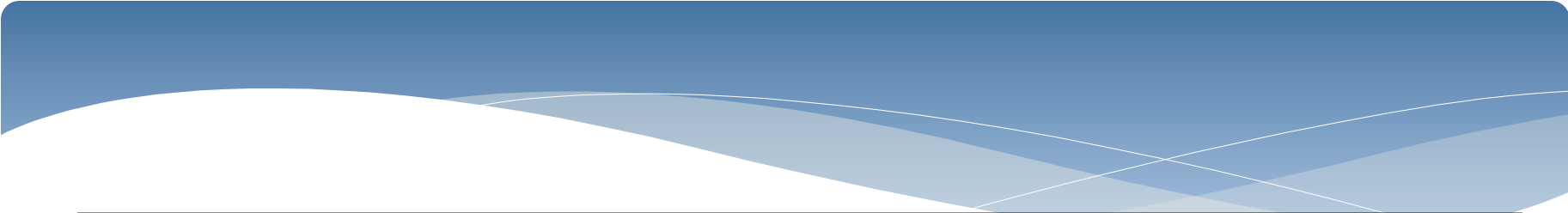


# Making it count: Marathon swimming and the quantification of the self

Karen Throsby  
University of Leeds







<http://www.thelongswim.blogspot.com>

## The Long Swim

SUNDAY, 14 APRIL 2013

### When the wheels come off...

Sooner or later in a sport like marathon swimming, something will go wrong and you won't be able to finish a swim. It's an occupational hazard. Even with the hardest and most meticulous training, this can happen; but with an early season swim in unseasonably low temperatures, the risks are increased. And so it was that my attempt to swim the Cabrera Channel on 10 April ended with me being hauled out mid-Channel, too cold to continue.

We set off from the port of Sa Rapita at 7am and motored over to the beautiful island of Cabrera - a closely protected nature reserve to the south of Mallorca. The journey was thankfully quick (bearing in mind my uselessness on boats), and after a few moments to settle my stomach, we started getting ready for the swim. I felt great - full of energy and optimism. The water in the sheltered bay was glassy and clear, and even though a thick mist hung low on the water, I was looking forward to some warming sunshine later on. Jumping in, I felt the usual rush of adrenalin - the mild shock of the water, plus the excitement of the swim to come. And off I paddled, feeling good, with the team from **XTRM** of Toni, Rafael and Laura on board the boat, along with Peter.

It's difficult for me to pin down exactly what happened in the hours that followed, but although the boat's thermometer was showing 15 degrees, it felt SO much colder - perhaps as a result of my lack of acclimatisation beforehand, or the weight I have lost over the winter, or windchill, or the sapping effects of the cool mist that hung low over the water for the first few hours of the swim. Or perhaps it was just cold. By hour two, I was heart-sinkingly cold; chilled right through to the core. And I just couldn't stop thinking about it. It was like being eaten by cold from the inside and my positive mood was being eroded with it.

### TWITTER



Karen Throsby  
**thelongswim**

**thelongswim** Next stop MIMS. Only 7 weeks to go!

54 seconds ago · reply · retweet · favorite

**thelongswim** Well done to all the Tampa Bay swimmers yesterday - looked like a bit of a brute.

3 minutes ago · reply · retweet · favorite

**FWSAuk** Check out our conference programme- we wish June would hurry up so we can hear our fantastic speakers!  
[fwsaconference.wordpress.com/conference-pro...](http://fwsaconference.wordpress.com/conference-pro...)

3 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

**thelongswim** @Tanni\_CT to be honest, if they're asking now, they're very late and panicking!

3 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite



Join the conversation



www.warwick.ac.uk/go/channelswimmer

# Becoming a Channel Swimmer

Research and Data

Resources

## Welcome to "Becoming a Channel swimmer"



My name is Karen Throsby and I am a sociology lecturer at the University of Warwick. This website is part of a two and half year ESRC-funded sociological research project, entitled "Becoming a Channel swimmer: identity and embodiment in an extreme sporting culture".

The research is about the experience of becoming (or trying to become) a Channel swimmer, drawing on my own experiences, as well as those of other swimmers, boat

pilots, coaches, family members, official observers, beach volunteers....basically, anyone involved in Channel swimming. As well as observing and training with swimming communities both in the UK and overseas, I am conducting interviews and studying a wide range of published and unpublished accounts, blogs and websites and media reporting.

