

## Notable Vanier Alumni

### **Protecting Your Surf in the Turf** **By Steven Munatones**

**August 5, 2010**

Jordan Waxman had an eventful practice swim with training partner Gilles Chalandon (Sept 29th English Channel attempt) last month. Jordan, preparing for an August 17th assault on the Channel, and Gilles headed out to Brighton Beach in New York for an 8-hour night-and-day swim.

"I picked Gilles up at 2:50 am as we set out to Brighton Beach. By 4:00 am, we had the floating aid station stocked [see photo] and Gilles rigged some flashlights as a beacon so we could see the buoy. We also had glow sticks attached to our suits so we could see one another while swimming."

As Jordan and Gilles were preparing their floating hydration station, six tattooed men and one woman approached them. The woman asked for their glow stick to which Jordan replied that they needed them. She wanted to rave (wave it and dance), but Jordan and Gilles were intent on putting in a great training swim.

Suddenly and without explanation, the women grabbed the red torches from their rig and the lead guy assaulted Jordan to defend his female companion. "What crossed my mind was that I had to fight and second that my element was water and his was land," explained Jordan. "Although we were outnumbered, if we were lucky and they didn't have any weapons, we could get away without too much injury and salvage the day."

While the men were earlier focused on their English Channel preparations, they were now faced with potentially a life-threatening tussle in togs. "The man swung at me. I blocked his punches and lunged at him. I took him down into the surf, surprising him and making him uncomfortable. Behind me, the woman swung at Gilles and punched him on the side of the head, drawing blood. He retaliated with two punches. As I got to my feet, I snatched the torches from her right hand and the other guys did not join in."

Jordan, a resourceful businessmen from New York who was remarkably still focused on his training, unclipped the red glow stick from his swimsuit and said, "You want a glow stick? Take this one, and have a good time. We have to swim now." After a brief respite in the fight, the women attacked them again as Jordan and Gilles headed offshore with their hydration station. Yelling and threats aside, Jordan and

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Gilles were now in their element and were not going to back down - from either their adversaries or their training.

"As the sun came up 90 minute later, they were gone. Throughout the morning, we dodged jellyfish and crossed back and forth in the currents, more and more people flocked to frolic in the bright sun in Brooklyn," explained Jordan as their training swim went to plan.

"We walked out of the water, rig depleted at noon in the summer sun after a 26K swim. Hard to believe our warm-up, 8 hours earlier, was a rumble on the beach over some glow sticks."

Now that is an example of total commitment to one's training plan. Dover will seem much more docile in comparison.

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### **UPDATE: (published October 1, 2010)**

In a follow-up to the training partners Gilles Chalandon and Jordan Waxman who had to negotiate, fight and swim their way out some serious trouble at Brighton Beach in New York, the two men came out swinging against the elements and, remarkably, they both successfully crossed the English Channel on the exact same day.

Jordan crossed in about 14 hours flat on September 28th and Gilles left about 11 hours later and crossed in 14:31. As a 52-year-old Gilles joins the Half Century Club, the exclusive club reserved for individuals over the age of 50 who have swum the English Channel.

"It was fitting that good training buddies crossed the same day," said Jordan. "Mine was by happenstance, as I was supposed to cross in August but all swims were blown out by high winds. I went back a month later."

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