

**Observer's Report**  
**Mark Crowther – Solo**  
**26 Aug 2003**

*(Compiled/Observed by Matt Johnson)*

<b>Time</b>	<b>Feed Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Comments</b>
0900-1010		Pre-start	We met at Eddie's boat at 0900. Mike Oram has advised the pilots to wait ca. 30 minutes to allow winds to settle.
1010-1048		Shuttle from Marina to Abbott's Cliff	Chop and scattered white horses at the mouth of the harbour, but the sea flattened a bit as we approached the start point. Wind speed 4.2 knots at start point. Mark's crew applied zinc to head and shoulders, grease to arms, legs and torso, and Vaseline to friction points.
1053		Start	Wind speed increased to 10.2 knots at start time.
1143	2:00	First feed	Mark did well in the first hour. No breaks or pauses. Complained of seasickness. Coach gave him two "Kwils" tablets to combat that. Feed delivered via a pole/basket assembly.
1249	1:00	Second feed	During the second hour, Mark complained that he had ingested a lot of saltwater, and that things weren't going well. We recommended that he switch to the right side of the boat, so that waves would be dampened. He switched, and began swimming better.
1349	0:30	Third feed	Quick feed. Maintaining 56 stroke rate. Sun has come out, but winds persistent at 13.5 knots.
1418	0:30	Fourth feed	3.5 hours into swim. No problems. Seafrance ferry passes within 600 meters off to our right. Mark was fed maxim electrolyte.
1449	0:30	Fifth feed	Winds still at 13 knots. Mark is not wasting any time on his feeds, but he communicates freely when the need arises.
1519	0:50	Sixth feed	Quick feed of Maxim electrolyte—served warm this time. At 1525, a French fishing trawler ("Kerbulic") passed close to our bow. Fishing nets in the water.
1549	0:30	Seventh feed	Mark's stroke has stiffened, and his kick is becoming wide and less-balanced. At the feed, he stated that his shoulders and back were locking-up. He declined Nurofen. Requested banana at next feed. Told by Eddie to sprint for the next hour, to take advantage of the slack tide.
1619	1:15	Eighth	Mark has pulled very hard for the past 30 minutes. Ate ½

		feed	banana and electrolyte. He was told to continue sprinting for another 30 minutes.
1649	2:00	Ninth feed	Mark vomited-up the banana he ate on the previous feed. Took about one minute of dry-heaving to get it out. He has been advised he can now throttle back.
1719	0:50	Tenth feed	Quick feed on unflavoured Maxim. He was told he was at the halfway point, and doing well.
1749	0:55	Eleventh feed	Mark applied additional Vaseline to his left armpit. Said his “shoulders are gone”. He is tired but maintaining a good pace.
1819	2:00	12th feed	“Ambassador Bridge” container vessel passing 300 meters in front of our bow. We are now 4 miles into the French shipping lane. Mark puked after trying to eat Jelly Babies.
1849	1:00	13th feed	Declined solid food, saying that he would puke it up. Fed Maxim.
1919	1:10	14th feed	A few dry heaves at the feed stop. Only drank half the Maxim offered to him. Minor difficulty removing the light stick from the feed basket.
1949	0:40	15th feed	Drank 6-8 oz of Coke. Stopping occasionally now to adjust hat and goggles.
2015	0:50	16th feed	A few more dry heaves, settled by flat Coke. Asked for information regarding his progress, but then told his coach not to tell him. Lights of Wissant clearly visible. Eddie says that we are dropping nicely with the tide.
2046	0:30	17th feed	Coke with Maxim. Eddie informed crew that we won’t make CGN, and counselled that it would be quite awhile before we hit shore.
2115	0:50	18 <sup>th</sup> feed	Quick feed with Maxim-laced Coke. Mark is communicating and alert. Stroke getting sluggish (48 spm).
2130	0:25	19 <sup>th</sup> feed	Quick Maxim feed. Mark was told he had 4 miles to go, but that it would be some time before the tide shifts—to allow him to reach shore. Crew ran out of Maxim, but Eddie had reserves!!
2146	0:20	20 <sup>th</sup> feed	Quick Maxim feed. Mark was told that the tide was pushing him up the butt. That pleased him!
2225	0:30	21 <sup>st</sup> feed	Quad strength Maxim. Minor dry-heaving.
2254	0:20	22 <sup>nd</sup> feed	Only swallowed 50 ml of Maxim. Said he would “spew” if

			he tried to inject more.
2354	2:00	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> feeds	We called Freda to get advice on “feeds” for Mark which would not induce vomiting. She recommends water (with the chill taken off). Mark took two such feeds in the last hour.
0049		No feeds	No feeds this hour. Mark has become sluggish. Ragged stroke and frequent breaks to dry-heave. But he hammers ahead. And continues to communicate effectively with crew.
0146	2:00	26 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> feeds	Eddie informed Mark that the tide is pushing him towards France, and that he had roughly 1.5 – 2.0 miles to go. Mark said the seasickness is overwhelming. 3 water feeds, and one fruit feed.
0247		No feeds	Mark is now 1.0 miles off the coast. Near Cape Blanc-Nez. Tide in moving inward at 1.5 knots. He is gonna do it!!!!!!!!!!!!
0411		No feeds	TOUCHDOWN. Eddie took us as close to the beach as he could. Dropped us under the monument. He was not able to get close, due to subsurface rock outcroppings. Mark and Matt swam the last few hundred meters together, with Mark exiting the water at 0411. Mark was as polite and calm as ever.

After 17 hours 18 minutes in the water, Mark was a understandably weakened, and we thought it would not be wise to try to swim back to the boat. We spent some time on the beach signalling for the boat to pick us up. Poor visibility hampered our efforts. In the meantime, Matt brought Mark to the cliff face, in order to get out of the breeze. We did some very close bonding to stay warm. In the end, w were picked up in a dinghy by Brian. Fairly intense end to a very intense swim, but it ended well.

**This was an amazing swim for all of us to observe. Our hats go off to a guy with a very strong head, who overcame very, very tough conditions.**