3. **Ft. Lauderdale Aquatics** was the 2nd mixed relay, swimming 8 hours, 42 minutes
Team members: **Michelle Schraer**, 35, Miami, FL; William Zenga, 51, Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Carlos Lloreda, 51, South Miami, FL
4. Tampa Bay Aquatic Club completed their 7th consecutive Tampa Bay Marathon Swim in 9 hours, 44 minutes
Team members: **Tom Rawls**, 38, Tampa, FL; **Joe Solak**, 41, Tampa, FL; **Clara Reynolds**, 36, Tampa, FL
5. **Brighton Beach Memoirs** finished their 3rd consecutive Tampa Bay Marathon Swim in 9 hours, 56 minutes
Team members: **Cristian Vergara**, 47, Brooklyn, NY; **Lori Carena**, 52, Brooklyn, NY; Jordan Waxman, 41, Rockleigh, NJ
6. **Conrad and the Comrades** were the 2nd male relay finishers, swimming 10 hours, 27 minutes
Team members: Pat Marzulli, 57, Indian Rocks Beach, FL; **Dr. Konrad Euler**, 70, St. Petersburg, FL; **Bob Aldrich**, 57, St. Petersburg, FL

Saturday, April 16, 2005, 10:01 pm Eastern Time

For Immediate Release

SOURCE: Distance Matters, Inc.

Californians Dominate at the Eighth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

CLEARWATER, FL--**Forest Nelson**, 39, of Los Angeles fought through a strong head-wind and large waves to become the over-all solo champion at the Eighth Annual Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. His official time was 10 hours, 21 minutes. The women's champion was **Leslie Thomas**, 30, of San Francisco who swam to the Howard Frankland Bridge in 11 hours, 58 minutes.

Southern Californian relay team SoCal Kao lele II (Bill Ireland, 45, Kris Behrens, 30, Chris Yontz, 40, Suzy Nicoletti, 25, Patrick Dixon, 56 and Mac Montgomery, 55), were the first relay to finish with a time of 9 hours, 2 minutes. The three-person relay champions were local team **Rip Tide** (Brian Rimel, 38, Tim Kennedy, 48, and Zach Pruitt, 30, of St. Petersburg) who finished only seven minutes later.

Due to the treacherous conditions, the swim was done on a "best-efforts" basis, with many competitors opting to finish at the St. Petersburg Pier, the Gandy Bridge, or the Howard Frankland Bridge. Only six solo swimmers were able to complete the entire 24 mile course to Ben T. Davis Beach, out of the 19 swimmers who started the race. Of the ten relay teams competing, only 4 completed the full course.

SOLO SWIMMERS - MEN RESULTS

Forrest Nelson, 39, of Los Angeles, California **finished first over-all** in 10 hours, 21 minutes at **Ben T. Davis Beach** (24 miles).

Jose Serra, 31, of Guatemala City, Guatemala was second, completing the swim in 10 hours, 55 minutes at Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Ray Gandy, 43, of Coventry, Rhode Island finished third over-all with a time of 11 hours, 1 minute at Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Ross Reichard, 34, of Albuquerque, New Mexico was the fifth finisher, swimming 12 hours, 4 minutes to Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Joe Wolf, 37, of Denver, Colorado made it to the end for the second year in a row with 12 hours, 31 minutes at Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Vince Herring, 62, of Rochester, Minnesota was the final individual to complete the course, swimming 12 hours, 34 minutes to Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Mark Monticino, 41, of San Diego, California finished after swimming 7 hours to the Gandy Bridge (18 miles).

Dave Parcels, 47, of Madison, Connecticut swam 4 hours, 13 minutes to be the first finisher at the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Jeff Magourik, 43, of Westminster, Colorado finished in 4 hours, 15 minutes at the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Kevin Joubert, 32, of Towson, Maryland swam 4 hours, 28 minutes to the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Todd Landin, 29, of Boulder, Colorado swam 4 hours, 41 minutes to the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Jason Pipoly, 33, of Nashville, Tennessee finished in 5 hours, 50 minutes at the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Hal Clarendon, 59, of Gainesville, Florida swam 6 hours, 58 minutes to the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

David Cameron, 29, of St. Louis Park, Minnesota 5 hours one mile shy of St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Greg Langsett, 52, of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida retired at Pinellas Point due to hypothermia.

Marcos Diaz, 30, of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic retired at Pinellas Point due to hypothermia.

SOLO SWIMMERS - WOMEN RESULTS

Leslie Thomas, 30, of San Francisco, California finished her swim in 11 hours, 58 minutes at the Howard Frankland Bridge (21 miles).

Suzanne Dods, 44, of Larkspur, California finished in 5 hours, 20 minutes at the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Flavia Zappa, 37, of Bradenton, Florida finished in 7 hours, 5 minutes at the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Laura Collette, 40, of San Jose, California was a late scratch due to a business trip to Beijing, China. She plans to return in May to make her attempt.

RELAY RESULTS

SoCal Kao Ie Ie II (Bill Ireland, 45, Kris Behrens, 30, Chris Yontz, 40, Suzy Nicoletti, 25, Patrick Dixon, 56 and Mac Montgomery, 56) of Southern California finished in 9 hours, 2 minutes at Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Rip Tide (Brian Rimel, 38, Tim Kennedy, 48, and Zach Pruitt, 30) of St. Petersburg, Florida swam 9 hours, 9 minutes to Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Tampa Bay Aquatic Club (Joe Solak, 39, Bart Cobb, 50, and **Tom Rawls**, 36) of Tampa, Florida finished in 10 hours, 26 minutes at Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Glory Days (G. J. LaBonty, 41, Ruth Cole, 38, John Thorp, 41, and Katy Hillard, 22) of Florida and Utah completed the swim in 12 hours, 6 minutes at Ben T. Davis Beach (24 miles).

Florida Goldcoast Masters (**Scott Coleman**, 50, Nicki Jones and Cori Graham) of Boca Raton, Florida finished in 7 hours, 34 minutes at the Gandy Bridge (18 miles).

Brighton Beach Memoirs (James Meier, 60, Lori Carena, 51, and Cristian Vergara, 46) from New York City, New York swam 9 hours, 30 minutes to the Gandy Bridge (18 miles).

Jill's Johns (Jill Moberg, 42, Jonathan Maier, 41, Gary Emich, 54, and Steve Hurwitz, 44) of New York and California swam 9 hours, 36 minutes to the Gandy Bridge (18 miles).

9 Relay Team (Mike Embry, 57, John Neukamm, 44, Albert Robinson, 61, David Kirkam, 50, Jim Zinner, 50, and Mandy Zipf, 39) of Tampa, Florida swam 3 hours, 39 minutes to the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles)

The Patricks (Patrick Spearing, 41 from New York, New York, and Patrick McLeroth, 33 from Baltimore, Maryland) swam 4 hours 41 minutes to finish at the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

Beauty and the Beasts (John Cox, 70, Lisa Flanagan, 42, Konrad Euler, 69, Robert Aldrich, 56, and Laura Kaleel, 44) of St. Petersburg, Florida finished in 5 hours, 5 minutes at the St. Petersburg Pier (9 miles).

A Daunting Day On Tampa Bay

By BART O'CONNELL Tribune correspondent
Published: Apr 17, 2005

TAMPA - Chris Yontez staggered to his feet and ran toward the shore of Ben T. Davis Municipal Beach. The waves kicked up under him until he touched dry land for the first time in nine hours. "I didn't know Tampa was so lovely," Yontez said, "until I got to this beach." Yontez and teammates Pat Dixon, Mac Montgomery, Bill Ireland, Kris Behrens and Suzy Nicoletti were the first group to finish the annual Tampa Bay Marathon Swim, a 24-mile endurance race spanning the length of Tampa Bay.

The race began Saturday morning at 7:35 and the final swimmer to finish was 62-year-old Vince Herring, who came to shore at 8:09 p.m. Herring was the oldest to enter the race. Because of harsh winds that brought 2- to 3- foot waves into the swimmers' faces, many diverted for the **St. Petersburg Pier** - a nine-mile swim - or stopped at the Gandy Bridge.

Yontez and his team, the SoCal Kao Iele, arrived at 4:37 p.m, finishing in 9 hours, 2 minutes. Seven minutes later, Rip Tide, a three-man relay team from St. Petersburg, came to shore. Teammates **Zach Pruitt, Brian Rimel and Tim Kennedy** each took 30-minute turns in the water. Pruitt said the conditions were daunting. Only four of 10 teams and six of 20 solo swimmers finished the 24-mile course.

Los Angeles resident **Forrest Nelson**, 39, won the individual competition in 10 hours, 21 minutes. He said he thought about stopping four times - three because he needed something for the pain. Nelson was followed by Guatemala native Jose Serra, who entered his first Tampa Bay Marathon swim to get ready for a 36-mile double crossing of the English Channel later this year.

All swimmers were accompanied by crews on power boats and kayaks, which supplied food and drink to the competitors. But even those out of the water were in danger because of the winds and waves. The kayak assisting the **Tampa Bay Aquatic Club relay team flipped**. Team member Joe Solak, 39, said it was the only time the team thought about quitting. Solak's team finished third among the relay teams in 10 hours, 26 minutes.

Meet the Competitors of the Eighth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

The 24 mile swim race starts at 7:30am from the Sunshine Skyway at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort (800 227 8045) and ends at Ben T. Davis Beach on the Courtney Campbell Causeway. The race course covers the entire length of Tampa Bay and is held each year to celebrate Earth Day and the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary.

