

Student swims for MS charity

TORONTO (CUP) — Jocelyn Muir apologised four times for taking so long to return my calls.

The fourth-year psychology student swims 11 time a week, travels out of town to speak every two or three days and is taking five courses.

She is also busy planning her next fundraising project of Multiple Sclerosis after she raised \$500,000 swimming around Lake Ontario this summer.

"We're working on something else that's even bigger. It should be announced by December," says Muir in an interview after an early Saturday morning swim practice.

A fundraising project that is "even bigger" than swimming 522 miles in the often polluted and frigid water of Lake Ontario will be something to watch for, but her accomplishment last summer cannot be so lightly dismissed.

After ten months of planning, Muir and eight friends packed their camping gear and set off from Toronto July 1. Up at 5 a.m. each day, Muir was in the water by 6:30, flanked by boats and crew of eight friends. She would

swim for four or five hours until lunch time, either attend an organized lunch event or rest, and then dive back in the water for another three hours of swimming until 7 p.m. Swimming an average of 13 miles a day, six days a week, Muir and her crew rested on the seventh — in between moving campsites and doing laundry.

"I knew going into it a big thing is the unknown — to be able to meet the obstacles as they come," reflects Muir. "The water dropped 40 degrees for the last 10 days. That's one obstacle I didn't really think I'd encounter but I had to just think of a different way of dealing with it."

Muir says swimming in cold water was her most difficult problem because she couldn't control the physical repercussions.

"The only thing I could do was to make sure that as soon as I got in the water I was concentrating the whole time. We did different sets, like speed sets and things so I could concentrate. And although I was shaking pretty violently, I was alert."

Muir says even though she started swimming for three shor-

ter periods each day instead of two, she still had hypothermias each time she got out of the water.

"It's dangerous because you just don't know how much your body is going to take."

Beyond the cold, however, Muir says most other things could be overcome psychologically.

"We were in the Erie Canal and we saw a rat this big," says Muir, stretching her hands about a foot apart. "That's something I did not anticipate. I knew the pollution was going to be bad in the Erie Canal, but I didn't expect it to be that bad in some areas."

"You really can't do anything about it. You just have to beat it psychologically and the other thing is as soon as you get out of the water you have to take a shower."

Now back at school, Muir has a manager at the Toronto chapter of MS who arranges her speaking engagements. She says she enjoys the chance to talk about her swim and motivation techniques and doesn't get nervous during her trips to businesses and Ontario chapters of the MS about four times a week.

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