

# Martin Strel: Swimming Like a Fish

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**S**nakes, electric eels and crocodiles may not **make** the most ideal swimming **companions**.<sup>1</sup> But for “fish-man” Martin Strel, they’re all **par for the course**. Strel has made a name for himself in recent years as the world’s top marathon swimmer. He recently **stroked**<sup>2</sup> his way into the Guinness Book of Records by swimming the entire Amazon River.

Strel’s incredible swimming ability comes from decades of practice. He first taught himself to swim at the age of six. His native Slovenia (斯洛維尼亞) used to be a poor and mountainous country, so the young athlete used a nearby stream to develop his technique.

As a young man, Strel worked as a guitar player. But at the age of 23, he gave up his music to focus on swimming full time. He first attracted international attention in 2000 when he swam the entire Danube River (多瑙河). He then swam the Mississippi River (密西西比河) in 2003. In 2004, Strel **grabbed the headlines**<sup>3</sup> again by swimming 4,003 km of the Yangtze River (長江) in China, **setting** another world **record**!

Today, Strel describes himself as “a little fat ... a little old” and “a simple man.” With his pudgy body and rough beard, Strel looks like he could be your uncle or grandfather instead of a **champion**<sup>4</sup> athlete. But behind his ordinary looks is a powerful heart that makes him **extraordinary**.<sup>5</sup>

to be continued ...

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<http://www.amazonswim.com>

## Language Focus

\* Snakes, electric eels and crocodiles may not **make** the most ideal swimming **companions**.

解析：

1. **make** 在此解釋為「適合當……」，為連綴動詞：

例：I hope Mary will **make** a good actress.  
我希望瑪麗會成為一名好演員。

2. 此外，**make ... of ...** 指「把……培養成……」

例：He hoped to **make** a teacher **of** his son.  
他希望把他兒子培養成老師。

\* In 2004, Strel **grabbed the headlines** again by swimming 4,003 km of the Yangtze River in China, **setting** another world **record**!

解析：record (紀錄) 常見的搭配字詞如下：

1. **set a record** 「創紀錄」

例：He **set a record** in the marathon.  
他在馬拉松賽中創紀錄。

2. **hold a record** 「保持紀錄」

例：**Holding a record** for ten years is a great achievement.  
保持紀錄者十年是個偉大的成就。

3. **break a record** 「打破紀錄」

例：The young man **broke a record** in the golf game.  
這年輕人在一場高爾夫球賽中打破紀錄。

練習：

1. 適當的訓練之下，他會成為一名好老師。  
With proper training, he will \_\_\_\_\_.

2. 十年努力之後他締造另一個世界紀錄。  
After ten years of effort, he \_\_\_\_\_.

※答案請參閱 p. 85

## More Information

- **eel** [ il ] *n.* 鰻魚

- **Guinness** [ 'gInIs ] *Book of Records n.* 金氏世界紀錄大全

- **pudgy** [ 'pʌdʒɪ ] *adj.* 矮胖的

### By the Way ...

**par for the course** 「在預料中」。par 就是高爾夫球用語中的標準桿。而 course 就是高爾夫球場囉。所以 par for the course 就是指所發生的事情都是在預料中，不可避免的。例如：

When going snorkeling, seeing colorful fish is **par for the course**.

浮潛時，看到色彩繽紛的魚類是預料中的事。



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At 5,430 km, the Amazon is the world's second longest river. Strel swam from the mountains near Peru's (祕魯) Pacific (太平洋的) coast all the way to the Atlantic Ocean (大西洋).

He began his **epic** journey on February 1, **averaging**<sup>1</sup> a breathtaking 83 km per day. The fair-skinned Slovenian found himself **at the mercy of** the red-hot sun for most of the day. Constantly being in the water made it almost useless to apply sunscreen. Although **suffering from sunstroke**, dizziness and **nausea**, Strel refused to give up.

