



SWIMMATHON '08

In 1997, two members of the IITB swimming team tore to shreds the notion that IITians are only good at academics. They swam non-stop, lap after lap, for 85 hours. Inspired by this legendary odyssey, IIT Bombay conducted its annual swimmathon on March 1st, 2008. The objective of the Swimmathon is to swim continuously for 12 hours. Just to put it into perspective, the average running marathon takes a pro about 2.5 hrs to complete.

Dr Mohan Reddy, the inspirational aquatics team coach believes this super-long distance event makes all participants mentally and physically fit - if there were ever an accident out at sea, these swimmathoners would be safe, with or without a lifeboat.

6 IITians completed the 12 hours -the top 3 were Apurva Godbole (4th year), Abhishek Gupta (3rd year), Swaroop Jyoti (1st year)- all doing 21.2 km (i.e. 848 lengths of the pool). Among these was also a girl student, Shailee Mehta (2nd year), who swam 17.5 km. Profs. Sharat Chandran and PV Balaji also participated in this endurance event.

Starting a little after dawn, the 12 hour test of endurance went on and on, as the number of participants in the pool slowly reduced with time. After the 6-hour mark very few remained in the water, and it took some phenomenal grit and determination to keep oneself going in those chilly waters.

Swimmers were visibly shivering as they slowly dragged themselves to the changing room on coming out of the water. Abhishek, one of the students to finish the 12 hours joked on coming out, "It's like being on top of the world - except that it'll take forever to get rid of this tan!" All in all, Swimmathon 08 was a great success, with huge participation and a large cheering audience.

- Kartikeya Shah