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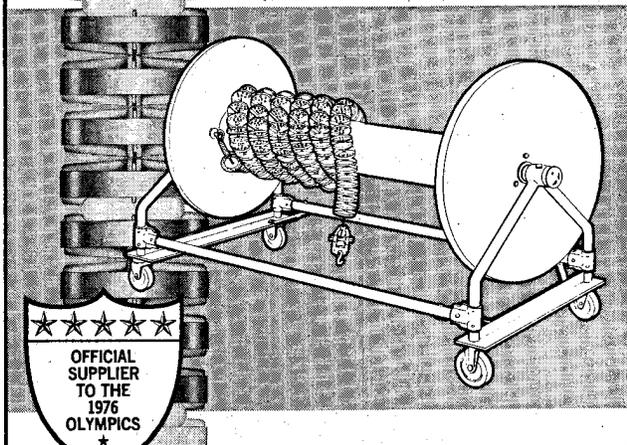
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# DISTANCE SWIMMING



World ratings of professional swimmers in 1975 have resulted in an upset as far as the world champion is concerned.

Claudio Plitt of Argentina has beaten out John Kinsella of the United States. The reason why Plitt was able to win the world championship is as follows: there were only four sanctioned pro races this year—the 22 mile Mar del Plata (Argentina), 19 mile Capri-Naples (Italy), 20 mile Lake St. John (Canada), and the Chicago 10 mile marathons. There were three other pro races on the circuit but a unanimous vote (including Kinsella) at the Federation's last meeting was in favor of not counting these races in the tabulations (too little money offered by the sponsors). Those races were the Saguenay River (28 miles) race, the 24 hour LaTuque team race (Canada), and the Laval (Canada) 10 miles.

The rules of the WPMSE state that one more than one-half the total number of sanctioned races are to be counted in the tabulations for any swimmer. This is to bring some sort of equity into play to allow swimmers unable to afford transportation (a round-trip fare can run as high as \$1,000 between countries) to be considered on their merits for qualifying number of swims. It also serves to promote and foster foreign pro marathons. The point system awards points for mileage, place and time. The longer and harder the swim, the greater the number of points awarded.

Claudio Plitt swam in all four of the sanctioned races. John Kinsella swam in only three, of which he was only able to complete two (he failed to finish the Mar del Plata marathon). Claudio's three swim totals (he broke the record at Mar del Plata by four hours) surpass John's two eligible swims (he broke the Lake St. John swim by some 17 minutes).

In the unsanctioned races, Kinsella won two, the 24 hour Latuque team race and the Laval 10 miler. Kinsella quit the 28 mile Saguenay River Race after six hours. Plitt got second at Saguenay. Thus, in essence and reality, Plitt beat Kinsella in the two longer and tougher marathons. Also, Plitt competed in six of the seven pro races and completed every one. It is easy to see why Claudio plitt of Argentina is the new world's champion of pro swimming—and deservedly so.

One factor which may make the rankings appear unfair is that Kinsella made between 20 and 30 percent more money than Plitt while in fewer swims. One must realize, however, that the point system was set up to promote professional swimming all over the world. It also allows for the different currency values of different countries.

I, myself, have always wanted to score the rankings by the amount of money won. One big drawback of such a system would be how to differentiate between the swimmer who spends \$5,000 in traveling expenses to win \$1,000 and vice-versa. It is well to keep in mind also the fact that Rogosic Veljko of Yugoslavia did not show up at his favorite Capri-Naples swim (he is four-time winner) this year. The reason? He won \$30,000 swimming 44 miles in the Adriatic Sea this summer. A crowd of 100,000 greeted him on his completion. It seems that some foreign swimmers and countries want little publicity for their pro swims.

Paul Bucha, father of Sandra, and a member of the Federation, has submitted a proposal to change the point system. It has some interesting points, one of which is, "Since men and women in pro swimming compete against each other they should be scored and awarded points on an equal basis—not separately." But do the women compete on an equal basis with men in pro swimming? In almost every pro swim I have been in over the last 15 years, a woman has had the advantage of being able to win between \$500 and \$1,000 more than any man in the same event. Why put women on an equal basis with the men in

(Continued on page 49)



# YMCA AQUATICS

By C. Eugene Keltner

The National YMCA Operating Council on Swimming and Diving Executive Committee met during the month of August to review its constitution and bylaws, and to take action on our Physical Education Management Team to work on the rules that govern.

