

7th Possibly Annual Loong Distance Swim

A week of worry about weather conditions and if the race would be held was all for nothing. Race day, December 20, dawned with no rain or wind, cool overcast skies (ideal for loong swims) and calm, clear waters in Waikiki Bay.

Greg Louganis, America's foremost diver, after giving encouragement to the swimmers and their escorts, fired the starting gun.

Water conditions were the best in the history of the event, with the exception of the current which was the strongest. This made the first half of the race, Kai-mana Beach to the outer Ala Wai Harbor Channel marker, slow and difficult.

Once around the channel marker, all those Waikiki buildings that had gone by so slowly, now moved much faster.

This strong current was the principal cause for the highest dropout rate ever.

Rick Heltzel, the winner in 1985, navigated the course in 1 hour, 39 minutes.

OCC member Diane Stowell repeated as winner of her age group for the seventh consecutive time.

The international standing of this event remained strong as Grant Gilland of New Zealand took second for the second year. One third of the entrants were from outside Hawaii.

Other OCC participants included John Nielsen, Michael Spalding and Jim Andersen.

The awards ceremony at the Aquarium was another excellent social affair with old friendships renewed and new friends made. A fun time was had by all. 