

Jersey Long Distance Swimming Club

(Affiliated to: ASA-SER; CS&PF; BLDSA.)

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ESCORT VESSELS REQUIRED FOR ROUND JERSEY SWIM SEPTEMBER 2012

Ladies and Gentlemen;

You may recall from last year that Jersey welcomed a group of severely disabled Servicemen who had lost limbs whilst in the service of our Nation in Iraq and Afghanistan. ‘Battle Backs’ well-intentioned aim was to complete a relay swim around Jersey in order to raise funds for Holidays for Heroes (Jersey) a locally registered charity which brings their fellow disabled colleagues and families to the Island for a well-deserved break.

Due to the wind and rain conspiring against us the main swim never got away, although the lads were able to train several hours per day in various coastal locations. Our upper wind speed limit for any swim in Jersey is Force 4.

The upper echelon of Service swim team managers and the manager for ‘Battle Back’ left the Island considerably impressed by the facilities, organisational ability and warm welcome given to all members of the visiting squad, especially the swimmers. Long Distance swimming in the Services has progressed since the introduction of a Service Championship run over a three and a half mile course in the less than inviting waters of Lake Bala in North Wales, back in 1975. Both able bodied and physically handicapped Service swimmers now take to the brine on a regular basis for swims around the UK and across the English Channel.

Due to the facilities and splendid scenery and locale of Jersey the British Army suggested that their annual ‘Exercise Channel Eagle’ across the Channel should be switched to Jersey for 2012 and renamed ‘Exercise Jersey Eagle’. Other Service swimming associations concurred the proposal and things are building from there. The final suggested line up of six relay squads is a truly international approach. Besides the three UK Service teams from The Royal Navy The Army and the Royal Air Force, ‘Battle Back’ will again grace our coastal waters together with a squad drawn from The Jersey Long Distance Swimming Club, a world renown Club famed for its plethora of 28 successful Channel swimmers. From across the pond a good friend of both Channel swimming and the JLDSC Colonel Tim Lawrence of the United States Air Force is assembling a team of his Services finest. Tim is a past Round Jersey; Jersey to France and Channel conqueror.

All these teams throw up a logistical nightmare in assembling and organising the very necessary escort flotilla required to keep a watchful safe eye on proceedings! Each team requires both a larger Mothership capable of accommodating up to ten personnel in excess to the crew, plus close support vessels, capable of accommodating three swimmers plus your own crew and confident to navigate through the gutters from the ‘reclamation site to La Rocque harbour.

The ‘Battle Back’ team require a specialist vessel for both Mothership and close support which have

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fortunately already been sourced. However we are always on the lookout for suitable vessels for other teams. At this stage we can only offer fuel costs as thanks for your involvement. The swim will normally take 10 – 12 hours at 1.5 – 2 knots, however we are tidally assisted for a good deal of the swim.

Should you be interested in helping out with this very worthwhile charitable occasion, please contact me for more details at any of the above links.

Regards
'Charlie' Gravett
Event coordinator.