



Santa Barbara Channel Swimming Association

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Annual Report

Inception to September 2007
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Santa Barbara Channel Swimming Association

1. FINAL Annual Report, October 2007

This is a confidential report for the Association Board reporting on the activities to date and future plans. Once approved by the Board, a summarized version will be made available to the general public on our website.

The Santa Barbara Channel Swimming Association has been formed to:

1. Sanction the swimmers who want to attempt Channel crossings and other marathon swimming adventures in the Santa Barbara Channel region, and recognize them in the category in which they choose to participate.
2. Sanction our members' marathon swims in other areas where there is no official sanctioning body.
3. Foster and help candidates who want to become marathon swimmers by offering swim practices and opportunities to participate in longer swims.
4. Recruit pilots, observers and kayakers to help in the carrying out of the tasks necessary to sanction a swim.
5. Furnish information, advice and sanction only those swimmers with a proven history of marathon swimming that have a proper plan. To all those interested in attempting the crossing that do not have a history of marathon swimming, the Association will share with them a prescribed swimming practice that will enable them to get prepared.
6. Gather and preserve the historical channel crossing data.
7. Celebrate! We will hold a yearly banquet to honor those who successfully did the crossing their family and friends. Most important, all attempts that did not result in a full crossing, at this time, are also welcome to attend with their family and friends.
8. Promote activities to benefit the ocean. Since 2004, we have sponsored an annual relay swim across the SB Channel to raise funds for local ocean-caring non-profit organizations. Each year, approximately 100 swimmers, kayakers and volunteers participate, collecting \$25,000 to \$28,000. 100% of the proceeds go to the chosen beneficiary.

2. Swims that took place in this period of time

2.1 Solos: Details in the web site

- Paul Lewis: First to come to cross the channel as a solo after many quiet years.
- Ned Denison: Most excited supporter of this organization since its inception and first to demonstrate interest in coming to swim it. Did his solo in 2006.
- Rendy Lynn: Youngest and fastest female swimmer to date.
- Kathleen Wilson: Seasoned swimmer with many international swims to her name.
- Peter Urrea – oldest swimmer to cross the channel.
- Kevin Murphy – King of the English Channel.
- Kaustubh Vemuri – 10 years old, the youngest to cross the channel.

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2.2 Relays: Details in the Web site

- July 2007: 6x6 6 boats/6 swimmers each
- August 2007: Tim Lawrence and Peter Zabel



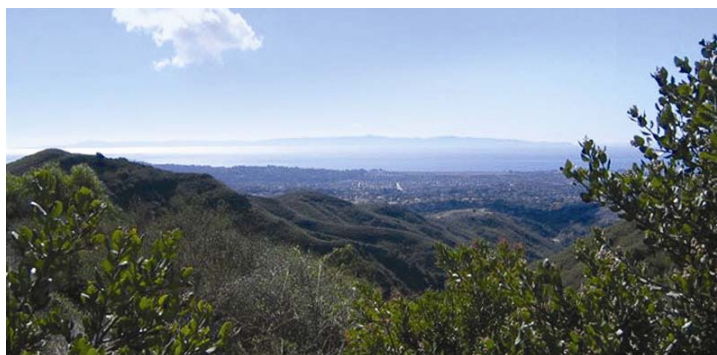
winning team of the 6x6 relay race

2.3 Historic records

- The SBCSA association decided to list all previous reported swims across the Santa Barbara channel (as if they had been formally witnessed by the Association at the time). We hope we have a complete record with just details on Cindy Cleveland's yet to be established.

3. About the Santa Barbara Channel:

- The channel provides a variety of swims in cold/pristine waters. (distances in road miles & km)
 - Anacapa to Oxnard being the shortest distance at 12.4 miles/20 km
 - Santa Cruz Southern tip to Oxnard: 20 miles/32 km
 - Santa Cruz (middle) to Santa Barbara: 24 miles/38 km
 - Santa Rosa Carrington Point to Coal Oil Point: 27.4 miles/44km



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- We have learned from the best of the English Channel, Catalina, Manhattan, Gibraltar and Cook federations: rules, reputation, record keeping and influence.
- Our focus areas are (and continue to be):
 - Personal: The Board members, the pilots, the kayakers do their best to be as friendly as possible to the prospective swimmer and his family.
 - Responsive: The SBCSA was created after the advent of email. This has allowed us to respond quickly to questions from prospective swimmers.
 - Flexible: Understanding the growing participation of open water swims in Triathlons we have created a whole separate category for people who choose to swim with wet-suits. We are willing to work with swimmers on how the logistics of the crossings are done as long as there is no compromising of the swimmer's safety.