Since this event was first staged in 1998, it has drawn competitors from across the United States, Great Britain, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Germany, India, Canada, and the Cayman Islands. A record fifty-seven participants have entered this year's event, either as soloists or as relay swimmers. Here are the twenty individual swimmers and the ten relay teams that participated in this year's event:

SOLO SWIMMERS - MEN

Jason Pipoly, 33, of Nashville, TN was **only 4 miles away** from becoming the youngest person to swim the English Channel on a rough and windy day in 1982. In February 1998 while driving near Aspen, Colorado, he slid off the road, hit a tree and became a paraplegic. Almost 20 years after his first attempt, he became the second paraplegic in the world to swim the English Channel. The swim took 13 hours and 48 minutes beating his dad's time by almost 1 1/2 hours. In 2003, he became the first paraplegic to **swim from Los Angeles to Catalina Island** in a swim that took 18 hours.

Marcos Diaz, 30, of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic is his country's national open water swimming champion. He is entering the Tampa Bay event for the third time after **finishing third in 2002**, and **second in 2004**. He placed seventh in the 28 mile Manhattan Island Marathon Swim in 2004, then went on to swim the English Channel in 9 hours, 56 minutes.

Dave Parcels, 47, of Madison, Connecticut is returning for his 7th consecutive Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. His highest place was in 2003 when he was **overall champion** with a time of 10 hours, 24 minutes. In 2002, he became the oldest person ever to successfully complete a double crossing of the English Channel (21 hours, 30 minutes). Known as the "King of Tampa Bay" for completing the most swims of Tampa Bay, he is also the race director for the **25km Swim Across Long Island Sound**.

Jose Serra, 31, of Guatemala City, Guatemala was a national champion in several events dating back to 1984. In 2001, he **placed fourth at the 28 Mile Manhattan Island Marathon Swim**. In 2002, he swam the English Channel in 10 hours, 46 minutes and is planning a two-way attempt in 2005.

Mark Monticino, 41, of San Diego, CA began swimming in Miami, Florida before settling in San Diego after a stint in the Navy. In 2003, he became the 101st person to swim the **21 Mile Catalina Channel** finishing in 10 hours, 11 minutes. He has completed 2 Alcatraz swims (1.5 mile), and 5 La Jolla Cove Gator Man Swims (3 miles). He represents the **La Jolla Cove Swim Club**.

Forrest Nelson, 39, of Los Angeles, CA trains at the Rose Bowl Aquatic Center in Pasadena, California. He regularly competes in long distance ocean events in Maui, Santa Barbara, La Jolla, and is returning to the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim for his first solo attempt. In 2004, he was a member of the winning **Tampa Bay relay with Craig Taylor & Bill Ireland**. Last fall he swam the **Catalina Channel in 10 hours, 35 minutes**, and plans to swim the English Channel this summer.

Hal Clarendon, 59, of Gainesville, FL competes for the **Gator Swim Club** and is making his 6th attempt to complete the Tampa Bay Swim. His longest attempt was in 2003, when he **swam for more than eleven hours**. He is the publisher of ADVENTURE magazine.

Vince Herring, 62, of Rochester, MN is a top USMS age grouper and All-American in postal and open water events. He as completed the 12.5 mile Swim Around Key West twice (1997 & 2003). In 2001 he swam 40 lakes in one day, and attempted 100 lakes in one day in 2004 but got sick and dropped out after 5 hours and 28 lakes. He racked up incredible one month totals in the February Fitness Challenge with 421,000 yards in 2003 and 427,000 yards in 2005. He was also a member of a relay that did an English Channel double crossing in 2003.

Kevin Joubert, 32, of Towson, MD has been swimming competitively for five years. He has done the **4.4 Mile Chesapeake Bay Swim** 4 times. He has finished in the top ten in the Race for the River in New York City, and the Escape from Fort Delaware Swim. He coaches triathletes' swim classes and competes regularly in triathlons.

Joe Wolf, 37, of Denver, CO completed 24 marathon runs, then he ventured into the water in 2002 to compete in a few local triathlons before catching the marathon swimming bug. In 2004 he completed **his first marathon swim in Tampa Bay** in 12 hours, 15 minutes, then the **Manhattan Island Marathon Swim** in 8 hours, 17 minutes. He went on to make a 10 hour attempt on the English Channel. He has signed on for all 3 swims again this year. In August, 2003, at the 22.5 Mile Atlantic City Around the Island Swim, he was forced out by a referee "for a little puking."

Ross Reichard, 34, of Albuquerque, NM is a Doctor of Pathology at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. He swam as an age grouper with the Lakeside Seahawks (Louisville, KY), in college at Centre College (Danville, KY) and now with the Lobo Masters (Albuquerque, NM). He has completed the **Manhattan Island Marathon Swim** twice (**2000 - 8 hours, 31 minutes**) (**2004 - 7 hours, 57 minutes**).

Ray Gandy, 43, of Coventry, RI was nationally ranked as an age grouper, holding multiple West Virginia state records. He was a member of national record-breaking relay teams at NCAA Div II Clarion University of Pennsylvania. As a masters swimmer he has been named All-American and has **8 annual top-ten results** to his credit. He has done open water swims in Newport, RI (1.7 miles), Lake Champlain, NY/VT (8 miles), and Long Island Sound (12 miles).

Greg Langsett, 52, of Ft. Lauderdale, FL is an open water swimming veteran. He has competed in national championships in 3.2 mile and 8.5 mile distances. In 1998, he was named USMS Long Distance All-American.

Jeff Magouirk, 43, of Westminster, CO has been training for two years after a 22 year lay off. He was a member of the last Colorado State University men's swim team (1979-80). He and training partner Joe Wolf swim on the **Broomfield Breakers Masters** team. In 2004 he swam the 10KM Wingshadow Horsetooth Swim and has done several 1.2 mile swims as a member of triathlon relay teams. He plans an assault on the English Channel in 2006.

Todd Landin, 29, of Boulder, CO was a sprinter in high school and college before turning into a triathlete in 1998. He did the Hawaiian Ironman in 2001, the Wingshadow Horsetooth 10K Swim in 2003, and attempted the English Channel in 2004. He plans another assault on the Channel in August 2005.

David Cameron, 29, of St. Louis Park, MN has been **coaching masters and triathletes** since 2000. He currently runs both the youth and Masters swim programs for the Minneapolis YWCA. He was a 15-time All-Conference Swimmer at Carleton in distance events. In 2004 he **completed the English Channel** finishing in 13 hours, 9 minutes. Recently, he had his **head shaved by some of his swimmers**.

SOLO SWIMMERS - WOMEN

Laura Collette, 40, of San Jose, CA is returning to Tampa Bay for the fourth year in a row and considers the event a celebration of her birthday. She has swum the English Channel, Lake Tahoe's width and length, the 9 mile Maui Channel, **Santa Cruz to Monterey** relay, **Llyn Padarn, Wales**, and has swum the 22 mile Loch Loman in Scotland. Recent quote: "Long distance swimming is a passion to be fully enjoyed, and then we eat. "

Flavia Zappa, 37, of Bradenton, FL swims for the **St. Petersburg Masters Swim Team**. She swam the 12.5 Mile Swim Around Key West in 2004 and competed in the United States Masters Swimming's 5K Postal Swim in 2003.

Leslie Thomas, 30, of San Francisco, CA calls herself, "A fitness swimmer who happens to have a soft spot for long swims." She completed Lake Zurich in 2000 and attempted the English Channel in 2003. She is an instructor for **Total Immersion Swim Camps** and coaches a women's triathlon team. She also runs, hikes, surfs, and snow skis. To find out more about Leslie, visit her on-line at www.Swim-Art.com.

Suzanne Dods, 44, of Larkspur, CA swam the width of Lake Tahoe in 1988 and the length in 1989. She completed the 12 mile Coronado Island Swim in 1996. She was a member of an English Channel relay team in 1992 and 1993, then swam the English Channel as a soloist in 2003. Her Tampa Bay swim will be a benefit for Seacology. **Seacology** is the world's premier nonprofit, nongovernmental organization with the sole and unique purpose of preserving the environments and cultures of islands throughout the globe.

RELAY SWIMMERS

Rip Tide are Brian Rimel, 38, Zach Pruitt, 30, and Tim Kennedy, 48, of St. Petersburg, Florida. They are top-ranked distance swimmers that compete for the **St. Petersburg Masters Swim Team**. In 1999, Kennedy completed the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim as a soloist in 10 hours, 42 minutes.

SoCal Kao Ie Ie II are Bill Ireland, 45, Kris Behrens, 30, Chris Yontz, 40, Suzy Nicoletti, 25, Patrick Dixon, 56 and Mac Montgomery, 56. They swim for **Southern California Aquatics**, and have done prior open water relays in Hawaii and La Jolla but never all together before Tampa Bay. Chris Yontz is one of the fastest open water swimmers in southern California. He has been a top 10 finisher in the Waikiki Roughwater Swim and has won USMS open water age group races at several different distances. Swimming as a soloist, he has won the La Jolla Roughwater, Coronado Roughwater, Seal Beach 1 mile swim and the Big Shoulders swim in Chicago. He hopes to do the English Channel in 5 years. Pat Dixon has been doing open water swims around the country for over 20 years, including the Maui Relay and the Waikiki Roughwater Swim 20 times each. Last summer Pat won the USMS National Championship 5KM in his age group, and his Maui Relay won the Grand Makule Division. Mac Montgomery is another long time open water and pool racer, and was on Pat's Grand Makule championship relay in 2004. Kris Behrens has done races from San Francisco to Hawaii, placing high in his age group, but usually slightly behind Suzy Nicoletti. Suzie is the youngest member of the team, has also raced in San Francisco and Hawaii, routinely winning her division and often being the overall female champion. Her Maui Relay team in 2004 was the overall mixed champion. Bill Ireland swam several races in 2004 including the **Tampa Bay relay**, the Hawaii races, the **St. Croix 5 Mile Coral Reef Swim**, and the **Boston Light 8 Mile Swim** where he was the overall winner..

