



Shelley Taylor-Smith, Honor Swimmer, Australia, 1990



[Personal Website](#)

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Shelly Taylor-Smith won 11 Majors: 1990 and 1991 Capri to Naples; 1991, 1992 and 1993 [twice beating all the men] Around Atlantic City; 1991 International Marathon Swimming Federation World Ranking [with the highest number of World Ranking Points of all swimmers]; 1992/1993 Marathon Swimming World Series Championship; 1988 and 1994 FINA Long Distance Swimming World Cup; 1993/1994 FINA Marathon Swimming World Series; and 1991 25 km FINA World Championship. She held the professional women's top world ranking from 1988 to 1995.

Shelley set the overall speed record for the 45.9 km around Manhattan swim in 1985 in 6 hours and 12 minutes which held until 1992 and broke her own female speed record in 1995 in 5 hours and 45 minutes – which held until 2011. She set the speed record for the 79 km Sydney to Wollongong solo swim. She set the female speed record for the 40 km lac St. Jean race in 1990 which held until 2024 (and beyond).

She won: 51 international marathon races, including nine overall (men and women) victories and two 25 km Pan Pacific Swimming Championships. Shelley crossed the English Channel in 1990; won (overall) 5 times the around Manhattan race; and was the 9-time Australian Women's National Open Water Swimming Champion.

She wrote an autobiography called *Dangerous When Wet* and has helped standardize and professionalize the staging of marathon swims around the world through her position as the honorary secretary of the FINA Technical Open Water Swimming Committee. She had oversight of the FINA 10

km World Cup circuit, the FINA Grand Prix series, the FINA World Swimming Championships, the Olympic 10 km at the 2008 Beijing Olympics Olympic and the 2012 London Olympics.

In 2008 she was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame and received The Irving Davids/Captain Roger W. Wheeler Memorial Award for her contribution to the administration of open water swimming. In 2022 she received the Poseidon Award from the International Swimming Hall of Fame for her high-level performance that advanced the development and status of marathon swimming to the world.

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

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