

## **SOUTH AFRICA LEADS THE FIRST OFFICIAL ICE-SWIM EVENT IN ANTARCTICA WATERS**

**Preview the Antarctica swim here:**

<https://www.facebook.com/MadswimmerSA/videos/349174929183147>

On 14 November, 4 South African open water swimmers will be off to the South Pole in an attempt to complete a 1km ice swim in Antarctica waters together with 10 other swimmers from 9 countries including South Africa, Poland, Russia, Australia, Argentina, Italy, China, Bulgaria and Spain.

The swim is a "first of its kind" initiative by The International Ice Swimming Association (IISA) and will be led by its founder Ram Barkai. It will be an officially recorded 1km ice-swim and fully comply with IISA rules. Being a world first - official ice swimming **event** in Antarctica waters - IISA will apply for a Guinness World Record. A few people have swum there before, but it has never been an official event. Fourteen ice-swimmers swimmers from 9 nations with SA in the lead and an auxiliary Madswimmer charity focus is quite a "Proudly South Africa" event and expectantly also a Guinness World Record soon!

South African swimmers include Jean Craven (founder Madswimmer), Ram Barkai (founder IISA), Samantha Whelpton and Clinton Le Sueur.

Jean Craven will be representing Madswimmer with this swim. Madswimmer is a South African NPO that raises funds for children's charities. To date they have raised over R9-m with various world first swims they have done across the globe. Thousands of children's lives have been changed by these daring swims. Read more: <http://madswimmer.com/charities-and-sponsors/>

For Madswimmer the Antarctica swim will be Part 1 of a dual series attempting ice swims at the extreme ends of the Earth - starting with this expedition at the South Pole and completing the series at the North Pole within the next year.

The swim will not differ from any previous Madswimmer and IISA swims in terms of great effort:

- Extensive travelling: Departing from OR Tambo Johannesburg, they will fly to Sao Paulo (Brazil), Santiago (Chile), and Punta Arenas (Southernmost part of South America), where they will meet up with their Canadian expedition cruise operator, One Ocean Expeditions, and board the expedition ship, the RCGS Resolute.
- A 200m test swim will be conducted a day or two before to acclimatise and make sure all safety measures are in place. The main swim date will be determined by the weather and position at sea at the time and could be **any date between 16 and 29 November**

- The main swim route is expected to be a 100m length along the ship, with 5 loops starting from the ship and back.
- Water temperature is expected to be 0 deg C or less. The team will attempt these polar conditions in Speedo's only. Ignorant fellow voyagers might get the shock of their lives witnessing this!
- The strategy is to have 4 swimmers in the water at a time, accompanied by 2 rubber ducks, 4 kayaks and medical and safety staff wearing dry suits and floating devices – ready to jump in and rescue a swimmer if needed.
- Dr Sean Gottschalk, also from SA, will be the expedition doctor. He is a specialist Emergency Physician and has extensive experience in extreme swimming expeditions, including being the physician who accompanied Lewis Pugh on his Everest swim.
- Although the swimmers will be part of a larger 13-day Antarctic Polar Marine Travelling Expedition that will be enjoying the exceptional wildlife and enchanted environment of Antarctica, swimmers will mainly focus on what they had come for namely to identify a location in the open sea and swim. In the mean time they will also be experiencing the magic of the trip and participate in the adventurous activities it offers (sea kayaking, onshore hiking and camping on ice, whale watching, fascinating educational presentations by polar experts etc.).

As in the past, no effort will be spared. Madswimmer will be investing everything to showcase the human spirit and prove the impossible is possible when the goal is set at helping others. Come hell or cold water, the sight is set at the end of those 100m icy loops that will change under-privileged children's lives.

Costs of the swim are covered by corporate sponsors and swimmers themselves. Supporters' contributions will therefore benefit children solely. To make a donation visit our website here: [www.madswimmer.com](http://www.madswimmer.com)

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