



“Go the Distance” January, 2008 Highlights

January Highlight # 1: What kind of creatures do you swim with in the Open Water? Diana Corbin (40-44, 30.80 miles 2008, 568.57 in 2007) has been training for a quite a while for a Catalina Relay Swim. It sounded like lots of fun – but cold – brrrr! All went well and her relay was successful – but they had some company along the way! I hope you will enjoy her story as well as the video (link in the body of the message) that is truly incredible!

“Dear friends and family,

I did it! Well, actually our relay team did it. The swim started at 2:02am on Tuesday morning, January 15, and finished at 2:02pm that same day. We had six swimmers, and we each swam for one hour. I was second in the rotation, and swam from 3:02am to 4:02am, then again from 9:02am to 10:02am. We went through the rotation exactly twice, and finished with an official time of 12 hours and 40 seconds. On my first swim, the water was 54 degrees and the air temperature was in the 60s (I think - I forgot to write that on my notes). Once I got going, it didn't feel cold at all. When I got out, they told me there were dolphins accompanying me, but I did not see them. I could only see the bioluminescence in the water. Each time I put my hands in the water to swim, they glowed and there were bubbles all around them. It was surreal. It was really dark, and I don't know where the dolphins were, but they were apparently close to me. But I just kept my head down and kept swimming.

At 9:02am when I went in for my second turn, it had warmed up to a balmy 55.6 degrees and the air temp was about 70 degrees, with clear skies and lots of sunshine. It was a bit of a shock after finally warming up after the first swim -- it took me about three hours to get warm after my first swim -- but it was so incredible! After I swam for a few minutes, I was fine and didn't notice the cold at all. The kayakers next to me (Marie from La Jolla and my cousin Bob) told me that they could see whales up in the distance, but I couldn't see them from my vantage point in the water. It was slowing me down to try to see them, so I gave up trying to see them and just kept swimming. When it was time for the next swimmer to get in, I really didn't want to get out. I wanted to JUST KEEP SWIMMING!

Around noon, three whales joined our swimmers and accompanied them for about an hour. They were probably the same ones the kayakers and the boat crew had seen up ahead during my swim. It was amazing! They were so close to the boat and the kayakers and the swimmers. The boat captain said he had never seen anything like

it. Those of us on the boat tried to get lots of pictures. One of the whales surfaced and was as big as our 50 foot boat! Just amazing!

Here is a link to a video from the swim with one of the whales. I was not the swimmer in the water at the time - it was my teammate David Palomino. But it was truly amazing to see this from the boat, and we were so lucky that someone actually had the camera handy and in video mode! I remember saying to them that no one would believe it - that everyone would think it was a doctored video - but I guarantee that is not the case. The whale really was that close to the kayakers and swimmer and main boat. It was a truly incredible experience.

I have also attached the press release. We may be getting an article in USMS SWIMMER Magazine.

<http://www.familykayak.com/gallery/albums/Catalina-Channel-Relay/IMG2944.mov>

(See attached file: Press Release - relay catalina.doc)

It is difficult to put into words what we experienced. It was an incredible swim. The only thing that could top it would be to do a solo crossing, which is my next goal. I thank you all for your support and encouragement, and for not locking me away in a mental institution for wanting to do this!"

January Highlight # 2: The places we find to swim! I giggled when I read this story from Laura Smith (35-39, 21.34 so far in 2007, 236.17 miles in 2008). I think most of us have had a similar experience of trying to find a decent place to swim while traveling... but somehow, somehow we find a way to make it work. I believe that's because GTD participants are some of the most dedicated folks who are very loyal to our sport - we just need to find water!

"Hi, Mary -

I logged 21.34 miles in January. Not bad considering I took two weeks off for business travel. I am behind last year, but I am still planning on doing better overall in 2008 than 2007.

Here's a good GTD story. I was swimming in a small (had to have been less than 20 yards) hotel pool in Atlanta on one of my travels. One of those "push off, streamline, at the wall" pools. I tried to do a "workout" but gave up after a while to hit the treadmill. As I was finishing, another "serious" looking swimmer started to get in, and we struck up a conversation. We discovered that we were both USMS swimmers, and he was in town to attend the same meeting from CA. He mentioned that he had to get in to "log a workout", and turns out he's a GTD participant too. We both agreed that we had no idea how we were going to compute the yardage, and perhaps we should just skip the entry altogether rather than worry about it!

We're a dedicated bunch, us GTD'ers!! Open water, regular pools, hotel "Olympic" pools - we'll do it all!"

January Highlight # 3: Celebrating your achievements. I'm sure most of you were in awe (as much as I was!) of our GTD Xtreme Leader Carrie Kostopulos in 2007. She logged a phenomenal 1803.56 miles last year and has already swum 212.41 miles so far this year. So how does Carrie celebrate her accomplishments?

