



Dr. Harry Huffaker, Honor Swimmer, United States of America, 2011



Platinum Patron



Personal Website (None known)

Dr. Harry Huffaker is a pioneer in swimming the dangerous channels in Hawaii. Throughout his illustrious career in the pre-GPS era, Dr. Huffaker has faced sharks, jellyfish, massive ocean swells and strong currents during unprecedented swims in the tropical waters of Hawaii. During his 1967 Molokai Channel swim, Dr. Huffaker saw a large shark underneath him and immediately headed for his escort boat, but the shark then swam between him and his boat, which was too far away for an easy escape. He swam on and ultimately reached his goal after 16 hours. Dr. Huffaker was the first person to cross the 30-mile Alenuihaha Channel in 20 hours between the Big Island of Hawaii and Maui in 1970 after his initial failure of 17 hours. He crossed from Molokai to Oahu in 1967 and was the first person to cross between Oahu to Molokai in 1972 after a failed 20-hour attempt when he ran into strong currents, a tiger shark and a brood of Portuguese Man-o-War.

At the age of 50 in 1989, he swam from Lanai to Maui, then Maui to Molokai, then attempted to complete his final Molokai-to-Maui leg before being pulled after 18 hours. He has swum the Maui Channel three times, is the first person to cross the 9.3-mile Kalohi Channel (1989) from Molokai to

Lanai, has crossed the 8.5-mile Palilolo Channel from Maui to Molokai (1989). A lifetime of success that followed some dramatic failures has proven Dr. Huffaker to be a true pioneer of Hawaiian Islands channel swimming community.

[Expanded Biography \(Openwaterpedia\)](#)

[Long Swims Database \(Marathon Swimmers Federation\)](#)