



Penny Lee Dean, Honor Swimmer, United States of America, 1980



Videos: [Interview 1](#) [Talk 1](#) [Panel 1](#) [IMSHOF 1 at 32:28](#)

Penny Lee Dean won 1 Major: 1979 World Professional Marathon Swimming Federation. She set the overall English Channel speed record of 7 hours and 40 minutes in 1978 which stood until 1994 when one of the swimmers she coached, IMSHOF Honoree Chad Hundebly, broke it. Penny set speed records in the Catalina Channel, from the mainland to Catalina in 7 hours and 16 minutes in 1976 (still holds in 2022), and from Catalina to the mainland in 8 hours and 33 minutes in 1977 on her way to a 80.4 km (50-mile) 2-way crossing in 20 hours and 3 minutes (still holds in 2022). In 1979 she won the 42 km lac Memphrémagog; 36 km Atlantic City; 34km lac St-Jean; 24-hour La Tuque relay; and 22.5 km Paspébiac.

Penny was the founder; president for more than 10 years; and historian/board member for more than 40 years of the IMSHOF Honor Organization Catalina Channel Swimming Federation. She was the meet director for the 1984 USA Long Distance International Championships across the Catalina Channel and president of the College Swimming Coaches Association of America from 1985 to 1987.

Penny was the USA Swimming National Open Water Team coach for twelve years (winning every competition): taking teams to the 1991 Pan Pacific Championships; 1991 World Swimming Championships; 1982, 1986, and 1990 Windermere Championships; 1990 English Channel Race; and 1984 and 1989 Catalina Channel Races. She coached coached IMSHOF Honorees: Karen Burton,

S.A. "Sid" Cassidy Chad Hundebly, Steven Muñatones and John York and a total of 9 solo Catalina Channel swimmers.

Penny has presented numerous international clinics on marathon and open water swimming, written articles for swimming publications and authored books including: How to Swim a Marathon with printings in 1985, 1988 and 1992; a How-to Manual Open Water Swimming (1998); History of the Catalina Swims in 1985; and Just Try One More (2013). On this basis, Penny was presented with the Buck Dawson Authors Award by the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1998.

She is an Honoree of the International Swimming Hall of Fame (1996).

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

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