

Swimmer tries for Lake Ontario crossing to honour his great uncle

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ory of his great uncle, Clifford Miller, who died of lung cancer four years ago.

"We used to go up to the lake a lot, so I figured this (crossing attempt) was just a natural way to honour him," explained Mr. Taylor, who along with the rest of his swim-crazed family is trying to raise both awareness and money for the Canadian Cancer Society through his 'Swim for Cure' venture.

Currently training about 22 hours a week — a pace he's maintained almost without exception since September — Mr. Taylor isn't just looking to cross Lake Ontario, but to do so in about a speedy 14 hours.

That would give him the amateur record.

While many might consider this overly ambitious, the young swimmer is going in with plenty of long-distance experience — having completed a 10-km swim last year and covered 32km over a 12-hour period just last month (breaking only for public swims offered at the pool).

Stressed Mr. Taylor, "The key is to not kill myself in the first 100m. The weather will play a big factor as well, but I've got the endurance and I just need to stay focused. I'll do it."

Ms Murray seems equally confident about his ability to cross Lake Ontario.

"I think he's got the stamina to do it. Hopefully he can set the record as well, but Mother Nature will have to give him a hand," she said.

Mr. Taylor will get at least some indication of his chances for success tomorrow, when he attempts a mandatory Lake Ontario trial run — which will amount to one-third of the overall distance.

Then on August 13 — weather permitting — he'll look to make a full crossing under the watchful eye of a swim master from Solo Swims of Ontario, as well as friends and family members, many of whom will be along for the ride in two 30-foot boats.

Much of the swim will be done at night, when water conditions are usually calmest.

Anyone wishing to sponsor Mr. Taylor's 'Swim for Cure' bid can do so at Carole Murray's Swim Academy, Bill Mathers Men's Wear, Hair Associates, Dr. Grant Woodall's Main Street office or at Scotia Bank.

Steve LeBlanc can be reached at sleblanc@haltonsearch.com.

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