4. Finances

- Although our finances are still quite precarious we will always strive to create events that will make some profit so as to support the organization. We also want to increase the membership group and have a solid international data base of swimmers.

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5. Participation

5.1 Association Membership:

- All board members and friends of the SBCSA will be asked to pay a membership fee of \$100.
- Lifetime memberships of \$1500 are greatly encouraged.
- All participants who swim the channel must join at the \$100 fee, which is good for one calendar year.
- For relays, membership is \$50 per swimmer with a \$150 minimum, good for one calendar year.

5.2 Observers:

- We are constantly recruiting potential observers and asking them to take the class.
- This class will be offered monthly. It is only a one hour class. The best observer is one who has done quite a bit of open water swimming and is familiar with the pitfalls of marathon swimming.
- Linda Bamford was instrumental in getting these classes going.

5.3 Pilots:

- We are working assiduously to recruit skippers so as to have a list available to prospective swimmers. As of now we are not asking that they be Coast Guard certified, simply that they are familiar with the channel and have the experience necessary.
- Dean White, board member, has been volunteering to pilot many a swim. His knowledge of the channel, currents, tides and instrumentation has been greatly appreciated by the swimmers.

5.4 Kayakers:

- We have been lucky to count with incredible kayakers who volunteer their services over and over again. People like Rob Almy, Ben Pitterle and many others come to mind.



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5.5 Volunteers:

- Many of our events need the helping hand of volunteers of which we never seem to run short.

More information on boats, pilots, observers and kayakers will be made available in the SUPPORT section of our website.

6. Safety

Safety is of utmost importance and is at the top of our list when sanctioning a swim:

- Swimmer physicals – together with correct expectation setting and training.
- Qualified/dedicated observers, kayakers, pilots and as a bonus the swimmers' crews.
- To date the only incident has been Ned's trip to the hospital with hypothermia. Quick action on Ben's (Kayaker) part was critical in making this more "interesting" than "serious". Emilio has improved detection and communication methods as a result.
- The Association has taken additional steps (insistence on a 6 hour SB qualification swim on cold water - near the coast) to allow a young swimmer from India to participate as an added safety precaution. He followed our suggested training in Santa Barbara and was able to successfully complete the crossing.

7. Publicity

7.1 Website

- The SBCSA website took form this past year and will continue to evolve with the addition of fresh and current information.
- We have an incredible web designer in the person of Megan Miley who has done wonders for the Association. We met Megan in 2004 on occasion of our first Fundraising relay crossing from Santa Cruz Island. Since then Megan has designed our logo, medals, stationery, the website, and special event flyers and advertisements. We continually receive compliments on our web site. Thank you Megan.
- One area of huge growth has been to addition of the link to our web site to many leading open water swimming web sites.



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7.2 E-mail lists

- Our email list of interested swimmers is growing and we want to expand it as much as possible.
- Subscribers receive periodic information of swims accomplished and upcoming events.
- Ned is sending out swimming-related emails to more than 4,000 addresses – all good added exposure for the SBCSA. Ned has our web address as part of his e-mail signature.

7.3 Mentions on Google English Channel (EC) group

- One of the largest groups of open water swimmers regularly communicate on the English Channel Google Group. Ned, Chris and Penny are active participants. We have had 25 plus great mentions over the last year. It is worth noting that several of the “reviewers” rated SB as tougher than the EC.

7.4 Press & Media coverage

- Several swims were noted in the Santa Barbara News-Press and the Ventura County Star. Articles on Paul Lewis, Tim Lawrence and Peter Zabel, Kevin Murphy, Kaustubh Vemuri, and Scott Zornig were published. Also noted was the success of the SBCSA in bringing more swimmers to the area. Articles are available in the “News & Stories” section of our website.
- We are just about to launch a DVD “*Santa Barbara Solo*” covering Paul Lewis, Ned Denison and Rendy Lynn solo swims; plus the first relay race of 6 boats with 6 swimmers each. The video is intended as an introduction to all those who ask about the SBCSA and to present to schools, interested organizations, and related events, and was entered into the Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival.

7.5 Miscellaneous

- The availability of high quality letterhead, caps, badges, certificates and medals has been well received. Our official car gives exposure to the organization.