9 Relay Team are Mike Embry, 57, John Neukamm, 44, Albert Robinson, 61, David Kirkam, 50, Jim Zinner, 50, and Mandy Zipf, 39. They are from the Tampa Bay area and are swimming in their third consecutive Tampa Bay Marathon. This year they are entered as a mixed relay now that they have added triathlon sensation **Mandy Zipf** to their team.

Glory Days are G. J. LaBonty, 41, Ruth Cole, 38, John Thorp, 41, and Katy Hillard, 22. LaBonty and Cole are from Utah, while Thorp and Hillard are from the Ft. Myers, Florida area and swim for **Swim Florida Masters**. LaBonty swam at Temple University from 198 to 1985 and was on the North Wildwood Beach Patrol from 1983 to 1987. He has completed the **Chesapeake Bay Swim** and the Canadian Ironman Triathlon. John Thorp is returning to the water after a 20 year lay-off since his high school glory days on the swim team with G.J. LaBonty, hence the team name. Katy Hillard swam on YMCA, club and high school teams from 1988 to 2000 and is returning to swimming after a five year break. She says that, "This will be my first open water experience."

Tampa Bay Aquatic Club of Tampa, Florida is represented by Joe Solak, 39, Bart Cobb, 50, and **Tom Rawls**, 36. They are competing in their sixth consecutive Tampa Bay Marathon Swim as a three-person relay team. In **2003** and **2004**, Cobb was a member of the #9 Relay Team.

Jill's Johns are Jill Moberg, 42, Jonathan Maier, 41, Gary Emich, 54, and Steve Hurwitz, 44. The three men are members of San Francisco's **South End Rowing Club**, while Jill is a New Yorker who they met when she acted as their official observer for their relay in the Manhattan Island Marathon Swim. According to her teammates, "She didn't protest when our co-ed team decided to do the entire relay buck-ass naked, so we adopted her." Team members collectively have done relays across the Catalina Channel, the English Channel, the Strait of Gibraltar and the Boston Light swim.

Florida Goldcoast Masters are Scott Coleman, 50, Nicki Jones and Cori Graham. Coleman was inducted into the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame in 1998. He returns to Tampa Bay five years after **swimming the 2000 as a soloist with a time of 12 hours, 41 minutes**. He has completed Key West three times, Catalina, the Swim Across the Sound, Manhattan, and was the **first male diabetic to swim the English Channel**.

Brighton Beach Memoirs are James Meier, 60, Lori Carena, 51, and Cristian Vergara, 46 from New York City, New York. They are swimming Tampa Bay for the second consecutive year. Meier was named a USMS All-American last summer when he placed first in his age group in the National 10K Open Water Championship in Huntington Bay, New York. During the winter he competes in cross-country skiing events. Over the years he has won 6 gold medals in the two-day, **100 Mile Canadian Ski Marathon**, which is the longest such event in the world. Lori Carena was a competitive age group swimmer in the Metropolitan AAU and a member of NYU Sports Hall of Fame. She trains for swims and triathlons with the NYU Tri Club, and plans to swim Manhattan, the Swim Across the Sound and the Strait of Gibraltar. Cristian Vergara started swimming open water 4 years ago, has done the **Manhattan Island Marathon Swim in a relay in 2002, and as a soloist in 2003 and 2004**. He also was member of a two-way relay crossing of the English Channel in 2003, and plans to swim as a soloist in July. In September, 2004 he swam the Strait of Gibraltar in the company of pilot whales. From early May to November this relay team trains in the frigid waters of the Atlantic Ocean at Brighton Beach in Brooklyn.

Beauty and the Beasts are John Cox, 70, Lisa Flanagan, 42, Konrad Euler, 69, Robert Aldrich, 56, and Laura Kaleel, 44. They swim for the **St. Petersburg Masters** swim team. In Euler was the oldest person to swim Tampa Bay, completing the course when he was 64 years old.

The Patricks are Patrick Spearing, 41 from New York, New York, and Patrick McLeroth, 33 from Baltimore, Maryland. As a relay, they have done the **Manhattan Island Marathon Swim four times**, and have competed in the Little Red Lighthouse Swim twice, the Great Hudson River swim, and the Flag Day Intrepid Swim in New York City.

Making waves

Jason Pipoly, who nearly swam the English Channel at 11, succeeded, more remarkably, as a paraplegic.

By DAVE SCHEIBER, Times Staff Writer - Published April 13, 2005

See this story on-line at: http://www.sptimes.com/2005/04/13/Sports/Making_waves.shtml

It was the moment of a lifetime for an adventurous kid from Texas. There he sat in the seat reserved for showbiz legends, movie stars and marquee athletes on the set of The Tonight Show, answering questions from the king himself, Johnny Carson. At 11, Jason Pipoly had earned the rare invitation in 1982 for a most impressive feat: becoming the youngest person on the planet to attempt to swim across the English Channel.

His father, Carl Pipoly, had completed the brutal, 21-mile course between England and France two years earlier, and the boy wanted to match his dad's accomplishment. For more than eight hours he battled the relentless waves before succumbing to fatigue 4 miles short of the finish.

Still, it was enough to wow Carson, Ed McMahon and the studio audience. Pipoly was nervous, but he recalls how Carson made him feel at ease with his kindness and quips. During the show, Pipoly made a vow to the host. "I told him that I would someday go back and try it again," he said.

But the dream of completing the Channel swim faded over the years, as Pipoly became an avid skier, rock climber and surfer, eventually earning a fine arts degree from the University of Colorado. Then, on a winter day in 1998, the course of his life made a detour. While working as a photographer and handyman in Aspen, Pipoly was driving a little too fast and lost control of his car on a gravelly Colorado road. It flipped into a ravine. "I went to get out of the car, and I realized I couldn't feel my legs," he said. He had to be cut from the vehicle and air-lifted to a Grand Junction hospital. He was paralyzed from the chest down.

After grueling rehabilitation, while wondering what his future held, Pipoly found the answer on an old videotape his mother Mary played for him a year after the accident. It was from the magical evening of Oct. 27, 1982, with the talk-show giant and the kid. He saw something he had forgotten. The vow. And that is why, when Pipoly competes Saturday in the eighth annual 24-mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim, he brings a dazzling long-distance resume that includes this highlight: **First American paraplegic swimmer to cross the English Channel.**

Determination

The Carson tape immediately gave Pipoly a new perspective on his attempt at the Channel crossing. "I really had never thought of (the first attempt) as a success, more like I had failed to complete it, but watching it again made me look at it entirely differently," Pipoly, 33, said by phone from his home in Nashville. "I felt like it was amazing that I had even tried. "That's when I thought, "You know what? Maybe I could swim the English Channel as a paraplegic. This is something that I have to pursue."

Pipoly had moved back home to Texas barely four months after the accident, living by himself in an apartment near his father in San Antonio. He didn't want special treatment, even refusing to get handicapped plates for his car. And one day in 1999, he broached the Channel idea with his dad. "When he first told me he was going to swim the Channel, I didn't say anything to him, but I said to myself, "This is not good," Carl Pipoly said. "It's not a doable thing for him."

But Pipoly asked his father to come out and watch him swim in nearby Boerne Lake, where he had been training on his own. "I watched him get out of the car, get in his wheelchair, get in the water and swim across and back - and my whole attitude completely changed," his father said.

Pipoly wanted to try the landmark swim immediately. His dad recalls several arguments over the timing, but he finally convinced his son not to rush but to prepare as thoroughly as possible. For three years, Pipoly immersed in a rigorous training regimen, swimming every day in a neighborhood pool where he once had competed. He felt a renewed sense of freedom and fulfillment that had eluded him since his accident.

He also realized he would not be able to swim the Channel without help. Specifically, he needed a flotation device to support his legs and keep him as streamlined as possible during a long swim. The solution was a pool buoy strapped to his legs. But there was also the matter of expense. The proposed trip would cost about \$10,000. Pipoly earned half of that through his job at a pool store, and his family helped with the rest.

Finally, in August 2002, he was ready. He entered the water filled with confidence, trailed by a boat that included his father, several cousins, some friends and a BBC cameraman. The first five hours were a breeze. Then, suddenly, it was as if he hit a wall. His arms ached. His stroke slowed. He began to doubt. "I thought, "Man, I just don't want to give up; I have to keep swimming," he said.

So he pushed on past six hours, past seven and eight, and finally began to get his second wind, forging on past globs of jellyfish and floating diesel fuel to reach the shoreline. He had completed the course in 13 hours, 48 minutes, almost two hours faster than his father. And he had become only the second paraplegic to pull it off, joining former Australian rugby player John Maclean, who did it in 1998.

Pipoly could hear the muffled cheers coming from his father and friends on the trailing boat in the distance. In the placid darkness of a summer night, a world away from where his life had changed so drastically, he savored the moment by himself. "I was pretty delirious," he said. "But there was no one around me on the shore. And I just felt a sense of quiet contentment."

Just a beginning

Pipoly's achievement was unsanctioned because the Channel Swimming Association doesn't allow anyone to use flotation devices. But he says he doesn't lose sleep over that. "I'm not swimming to get into the record book or show I'm better than anybody else," he said. He's simply trying to challenge himself and encourage others facing difficult circumstances.

That is why, after the English Channel, his next big target was the Catalina Channel in September 2003, spanning 21 miles from Los Angeles Harbor to Catalina Island. Pipoly trained three hours a day, six days a week, and set out to swim the entire 42-mile round trip. He might well have done it if not for the frigid water and strong current that ended his attempt on the return leg after 26 miles over a span of 24 hours, 14 minutes and 16 seconds.

Still, he became the **first paraplegic to conquer the Catalina Channel**. "It was amazing because the water was extremely cold and rough," said Kaia Halvorson, director of orthotics for the Bethesda, Md., Hanger Orthopedic Group Inc., which now sponsors Pipoly. "We were up all night throwing him food and water from the boat. It was an incredible tribute to Jason just to be able to do that swim."