## Contact

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[k.throsby@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:k.throsby@warwick.ac.uk)

[The Long Swim](#) (my blog)

FOLLOW ME ON 

**Tue 01 May '12**

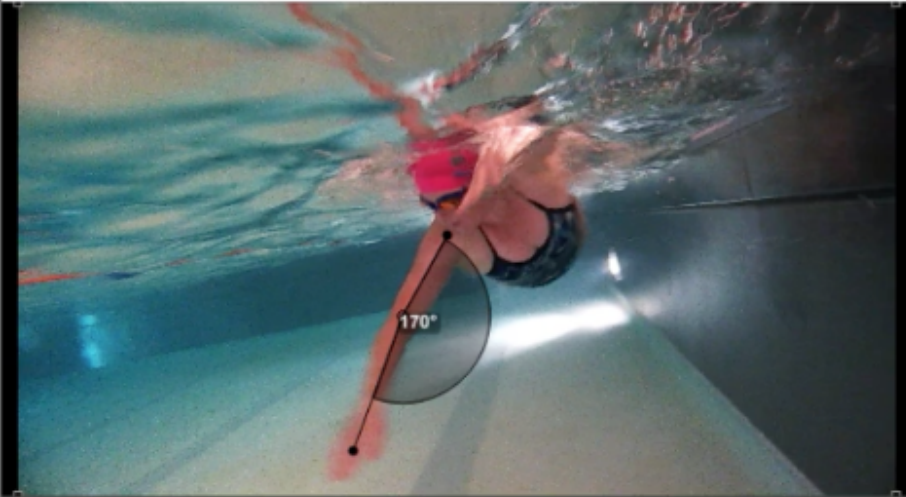
[New featured blog and video of the month](#)

**Sat 14 Apr '12**

[New resources added](#)



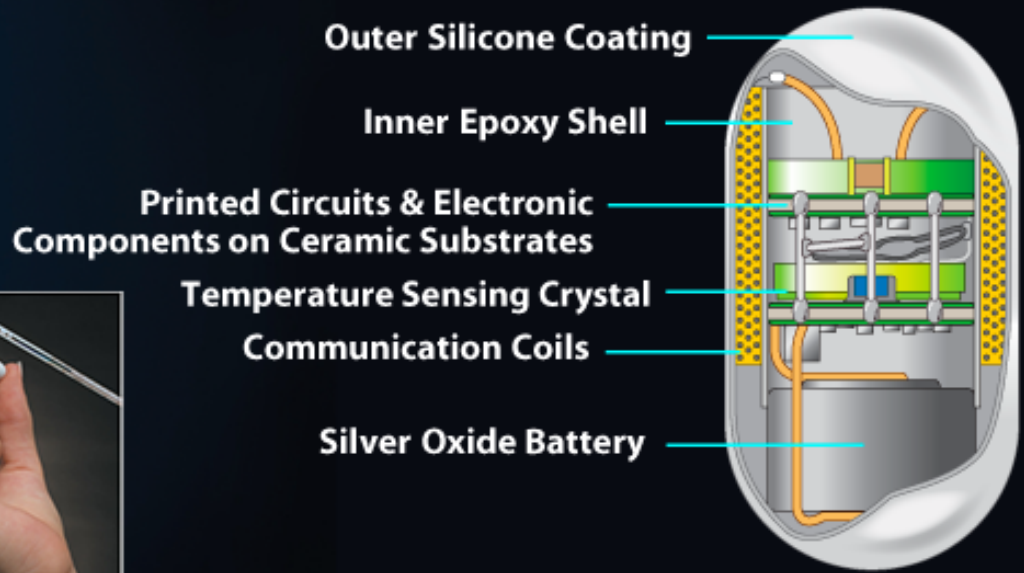
Karen T 2014.mov



shelley taylor smith and mel benson - elite open water swimmers.mp4







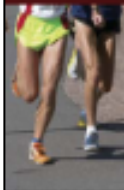
# CorTemp<sup>®</sup>

Core Body Temperature  
Monitoring Systems

Convenient  
Accurate  
Realtime  
Wireless

The CorTemp<sup>®</sup> core body temperature monitoring system, featuring the CorTemp<sup>®</sup> ingestible temperature sensor, monitors, records and reports core body temperature accurately, wirelessly, and comfortably...even during periods of high physical activity

98.6°  
37.0°C



# When Absolute Accuracy Is Critical...

## A NASA® Originating Technology

The CorTemp® core body temperature sensor technology was developed in the mid 1980's by the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in collaboration with the Goddard Space Flight Center.

