



Charles Zibelman, Honor Swimmer, United States of America, 1966



Personal Website - (None known)

Charles Zibelman made his mark on marathon swimming by completing a 233 km (145-mile) staged swim down the Hudson River in 147 hours in 1937, while he never left the water, losing 12 kg (26 lbs.) during his swim. The swim drew considerable media coverage at the time. He then went on to set the record for the longest pool swim (168 hours) ending on 24 February 1942 in Honolulu. Prior to this, he attempted (and failed) to swim the English Channel three times in 1932 and 1933 - his time in the water ranged from nearly 11 to 18 hours. Charles likewise failed to complete the Catalina Channel swim.

He performed in a circus then made his living doing swimming exhibitions. Part of his “story” was that he lost his legs at age 9 in a trolley accident – but the truth was that he suffered from caudal regression syndrome and was born without legs.

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

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