He has done others, too - the five-hour swim of Boerne Lake, a 10-hour swim in Lake Erie and a 15-mile swim of Canyon Lake between Austin and San Antonio - and he may take another shot at the Catalina round trip. "He inspires me," his father said.

Out of the water, Pipoly works as a patient advocate for Hanger, speaking with physical therapists and counseling people coming to grips with their disabilities. He also uses and gives demonstrations of a brace made by Hanger that enables him to stand and walk for short distances.

Pipoly recently moved to Nashville, where his fiancée, Vanessa Vance, attends Vanderbilt University and is studying special education. They fell in love about three years ago after meeting at a special modern dance seminar for able-bodied and disabled participants alike, staged by a professional company in Cleveland. Vance also needs a wheelchair, but it hasn't stopped them from dancing together, or Vance from dreaming of becoming a professional dancer. "I told her that if it's something she wants to do after she gets her degree, then we'll go to Cleveland and see if she can do that," he said.

Pipoly's future marathon plans aren't set, though he knows he will continue swimming to challenge himself and hopefully inspire others who might need a boost. Swimming is only part of what has helped in his own healing process, he said, emphasizing that the real healing has come through his deep religious faith. "I think the Lord has a plan for me," he said.

So there's always a new body of water to tackle, a new challenge to overcome, for the kid who told Carson he'd be back one day to try again.

Saturday, April 17, 2004, 11:50pm Eastern Time

For Immediate Release

SOURCE: *Distance Matters, Inc.*

Denis Crean Tops Competitive Field at the 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

CLEARWATER, FL--Denis Crean made a late charge to win a closely contested Seventh Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. Rough seas and an unseasonably cool 68F degree water temperature proved to be extremely challenging for the 13 solo swimmers and 13 relay teams that entered the event. Crean, 43, from Washington D.C., competing in his first race over 4 miles, was able to beat out a seasoned field of open water swimmers. Six other solo swimmers finished the guelling 24 mile swim less than an hour behind the champion. Denis Crean's official time was 9 hours, 20 minutes, 15 seconds.

The women were led by Nancy Steadman Martin, 49, of Oceanport, New Jersey. Her time of 10 hours, 6 minutes was registered after a close duel that lasted most of the day with Michelle Davidson.

Southern Californians Bill Ireland, 44, Forrest Nelson, 38, and Craig Taylor, 51, set a new record for completing the course as a three-person relay team with a time of 8 hours, 14 minutes.

Results - Solo Men

9:20.15 - Denis Crean, 43, Washington, DC - His late surge to pass early leader Marcos Diaz between the Howard Frankland Bridge and the finish line earned him the soloist championship. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 40-44 age group.

9:28.22 - Marcos Diaz, 29, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic - Led the entire field until he **suffered exhaustion and hypothermia** near the Gandy Bridge. His time was about 25 minutes slower than he swam Tampa Bay **in 2002**. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 25-29 age group.

9:32.39 - Richard Flambard, 35, Jersey, United Kingdom- Channel Island champion ends up just behind the leaders to finish as third soloist. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 39-39 age group.

9:40.00 - Dave Parcels, 46, Madison, Connecticut - Completed his record-setting 6th swim of Tampa Bay. Parcels' next endurance marathon will be a triple crossing of the English Channel in August 2004. Official Placement: 2nd Place, Men's 40-44 age group.

10:05.50 - Gilles Chalandon, 47, New York City, New York - Fifth soloist overall. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 45-49 age group.

12:15.22 - Joe Wolf, 36, Denver, Colorado - He was able to complete his first marathon swim, even though he had to overcome "a little puking" early in the day. Official Placement: 2nd Place, Men's 35-39 age group.

DNF - Kevin Flynn, 43, Westempton, New Jersey had hoped to finish his first marathon swim, but withdrew at the Howard Frankland Bridge after swimming 12 hours. Kevin said, "I did not complete the race, but I considered my swim a success as I went farther than I expected on my first attempt at a marathon swim. I decided before the race to get into a rhythm and hold a steady pace, I did not try to push my speed. I made the Gandy bridge in 9 hrs, in between the bridges I spent 3 hrs fighting the outgoing tide and was pulled from the water close to the Howard Frankland Bridge when the sun was setting. I could not have gone as far as I did without a great crew to help. I had two kayakers, Matt Price had participated in the swim before and took control on what needed to be done from his experience. Matt's friend, James, was great in encouraging me, especially when trying to push through the outgoing tide. My wife Denice was a great help from the power boat as was Jake Draughon who was driving the boat and keeping me safe. It was a great experience."

DNF - Joseph Van Horn, 68, Canton, Ohio - Withdrew near the Gandy Bridge due to exhaustion and the change in the tides.

DNF - Hal Clarendon, 58, Gainesville, Florida - On his fifth attempt to swim Tampa Bay, he swam as far in six hours as he did in eleven hours in 2003.

Results - Solo Women

10:06.44 - Nancy Steadman Martin, 49, Oceanport, New Jersey - Finished 6th overall, and first woman overall. Official Placement: 1st Place, Women's 45-49 age group.

10:13.16 - Michelle Davidson, 33, Oakhurst, New Jersey - Finished 7th overall, and was first woman runner-up. Official Placement: 2nd Place, Women's 30-34 age group.

DNF - Laura Colette, 40, San Jose, California - Forced to withdraw at the Gandy Bridge due to the change in the tide.

DNF - Rose Rice Fields, 30, Poulsbo, Washington - Withdrew at the St. Petersburg Pier due to rough conditions.

Results - Relays

8:14.33 - SoCal Kao lele - Set a new record for swimming as a 3-person relay. Craig Taylor recounted their experience: "We had a great time with the event - great fun & great competition. All three of us felt we swam well, & the conditions seemed to suit us. Cooler water temps & some chop (pretty good chop earlier in the event) - conditions we do well in. Our goal was to break 9 hours, but as we approached the first bridge, we began to suspect that we would be under that goal. The 8:14 time was beyond our expectations. As we approached the halfway point, Marcos Diaz' boat was slightly ahead of us - he did a great job the first half of the swim - but we saw we were gaining fairly quickly & felt he was likely having a few problems. From there, we moved a little east of him & away, but could not see any other boats. From just before the first bridge to the finish, we concentrated on swimming well & keeping legs that maximized our (dwindling) energy levels. Passing the 2nd bridge & eyeing the finish line was a great sight." Relay members: Bill Ireland, 44, Forrest Nelson, 38, and Craig Taylor, 51, of Laguna Niguel, California. Official Placement: 1st Place, 3 Man relay.

8:54.00 - Rip Tide - Another strong performance for the 2 man relay champions. Relay members: Brian Rimel, 37, and Tim Kennedy, 47, of St. Petersburg, Florida and the **St. Petersburg Masters** Swim Team. Official Placement: 1st Place, 2 Man Relay.

9:46.19 All Action, No Motion - Enjoyed their day on the water just as much as they enjoyed their nights on the town. Relay members: James Scott, 31, and Mark Rosenberg, 39 of London, England. Official Placement: 2nd Place, 2 Man Relay.

9:58.01 - # 9 Relay Team - Bay area relay team makes a good showing in their second consecutive completion of Tampa Bay. Relay members: Mike Embry, 56, John Neukamm, 43, David Kirkam, 49, Jim Zinner, 48, Barton Cobb, 49 from Tampa, Florida. Official Placement: 1st Place, 5 Man Relay.

9:59.22 - Tampa Bay Aquatic Club - Fifth consecutive success for TBAC. Relay members: **Joe Solak**, 39, **Clara Reynolds**, 34, and Tom Rawls, 36 from Tampa, Florida. Official Placement: 1st Place, 3 Person Mixed Relay.

10:23.53 - Brighton Beach Memoirs - May return next year for solo swims. Relay members: Cristian Vergara, 45, Bonnie Schwartz, 24, Lori Carena, 50, and James Meier, 59, of New York City, New York **Metro Swim Club**. Official Placement: 1st Place, 4 Person Mixed Relay.

10:30.15 - The Eulers - Father/son team completes the swim in the first relay of its kind. Relay members: Dr. Herbert Euler, 36, and Dr. Konrad Euler, 68, of St. Petersburg, Florida swimming for the **St. Petersburg Masters** Swim Team. Official Placement: 2nd Place, 2 Man Relay.

12:26.07 - Jersey Long Distance Swim Club - Second year for the Channel Island open water veterans. Relay members: **Sally Minty-Gravett**, 46, **Charlie Gravett**, 60, Katharine Clark, 19, and **Dario Parmesan**,

40. ADDENDUM 5.1.04 Email from **Charlie Gravett** after spending an extra week in Tampa in the hospital: "Hi Guy's; I don't want to labour the point as I'm sure most of you couldn't give a monkey's but now I'm back on the 'Rock' I find our E-mails bursting with good wishes from so many of you. I have safely returned from the 'Green Apple Tango' World Championships without the option of a Vikings funeral. Thanks to a sound travel Insurance Policy I was treated like Royalty, or at any rate a moderately acceptable Limey by the American health system at St Joseph's Hospital in Tampa. They were as superb in their understanding of my plight as their jealous husbandry of their municipal sewerage system as they were thorough in their clinical investigations and remedial treatment. From the Emergency Services who scrapped me off the boardwalk and turned my arms into dart-boards, the specialist cardiologists and infectious disease doctors who scratched their collective heads and tried to fathom out why anyone would travel half way round the world to swim in their shark, sting-ray, crocodile infested waters and to the nurses who just couldn't do enough and shared a few laughs with me. Thanks. Thanks to Ron Collins for a great swim - initially! All Tampa Bay swimmers get their monies worth out of that boy, it's a great swim and our congratulations to all solo swimmers who completed the 24 miles and us relay squads of varying numerical composites who had a little more time to enjoy the skylines and sights. His escorting of Sally through the 'flesh-pots' of the Tampa Bay night whilst I lay 'suffering' was as gallant as a guy can get! His reward is a collective round of applause as the sun sets and a crowded pub find it necessary to clap the sun going down; only in America! Thanks to Bad Boy Parcels who showed such concern with his frequent phone calls, he's hoping for the code to get into the Guinness fridge, but the code will die with me mate! To my mates who formed the Jersey squad, thanks for all your efforts in and out of the water and for your support of Sal and thanks to the E-mailers, texters, phone callers et al. To all my aquatic mates - thanks a lot, we had a ball - eventually!" Official Placement: 2nd Place, 4 Person Mixed Relay.