Introduced as the "ingestible thermometer pill", the sensor was



Space-Age  
Technology

(Actual size)

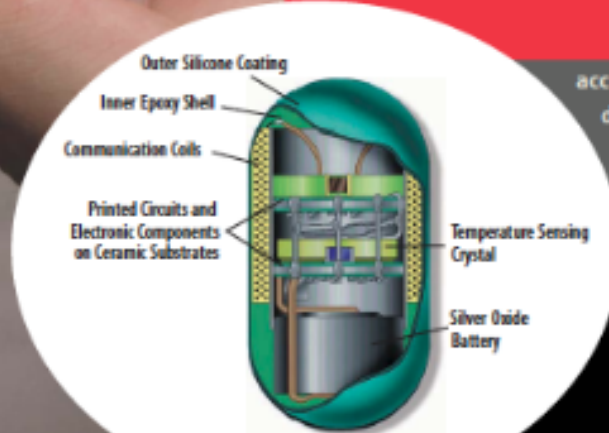
used to monitor deep internal core body temperature in astronauts to detect hypothermic and hyperthermic conditions during space flight. HQ, Inc. licensed the sensor in 1988 for widespread commercial use and today the CorTemp® core body temperature monitoring system is globally recognized and used in sport, military, occupational safety, medicine, research, agriculture, and industrial applications.

## Why Use CorTemp®?

Accurate core body temperature reveals vital information for treatment and study in both active and inactive subjects and when monitoring and preventing heat stroke in athletes on the field. Yet, before CorTemp®, monitoring in non-laboratory environments proved difficult, if not impossible. The absence of catheters, probes and wire connections frees ambulatory patients, athletes and research subjects from discomfort and confinement. CorTemp® brings new comfort to bedside monitoring in surgery, recovery, ICU, sleep study and other resting environments.

Accurate core body temperature measurement is critical when monitoring athletes in hot environments. Research indicates that external methods of temperature measurement, such as tympanic, temporal, or other measurement devices are not

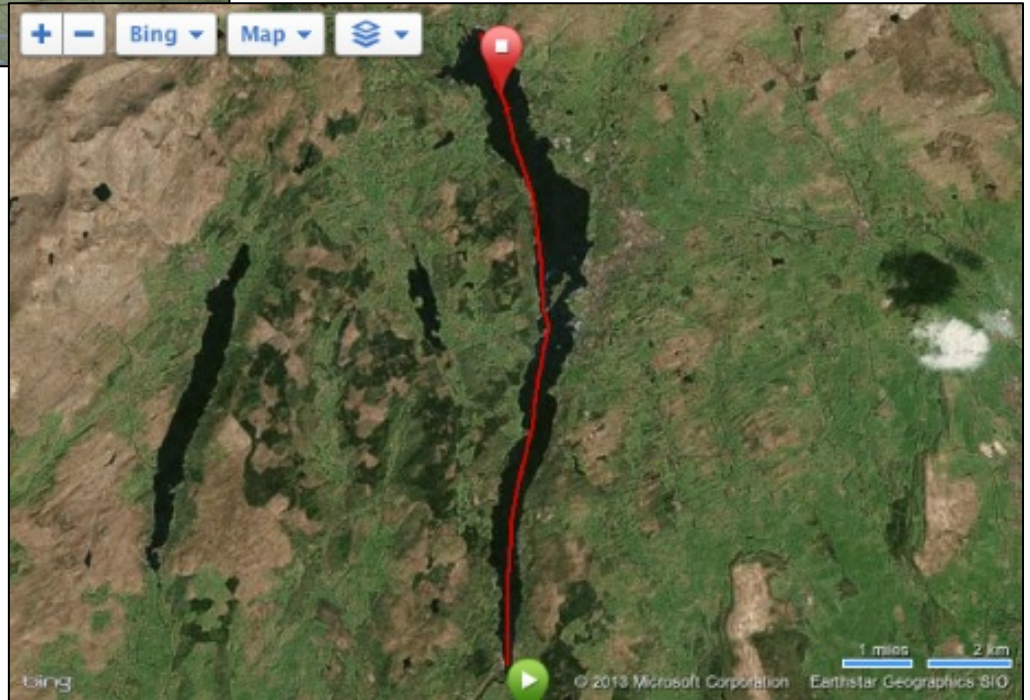
accurate in assessing core body temperature during intensive activity in the heat. The CorTemp® system will enable you to monitor your at risk athletes and evaluate the effectiveness of cooling methods so cooling can be applied to the athletes that need it the most.

