

# Olympic medallist Dan tells of cross channel swim pain

Highly decorated Edinburgh swimmer Dan Wallace, 31, has fulfilled an ambition by successfully completing a solo English Channel crossing.

But the 2016 Olympic silver medallist and world and commonwealth champion admits he was pushed to his physical limits after being hampered by lower back pain as well as leg and hip cramp.



Dan Wallace had to dig deeper than ever before to complete a success solo swim across the English Channel. Photo Connor Mollison

He says: "Training for top class competitions has made me very resilient but I really was close to taking my cap and goggles off.

"I regard myself as a very capable swimmer but found myself in a place I had never been before and needed all my grit and determination to finish.

"I think that was why I was emotional at the finish.

"I was actually quite tearful having completed the project after a long preparation. I'd ticked off something on my bucket list.

"To finish I just had to concentrate on achieving micro-doses, five minutes at a time."

Despite his problems Dan actually swam a highly commendable 9 hours, 54 minutes from Dover to Cap Gris-Nez in France.

"I had a ball park time of 10 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours so it was good to be under that" he said, adding:

"When the support team is telling you to just be tough it's hard to hear it, but they're right. You slowly get further and further and then you're like, ok, now I'm quite close, now I can maybe do it. You're hoping it hurts in the last 2-3 hours but straightaway I realised this is not going to be a walk in the park. It was never going to be. My hip flexors went first, then my hamstring, and then my lower back really went and I thought, oh, this isn't good. It's exactly what I wanted, to be tested."

A few days holidaying on Skye with family helped Dan adjust to life back on dry land.

But how did he celebrate the solo crossing having been part of a four man team who raised nearly £200,000 for charity by swimming the English Channel last year?

“I was so tired but fortunately had a good friend to say with in Dover and we did a lot of chatting about the event ... but I also had a chippy and a few beers!”

Dan, along with close friend and fellow Warrender SC member, Connor Mollison, who was part of the back up team also including coach Tim Dreyner, are now back running their video-based swim technique course particularly helpful for those doing triathlons, Iron Man, or open water swim challengers.

<https://swimmr.com/>