

Support Crews

Mike Oram

Looks like you have already had a lot of replies on this one - from my observations and as a pilot.

Yes choose those that are near and dear to you BUT make sure they are aware of what is involved. "It's not a jolly day out on a pee green boat ". Do not include partners or team members if they are going to be concerned about you suffering or worry about the pain or mental strain you are going to go through. They will get upset when we shout and you shout back and that will put extra pressure on you & them - not enjoyable and not needed The same applies to a partner or team member that is going to suffer from seasickness or the cold or any other thing that will take your mind of swimming.

Tell them to bring warm and waterproof clothes. Remember that you will expect them to be around giving support and being productive - you will worry if they are not.

No young or disruptive children - let them wave goodbye when you leave and meet you when you come back. It can be a very boring day if there heart is not 100% in swimming or behind the swimmers ambition.

You need a experienced crew that can do the job (there are a few about locally) or someone that knows you and your swimming well and is not afraid to contradict you or bully you a bit - just in case you need it. Be selfish and choose a team that will give you 100% attention and be positive all the time.

Remember that this is an extreme sport with an element of danger. Boats are moving objects and the sea and weather are unpredictable. Plan what you need to have for the estimated swim the add 50% for "optimise" and make sure your support team know how to feed and communicate with you. Don't push your frustration to it's limit by wanting to know where you are or how long you have to go.

-- You start one side of "the pool" - do a width and get out the other side. Nothing else matters.--- A well know saying from the "Channel Queen" herself - and repeated to her regularly when she starts asking those questions. It's not as despondent as it sounds but - know the worst and hope for the best - is a good thought to base your swim on.

Regards Mike