13:04.29 - TRI Swimming - Longest swim of the day. Relay members: Tim Moore, 51, Tiger Mills, 49, Diane Sweetapple, 46, Janell Cory, 49, and Dawn Clark, 38 representing the St. Pete Maddogs Triathlon Team of St. Petersburg, Florida. Official Placement: 1st Place, 5 Person Mixed Relay.

DNF - A Beauty and 3 Beasts - Withdrew at the Howard Frankland Bridge due to the change in the tide. Relay members: **John Cox**, 69, **Robert Beach**, 73, **David McCord**, 55, Pam Geiger, 51 from the **St. Petersburg Masters** swim team.

DNF - Joe's Groupers -Withdrew due to inclement conditions at the St. Petersburg Pier. Relay members: **Barbra Lewis**, 42, Anne Coen, 61, Bill Van Horn, 65, from Canton, Ohio swimming for the O*H*I*O Masters Swim Team..

DNF - Shoals Sharks - Withdrew from race due to darkness with only 2 miles to go. Relay members: Rick Elliott, 51, Rachel Giles, 24, Jay Powers, 43, Bradford Lynch, 46, John Landon, 55, and Tim Zeulke, 45 from Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

DNF - Tampa Tarpons - Mechanical problems prevented them from starting the race. Relay members: Kevin Norris, 42, Nancy Lyn Ash, 30, and Chad Carson, 33 from Tampa, Florida.

Tuesday, April 22, 2003 - 9:01 pm Eastern Time

For Immediate Release

SOURCE: *Distance Matters, Inc.*

Parcells Reigns Supreme at Sixth Annual Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

CLEARWATER, FL--Dave Parcells was the first solo swimmer to finish the gruelling 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim on Saturday, April 19, with a swim that makes him the new "King of Tampa Bay." His total of 5 successful swims puts Parcells into Tampa Bay history books as the individual with the most successful swims of the 24 mile length of Tampa Bay. It was his first victory, after finishing as high as third in his 4 previous swims of the event.

The top woman finisher was Kathleen Wilson, who overcame shoulder injury and a change in tide that made her last 4 hours in the water painful and treacherous. In the competitive relay divisions, The Mullets out-distanced the entire field, followed closely by a suprisingly fit team of reuniting ex-varsity swimmers from Shippensburg State College.

The event is sanctioned by United States Masters Swimming and is held in celebration of Earth Day to recognize the renourishment and revitalization of Florida's largest estuary. As usual, most of the competitors and their crews reported that they saw numerous dolphin and manta rays during their trek from the southern to the northern end of Tampa Bay. This year, seven individual swimmers and seven relay teams competed for honors.

SOLO RESULTS

10:24.20 - Dave Parcells, 44, of Madison, Connecticut had another great Tampa Bay swim as he continues to use the event as a springboard for other challenging swims. Last year, he swam Tampa Bay to help him prepare for his successful attempt to become the 4th American, 16th person worldwide and the oldest person in history to successfully complete a double crossing of the English Channel (21 hours, 30 minutes).

Dave is happy that he gets to add another epic tale to his storied distance swimming career, and plans to return in 2004 to compete in his 6th consecutive Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. Crew Members: Chad Siple and **Marvin Siple**. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 40-44 age group.

12:26.30 - Kathleen Wilson, 39, Charleston, South Carolina said, "I really did enjoy myself in that sick way that we all relish. My swim went well for many hours, motoring along with a good pilot, good crew and happy swimmer. About 30 minutes before the Gandy Bridge, I started experiencing shoulder pain, and something that has never happened to me on a long swim, even during the very high stress swimming dealing with French currents. I asked for some pain medication and found that the better form I maintained, the less pain. As the hours wore on, nothing worked anymore and upon hitting rougher waters between the bridges, I was becoming very unhappy, in fact miserable. I did employ new tactics learned in the English Channel and managed to cure myself of my prairie dog tendency to stick my head up, looking around only to discover that nothing appeared to be closer. Terrific way to make a miserable swimmer even more miserable. I didn't look around and it did help."

"During the last several hours, I did something that I have never done before: I broke my stroke and swam a little breaststroke and one arm free. I needed a few seconds of pain relief. Crew chief and husband Fred called my coach in Charleston for a few words of wisdom, inspiration, something nice to say to me and they couldn't think of anything. "Remember Cape Gris Nez!" was it. (I try very hard to forget Cape Gris Nez.) They actually for a split second considered the possibility that I would quit. It was dismissed just as quickly when it simply drew laughs from my teammates in Charleston. They understand the personality that they are dealing with - not exactly normal."

"I staggered on with no right arm left and finally made it to the beach with a feeling of relief and some frustration knowing that I lost gobs of time. I did manage to solve a number of the world's great problems while swimming, as well as a few of my own."

Support crew: **The Glasure Group** (Jack, Stu, Becca, Nicolette, Katie) According to Jack Glasure, it was "Another totally awesome event to witness from the best seat in the house, my boat. The Glasure Group crew

was proud to lead the solo woman champion again. The weather was ideal this year, and the current was no factor, other than a short stretch of brisk NE wind just North of the Howard Frankland. We took a 30 degree heading from Pinellas Point and hit the beach on the Courtney Campbell Causeway right on the money. A straight shot. It helped to study a satellite image of Tampa Bay and to run the course with the swimmer and her crew two days before the race. "

Kathleen kept a brisk rate of 80 strokes per minute for the first 8 hours, then 75 strokes for the final 4 hours. Official Placement: 1st Place, Women's 35-39 age group.

12:35.15 - Pat Marzulli, 54, of Indian Rocks Beach, Florida became the second oldest competitor to successfully complete the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. He has participated as a relay swimmer and has been a member of the event's support crew since the inaugural event in 1999, but this was his first attempt as a soloist. Marzulli was "just happy to finish," and plans to continue his participation in the event, along with wife Martine. He competes at United States Masters Swimming events representing the **St. Petersburg Masters** swim team. Crew: **Maud Orlando, Mrs. Pat Marzulli, and Creighton Pruitt**. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 50-54 age group.

14:23.00 - Laura Colette, 38, of San Jose, California returned to Tampa after successfully completing the swim in 2002 (13 hours, 20 minutes). This year, she suffered through intestinal pains and a strong outgoing tide to eventually make it to her second consecutive completion of the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. In doing so, her time was the longest ever for a successful completion of the event. Crew: **Dave Figliola** and kayaker Mike Fisher. Official Placement: 2nd Place, Women's 35-39 age group.

DNF - Hal Clarendon, 57, of Gainesville, Florida was making his **fourth attempt** to complete the swim, but said that he, "got within striking distance of the Gandy bridge when the sea picked up and darkness and tide turned against me. I outswam my previous efforts, staying in the water eleven hours, eleven minutes and 27 seconds. I will spend this next year increasing my speed. A wonderful swim, with a wonderful crew. **Ryan kept me going**, and boatmaster Steve and my son, Jack, made this adventure a memory of a lifetime. We'll do something in our next issue of Outdoor Adventure Magazine. Thanks for a chance to step beyond the ordinary and everyday life." Crew: Steve Fisher, Jack Clarendon, and **Ryan Woodruff**.

DNF - Matt Price, 22, of West Point, New York suffered shoulder injury and withdrew as he approached the Gandy Bridge. He returns West Point to finish his final year as a cadet at the United States Military Academy. He is scheduled to swim the English Channel in July 2003. Crew: **Clark East** and **Delores Dios**.

DNF - Kevin Norris, 41, of Tampa, Florida was forced to withdraw as he approached the Gandy Bridge after suffering hypothermia and exhaustion. This is his first attempt to swim a marathon swim distance, and managed to set a new personal distance record. Crew: **Fred Uzro** and **Paul Marring**.

RELAY RESULTS

8:54.15 - The Mullets ran away from the field as they caught the strong incoming tide as they swam wide around Pinellas Point. The top-seeded trio hammered their way north to post the day's fastest time, arriving at the finish line just minutes before their goal of nine hours. The team was comprised by **Brian Rimel** and Tim Kennedy of St. Petersburg, Florida, and **Jill Gellatly** of Houston, Texas. Rimel said, "I wanted to take a moment to tell you that you and your support group did a wonderful job in orchestrating this weekend's swim. I look forward to competing again in '04, as do my team mates!" Crew: **Kern Davis**. Official Placement: 1st Place, Mixed 3 person relay.

9:12.40 - Shippensburg State College, Old School showed surprising form as they posted the second fastest time of the day. Local swimmer Chris Burke hosted a reunion for his college teammates nearly 20 years after competing as varsity swimmers at Shippensburg State College in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. They were **Chris Burke**, 41, **David Whitehead**, 41, Doug German, 39, Mark McCormick, 39, Rob Spence 40, and **Wynn Fertig**, 43. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 6 person relay.

9:59.30 - Tampa Bay Aquatic Club of Tampa, Florida made another strong showing as they completed their fourth consecutive Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. Their team also made another strong showing at the **post-race festivities** at the finish line. This year, TBAC was represented by **Joe Solak**, 38, Clara Reynolds, 33, and **Tom Rawls**, 35. Official Placement: 2nd Place, Mixed 3 person relay.