Burned, but not discouraged, he continued on. Every day he performed over 30,000 **strokes** to reach his goal. On April 8, he **emerged**<sup>2</sup> from the Amazon's muddy waters. He was **exhausted**,<sup>3</sup> but he had made it. He had started this swim "to **promote**"<sup>4</sup> a message of clean rivers, clean water and friendship." Strel kept these good feelings in his heart throughout his journey. "Many times I talked to myself and to the river," he said, "I am a good man with a good intention." "The river accepted me, protected me, and allowed me to swim it," he added. Nature, according to Strel, was what **ultimately**<sup>5</sup> **allowed** him to succeed.

*to be continued ...*

### More Information

- **epic** [ 'ɛpɪk ] *adj.* 史詩的
- **sunstroke** [ 'sʌn,strok ] *n.* 中暑
- **dizziness** [ 'dɪzənɪs ] *n.* 頭昏眼花
- **nausea** [ 'nɔ:sɪə ] *n.* 作嘔

### By the Way ...

**at the mercy of** 「在……的掌控之下」  
When we are taking a boat ride, we are **at the mercy of** the ocean.  
當我們乘船時，我們是在**大海的掌控之下**。



### Vocabulary

1. **average** [ 'ævərɪdʒ ] *v.* 平均達到  
Tom's mom was so happy because Tom *averaged* 90% for all of his tests.
2. **emerge** [ ɪ'mɜ:dʒ ] *v.* 浮現  
After the long race, Kevin *emerged* as the winner of the competition.
3. **exhausted** [ ɪg'zɔ:tɪd ] *adj.* 精疲力竭的  
Ted's father is *exhausted* after working overtime for one month.
4. **promote** [ prə'mot ] *v.* 倡導  
Many famous people are working together to *promote* the prevention of AIDS.
5. **ultimately** [ 'Altemitlɪ ] *adv.* 最後  
There is only so much we can help. *Ultimately*, it is your responsibility.

### Fun with Phrases

**suffer from** 「罹患」  
Nancy is **suffering from** a bad cold.  
南西因得了感冒而不舒服。



### Language Focus

\* Every day he performed over 30,000 **strokes** to reach his goal.

解析：stroke 在此指「一次划水」。

例：He swam with a graceful **stroke**.  
他優雅地划水。

stroke 也可指「游泳的游法」

\* **backstroke** 仰式 \* **breaststroke** 蛙式

\* **butterfly stroke** 蝶式

但是自由式是 **freestyle**，狗爬式是 **crawl**。

\* Nature, according to Strel, was what ultimately allowed him to succeed

解析：allow 在此指「使……有可能」

例：A weekend break **allowed** them to escape from the pressure of work.  
週末短暫的假期讓他們能遠離工作的壓力。

allow 也可指「允許」。

例：The airline **allowed** each passenger to take only one piece of carry-on luggage.  
航空公司允許每位旅客只帶一件手提行李。

