

MARTIN STREL- a renowned professional marathon swimmer, Guinness record breaker and promoter of peace, friendship and clean waters

Martin Strel is one of the most elite extreme athletes in history. He holds four Guinness world records in distance swimming, all of them performed on world's greatest rivers. He taught himself to swim when he was 6, in a small stream, and became a professional marathon swimmer in 1978. Before that he was a successful guitar player. He started out swimming in the World Cup and later doing a great deal of individual swimming marathons. The extraordinary feats of Martin have surpassed the boundaries of sports. With his endurance and determination Martin brings together individuals, nations and even continents. His projects do not focus only on great sports achievements, he also promotes the environmental messages.

His motto is: **SWIMMING FOR PEACE, FRIENDSHIP AND CLEAN WATERS.**

He has received many special recognitions. Among the more notable are support from Mr. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City, Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, Dr. William Perry, the former American Secretary of Defense, Mr. Daniel Scioli, the Vice-President of Argentina and others. Following the Mississippi swim in 2002, the American Congress passed a special resolution honoring Mr. Strel.

Many people still cannot believe what he has done so far, so that's why they sometimes describe him as "Daredevil", "Fishman", "Human Fish" or even "The Craziest Man in the World".

Some of his the greatest achievements are:

1994: Europe (Italy), Adriatic Sea between Lignano and Ravenna, 162,5 kms
55 hrs, 11 min - Martin set up a new world long-distance record in uninterrupted ocean swimming.

1997: Africa - Europe, Mediterranean Sea between Tunisia and Italy, 78 kms
29 hrs, 36 min, 57 s - Martin became the first to cross the sea from Africa to Europe. 7 swimmers have attempted this before, all failed. Martin swam without a wetsuit under FINA (International Swimming Federation) supervision with 7 international judges.

2000: Europe (10 countries) - Danube river, 3004 kms
58 days - a new world long-distance record. Martin goes for the first time in the Guinness Book of Records. He was the first to swim the whole Danube from source to estuary. He decided to make a difference for entering into a new millennium era.

2001: Europe – Danube river, 504,5 kms Non Stop
84 hrs, 10 min – a new world record in non-stop swimming achieved on the Danube in July 2001. Martin first beat the record by Argentinian Ricardo Hoffman (481,5km, 84hrs 37min), then proceeded to swim on and finishing at 504.5 km, after 84 hrs 10 min.

2002: USA (10 states) - Mississippi river, 3797 kms
68 days - Martin swam the entire length of the Mississippi in the USA. The project was entitled Eye to Eye. Martin was the first to swim the river from source to estuary and he surpassed his Danube record and entered in the Guinness Book of Records again. He also consecrated his great sporting achievement, covered by all of the world's major media, to peace, friendship and clean waters. He particularly reached out to the American public by stating that he lays his historic swim on the altar of remembrance of the victims of September 11.

2003: Argentina – Paraná river, 1930 kms

24 days: Martin made it in all the way from Iguazu Falls to the center of Buenos Aires in the Rio de La Plata. Becoming the first man to have swam the entire 1930 kms of this tricky South American river. He was swimming from dawn to dusk and averaged over 80 kms per day.

2004: PR China - Yangtze river, 4003 kms

In 51 days of struggling in the muddy China river Martin surpassed his record from the Mississippi 2002. This project was the most demanding to date in all respects so far. A new Guinness Record has been broken again. The project has been covered by CCTV 9 channel and followed through Yahoo China website.

2007: Peru, Brazil - Amazon river, 5268 kms

66 days: Most of the people could not believe it until it happened. The Amazon is known as largest, longest and the most dangerous river in the world. Martin decided to risk his life and made a history. For him this was a story of "Achieving the Impossible". Martin wanted to show the world that people can achieve their dreams and goals with hard work and persistence. He also promoted the importance of preservation of the Rain forest, the biggest oxygen producer on the planet. A new Guinness Record has been broken again. The whole world was following this amazing historical event and American filmmakers produced an award winning (Sundance 2009) feature-length documentary called **Big River Man** which is distributed by Discovery Channel in North America. The book: The man who swam the Amazon has been released in many countries worldwide.

Today:

Martin Strel has recently received many invitations from all over the world and he has become an international motivational speaker and educator.

Press:

Print Medias: Martin has been featured in National Geographic magazine, Outside magazine, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Sport Illustrated, Time, Guardian, The Sun, Sunday Times, Maxim Magazine, GQ Magazine, The Age Australia, Reader Digest International, Sun Toronto Canada, Folha de Sao Paulo, Veja Brazil, and many others...

The New York Times magazine compared Martin with legendary Sir Edmund Hillary.

TV: Martin's swims are followed by the biggest TV broadcasters: CNN, BBC, ABC, Sky, FOX, Discovery, CCTV 9 China, TV Globo Brazil. In 2009 Martin appeared on two popular TV British talk shows: Paul O'Grady and The fabulous picture show

Wires: Martin's swims are followed by biggest news wires around the world: Reuters, AP, AFP

Honors and Recognitions:

Martin's Mississippi swim 2002 was proven with the nomination for the prestigious LAUREUS sporting award in the category of alternative sporting personality for 2003.

Martin's Mississippi swim is one of the records featured in a video: 25 Awesome Records produced by OLN-Outdoor Life Network Channel.

American Congress even passed a special resolution honoring Martin for his achievements and generosity.

Publications:

2002: Book - Martin Strel in (on) the Mississippi

2002: Film - Eye To Eye, Mississippi swim 2002

2007: Book – The Man who Swam the Amazon

2009: Film - Big River Man – feature length documentary (Sundance 09 winner)

Websites:

www.martinstrel.com | www.amazonswim.com | www.bigriverman.com

Photos available in the press room at www.amazonswim.com. Password: belem