10:42.55 - Beauties and the Beasts had an amazing day in the event, especially considering that the team had an average age 63! They were **John Cox**, 69, **Robert Beach**, 72, **David McCord**, 54, **Pam Geiger**, 50, Jo Ann Harrelson, 47, and **Konrad Euler**, 67. All swim for the **St. Petersburg Masters** swim team. They still feature the oldest female(Harrellson-age 43 in 1999) and oldest male(Euler-age 66 in 2002) swimmers who have completed the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim as soloists. Official Placement: 1st Place, Mixed 6 person relay.

11:30.50 - # 9 Relay Team were comprised of triathletes and endurance athletes from the Tampa Bay area. They were: Michel Embry, 55, Joe Guidry, 52, David Kirkam, 48, Jim Zinner, 47, Barton Cobb, 48, and Al Robinson, 59. Crew: Official Placement: 2nd Place, Men's 6 person relay.

11:46.00 - Ali-Sally-Ali represented the Jersey Long Distance Swim Club, UK, and were comprised of **Alison Streeter**, 38, **Sally Minty-Gravett**, 45, and **Alison Lee Horsfall**, 29. "**Queen of the Channel**" Alison Streeter said that it, "was a great great swim and pretty tough. I was pleased I was doing a relay and not a solo. THANKS to all your helpers and boat pilots. We could not have done it without them." Crew: Bernie Sadowski and **Helen Barker**. Official Placement: 1st Place, Women's 3 person relay.

13:14.10 - Edodos teammates **Tim Lawrence**, 37, from Montgomery, Alabama, and **Matt Johnson**, 40, from Frankfurt, Germany were able to finish just as the **sun disappeared over the horizon**. According to Johnson, "it was a great experience for me. My first open-water event. I am so glad that Tim Lawrence was anchoring our team. The guy is a hammer." Crew: Karen Hoke. Official Placement: 1st Place, Men's 3 person relay.

Monday, April 22, 9:01 pm Eastern Time

For Immediate Release

SOURCE: *Distance Matters, Inc.*

Results from the Fifth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

CLEARWATER, FL--The Fifth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim was held on Saturday, April 20 to celebrate Earth Day. The 24 mile competition started at 7:30am from the Sunshine Skyway at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort (800 227 8045) and ended at the Courtney Campbell Parkway on Ben T. Davis Beach. Conditions were nearly perfect until a moderate sea breeze gave swimmers a slight chop during the late afternoon hours. Water temperature ranged from 78F - 81F.



Chris Derks, 31, Miami, FL set a new course record with a time of 7 hours, 41 minutes, 38 seconds. The old record was 8:24 set in 1999.



Tom Fristoe, 42, Pleasanton, CA also broke the old course record and finished in 8 hours, 13 seconds.



Marcos Diaz, 27, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic placed third with a time of 9 hours, 3 minutes, 23 seconds. Marcos Diaz 9:03.23



Gail Rice, 45, Miami, FL was the women's champion with a time of 9 hours, 8 minutes, 43 seconds. 9:08.43.



Cheryl Vega, 39, Hollywood, FL was the second woman to finish, posting a time of 9 hours, 37 minutes, 51 seconds.



Dave Parcels, 44, Madison, CT finished his fourth Tampa Bay swim in 9 hours 42 minutes, 48 seconds. Dave crossed the **English Channel** in 2000, and plans a two-way crossing later this year.



Dee Llewellyn, 24, Bradford, West Yorkshire, England was the third place woman, with a time of 11 hours, 39 minutes, 39 seconds.



John Ceraolo, 41, Coral Springs, FL completed the swim in 11 hours, 59 minutes, 37 seconds. Ceraolo plans an English Channel crossing in July.



Donald Lutton, 32, Miami, FL finished in 12 hours, 51 minutes, 54 seconds.



Tom Fergin, 37, Indianapolis, IN took 12 hours, 55 minutes, 24 seconds to finish, despite being everyone's sentimental favorite. He represents the **Indy Swim Fit Team**.



Dr. Konrad Euler, 66, St. Petersburg, FL, became the oldest ever to complete the swim, posting a time of 13 hours, 9 minutes, 28 seconds. Euler had entered the event 3 times previously, but was unable to make it to the finish until this year.



Laura Colette, 38, San Jose, CA set a new record for the longest time in the water, completing the swim in 13 hours, 20 seconds, 1 second. She agreed the time doesn't matter, but the distance does matter. She has competed in a **Santa Cruz to Monterey** relay, **Llyn Padarn, Wales**, and the **Spring Lake Mile**.



Kevin Murphy, 53, of Harrow, Middlesex, England was forced to withdraw within two miles of the finish because of the escort boat's inability to continue during darkness.



Wayne Gilliam, 34, Dallas, TX retired near the St. Petersburg Pier, after swimming more than 5 times longer than his previous best. On the boat were: Harold Nezat, Jim Barnes, Debra Gilliam and Tyler Jones.

RELAY SWIMMERS

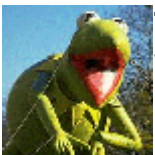
The Bolles School Sharks, Jacksonville, FL set a new relay record, finishing in 7 hours, 30 minutes, 32 seconds. Their old record was set in 2001, when they swam the course in 8 hours, 45 minutes. The swimmers were Gabriela Flores, **Briley Bergen**, Mariana Klinowski, Morgan Sonstegard, Kate Van Houten, and Catherine Wolpe.



St. Pete Masters, St. Petersburg, FL set a new masters record time with 8 hours, 43 minutes, 32 seconds. The swimmers were Brian Rimel, Tim Kennedy, Robert Melson, Jennifer, Ed, Christineare Tim Kennedy, Robert Melsom, Brian Rimel, Jennifer Alger, Christine Forkois and Ed Asnew.



Tampa Bay Aquatic Club, Tampa FL finished first in the 3-person men's relay division, completing the course in 9 hours, 43 minutes, 49 seconds. Swimmers were Coach Joe Solak, Lane Hudson, and Tom Rawls.



Team Kermit, Tampa, FL finished the course in 10 hours, 37 minutes, 21 seconds. Swimmers were Laura Kaleel, James Mela, and Christine Swanson.



Team Gatorbait, Gainesville, FL finished in 11 hours, 17 minutes. Their swimmers were Don Johnson, Lyndsey Gair, Lew Friedland, Bill Gair, Tom Wurzbach, and Alan Couzens.

Monday, April 23, 9:01 am Eastern Time

For Immediate Release

SOURCE: Distance Matters, Inc.

Derks Repeats as Champion in Marathon Swim

CLEARWATER, April 23 --Chris Derks, 30, of Miami, Florida completed a "three-peat" performance, at The Fourth Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim on Saturday, April 21. Having won the event in 1999, and 2000, he was able to cover the course in 9 hours and 4 minutes, to finish first out of a field of 21 individual swimmers.

The gruelling competition started at 8:30am at the Courtney Campbell Causeway, with swimmers attempting to swim to the Sunshine Skyway, a course that covers the entire length of Tampa Bay. Swimmers fought an incoming tide for the first 5 hours, and were plagued by a 10-15 knot cross-wind that blew most swimmers and escort crews to the west of the optimal course.

The women's champion was Laura Borgelt, 28, of Denver, Colorado, who finished the course in 10 hours and 20 minutes. Her performance placed her second overall, despite having to overcome adversity, as some of her vital provisions were mistakenly left behind at the starting line.

In the 3-Person Relay Division, Los Gringos of Washington DC, captured the overall title, while The Bolles School Sharks of Jacksonville, FL were the first to complete the course swimming as a four-person team.

The results posted are believed to be true and accurate as of Monday, April 23. Due to inclement weather and impending darkness, some swimmers were forced to be removed from the water. Finishing points - Gandy Bridge (10 miles from start), St. Petersburg Pier (15 miles from start), and Pinellas Point (within 3 miles from finish line).

MEN RESULTS

(Place, Finish Time or Finish point, **Swimmer**, Home Town)

1. 9 hours, 4 minutes, 41 seconds - **Chris Derks**, 30, Miami, FL
2. 11 hours, 28 minutes, 20 seconds - **David Boudreau**, 42, Weston, FL
3. 11 hours, 38 minutes, 15 seconds - **Ryan Woodruff**, 20, Gainesville, FL
4. 11 hours, 51 minutes, 9 seconds - **David Blanke**, 41, Austin, TX
5. 12 hours, 12 minutes, 0 seconds - **Dave Parcels** 43, Madison, CT
6. 12 hours, 38 minutes, 0 seconds - **Andrew Johnson**, 35, Arlington, VA
7. Pinellas Point - **Mark Lohnes**, 35, Lincoln, NE
8. Pinellas Point - **Gregg Cross**, 45, Ft. Myers, FL
9. Pinellas Point - **Gerry Teeven**, 43, Coral Springs, FL
10. Pinellas Point - **John Ceraolo**, 40, Coral Springs, FL
11. St. Petersburg Pier - **Dan Foster**, 36, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada
12. St. Petersburg Pier - **Eric Shanks**, 42, Lincoln, NE
13. Gandy Bridge - **Chris Hutt**, 21, Papillion, NE
14. Gandy Bridge - **Joel Klemm**, 28, Lincoln, NE
15. Gandy Bridge - **Hal Clarendon**, 55, Gainesville, FL
16. Gandy Bridge - **Dr. Konrad Euler**, St. Petersburg, FL
17. St. Petersburg Pier - **Robert Abcug**, 31, Coral Springs, FL

WOMEN RESULTS

(Place, Time or Finish point, **Swimmer**, Home Town)

1. 10 hours, 20 minutes, 30 seconds - **Laura Borgelt**, 28, Denver, CO
2. Pinellas Point - **Emily Watts**, 33, Manchester, MD
3. St. Petersburg Pier - **Sue Wilkinson-Megaw**, 47, Fairfax, VA
4. Gandy Bridge - **Allison Seldman**, 24, Gainesville, FL

