

## Add One More ... #74

by Bill Welzien

Temp: 77.0°  
3 mph E wind  
94% humidity

Saturday, May 21, 2016, was the date of my 74th career swim around Key West. My support kayaker was my daughter Jane. She turned 18 years old the Saturday prior. I was praying for calm weather, and the Lord graciously answered my request. Things were calm the whole day. We left home about 6:00 am and made our way to the traditional starting place at the west end of Smathers Beach here in Key West. There was virtually no wind; in its place were the sand fleas looking for breakfast. We were the only ones around.

We left home on the dark. The only light was that of the brilliant full moon in a clear sky. We did the customary things of unloading the kayak from the roof of the van and loading the sport bottles filled with my fuel into the kayak. Jane dutifully covered my back, arms and the backs of my legs with the Desitin 40% max strength zinc oxide. Then she painted my face and balding areas of my head.

The last trip reminded me of the need to put lip balm with SPF of my bottom lip. I had a blister for a few days after that go-round. I would repeat the application a few times during the swim, and the results were ideal ... no blister. The application of the zinc oxide as sunscreen and the lip balm, etc. are precautionary measures so that the recovery is quick and painless. As the saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." And, "A word to the wise is sufficient!"

Jane, too, had a long-sleeved shirt and hat and plenty of sunblock. She reapplied many times during our journey. Back in October during my #72 swim, my kayaker, Don Nelson, covered himself except for his feet. He burned the tops of his feet severely. The tropical sun of the Keys is nothing to trifle with!

Jane had Clif Bars (chocolate mint) and gallon of water for her fuel. I went with seven sport bottles of Hammer Perpetuum. Before we entered the water, I drank a full bottle of Perpetuum and ate a full Clif Bar (Peanut Toffee Buzz, my favorite).

I pushed Jane out from the shore and swam gently to the start pole. I took my first stroke at 7:06 am. The high tide in Key West Harbor was 10:04 am. The height of the high tide was 1.8 feet. The low tide was to occur at 4:44 pm with the depth of -0.3 feet. So we left just about 3 hours before the high tide. The timing

was right, but the tidal current was not killer (as you can see from my splits). Whether the time is what you want or not, every complete journey goes into the record book.

The splits from my Garmin 910XT are as follows:

Splits	Time	Cumulative Time	Moving Time	Distance	Avg Distance per Stroke
1	32:29	32:29	32:17	1,760	1.81
2	32:14	1:04:43	31:14	1,760	0.91
3	29:57	1:34:39	29:38	1,760	0.63
4	26:52	2:01:32	26:25	1,760	0.49
5	27:31	2:29:03	27:28	1,760	0.40
6	36:42	3:05:44	36:37	1,760	0.33
7	34:22	3:40:06	33:53	1,760	0.28
8	36:26	4:16:33	35:21	1,760	0.24
9	36:14	4:52:47	36:03	1,760	0.21
10	30:15	5:23:02	30:14	1,760	0.19
11	41:52	6:04:55	37:56	1,760	0.17
12	41:45	6:46:40	40:55	1,760	0.15
13	5:19.8	6:52:00	5:16	289	0.02

The water was clear. I saw a multitude of conch shells on my way toward the Harbor. I saw one very finely formed starfish. I saw many fish - tropical and otherwise - as I passed Fort Zachary Taylor. I encountered little floating seaweed and no stings or itchy stuff. The water was about 84-85 degrees. It is getting warm, but not suffocatingly so (to me, unabashedly a warm water guy!).

I went up the middle of the Cow Key Channel and the water got very shallow. This was "drag- your-shoulders-and-thighs" shallow. Weird contortions with my arms as I attempted to stroke my way through. My shoulder muscles rebelled. It was especially difficult when I needed to take a breath.

As I rounded "dead man's curve," I hit deeper water, but I didn't find the depth I would be comfortable with until my last half mile. The last 2+ miles were annoying. The water was swimmable, but not deep enough to take a good, full, deep stroke. This was a call for patience. Persistence would pay off. My finish time was 6:52:00. And with that I accomplished my 74th lap around the Island of Key West.

Now I am eligible to attempt #75 or, as distance swimming great Steve Munatones calls it, my "Diamond Swim." This swim is scheduled for the day of the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Swim Around Key West on Saturday, June 4, 2016.

## Distance

21,404 yd

Distance

## **Calories**

**4,392 C**

Calories

## **Timing**

**6:52:00**

Time

**6:43:17**

Moving Time

**6:52:25**

Elapsed Time

**1.8 mph**

Avg Speed

**1.8 mph**

Avg Moving Speed

## **Swimming Dynamics**

**76,938**

Total Strokes

**26 strokes/min**

Avg Stroke Rate

**47 strokes/min**

Max Stroke Rate

**5,918/length**

Avg Strokes