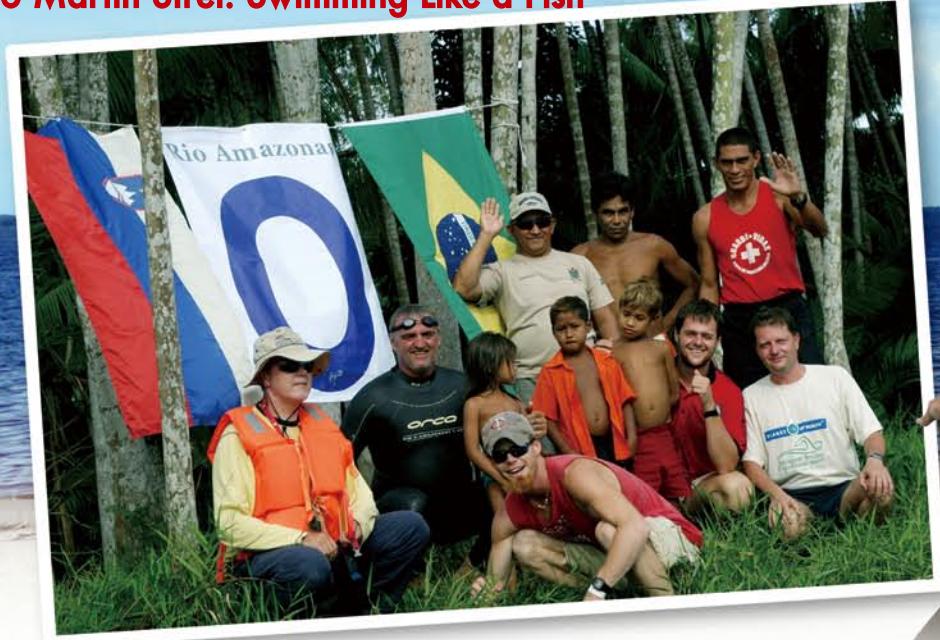
練習：

1. 老師允許我們提早離開。  
The teacher \_\_\_\_\_ take an early leave.
2. 停火協定讓人民可以重建家園。  
A ceasefire \_\_\_\_\_ rebuild their homes.

※答案請參閱 p. 85



## Unit 6 Martin Strel: Swimming Like a Fish



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Through concentration and mental **discipline**,<sup>1</sup> Strel is able to **carry out** this **tremendous**<sup>2</sup> achievement. He also has to rely on the help of his dedicated team. Led by his son Borut, the team cleared drifting objects on the Amazon. They also **distracted**<sup>3</sup> the hungry **piranhas** by dropping blood and meat into the waters far away from where he was swimming.

This 45-strong team proved to be a helpful presence in the Amazon's normally empty rural areas. Once, the father of a wounded little girl flagged the group down. There were no hospitals around, and the team's doctor had to perform an operation to save the girl's life.

This swim also offers a broader message of hope for the world. Strel wanted to make a statement about the need to keep the world's waterways clean, as well as the importance of preserving the Amazon Rainforest. This swim was also the ultimate test of Strel's determination to conquer<sup>4</sup> the impossible. In his own words: "I think there's a lot of people in the world like me. People with dreams. Big dreams. Dreams they are afraid to reach." Strel believes that "if you keep working and don't quit right away, you will come to the end." His amazing example shows that even a "simple man" is capable of great things. LM

— by Michael Karanicolas

### More Information

• piranhas [prɪ'rænəs] n. 食人魚

### By the Way ...

flag ... down 「示意……停下來」。flag down 在這裡和旗幟並無關係，而是指我們做些動作示意讓某物停止下來。例如：The woman on the side of the road flagged down a taxi. 路邊的那位女子招了台計程車

### Vocabulary

1. **discipline** [dɪ'siplɪn] n. 紀律  
Jackie showed great discipline, practicing playing the piano four hours a day.
2. **tremendous** [tri'medəs] adj. 驚人的  
Jerry accomplished the tremendous challenge of climbing the stairs of Taipei 101.
3. **distract** [dɪ'strækt] v. 使……分心  
How can you prepare for the exam with the loud music distracting you?
4. **conquer** [kən'kjər] v. 克服  
Brian conquered his fear of heights when he finally flew in an airplane.

- \* **carry out a promise** 履行承諾
- \* **carry out a plan** 實行計畫
- \* **carry out an order** 執行命令
- \* **carry out a threat** 實行威脅
- \* **carry out an intention** 實現目的

比較：realize 的用法，意指「達成希望做到的事」。

- \* **realize an ambition** 實現抱負
- \* **realize a hope** 實現願望
- \* **realize a goal** 實現目標

\* This 45-strong team proved to be a helpful presence in the Amazon's normally empty rural areas.

解析：strong 在此指「人數達……」，僅用於數字之後。

例：The club's membership is 7,000-strong.  
這個俱樂部會員達 7,000 名。

練習：

1. 市長下定決心要執行他的政策。  
The mayor was determined to \_\_\_\_\_ his policy.
2. 博物館內參觀展覽者達兩千人。  
The crowd at the museum was \_\_\_\_\_.

※答案請參閱 p. 85