

# Woman Swimmer Circles Manhattan On Her 2d Attempt

By FRANK J. PRIAL

Diana Nyad, a 25-year-old marathon swimmer, successfully swam around Manhattan Island yesterday, on her second attempt in 11 days. Exhausted, but triumphant, she was helped from the slimy waters of the East River off Gracie Mansion at 7:32 P.M., seven hours and 57 minutes after starting out from the same point.

"I knew I'd make it," she told a crowd of about 100 newsmen and well-wishers who had assembled at the Fire Department pier at East 89th Street to welcome her. "I feel very proud," she said. "It's not easy to swim around this island, especially on Oct. 6."

Miss Nyad at first tried to climb a ladder onto the dock, but she was too tired. She allowed her aides to help her aboard the motorboat that had accompanied her on her 28-mile swim. After donning a bathrobe and being dried off, she was assisted onto the dock by crewmen of the fireboat, John Glenn.

Someone asked the 128-pound 5-foot-6 swimmer what

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the worst part of her ordeal had been. She paused and, still shivering, said: "It's a funny thing. The second hour was the worst. I was very cold." During the second hour of her swim, Miss Nyad was in the northern reaches of the Harlem River, in the vicinity of Yankee Stadium.

On her first attempt to swim around Manhattan, Miss Nyad was pulled from the East River off Wall Street, floating on her back and unable to continue. "I could see the Brooklyn Bridge," she said at the time, "but it just didn't come."

On that occasion, her quest was spoiled by almost constant rain and winds that upset the tides. Most of her swimming yesterday was done in bright sunshine. The first trip was begun at 1 P.M. Yesterday's swim began at 11:35 A.M., 10 minutes before high tide in Hell Gate, the most treacherous part of the trip.

Where, on her first attempt, Miss Nyad began falling behind schedule almost from the start of her swim, she was so far ahead yesterday that she was able to tread water off the Battery for 20 minutes to rest and to wait for a stronger incoming tide. Even then, she was 30 minutes ahead of schedule as she swam under the Williamsburg Bridge at 6:25 P.M.

## Began at 11:35 A.M.

Her time beat the old unofficial record of 8 hours 56 minutes by 59 minutes. The old record was set by Byron Sommers in 1927. In 1959 Diane Strubel made the trip in 11 hours 59 minutes.

Miss Nyad, who is working for a doctorate in comparative literature at New York University, slipped into the filth-laden river at 11:35 A.M., after an hour of light-hearted joking with friends and newsmen. "Bye," she called to the little knot of bystanders, "see you all back here tonight."

Miss Nyad wore a one-piece blue purple and white swimsuit and two rubber bathing caps. "Sometimes," she said, "I wear three or four and a woolen hat underneath. Your head really gets cold in there." The water temperature in the East River yesterday was 65 degrees. In the Hudson it was a degree or two less.

Previously, Miss Nyad had

said she would not swim in water cooler than 66 degrees. Last night she said the cold abated after her second hour in the water, until she began to tread water off the Battery. "I got a chill there for a while," she said.

Rather than being disturbed by moving from the relatively calm Spuyten Duyvil Creek into the choppy Hudson, Miss Nyad said later that she was elated. "It was a blessing," she said. "I love that rough water and it was rough in the Hudson. I thought, boy, this is a challenge."

At 12:45 and at each hourly interval thereafter, Miss Nyad's aides held up the blackboard showing the number of hours she had been in the water. Then her boat hove to and an aide with a six-foot-long pole handed her a cup of high-protein, high-carbohydrate chocolate drink, her only nourishment until the next break.

Before her swim, Miss Nyad spoke of the effects of exhaustion.

"When your minerals, protein and sugar are down, you get depressed," she said. "You lose that strong sense of why you

did it in the first place." The hourly infusions were to counteract that depression, she said.

They also were aimed at keeping up her powerful, relentless stroke: 60 to the minute, 600 to the mile. "Sometimes I hum 'Row, row, row your boat' to myself to keep the pace," she said.

Ignoring the flotsam that at places seemed to cover the river, Miss Nyad worked northward steadily. At 12:55 she was abreast of Yankee Stadium. At 1:05 she was just off Mount Morris Park. Fifty minutes later, she was under the Broadway Bridge from Manhattan to Marble Hill.

Except for a handful of workmen at various places along the route and reporters who stayed nearby, either on a chartered yacht or overhead in a helicopter, Miss Nyad swam on alone. Thousands of New Yorkers raced along the East River Drive, unaware that a woman was in the water just a few feet away, attempting to do what no woman had done before.

At Inwood Hill Park, a few children cheered from the Manhattan shore, and in the Spuyten Duyvil, a couple of yachts

circled the party for a while, then moved off.

Later Miss Nyad said she had not noticed the yachts or much of anything else during her swim, including the photographers' helicopters that hovered low over the water as she pulled along in the Harlem River. "When I'm swimming, I'm very little aware of what's going on in the boat or in the air or on the shore," she said.

After her first attempt to swim around Manhattan, on Sept. 24, Miss Nyad came down with a severe virus, apparently caused by pollution in the river. "I may not even be sick this time," she said. "Victory makes you feel better." She also observed that the rivers seemed cleaner on the second trip.

Instead of going to a hospital for a checkup after the long swim—as originally planned—Diana Nyad, whose name is similar to the Greek naiad, or water nymph, chose to attend a victory party. She was scheduled to get a physical examination today.

Miss Nyad was born in New York City in 1950 and grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where she was captain of the swimming team at Pinecrest Prep. She began swimming competitively at the age of 13 and later competed in 11 United States National competitions.

At 16 she suffered a virus infection of the heart, recovered, and went on to become a champion swimmer. She was graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Lake Forest College and currently is working for a doctorate in comparative literature at New York University.

New York may be the city of her birth and her residence now, but she has no desire to swim around it again. "This is the last time," she said yesterday. "I will never swim Manhattan again after today."



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Diana Nyad being wrapped in a blanket by her handlers after completing her 28-mile swim last night.

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