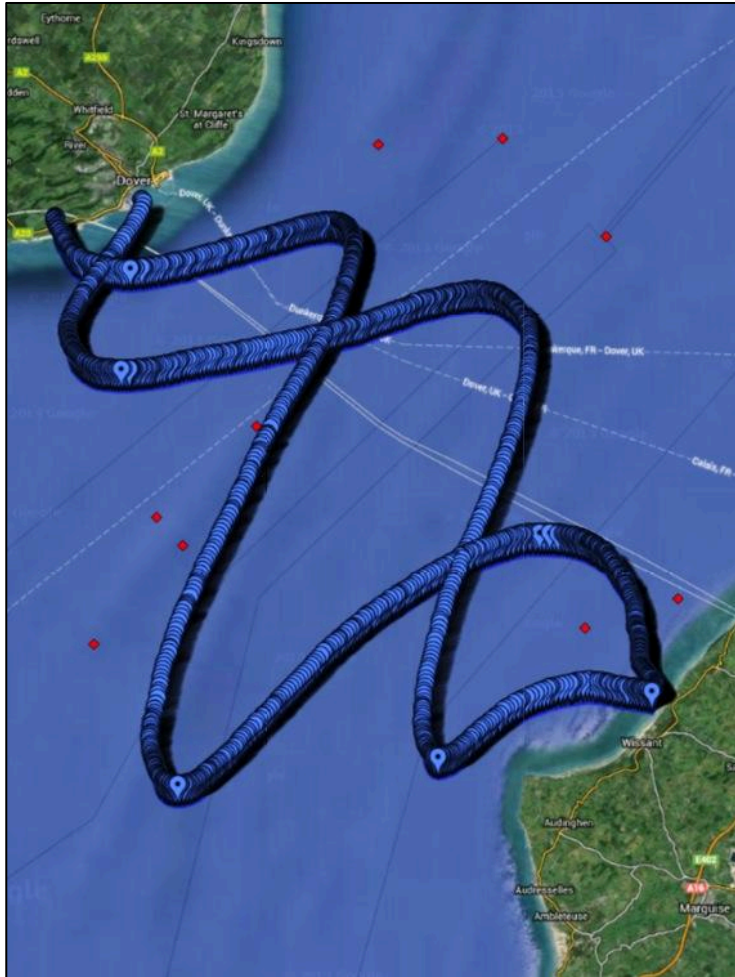


**±0.1°C**



**Solo Swims of Ontario**





- \* “With the growth of wearable tech, we will see goggles with head-up display and ear buds which will allow our coach to talk and encourage us throughout the swim. All within the next decade.”
- \* These devices “would make our training and official swims easier....”



United Kingdom - Dover [\[Options\]](#)

Forecast	2D	Map	Webcams	Wind reports	Accommodation	Schools/Rentals	Shops	Other...																				
<a href="#">GFS 50 km</a>																												
23.04.2014																												
06 UTC																												
	We	We	We	We	We	We	Th	Th	Th	Th	Th	Th	Th	Th	Th	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Fr	Sa	Sa	Sa	Sa		
	23.	23.	23.	23.	23.	23.	24.	24.	24.	24.	24.	24.	24.	24.	25.	25.	25.	25.	25.	25.	25.	25.	26.	26.	26.	26.	26.	
	07h	10h	13h	16h	19h	22h	04h	07h	10h	13h	16h	19h	22h	04h	07h	10h	13h	16h	19h	22h	04h	07h	10h	13h	16h	19h	22h	
Wind speed (knots)	6	6	4	2	1	1	7	6	4	3	5	8	7	11	14	13	11	6	5	5	10	13	17	13	10	7	6	
Wind gusts (knots)	7	9	8	5	4	3	9	7	4	3	6	10	9	14	18	17	14	8	7	7	15	20	24	18	13	10	6	
Wind direction	↑	↑	↑	↗	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	↘	
*Temperature (°C)	11	12	13	13	12	12	11	10	11	11	12	12	11	10	10	11	12	13	13	12	11	10	11	11	11	12	11	11
Cloud cover (%)	-	23	39	59	70	89	28	34	23	12		14	74	78	74	91	83	70	71	27	51	47	54	70	78	86	99	
high / mid / low	-				11	77	87	52					24		5	65	74	44	44	69	5		16	50	85	91	65	
*Precip. (mm/3h)	-						0.9									0.7	0.9	1.5	2.2	1.2			0.4	2.1				
Windguru rating																★	★						★	★	★			