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8. The Board

- Emilio Casanueva: continues to correspond and greet all new swimmers and works on creating new exciting and challenging swimming events. Observer to most swims.
- Ned Denison is relentless in his pursuit and enthusiasm to promote the SBCSA to Europeans. He participates actively in all decisions concerning the association. This year he added the Manhattan swim to his open water accomplishments
- Dean White: brings a second local SB presence, growing distance swimming prowess and a world of knowledge of the Santa Barbara Channel; currents, tides and general conditions. His familiarity with the islands is also an invaluable resource. He continues to pilot swims for most of the candidates.
- Carina Bruwer brings a record holding international marathon swimming pedigree, the connections with the South African swimming community and plenty "glamour!" She is an accomplished classical flute player to boot.
- Scott Zornig brings a proven marathon and master swimming record and great connections in the Los Angeles/ San Diego swimming communities
- Penny Palfrey brings a record holding international marathon, masters and open water race swimming accomplishments plus the connections with the Australian community. She was the winner of the 2007 Manhattan 28 mile open water race.
- Chris Palfrey: brings a proven marathon swimming record, connections with the Australian community and an immediate responsiveness to email practice (which, with a dispersed group, is vital).
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9. The BIG SWIM

One of the goals of the SBCSA is to promote activities to benefit the ocean. Since 2004, we have sponsored an annual relay swim across the SB Channel to raise funds for local ocean-caring non-profit organizations. Each year, approximately 100 swimmers, kayakers and volunteers participate, collecting \$25,000 to \$28,000. 100% of the proceeds go to the chosen beneficiary. Past beneficiaries include the Community Environmental Council, the Santa Barbara ChannelKeeper, and the Environmental Defense Center. The 2008 BIG SWIM will benefit the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation.



Participants of the 2007 BIG SWIM

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10. The Future:

- We will continue to have communication with prospective swimmers from the USA and around the world.
- Our close relationship with the Santa Barbara City College that has an open water swimming class brings a constant flow of swimmers to our group, and from there I am certain relays and solos will evolve.
- We will add a “Frequently Asked Questions” section to the website.
- We will produce an inventory of local boats and costs to assist out-of-town swimmers.
- We are developing a race that will involve great strength and stamina: The Santa Barbara Ocean Triathlon. This is a new race event which holds great promise: 8 boats with 8 people each, 2 of which are skippers. Set sail (early afternoon) to Santa Cruz Island to Forney’s cove or beyond that is a 5 hour sail, then paddle (kayak) in a relay form the 6 members (non skippers) to Cueva Valdez that is about a 50 mile stretch around the island, then all 6 of them swim in a relay back to East Beach.

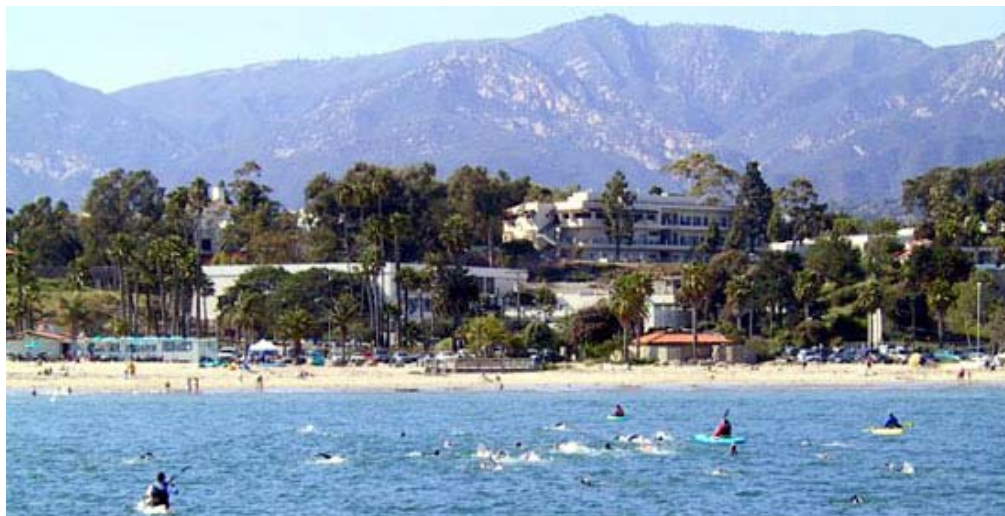
This is the iron man of the Sea.

Nota Bene:

This event has some similarity to the Hydro Tasmania Three Peaks race in Australia. Australia’s premier short-handed sailing endurance mountain running race is held every Easter in Tasmania since in 1989.

How SBCSA will evolve

- The Association will fundamentally continue on the same path with a few additional events and a willingness to certify global swims, if appropriate. The exception is that we will not certify any swims where there is an active federation already in place.
- We want to continue to attract the global spread of swimmers. The Palfrey’s swims next year will help build excitement in Australia and we hope to see Carina (and some recruits) from South Africa. Ned, of course, will continue to get the Europeans over here.



Lovely Santa Barbara