RELAY RESULTS

(Division (Place, Time or Finish point, **Team member**, Home Town)

- 1 Four-person USA - 8 hours, 45 minutes, 24 seconds - **The Bolles School Sharks**, Jacksonville, FL - Briley Bergen, 17, Annie Moore, 18, Brielle Adamovitch, 19, Cara Manlandro, 17
1. Three-person USA - 10 hours, 10 minutes, 26 seconds - **Los Gringos**, Washington DC - Denis Crean, 40, Sarn Brownell, 18, Guillermo Garcia, 14
1. Three-person USMS - 11 hours, 31 minutes, 2 seconds - **Tampa Bay Aquatic Club**, Tampa, FL - Joe Solak, 36, Carol Carter, 37, Tom Rawls, 33
2. Three-person USMS - 11 hours, 27 minutes, 20 seconds - **United States Paralympic Veterans**, Kendra Berner, 20, Davidson, NC, Trischa Zorn, 36, Indianapolis, IN, Dan Kelly, 24, Robbinsdale, MN
3. Three-person USMS - St. Petersburg Pier - **KOWS**, Julie Yamato, 32, San Francisco, CA, Wendy Woods, 36, Boston, MS, Russ Dagon, 34, Orlando, FL

Saturday, April 22, 2000

Swimmers Brave High Winds and Seas at the Third Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

TAMPA, April 22 --Nineteen individuals, and 5 three-person relay teams fought to survive choppy seas and a 20 knot headwind at the Third Annual Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. More than half of the competitors were forced to withdraw midway into the race, due to the challenging conditions. Chris Derks of Miami, Florida won the event with a time of 8 hours, 30 minutes, 53 seconds.

The event is held each year on Earth Day to celebrate the revitalization of Florida's largest estuary, and to promote open water swimming.

OFFICIAL RESULTS



1. Chris Derks, Miami, FL - 8:30.53 Chris, 29, successfully defended his title as champion, having also won in 1999. His time was only 7 minutes slower than his course record that he established a year ago.



2. Georgios Tsianos, Berkeley, CA - 9:00.50 George, 23, led the race early, but was passed at Pinellas Point by Chris Derks and the team from University of Florida. He was a varsity swimmer at University of California, Berkeley and trains in the San Francisco Bay.



3. David Parcels, Madison, CT - 10:55.30 Dave, 42, improved on his 4th place finish in 1999(10:04). Next, he plans to swim the 28 mile Manhattan Island Marathon swim in June, and then will attempt to swim the 21.5 mile English Channel in August.



4. Stuart Abcug, Atlanta, GA - 10:56.25 Stu, 28, won the "Battle of the Abcug Brothers" by beating his brother Rob by almost 50 minutes. His 1999 result was 6th (10:14).



5. Robert Copeland, Somerset, NJ - 11:06.38 Rob, 43, placed fifth, matching his 1999 result. He competed at the 28 Mile Manhattan Island Marathon in 1999, where he was the bronze medalist.



6. Robert Abcug, Coral Spring, FL - 11:44.09 Rob, 30 is the brother of Stuart Abcug. In 1999, he completed the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim in 10 hours, 59 minutes.



7. Scott Coleman, Boca Raton, FL - 12:41.33 Scott, 45, agreed that this swim was difficult, but there were few comparisons to his 1996 English Channel crossing.



8. Gregg Cross, Ft. Myers, FL - 12:59.00 Gregg, 44, suffered through the conditions longer than anyone ever has while swimming the Tampa Bay Marathon. On March 14, 1996, he was the first to successfully swim the 19 miles around Estero Island, FL with a time of 8 hours, 10 minutes.

RELAY RESULTS

1. The Old Faded Speedos - 9:15.40 Rod O'Conner, 35, of New York, Ny; Robert Allen, 34, of Stirling, VA; and Ed Zerkle, 28, of Reston, VA. This is the second major relay championship for the Old Faded Speedos team. In 1999, they set a new course relay record at the 28 Mile Manhattan Island Marathon with a time of 7 hours, 2 minutes.

2. Team OAS - 9:43.19 Andrew Johnson, 34, of Alexandria, VA; Rose Rice, 26, of Falls Church, VA; and Guillermo Garcia, 13, of Washington, DC.

3. Tampa Bay Aquatic Club - 10:37.19 Joe Solak, 35 of Tampa, FL, Clara Booth, 30, of Tampa, FL, and Tom Rawls of Orlando, FL. They were the hometown favorites, with many of their raucous teammates present at the finish line.

CHRIS DERKS WINS INAUGURAL TAMPA BAY MARATHON SWIM

APRIL 22, 1999 OFFICIAL RESULTS:

1. Chris Derks, 28, of Miami, FL - 8 Hours, 23 Minutes
 2. Bambi Bowman, 25, of Miami, FL - 9:30
 3. Kathrin Lammers, 29, of Hamburg, Germany - 9:43
 4. Dave Parcels, 41, of Madison, CT - 10:04
 5. Rob Copeland, 42, of Somerset, NJ - 10:10
 6. Stuart Abcug, 27, Atlanta, GA - 10:14
 7. Tim Kennedy, 42, of St. Petersburg, FL - 10:39
 8. Bruce Anderson, 38, of Riverview, FL - 10:42
 9. Robert Abcug, 29, of Coral Springs, FL - 10:59
 10. JoAnn Harrelson, of St. Petersburg, FL - 11:05
 11. Tim Moore, 46, of St. Petersburg, FL - 12:31
- Dr. Konrad Euler, 63, of St. Petersburg, FL - dnf due to leg cramps at Pinellas Point
Hal Clarendon, 53, of Gainesville, FL - dnf due to coldness at the Pier
Jeff Wheatley, 38, of Tampa, FL - dnf due to time constraint
Finlay Macadam, 39, of Georgetown, Grand Cayman - dnf due to coldness at the Pier



- Chris Derks, of Miami, FL set the new course record for the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. He has completed the New York City Marathon (28 miles) , and the Atlantic City Ocean Marathon (10 miles). He was USS 25 & 15 kilometer All-American each year from 1995-97. He said that sea life was abundant and he saw hundreds of sting rays during the Tampa Bay swim.



- Bambi Bowman, of Miami, FL was the womens' champion for the Inaugural Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. She was the 1998 USS (United States Swimming) National Champion for the 25K Open Water distance. She has won three 25K open water national championships. In 1995, she placed first in the 25K at the Pan Pacific Championships.



- Dave Parcels, of Madison, CT is 41 and was the first and only amateur to compete with IMSA(International Marathon Swimming Association) professionals at their 17.5 Mile Swim Across Long Island Sound.



- Stuart Abcug, of Atlanta, GA is 27 and swims for Dynamo Masters Swimming in Atlanta, GA. He also plays water polo for both Dynamo Water Polo and Emory Water Polo, and played in college for Georgia Tech from 1989-1994.



- Robert Abcug, of Coral Springs, FL is 29 and the brother of Stuart Abcug. He swam and played water polo at George Washington University and competes at USMS (United States Masters Swimming) meets representing the Coral Springs Masters Swim Team.



- JoAnn Harrelson, of St. Petersburg, FL is 43 and a member of St. Pete Masters. Her finish made her the oldest woman to successfully complete 24 mile swim.



- Dr. Konrad Euler, of St. Petersburg, FL is 63 and a member of St. Pete Masters. Unfortunately, leg cramps led to the Doctor's demise about 3 hours into the swim in 1999.



- Hal Clarendon, of Gainesville, FL is 53 and swims the Florida Aquatic Swim Team (FAST) Masters. He has swam across Tampa Bay twice already as a participant in The Tampa Bay 5K Challenge. He has also twice crossed the Pensacola Bay in their annual 5K race.



- Finlay Macadam, Georgetown, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands is 39 and a Caribbean open water swimming veteran. In 1998 he completed the 5 mile St. Croix Coral Reef Swim.

To see the article written by Terry Tomalin in the April 23rd St. Petersburg Times, click here:
http://www.sptimes.com/News/42399/Sports/A_windy_chilly_marat.shtml

Notes from 1999 participants:

" Just a note to thank you for all your efforts related to the swim.. It was a tremendous first time event and you should feel proud it came off as well as it did.. With some more planning and marketing you should have no problems attracting some good sponsors next year, making the event even bigger and better...

Please keep me posted on next year's event as I will definitely come back. "

*Dave Parcels
Madison, CT*

" I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW WHAT A GREAT DAY I HAD. THE SWIM WAS FANTASTIC, A REAL BLAST. THE WATER AND WEATHER WERE PERFECT. ALTHOUGH THE SWIM WAS MORE DIFFICULT THAN I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE, I REALLY DID ENJOY IT. ONE DAY, WHEN I CAN MOVE MY ARMS AGAIN, I'LL GET BACK IN THE WATER AND START TRAINING FOR NEXT YEAR."

*Rob Abcug
Coral Springs, FL*

WHY?

A friend from Miami spent at least \$15,000 on his mission to swim the English Channel. The water was unbearably cold with temperatures topping out at about 62 degrees. What convinced me to invent my own local event was his story of the finish - His boat captain stopped about 200 yards off the French shoreline and directed his flood light towards land. With that, Scott Coleman swam the last 200 yards to France. He arrived on the shores of France in pitch darkness, celebrated with one person (escort swimmer Randy Nutt), and within minutes got back in the water to catch his boat ride back to England.

So on April 15, 1998 I rounded up a few of my closest friends to be my support crew. I leisurely swam the 24 mile length of Tampa Bay in about 10 hours, and had a big party at the finish. The water was a perfect 74 degrees and the cost was virtually nothing! My hope is that we can eventually make this event a world class race.

