

Observers Report

Alison Streeter

21st July 1992

Observer: Emma Ruston

Type: Two-Way

Successful: YES

Time: 20 hours 55 minutes [BRITISH RECORD]

06.50 The swim started from Shakespeare Bay just behind two other swims that were taking place that day.

07.07 Alison was already edging past the other two swimmers.

07.16 Swimmer decided everyone needed a shower , so started to splash us all, specially Freda who was sitting closest to her .

07.21 Mike did not warn Freda about an oncoming wave so she got her shoes soaked.

07.25 Support team had a discussion about the fact that despite the cost of a ticket on the ferry only being one pound and it only takes one hour and 15 minutes , Alison still wanted to swim across the channel instead.. (yeah yeah , how many times have I heard that one .. yawn Alison)

07.45 Although it was still very early everyone had started to lather on sun cream.

08.55 Mike started throwing pic'n'mix sweets at Alison trying to get them in her mouth.

08.59 Entered the South West Shipping Lane

09.17 Alison reports seeing lots of small fish and promises to catch any tasty looking ones for us .

09.25 Alison wanted to swim through an oncoming ship the 'Isartal' but decided against it.

09.30 Alison said she wanted a new costume so she could get a better tan !

10.13 Three helicopters flew overhead which was fairly unusual.

10.35 We came across a large patch of Jellyfish and Alison tried to eat one. Everyone then was on the watch for more.

11.25 Everything was so relaxed on board that fishing was started off the stern of the boat.

11.46 The first fish , a mackerel was caught , but then the fishing stopped as some of the passengers did not agree with it.

12.33 Alison gave everyone another shower but missed Freda this time , her excuse was that we all looked too hot and needed a cool down.

13.15 We were sandwiched between the P&O Pride of Calais and the Sealink Fiesta.

13.34 The same helicopters came overhead again , but this time in a triangular formation , not in a line like last time.

13.35 Alison came to a patch of muck but just ploughed on through it all.

14.20 There was a denser patch of muck and rubbish so Mike went ahead with the boat and cleared a way through for Alison.

14.45 Alison swore at the suggestion the conditions were so good she should think about going back ' NO WAY' she said , amongst other things.

15.00 A French tourist boat passed close to our stern and its passengers all waved to us.

15.25 Morven went in the water to see if she could catch Alison up for the last part of her swim.

15.40 After a bit of mountaineering Alison landed successfully on the point of Cap Griz Nez with a herd of on-lookers on top of the cliffs wondering what the hell was going on. What a great time , 8 hours 50 minutes.

15.45 Alison swam back out towards the boat where everyone was ready with her towel and prawn sandwich.

15.46 Alison shouted to Mike ' It's a nice day I think I WILL swim back ' and set off again towards England much to the surprise, and shock ! of her support crew . The prawn sandwich got put back in the fridge!

17.27 We had to dodge some lobster pots that were in our way.

17.35 A large Man war jellyfish was spotted and we shouted to Alison to swim round it.

18.15 The white cliffs of Dover could be seen.

18.50 A ball game was played by several of the support team at the stern of the boat.

18.53 Helen Ann Marie with Reg Brickall came to visit us after her swim had finished successfully.

19.15 The other escort boat Sea Satin came up as well, her swimmer had also been successful. Alison stopped to talk to Frank , the observer on the swim.

19.48 The new P&O cruise liner the Oriana could be seen in the distance.

19.48 We came to a large patch of muck and jellyfish. Alison yelled as she was stung by a large 'jelly'

20.30 The sun was setting , but it was still warm and the sea was as flat as a pancake.

20.32 Alison had a green light stick pinned to her costume at the back so we could see her in the dark.

21.30 As we neared the Varne Lightship Freda pulled up her hood and put her fingers in her ears as she is sick of hearing the horn go off every thirty seconds , warning ships of the sandbank.

22.10 The sea has started to get quite rough now , several of the passengers were wishing that they had changed boats and gone back earlier on 'Sea Satin' when they had the chance.

22.30 The wind was right on our nose at approx twenty knots and pushing us back as fast as we moved forward

23.50 Most of the support team stayed outside on the stern because they were feeling too ill to go inside.

03.40 Having been pushed back by the wind for a long time we missed Dover Harbour, and were swept down t just below Folkestone when the tide turned.

03.45 Alison clambered out of the water and a very weary support team cheered her on.

03.50 Alison got back to the boat after completing her 29th and 30th swims .

The total for the two-way was 20 hours 55 minutes . (map)

Emma Ruston