

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Despite Fog at Start, 100th Anniversary of the 8-Mile Boston Light Swim Finishes Smoothly

SOUTH BOSTON, Massachusetts— Deep within the thick fog that blanketed the islands of Boston's Inner Harbor early Saturday morning (8/2/08) the water stirred. The Harbor was unusually still and glassier than a swimming pool that morning, but there were some ripples moving steadily westward. Despite the fog that restricted visibility in some spots to as little as 50 feet, 19 swimmers launched from the Boston Lighthouse on Little Brewster Island at 7am for the start of the 100th anniversary of the Boston Light 8-Mile Marathon swim race.

Unlike the race in 2007 which featured a 20 mile per hour headwind that lasted nearly the whole way and imposed a significant handicap on the swimmers, this year, the flat water and nearly no wind made for ideal conditions for a fast, long-distance open water swim on the time-honored course among the Boston Harbor Islands.

This "Granddaddy of Open Water Swims" began in 1908 and is the oldest continually contested open water swim in the country. The course, which starts at Little Brewster and runs between Georges and Rainsford Island, around the southern tip of Long Island, under the massive Long Island Bridge, between Spectacle Island and Thompson Island, and finally finishes eight miles later at the L Street Bathhouse in South Boston, is one of the toughest open water marathon swims in the world due to the extremely cold water, shifting currents, unpredictable weather, and high density of recreational boat traffic. Most swimmers complete the course in three to five hours.

Because the conditions were so ideal for the 2008 race, fog and the difficulties it poses to line-of-sight navigation notwithstanding, the top four swimmers all beat the three hour mark. Ray Gandy, 46, of Coventry, Rhode Island, last year's defending champion, and Seb Neumayer, 25, a graduate student at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, who was last year's second place finisher, tied for first place this year in a time of 2:44:26. The first place female finisher, 3rd overall, Michelle Macy, 31, of Portland, OR— an accomplished open water marathoner who conquered the English Channel in 2007— finished close on the heels of Gandy and Neumayer in a time of 2:47:33. The third place male, 4th overall, clocking in at 2:54:14 was Greg O'Connor, 39, of Natick, Massachusetts, swimming the race for the second time. The second female finisher, 6th place overall was Joni Young, 47, of Salem Oregon, finishing in a time of 3:09:47. Elaine Kornbau Howley, 30, of Waltham, Massachusetts, was the 3rd place female finisher, 8th overall, finishing her 3rd Boston Light swim in a time of 3:25:13. The lone relay consisting of Ali Maglievi, 36, of Southborough, Massachusetts, and the uncle-nephew pairing of Mike Brock, 47, of Loveland Ohio, and the youngest swimmer, 14-year-old Devin Brock of South Boston, Massachusetts, finished in 3:34:17.

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Complete, official standings and times for the 2008 Boston Light Swim 8-Mile Race:

Place	First Name	Last Name	Hometown	State	Age	Gender	Race Time
1	Seb	Neumayer	Cambridge	MA	25	M	2:44:26
1	Ray	Gandy	Coventry	RI	46	M	2:44:26
3	Michelle	Macy	Portland	OR	31	F	2:47:33
4	Greg	O'Connor	Natick	MA	39	M	2:54:14
5	Gil	Sharon	Westborough	MA	34	M	3:08:45
6	Joni	Young	Salem	OR	47	F	3:09:40
7	Andreas	Hilfinger	Jamaica Plain	MA	31	M	3:17:19
8	Elaine	Howley	Waltham	MA	30	F	3:25:13
9	Dana	Farrell	Washington	DC	33	F	3:26:17
10	Eileen	Burke	New York	NY	45	F	3:31:25
11	Mike	Brock	Loveland	OH	47	M	3:34:17 Relay
11	Devin	Brock	South Boston	MA	14	M	3:34:17 Relay
11	Ali	Maglievi	Southborough	MA	36	F	3:34:17 Relay
12	Conor	Hartnett	Babylon	NY	41	M	3:40:03
13	Stephen	Autry	Cincinnati	OH	60	M	3:48:06
14	Fran	Fidler	Naples	FL	52	M	4:16:05
15	Laura	Colette	Nahant	MA	44	F	4:39:26
N/A	Tara	Gulla	Newton	MA	35	F	DNF
N/A	Kiko	Bracker	Roslindale	MA	39	M	DNF

Race Director John Werner says the results show that the 100-year-old swim “is a nice tradition that cuts across ages and demographics. We had international swimmers and swimmers from all over the country turn out for the race this year, and in this sport, it’s not always the youngest swimmers who win. It’s a sport for all ages.”

The BLS race committee would like to extend a special thanks to all the volunteers who made the race possible this year. Private boat pilots turned up at 5:30 am to ferry the swimmers out to the start and motored along with them until the finish line as the support vessel and first line of safety defense for each swimmer, making for a long, strenuous day on the water. The committee would also like to thank the Boston Harbor Yacht Club for hosting the banquet and safety briefing on Friday night. Congratulations to all the swimmers!

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