

The Great Arctic Swim from Canada to Greenland Test Limits of Human Endurance, Swim Re-Routed by Deadly Ice Maze

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, September 20, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Explorers Wesley Archer and Justin Fornal made the first attempt in history to conduct a nonstop swim from Canada to Greenland across the Nares Strait.

Their adventure started on August 7th, 2022 when the two set off from an airport in New York in Wesley's single engine aircraft and flew to Qaanaaq, Greenland, one of the northernmost settlements on the planet. From there, Justin and Wesley made their final preparations and with the aid of local hunters Argiunnquuaq Qaernagag, Otto Simigaq and the support of the local community to head north into the Nares Strait.

The team set off from Qaanaaq in two boats in the direction of Pim Island, Canada with the goal of Justin swimming the width of the Nares Strait with Wesley manning a support kayak to assist Justin in the event of any difficulties.

The Nares Strait can have some of the most extreme weather in the Arctic. The winds can reach gale force as the result of the Nares Strait compression zone and the ice flows are unpredictable.

While en route to Pim Island the team encountered an impenetrable wall of ice. The local team would not take their boats any further towards Canada as they could get caught between the moving pieces of thick ice and crushed to splinters. The only option was for the swim to begin from the ice wall. On August 15th, Justin jumped from the Arctic ice-sheet and began his swim towards Greenland through icy below 40F water as Wesley rowed in a kayak next to him full of supplies including food, water, and hot drinks. Argiunnquuaq and Otto remained close by in



Wesley Archer

power boats to help navigate, keep away territorial walruses, and assist emergency extraction. The entire event was documented by Emmy nominated film maker Emiliano Ruprah.

The shifting ice sheets made the crossing both hazardous and incredibly tiring – instead of swimming in near freezing waters point-to-point, Justin and the support team had to swim around moving obstacles, “including icebergs the size of buildings”.

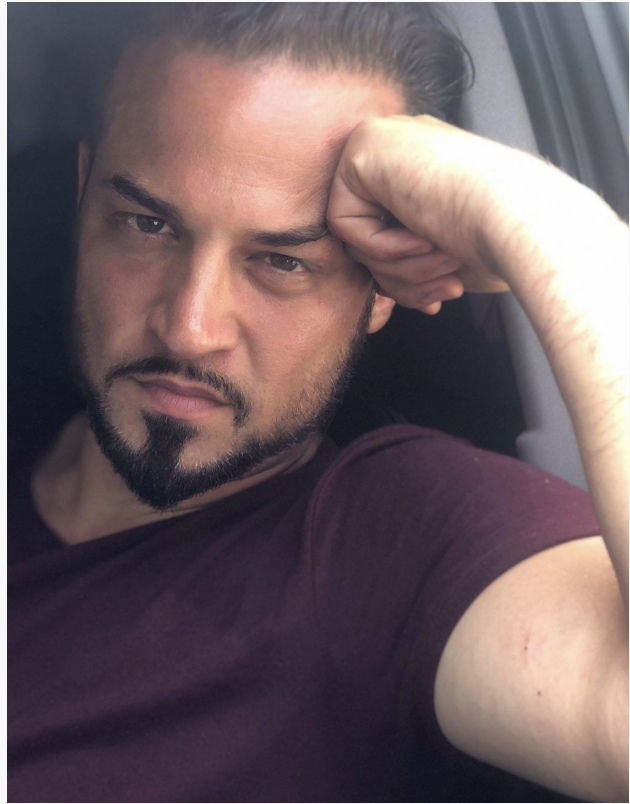
After swimming 7.5 hours and navigating 11 miles of the deadly ice labyrinth. Justin reached the rocky shores of Greenland where the team rejoiced. When Justin emerged from the water he was identified as approaching level 2 hypothermia, though recovered quickly with proper medical assistance from the team.

The Swim was extremely challenging and a true test of human endurance. While the team was not able to attempt a Canada to Greenland swim on this expedition, Justin completed the first long distance swim of the Nares Strait in history. The team plans to return in 2023 to complete the full swim.,

'The swim was majestic and we learned a lot. I cannot wait to return in 2023 to complete the full swim from Canada to Greenland' - Justin Fornal

'Every stage of this expedition from flying, nature, and culture, reaffirmed the respect I had for them going in. Without respect for those three, we wouldn't have made it.' - Wesley Archer

One the Great Arctic Swims supporters, Polar Bear International regards this geographic area as one of the last likely places to see Polar Bears – the ice providing shelter for the seal population



Justin Fornal



Justin and Wesley Attempting the crossing of the Nares Strait, Great Arctic Swim

which in turn lures the bears seeking sustenance.

For hi-res images, visit: <https://bit.ly/3dCwUpZ>

Photo Credit: Great Arctic Swim

About Justin Fornal:

Justin Fornal is an international explorer, long distance swimmer, and writer. Justin is the expedition Swimmer and will be central in telling the story of the arctic and its inhabitants. Justin is also the host of "Unexplained and Unexplored" on the Science Channel. More can be read at <https://justinformal.com/>

About Wesley Archer:

Wesley Archer is an explorer, adventurer, and General Aviation pilot with over 1100 hours in a Cirrus. Wesley is co-producing and directing logistics for the expedition and will fly his personal single engine plane to Qaanaaq. Wesley will also act as a safety supervisor during the swim.

About The Great Arctic Swim

Justin Fornal and Wesley Archer will fly from NY to Qaanaaq Greenland in a single engine Cirrus SR22. They will cross the Canadian wilderness, ice fields of Baffin Bay, and land in the remote high arctic. Once in Qaanaaq, the team will cross over 120 miles of sea from Qaanaaq to Pim Island Canada. The sea voyage will be led by Qaanaaq based hunters Argiunnquuaq Qaernagag and Otto Simigaq. Justin will complete the first swim across the Nares Strait between Canada and Greenland. It is a 25 plus mile race against time before winds and ice prevent the crossing.

Others involved in the expedition include Emmy Award Nominated filmmaker Emiliano Ruprah, who served as director, photographer, and cinematographer. Visit Greenland has graciously sponsored travel for Emiliano, which the crew expressed gratitude since the self-funded expedition works with a low out-of-pocket budget to fund the monumental task.

Mahiautsiaq Eipe of Qaanaaq serves as the team's translator.

G.W.K. Moore serves as science advisor and supported the team from Toronto. Moore has a Ph.D. in Geophysical Fluid Dynamics from Princeton University and a B.Sc. in Theoretical Physics from the University Guelph. He is currently a Professor at the University of Toronto Mississauga in the Department of Chemical & Physical Sciences.

Sakiko Daorana, was the Greenland advisor and expedition fixer who is the owner of Ultima Thule, an expedition support and advisory company.

For more information, please visit <https://greatarcticswim.com/>

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