

LXV – 65@65

Stanley Ulijaszek - 65 outdoor swims at the age of 65

www.lxvswim.org

The first swim / Swim #1



July 3rd, 1954. That is when I was born. A heavy baby I was told by my mother, much prone to fetal acrobatics until too big for the womb. This must be where my dislike of enclosed pools comes from - fetal constraint, as it is known to clinicians. I much prefer the open spaces now, and suffer from 'pool constraint' now – there is just enough time to stretch out, then you have to stop, turn around and start again. I find the process of pool swimming one of repeated disruptions. This is tolerable, until you add the chlorine in the air.

The West Oxfordshire Sailing Club lake is far from this – a loop marked by six buoys of over 800 meters (the length has been difficult to standardise), stream-fed by the River Windrush, soft to touch, clear to see. Swim #1 was very easy – just needed to go there, ten minutes drive from the village, as on most other days, with Pauline. July 3rd is my birthday, and the best present I give myself five years out of seven (not adjusting for leap years) is the day off work. Pauline takes the day off too, and we share some beautiful time. This birthday, the sun shone, the air and water were warm, and the swim was lazy and good. The biggest issue we faced this morning was on what to have for breakfast – we fell to burrata on salad on sourdough bread, topped with aged balsamic and a golden Cretan olive oil bought in Richmond. Swimming to and from Richmond is another story.