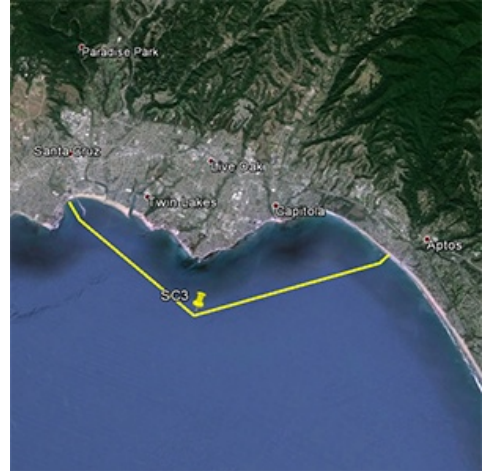


Cowell Beach (Santa Cruz) to Cement Ship (Aptos)

Overview:

This swim takes you from Cowell Beach in Santa Cruz to the iconic Cement Ship at Seacliff State Beach in Aptos. The Cement Ship, or SS Palo Alto, was a concrete ship built as a tanker at the end of World War I. She was mothballed in Oakland until 1929, when she was bought by the Seacliff Amusement Corporation and towed to Seacliff State Beach in Aptos, California. A pier was built leading to the ship, and she was sunk in a few feet in the water so that her keel rested on the bottom. There she was refitted as an amusement ship, with amenities including a dance floor, a swimming pool and a café. The company went bankrupt two years later, and the ship cracked at the midsection. She was stripped of her fittings and left as a fishing pier. Eventually she deteriorated to the point where she was unsafe for this purpose and was closed to the public. Today she remains at Seacliff Beach and serves as an artificial reef for marine life AND a world-class destination for brave and hardy ocean swimmers!



Official Distance: 7 statute miles (by way of the SC3 Buoy)

Swim Route/Map: Start/End at Cowell Beach on the West side of the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf. End/Start on Seacliff Beach on the South side of the Cement Boat and fishing pier. To make this a full 7 miles, stay outside of the SC3 Buoy (an offshore PWC boundary marker; 36°56'20.48"N, 121°58'7.17"W), which lies about one mile South of Point Soquel (Pleasure Point).

Difficulty: 7 miles, cold water, current, and lots of wildlife make this a challenging swim. The route takes you about a 1 to 2 miles off shore and is far enough outside the wind shadow of West Side Santa Cruz to place you well into the “windy” zone on most days. The predominant wind is out of the NW, so swimming from North to South is preferred. However, it’s not uncommon to see days with strong South wind.

Ratification Option: Not Available for ratification. Contact MBSA if you’d like assistance in planning your swim.