

OBSERVER REPORT

Circle Channel Swim Report, April 2020

Swim 'sanctioned' by Santa Cruz Masters and Monterey Bay Swim Association, USA

Conducted with knowledge of, but not necessarily adherence

to https://marathonswimmers.org/rules/8_swim-rules/. Compliant with state and local COVID-19 'Swim in place' restrictions.

Swimmer: Cynthia Hertzner

Observer: Joel Wilson

Videographer/lifeguard: Mark Agnello, RN

Assistant writer/editors: Sarah Jordan, Scott Tapley

MSF Standard equipment: Arena 1pc suit, polarized goggles, single silicone cap

Non-standard equipment:

Tether - short bungee, nylon rope, belt from an old swim buoy

Anchor - Santa Rosa plum tree

COVID-19 face coverings

Course:

-Intex 10ft diameter X 30in Metal Frame Pool, ~24" water

depth <https://www.intexcorp.com/products/above-ground-pools/metal-frame/10ft-x-30in-metal-frame-pool-set/>. Vinyl liner rests atop heavy-duty tarp on dirt

-Debris cover highly recommended <https://www.intexcorp.com/products/above-ground-pools/pool-accessories/pool-covers/10ft-x-10in-round-pool-cover/>

-Vacuum <https://www.intexcorp.com/products/above-ground-pools/pool-accessories/maintenance-cleaning/rechargeable-handheld-vacuum/>

Start location: next to the plum tree

Finish location: at the back door

Minimum distance: 10' in any direction

Max water depth: 2'

Safety equipment:

#chlorinetine calls for chlorine, lots of chlorine!

Upgrade to filtration system: 1000 GPH pump drop in replacement for included 330GPH pump : <https://www.intexcorp.com/products/above-ground-pools/krystal-clear-filtration-sanitation/cartridge-filter-pumps/1000-gph-krystal-clear-cartridge-filter-pump-110-120v-with-gfci/>

Conditions:

Water: 76F, Air: 72F, light winds, sunny skies.

Observer log:

Observer was too busy drinking or acting to keep a log. At least he brought a stopwatch.

Swimmer narrative:

I was inspired to build the Circle Channel by Sharon Vanrouwendaal's Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/p/B-SHZ8QIgZH/>. A COVID-19 beach closure further motivated me. A number of childhood hours spent vacuuming the pool where I swam summer rec gave me confidence I could operate a home pool. I spent approximately 3 hours working solo leveling a spot for the pool and another 3 hours or so putting it together and turning on the pump. All went very smoothly, except I regret not taking more time to smooth out wrinkles on the bottom of the liner. In the uncertainty of this pandemic, the pool is something that makes me smile.

Just before the swim start I was nervous. I tried to narrow my focus to essential work: taking off my COVID face covering, being sure I was buckled in securely, and tried to distract myself from worrying about notorious currents mid-channel. Nonetheless, I was aware that while the swimmer ahead of me ahead of me had started at the quack of dawn to try to get ahead of the tides, I could still see him mid-channel, evidently struggling to make forward progress.

Start: <https://youtu.be/3W3fduNFQ8Y>

After the start I was at the end of my rope almost immediately. I struggled to make progress but then we miraculously reached mid-channel. I took a feed and I saw the duck had made progress. If he could, I could too!

Mid-channel feed: <https://youtu.be/lHiWXgNp2wo>

The rest of the crossing passed quickly. It was nearly dinnertime, the crew was tired of repeating takes to capture each scene and I was eager to eat land food instead of the stuff in the bottles. Just a few strokes from the finish I had a minor collision with the duck. My crew suspects fowl play, but my sense was he was just sheltering in place, weary from so many hours of swimming in fowl weather.

Finish: <https://youtu.be/nBJRzaJisFU>

I hope my experience may inform some landlocked fish.

