

# Clissold Channel Relay 2008

Most people go to France by ferry or plane or in the Channel tunnel. Some people however, think that swimming there is more fun! Greg and Sally Goble, a solo Channel swimmer with several years of open water swimming experience, decided that if Eton and Harrow can do it then Clissold Swimming Club can swim to France as well!

## When and how

Clissold Channel Relay is scheduled for 25th to 31st July 2008

We have two escort boats booked for the Clissold Channel Relay

The relay could take place ANY TIME in that week or so slot, and could start at any time of the day or night

The two boats will be as follows

- one relay team made up of 6 swimmers and 1 reserve and one boat with parents and others, or...
- two relays made up of 6 swimmers and 1 reserve (although if we have two relay teams it will definitely NOT be a race). This depends on level of interest

Swimmers will swim in a predesignated order, for an hour at a time. Once each swimmer has swum for an hour, the first swimmer goes in again, and so on until the team reaches France.

The swimmers can't wear wetsuits or use any swimming aids

## Training commitment

Training will be divided into three sections:

### Now until Xmas

Swimmers sign up to train in the Channel relay squad to be considered for the Channel Relay Team

An extra 1.5 hour swim pool session will be scheduled to take place once a week (venue and time tbc). Swimmers in the Channel relay squad will attend this session in addition to their normal squad training sessions. Initially this session will be all front crawl and will work on building up distance gradually and will also include some open water swimming technique sessions (not in open water though - it'll be too cold!)

### From New Year to Easter and on to the beginning of May

Still once a week as well as other usual squad sessions: more intense distance sessions in the Channel relay squad session. Time trials over 1.5 km and more will gauge individual progress at distance in the pool.

*Easter* — we will have a Mock Channel Swim in a pool. Channel relay squad swimmers will be teamed up with several solo Channel swimmers and as a practice we will swim 37040 metres in a pool - the distance of the Channel as the crow flies. We will swim as we would do on the day - with each swimmer swimming for an hour in rotation until we reach 'France' (this will be after 1,482 lengths).

### Beginning of May until the swim

As well as carrying on with our pool Channel relay squad session we will begin outdoor training. This will mean that swimmers will be required to swim in cold water as many weekends as

possible until the relay, as acclimatisation and getting used to the conditions of the sea are an absolutely vital part of the training.

Approximately half of our cold water training sessions will be in the sea in Dover (in the safety of the harbour there) and the rest will be in or around London - either in an unheated lido, or in Hampstead Ponds. This will be a major commitment from swimmers and parents.

*July – Clissold Swimming Club Relay swims to France!*

## Who

Swimming the Channel as a relay is an amazing adventure and achievement for young swimmers, and part of the reason that it is those things is because it's not an easy thing to do. Swimmers - and parents - who want to be involved should not underestimate the rewards that will come out of the training and the experience on the day. However they should also be aware of the toughness of the training. Initially we encourage everyone who wants to be considered for the relay team to join the Channel relay squad - as long as they are going to be 12 or older next summer.

Any swimmer who is still taking part in the training squads two weeks before the relay will be considered for inclusion in the Team(s). However, the main concerns of those making the selection will primarily be safety and secondly will be the successful completion (in any time) of the swim. This will mean that if there is a swimmer who has worked very hard but cannot safely cope with the cold then it might not be possible to include them in the team. However, this is where acclimatisation is key. Many swimmers who find cold water difficult to cope with initially go on to be able to withstand cold water better with training. There is much advice on acclimatisation techniques which can be given to swimmers to help cope.

Whatever is the case, it is likely that some selection of teams will be necessary. Not everyone who wants to swim will necessarily be able to do so - and this should be borne in mind. It will be disappointing for anyone not being selected to swim. However, the club next year - in parallel to the Channel Relay - will also be encouraging swimmers to take part in some of the ASAs open water swim season on the South Coast - in Brighton, Portsmouth, Eastbourne and so on. This would mean that swimmers who may not have been selected for the Channel Relay can still test their training with an exciting series of races which could be a springboard to other adventures.

## The Team

Swimmers in the team need to meet these requirements by the Channel Swimming and Piloting Federation (one of the two governing bodies of Channel swimming)

- 12 years old before the day of the swim
- have completed satisfactorily a basic medical (Sally can outline details of this)

Other criteria (not officially required by CS&PF but required by Clissold Swimming Club)

- both male and female swimmers are eligible
- any stroke is welcome - even fly - as long as you can swim that stroke for an hour at a time
- the swimmer needs to be a team player and to work hard and be willing to challenge their fears, whatever those might be.
- swimmer needs to have attended a satisfactory number of Channel relay squad sessions and show a commitment to the success of the relay
- have taken part in the mock Channel swim
- Most important of all - the swimmer needs to be able to demonstrate, by two weeks before the Channel swim, that they can swim for ONE AND A HALF hours in the sea in Dover and not be affected too adversely by the cold