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George Stark, Dennie Swan-Scott, Patrick O'Keeffe and Michael O'Keeffe in Lake George Village, after completing their record-breaking swim

Local Team Sets Record for Length of Lake Swim

By Anthony F. Hall

Monday, November 7, 2016

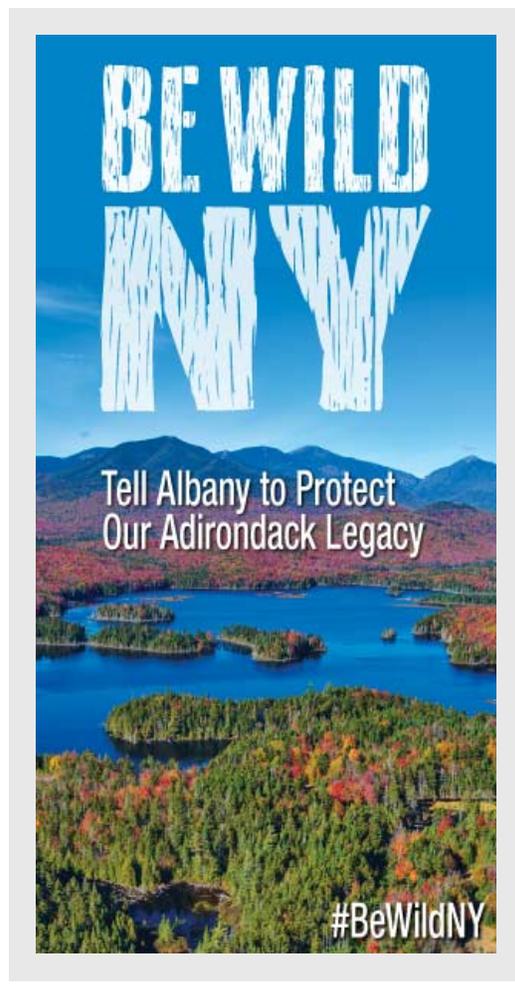
The suspension of this year's Lake George Swim Marathon a few hours after it started did not deter one local relay team from attempting a length of the lake swim two days later. The team, called the Glens Falls Masters, not only completed the swim, but did it in record time.

George Stark, Dennie Swan-Scott, Michael O'Keeffe and Patrick O'Keeffe left Ticonderoga at 11 pm on September 26 and arrived at Lake George Village's public docks 13 hours later, beating an unofficial record set in 1983 by an hour.

Swan-Scott, the head coach of the Glens Falls Gators and Masters swim teams, said, "I coach by example. I can't tell swimmers that this is something that can be done if I haven't done it myself."

To demonstrate what's possible once one commits oneself to achieving something; that's one reason why the team chose to make the length of the lake swim despite the fact that the official marathon was called on account of weather, said Swan-Scott.

"I want to encourage more people to become involved in swimming," Swan-Scott added, noting that she herself had returned to the sport years after graduating from college, where she swam



competitively. She has since gone on to become a nationally ranked, champion long distance swimmer.

Stark and the brothers O’Keeffe have won their share of titles, trophies and medals, too. “They’re some of the strongest swimmers ever to come out of this region,” said Bob Singer, the organizer of the Lake George Swim Marathon.

Michael O’Keeffe, who lives in Palo Alto, California, trained for the event with Stanford University swimmers. Stark, Patrick O’Keeffe and Swan-Scott began training in the lake itself, swimming from Plum Point to Beach Road and along Cleverdale’s shores.

“We were ready to go; we’d been training, we’d made the commitment. And by the time the event was called, we were passing other swimmers,” said Swan-Scott.

Over dinner at the Algonquin with its support crew Saturday evening, the team decided to make the attempt before Patrick O’Keeffe returned to California.

All four swimmers swam for approximately one hour each before trading places with another. All participated in the final laps, arriving at the Village docks at noon.

“I feel I know the lake really well by now,” said Swan-Scott. “It’s so beautiful, and so different in every part.”

The Lake George Land Conservancy was one of the charities selected by the team to support with its swim.

“Anything to protect the lake,” said Swan-Scott.

The Glens Falls Gators, the YMCA club team, was the members’ other exchoice.

While Swan-Scott coaches the team, “George, Patrick and Michael all got their start with the Gators long ago,” the team said in a statement. “We would like to help with future Gators.


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