During the meeting, the National Survey for Competitive Swimming and Diving was placed on the agenda as a priority item. The survey is a very comprehensive study and needs the close attention of all the YMCA's in the United States. The results of this survey will tell the world just what the YMCA is doing in competitive swimming and diving. There are estimates at the present time that the results will show that the YMCA is the leader in competitive swimming and diving concerning basic training, available facilities and outstanding certified swimming officials and coaches.

Aquatic directors, coaches and physical education directors please put a note on your desk calendar to watch for the survey. It will be sent to you from our New York offices and should be in your hands no later than the first of November.

All teams and coaches planning to participate in the National Championships this year (to be held in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., the week of April 21, 1976), watch your mail for information concerning registration deadlines, new rules, etc. Keep in mind the major meets must be sanctioned by the National Swimming and Diving Operating Council.

Also notice that all the hotel-motel reservations will be made through my office, Post Office Box 6726, Orlando, Florida 32803. The newsletter will include the necessary forms. Special rates are being given but will be given only to those YMCA team whose reservations go through this office. If you go to the housing establishment on your own you will pay their rates, not the YMCA rates.

All of you should be alerted that you will be receiving applications for the Joseph G. Rogers Award. The person you are

considering for this award must be actively involved in competitive swimming and diving in the YMCA programs.

In a previous article I incorrectly stated the competition season dates. The season runs from October 1 to May 31st of the next year. This varies from region to region and you should check with your region for the correct season dates.

Anyone interested in receiving a newsletter who is not on the mailing list should send \$1 to Marie Kaiser, Post Office Box 88, Brookfield, Ill. 60513. Please note that each association that qualifies receives a newsletter at no charge.

## Distance Swimming (Cont'd. from page 48)

the point standings if they are not on an equal basis as far as prize money is concerned.

In talking with a few of the other female swimmers on the pro circuit last year (Sahar Mansour, Diana Nyad, Corrie Dixon), they all felt that if men and women were considered equal as far as prize monies are concerned, the sponsors might forget about the special women's prizes in their races. It would also serve to discourage the women from competing.

Last year, Mr. Bucha became very upset because his daughter was beaten in the point standings by Diana Nyad even though Sandra had beaten Diana in four races. What has to be considered, however, is that Diana swam in two of the longer and harder races. Sandra could have competed in those races but she did not. All Mr. Bucha's point system would do would be to put some men swimmers between his daughter and the next female swimmer. That would do a lot to discourage other female swimmers and, as I've said, might cause the pro sponsors to think about eliminating the special women prizes because one or two of the women can keep up with the men.

Conrad Wennerberg, a Federation consultant, suggests a further refinement of the scoring system. Give double or triple the number of points to a swimmer who completes a race in which 90 percent of those starting fail to finish. This would serve to differentiate between the "standard" race and those of exceptional difficulty. However, he refuses to be drawn too deeply into a scoring method for he likes to cite the noted veterinarian of champion race horses who said, "All races are fixed. This has been true for thousands of years. A time, a place, a distance and a decision on how to start and finish put at least four qualified 'fixes' on the simplest of races."

Wennerberg is the first to admit that humans are not horses but in this day and age of bio-rhythms, can his analogy be far off? Judging from the Federation's "static" with some sponsors, and some swimmers, pro swimming today is in good shape.

NAUT REC	EVENT	SWIMMER	TIME	DATE	RECORD
1:28.7	200 MEDLEY RELAY	...	...	...	...
3:43.4	200 FREESTYLE	...	...	...	...
1:14.4	50 FREESTYLE	...	...	...	...
1:44.4	200 IND MED	...	...	...	...
1:48.1	100 BUTTERFLY	...	...	...	...
1:47.7	100 FREESTYLE	...	...	...	...
2:01.8	100 BACKSTROKE	...	...	...	...
5:20.8	400 FREESTYLE	...	...	...	...
1:00.8	100 BREASTSTROKE	...	...	...	...
4:07.4	400 FREE RELAY	...	...	...	...
	DIVING	...	...	...	...

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