



RUN 87 MILES London to Dover

SWIM 21 MILES English Channel

BIKE 181 MILES Calais to Paris

FINISHER



Arch2Arc

Run Marble Arch London to Dover
Swim across the English Channel
Ride Calais to Arc de Triomphe Paris.

Well after waiting three weeks in Dover for a start to a solo attempt for what is known as Arch2Arc (an Enduroman event) I had another start date. I had already had two other start dates but these were cancelled due to gale weather conditions in the Channel.

I cancelled my flight home and waited for a start. Up till then I had a daily routine of get up and run 6 miles, check the weather, ride bike 20-40 miles and go for a swim in Dover harbour. Oh and hang out with Channel swimming icons.

On the Wednesday three days before the swim I changed my diet to clear my system and just ate rice. On the Friday I went up to Marble Arch London on the train and started to run at 19:30. I carried 7 cans of rice pudding a box of Pringles and 1.5 litres of water.

I had set my course and was definitely expecting a better time on the run from my previous attempt, which was delayed due to getting lost and a mugging attempt by 5 lads in Deptford/Lewisham. A born and bred Londoner, yes I was used to situations like this and all the guys wanted to do was relieve me of my backpack. There was no way that I was going to lose my Rice pudding. Sitting on a brick wall at 1 am in the morning they were just having fun. As I approached they asked where I was going and what was in my backpack. I knew what was about to take place, I didn't engage and they weren't interested in a conversation. I didn't get too far ahead before I was jumped and pulled to the ground by the lads. With thirty years of martial arts experience an apt description would be I'm "useful". This situation is a numbers game so I managed to get up and get out before more boots came flying in to do more damage because I copped a few. I ran as fast as I could with my 6 remaining cans of Rice pudding. I got away and thinned the gang out. Now I was in control, despite being chased, now it was my turn. I turned on my first chaser and took him down. Without hesitation I dropped my backpack and ran to my next assailant, again a quick four combo and he was out the game. I watched the remaining lads stop in their stride as I moved towards them. Although they continued to mouth off they stopped moving and their hands came up to signal truce. I didn't talk at any point during our interaction. The first two were dispatched with ease and there was no need to continue. I was on another mission.

I was expecting to do a 15hr run but again got lost because of mistakes I made along the way and Google maps trying to correct the route mistakes (last time was 17hours). My own bloody fault!! Water refills and mars bars at petrol stations to renew stocks, my nutrition was okay. Going off route led me along Pilgrims Way in the middle of nowhere Kent!! Total run time was **21 hours 12 minutes** for **80 miles**. Not happy with that run time. Eventually I got to Dover and priority was to eat rice and drink fluids. Then I made my swim food up and got to bed at 9pm, having been awake 39 hours I got my head down and had a good sleep for 3 hours. Channel swim food prepared: 3.25L coke, 2L ginger beer, 1L lucozade, 500ml olive oil, 2.5kg maltodextrin, 1kg dextrose, 1.25kg milo, 8 packs baby food, 8 mars bars, 2x wine gums, 3x jelly babies, 1 fruit pastilles, 500gm protein powder. Got up at midnight, sorted my swim kit and food and headed to Dover Marina with my bike.

My race plan was simple, take it easy for the first hour and then swim a fast-steady pace around 3km an hour for 6 hours. Swim aim was of course to finish, but small steps, just get to the next feed every 30 minutes. Water temperature was 15°C at Dover my previous swim attempt 3 months before I spent 10 hours in the water. The water temperature was 11°C and proved too cold for me. I had to pull the pin and try again. It seemed like ages before the sun came up. Feeds were quickish but could have been better. Drinking about 300ml of maltodextrose/milo and a separate 200ml warm water. After swimming 8 hours I had a major spew session and this seemed to be about a litre, this was important to know because I knew I had to recover from this, rehydrate and refuel so the next swim hour I slowed down to recoup and changed my drink to flat coke and jelly babies. This worked well and then I alternated my feeds between baby food and warm water, coke, jelly babies and milo/dextrose.

I reached south of the Cape at 3:46pm to start swimming North/east, bloody choppy here! Arrived at France at 19:30 pitch black. Got on the boat and laid down on the deck to go to Calais and had a sleep. When we arrived at Calais port I lent over the bow and threw up again. Got off the boat at Calais and cycled off the port without going to immigration and then to my hotel and slept for 7 hours. Yee ha total **swim time was 16:38 hours** and total distance was **46.79km or 28.06 miles (24.93nm)**.

The ride to Calais was crap and difficult unassisted. Having started my ride, when I was 11km out of Calais I lost phone signal and data which I was reliant on for my navigation. So I had to phone home (Australia) to get back on course, but decided to go back to Calais to get some maps from tourist information. Seven hours later I was on the road fully restocked with food, water and maps! The ride was in the middle of nowhere, only three places were open to get food and for the most part – no street lights. Even arriving at Paris phone signal and data dropped out and it took 30minutes to get to Arc de Triomphe 3.5km away! Total ride time was **21.39 hours**, so it could have been 14 hours and the ride distance was **181 miles** on an undulating course.

Doing it the hard way made it all the more fun. Without a doubt the hardest leg is the swim... and what was I thinking at the end of the swim... I wonder if I could do a double arch 2 Arc?