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**AT Special Feature:  
Robert C. Placak  
The Man Behind "Tiburón Mile" Open Water  
Swim**

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*by Debbie Johnson*



*The RCP Tiburon Mile Swim* is its billing... I wondered what RCP stood for last year until I found that the name of its founder is **Robert C. Placak**. He decided to brand his initials to the title to add a higher level of quality and integrity to the event. You see, Robert is no stranger to swimming. While at UCLA in 1979, he was the national champion in the 100 yd. butterfly, earned a gold medal at the Pan

Am games that year in 100 yd. butterfly and 400 medley relay and competed successfully at the World Student Games, beat out only by Russia.

So, then, how did the Tiburon Mile (Open) Water Swim come about? At his 40th birthday party, it was announced by a friend that this would be the year Bob would go through with his plans of creating the event. He has a fantastical view from his home of Ayala Cove on Angel Island and the Golden Gate Bridge and, as he looked out at that breathtaking sight, dreamed of giving back to the swim world and community that had given him such wonderful opportunities, experiences and memories. Bob also desired to give to a charitable organization. The question now was, which organization...

Bob, as a swim coach, had the opportunity to make a difference not only in the physical abilities of his swimmers, but in their character and lives in general. One of those swimmers' dads happened to be chairman of Special Olympics. So, when he attended the event and watched a Special Olympian swim his event, he decided to train that athlete to swim open water. And, he eventually went on to swim the English Channel!

This will be the eighth year of *The RCP Tiburon Mile Swim* that attracts up to 1,000 swimmers of all ages, from local athletes and coaches to Olympians. Last year, the youngest swimmer was a local mega talent -- **Forest White** -- at nine-years-old. The music, food and atmosphere are superbly electrifying! It's definitely THE place to be! FOX NEWS will be there, as will other Olympians, Cal men's team, Terrapins, Aquabears and Orinda Aquatics swimmers and coaches, along with many other local swimmers.

Bob now has 4 children of his own now, all boys, the youngest not quite two-years-old yet, and he can swim! He and his family have a lot of fun in the water and the oldest three are on swim team.

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