



Ashby "Brud" Harper, Honor Swimmer, United States of America, 1984



Videos (please help if you can find any)

Ashby "Brud" Harper crossed the English Channel in 1982 in 12 hours and 52 minutes, setting the record as the oldest swimmer at 65 - a record until 1987. He was unsuccessful on his first attempt. Ashby was the 2nd to swim the 33 km length of Lake Tahoe on 23rd August 1985 - and the oldest at age 69 which stood in 2022 (and beyond). He was the 2nd, in 1984, to complete the 37.8 km Santa Barbara Channel (from Santa Cruz Island) - and the oldest at age 67 which stood in 2024 (and beyond). This was one of a handful of swims which inspired the creation of the Santa Barbara Channel Swimming Association.

He completed 3 times the 45.9 km Manhattan Island Marathon Swim in 1983 (9 hours and 3 minutes), 1990 (8 hours and 57 minutes) and in 1991 (9 hours and 24 minutes).

Ashby continued swimming later: two subsequent attempts of the English Channel in 1990 (6 hours+ each time) and at nearly age 74 he completed half-way across Catalina. He died shortly after winning his category in a 1-mile swim in Connecticut on 11 July 1992. He won 9 varsity letters at Princeton University (swimming, football and baseball), was a Navy pilot in World War 2 and was a Peace Corp leader.

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

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