

CS&PF Chairman's Report 2013

Thank you to everyone for their support throughout 2012 and into 2013 and to the members who have found time to come today to the AGM.

Thank you to our CS&PF officers, committee members and volunteers who have again worked hard over the past 12 months to keep the Federation at the top of its league. You have all helped make dreams a reality for so many people.

There was a more or less even split between successful solo and relay swims with, I think, (I'm sure our Hon Sec will confirm the exact figures in his report)

140 total swim crossing attempts -
51 successful solo crossings including 1 x 2-way
54 successful relay crossings including 5 x 2-ways

To mention the merits of them all would take too long.

To select a few to talk about is hard and something I prefer not to do. Everyone has their own heights of achievement, I would like to congratulate all that entered the chilly waters of the English Channel, both successful and unsuccessful, those who broke records and those who attempted to make their dreams a reality. All achieved new levels in their own personal worlds and contributed to an ever increasingly popular sport.

I would also like to mention all the volunteers working quietly in the background to help people through.

The Dover beach group had another busy year helping swimmers train from the beginning of May to the end of September. What a great crowd they are.

The CS&PF observers were organised by Tanya and turned out, often at short notice and in the middle of the night, to keep the swim reports going.

Tonight we have 275 people coming to the dinner. The work involved by the small team of organisers is tremendous and they are another group that have given their time for your pleasure.

Then there are all the support teams to do the feeding and back up work, and the patient partners quietly waiting for the day to happen.

2012 has been a busy year behind the scenes with a lot of ground covered by your committee. The new CS&PF web site is advancing in leaps and bounds giving a whole new look of professionalism to our organisation. Our thanks to Boris for all his efforts and updating and to our President, Nick, for putting so much time into the project.

There is a completely new set of CS&PF forms up and running for 2013 that have had many hours of updating and revamping put into them to bring them up to scratch and date both image and information wise. 2013 will hopefully see the work continue with a revision of the CS&PF rules and the rest of our forms and stationery matching the new ones already released.

Our Hon Treasurer, Cathie, has spent many hours sorting out the Federation finances. The work load is such that we now have a sub committee/work group to continue the

sorting out of our financial direction. Things like VAT, a new regalia programme, financial planning are all on the list of items to look at.

The committee and volunteer work that goes on quietly in the background is not always noticed but it is essential for our Federation to continue to be the best in the business. Our reputation is growing – the CS&PF is still growing – our sport is growing. Long distance open water swimming is increasing in popularity and coming together as a world wide organised sport with a large world wide following.

The English Channel swims are still looked upon as the top swims of our sport (The Everest of open water challenges). This means the demand is increasing and it is hard to find the means to meet and cater for the growing number of swimmers who want to turn their dreams into reality.

We have seen the pilots take up the gauntlet and work hard within the restrictions placed on us by the French authorities. They have increased the number of spring tide swims to counter the restrictions on the registered escort boats. With all the pilot skills and the modern electronics onboard the spring swims have now become the norm and they are producing a great number of successful crossings. We seem to have waved goodbye to the old fashioned idea that they are harder with what seems to be a very good success rate coming to light.

I think I've possibly said enough and have been told to keep things short and give others a chance to say something. My apologies for anything I have not mentioned but should have. If I said all that I originally had written down we would all be here for a long time.

My thanks and congratulations go out to everyone involved. We are truly an organisation for the swimmers run by the CS&PF members and swimmers who continue to promote our sport of open water swimming and English Channel swimming to a very high level as best we can. The English Channel will always be there to tempt people, let's hope the CS&PF will always be here to help people take up the challenge.

Michael Oram
CS&PF Chairman