

## **St. Augustine Student Swims Across Lake Ontario - almost breaks record!**

It all started out as an idea from a friend three years ago. That idea turned into a dream that came true for Rebekah Boscarol. The St. Augustine student braved the choppy, chilly waters of Lake Ontario recently in her first ever attempt to swim across the great lake and she made sure she was prepared.

“I took lots of cold showers, trained in cold water and in waves. I even gained ten pounds,” said Rebekah. “It took a lot to prepare mentally and physically.”

Not a feat for the faint heart or the weak of mind, Rebekah crossed the lake in just over 15 and-a-half hours, just 23 minutes shy of the current women’s record set back in 1974.

The driving force behind Rebekah’s swim was the love of her 4 year old sister, Sophia, who recently underwent a successful surgery in July to repair a hole in her heart at Toronto’s Hospital for Sick Children. As a way of giving back, Rebekah decided to use the 52-kilometre swim as a way of raising \$20,000 for the cardiac care section at the hospital that took such great care of her sister.

Rebekah’s plunge into the history books began on August 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:45 pm when she started her swim from Niagara-on-the-Lake. As the hours passed, Rebekah says there were several moments when she thought about throwing the towel in.

“There were a few times when I was swimming when I felt like giving up. But the support of my family and friends, my pacers, lifeguards, the boat crews that accompanied me in the water kept me going,” said Rebekah.

That support and her personal strength of will, propelled Rebekah to her finish point at Toronto’s Marilyn Bell Park on Saturday, August 6th, hungry, exhausted but proud.

So far, Rebekah’s efforts have surpassed her original goal of raising \$20 000. “Right now we are at \$24 000,” she said. “I just want to see how much higher we can go.”

Rebekah is only the 55<sup>th</sup> person to successfully swim across Lake Ontario. Many more have tried and failed. But now that she has a taste of that success, she wants more.

“I want to swim across Lake Eerie or try Lake Ontario again to see if I can beat that record. I came so close.”