To attract entrants I've depended heavily on this website. The project has been a success and 11 individuals, and 3 relays completed the inaugural marathon race in 1999. To help us reach our ultimate goal, we are currently seeking corporate sponsors to help underwrite this event. -Ron Collins

-24 Miles?-

A kayaker's tale - by Pete Wenner

5:00am Thursday, April 22, 1999

Before me, reflected in my bathroom mirror, was an individual barely recognizable to me. Inside my head reverberated the same four words, over and over again, "WHAT AM I DOING?"

Several weeks prior to this morning madness, I committed to paddling my kayak 24 miles, all the while keeping a swimmer, committed to swimming the same distance, close by my side. All of this took place as part of the inaugural Tampa Bay Marathon Swim, which began at the Holiday Inn at the northern end of the Skyway Bridge, ending at Whiskey Joe's on Rocky Point just north of the Howard Frankland.

Soon after arriving at Holiday Inn and transporting my kayak to the beach, from which all would be launching, my doubts quickly faded. It was a beautiful morning with a light southeasterly breeze and cool temperatures. It suddenly occurred to me that the best thing to do on a day like this was to go on a leisurely 24-mile paddle.

The swim began at 9:00am and ended, for me at least, at 8:30pm. My biggest concern was the boredom factor as I knew the pace a swimmer keeps is roughly half of a comfortable paddling pace. I must admit that boredom was not a factor. Barely a mile into the swim I heard a shout of "HELP" screamed out from behind me. I looked over my left shoulder and witnessed two paddlers, water up to their chests, attempting to paddle their double kayak, the deck of which was about two feet below the surface of the bay. Nearby was an assist power boat which came promptly to the rescue and had the pair back in a dry kayak, and on their way in a few short minutes. Once the paddlers safety was insured I had to allow myself a brief chuckle as the entire episode was more than a little comical.

Seeing downtown St Pete and Port Tampa from a mile out in the bay from a kayak was a perspective that many people don't get. Our course took us across the path of several schools of cowhead rays, porpoises and I think I saw at least one manatee, but that was toward the end of the day and that sighting might have to be chalked up to delirium. In addition to this I had the responsibility of keeping "my" swimmer on course, fed, hydrated and, generally speaking, in safe keeping from the vagaries of an 11.5 hour swim in Tampa Bay.

One draw back was the inability to just bolt off and explore those things and places that piqued my curiosity. Although witnessing an individual spend 11.5 hours in the water in order to swim 24 miles was an accomplishment that did a good job of sating my curiosity. This is not something I would want to do on a weekly basis, but once a year, in order to allow someone to accomplish a truly phenomenal feat, I would gladly do this event again and would enthusiastically encourage other paddlers to participate as well.



Ron Collins didn't wear a wet suit because of the flotation it would have provided. The bay temperature was 74. [Times photo: Bill Serne]

Bay swimmer puts in a lengthy day

By TERRY TOMALIN

© St. Petersburg Times, published April 16, 1998

ST. PETERSBURG -- Ron Collins didn't want to miss happy hour.

"There's a party at Whiskey Joes," the 35-year-old Clearwater man said. "I can't be late."

With that, Collins entered the water near the Sunshine Skyway bridge Wednesday morning, his coach and an official timer following in kayaks, and started swimming toward a drink with his name on it 24 miles away.

The marathon swim, the first of its kind in Tampa Bay, took the masters athlete the length of the shipping channel.

"I just want to bring some attention to the sport," he said. "There are a lot of great young swimmers out there making waves. This is for them."

Last year Collins helped organize the first Tampa Bay Open Water Challenge, a 3.5-mile sprint across the bay to help raise money for the environmental group BayWatch.

Organizers hoped to draw 100 swimmers to the May event and were surprised when more than twice that number showed up. This year they expect 400 swimmers to make the crossing from St. Petersburg's Gandy Beach to Tampa's Picnic Island.

The water temperature Wednesday was a cool 74 degrees, but Collins did not wear a wet suit. The rubber gives a swimmer extra flotation, and thereby an unfair advantage, and Collins wanted to do it alone.

"This is a pure swim," said Randy Nutt, one of Collins' support crew. "No toys. No gimmicks. Just a man and the water."

Collins, an investment banker, was not intimidated by the distance. He had completed the 12.5-mile swim around Key West before and saw doubling the distance as a natural progression.

"Anybody can swim the first 12 miles," he said confidently at a 9 a.m. news conference. "The last 12 miles is the hard part. That I can do."

Collins, who trains with the Clearwater Aquatic Team Masters at the Long Center, said he has been preparing his whole life for this event.

"I've been training for 25 years," he said before the swim. "I'm have no doubt that I will finish. We're not going for speed. We're going for distance."

Actual quote:

The swim from the Skyway to the Whiskey Joes restaurant on the Courtney Campbell Parkway is about 3 miles longer than crossing the English Channel, where the water temperature was about 50 degrees Wednesday.

"Swim, you bastard. "
"Coach"
Kelley Allen,
Tampa, FL

Although Collins is no stranger to cold water (he swam across Tampa Bay last November when the water temperature was 65 degrees), he prefers Florida's more temperate climate.

Collins, who usually competes in the butterfly event at swim meets, swam freestyle the entire way at a pace of roughly 100 yards every minute and 30 seconds.

His coach, Kelly Allen, and Nutt carefully monitored Collins' fluid and food intake.

"We've got lots of water and Snickers bars," Nutt said. "Real high-tech."

Collins hoped to complete the swim in nine hours. At 6:30 p.m. he was within sight of Whiskey Joes, where a crowd had gathered on the deck to cheer him on.

"Go, Ron, go," they yelled, which was a bit kinder than what his coach and crew said on the water.

"I don't know how many times I yelled "Swim you b-----!" which is what they say to English Channel swimmers who want to quit," Allen explained. "He kept going."

But Collins didn't need any help. When he crossed underneath the Howard Frankland Bridge, he picked up speed. A pod of dolphins came by and paid him a visit, but he didn't notice.

With the crowd cheering and the end in sight, Collins switched to butterfly for the last hundred yards.

He finished in 9 hours and 52 minutes.

"You are the man, Ron," Allen said. "You are the man!"

Nutt, 38, an accomplished distance swimmer himself, summed it up best.

"Some people are dreamers, others are doers. Ron Collins is both."

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-Swim into history-

By Janis Frolich of The Tampa Tribune

Thursday April 16, 1998

ST. PETERSBURG - Sporting Silly Putty for ear plugs, a melon-shaped blue cap and a size 34 tag peeking out from the back of his black suit, Ron Collins plunged into 74-degree water.

Collins was about to swim his way into Tampa Bay history.

On Wednesday, the 35-year-old investment broker became the first swimmer to make the 24-mile arch up the coast from south St. Petersburg to Clearwater.

"I'm pretty numb," Collins said after his feat, which included an energized outburst of difficult butterfly strokes the last few minutes.

Traveling from the Sunshine Skyway bridge at 9:05 a.m., he passed the St. Petersburg Pier about 1 p.m., where the current finally gave him a break. Collins freestyled under the area's two monster commuter bridges to reach the Courtney Campbell Parkway at 6:57 p.m., less than an hour behind his planned arrival time.

Official time: 9 hours, 52 minutes and 1 second.

Coach Kelly Allen was enthused about the swim, despite the extra time in the water. "The last mile he slowed way down, which brought us in a little late," explained Allen, who worked one of two kayaks that bookcased Collins to keep him on course.

To know the water yuppie Collins is to know two lifestyles.

His brown hair tinged with chlorine yellowish-green from morning workouts at Clearwater's The Long Center, Collins admits he's not the usual focused athlete.

He's quick to show off photographs of his 2-year-old son, Matthew, and speak proudly of his wife, Lea Ann, a vice president at SunTrust Bank. And he does have swimmer's credentials, with 25 years of swimming competitively.

But the stocky Collins, weighing 192 pounds pre-swim and 185 afterward, doesn't allude to any man vs. nature challenge as the reason for the marathon swim.

Instead, he's a man seeking a good time. After his swim and kissing his family, he reached for a swig from a waiting champagne bottle. "It's a great reason to have a party at Whiskey Joe's with my friends," he said of the swim.

For someone about to swim an endurance-testing distance - his previous feat was 12.5 miles in Key West - his approach was surprisingly nonchalant. On the eve of the marathon, his meal, he said, consisted of "chicken wings, ice cream, beers and something else." "He showed up at my house last night at 10:30," said neighbor Chris Hannukainen, who stood by the shoreline to wish him well. "And I wondered, 'Why isn't he asleep?'" During the swim, Collins was fueled by Snickers candy bars and freshwater - consumed while choppy waves pounded at his face.

He joked after coming out of the water about his slurred speech. "My tongue is swollen," he said after hosing off the dirty raccoon eyes from the goggles and the debris in the saltwater.

"I'm used to drinking saltwater," said Collins a week before his record swim. Having just returned from a few practice laps in the bay, Collins was sockless and tieless in the plush conference room at Lawson Financial Corp., where he's worked the past seven years. A varsity swimmer at Virginia Tech who graduated in 1985, he refers to himself as a "sponger," meaning he's adept on a boogie board.

"The swimming doesn't get you tired," he added, explaining that his main concerns were the weather, which turned out perfect, and touching bottom, which didn't happen, thanks to navigator Peter Clark, director of Tampa Baywatch, an environmental group.

Collins' swim, certified by the International Swimming Hall of Fame and sanctioned by U.S. Masters Swimming as a marathon solo swim, is a prelude to the May 2 three-mile race across Tampa Bay from the Gandy Beach to Picnic Island. Sponsored by Baywatch, entry forms are available by calling (813) 896-5320.

Collins plans to participate.

Asked if he'll sit and relax behind his office desk today, Collins, walking with a limp, answered, "Yeah, right."