

04 AUG 2003

Sports-Channel (Chronology)

CHRONOLOGY OF ABDUL MALIK'S FEAT

By: Asan Ahmad

DOVER (England), Aug 4 (Bernama) -- Following is the chronology of events leading to national marathon swimmer Abdul Malik Mydin's successful conquest of the English Channel:

(All hours are in GMT)

SUNDAY, Aug 3:

12.15am - Abdul Malik performs his ablutions and carries out a prayer at room 235, Hotel Premiere Lodge, Dover.

1am - meets supporters and director of the Malaysian Students' Department in London Datuk Kamaruddin Mohamed Noor

1.30am - boards pilot boat Aegean Blue with coach John Van Wisse, Channel Swimming and Piloting Federation (CSPF) officer Michael Oram and "Channel Queen" Freeda Streeter to Abbots Cliff Beach. At this time Abdul Malik feels seasick and asks to coat oil on himself as soon as possible.

1.36am - receives telephone call from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who prays for his success and wishes him luck.

2.08am - the siren sounds for the start of the swim and Abdul Malik takes off across the 32.8km-wide English Channel in 16 degrees Celsius water.

3am - in 52 minutes of swimming, Abdul Malik completes 3.2km.

4am - Van Wisse continues to give Abdul Malik support and feeds him every 20 minutes.

8am - Abdul Malik passes the 16km point going an average of 2.2km per hour.

8.15am to 9.45am - Abdul Malik enters heavy fog in the busiest commercial shipping lane. An estimated 10 commercial vessels pass through during that time, aside from the ferries which pass every hour. Abdul Malik is doing an average 1.5 to 2km per hour.

10am - free from the fog, Abdul Malik's manager Rahayu Ahmad informs him of Dr Mahathir's second call for an update.

10.30am - he regains his consistent strokes and Streeter continues to give support. An American swimmer, known as Matt, jumps in to show solidarity.

2pm - Abdul Malik cheers up as Calais gets nearer. Unfortunately, strong currents sweep him off course and he swims about desperately.

5pm - still fighting the currents in the last 3km, the landing point is changed from Cap Gris Nez to Le Petit Blanc because Abdul Malik is facing such difficulty. At one time, he is swimming as if he wants to return to Dover!

6pm - Abdul Malik gets instructions from Oram to head for Wishant Beach, Calais. He is a bit befuddled and sometimes does not hear those calling him from the pilot boat. Van Wisse continues to feed him.

7.50pm - Abdul Malik steps onto Wishant Beach as the first Malaysian and Southeast Asian to cross the English Channel. He overshoot his original aim and has swum 58km in 17 hours and 35 minutes according to CSPF timing.

8pm - boards a boat back to Dover.

11.15pm - arrives in Dover Port to the cheers of the Malaysians who are waiting. The last boat with journalists on board arrives at 12am.

12.20am - Abdul Malik receives the third call from the Prime Minister, this time with a congratulatory message on his success.

-- BERNAMA

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