

PROFESSIONAL MARATHON SWIMMING

BY: JOE GROSSMAN, Secretary, WPMSF
World Professional Marathon
Swimming Federation

The spunky swimmer, a competent comptometer operator, obtained a position with the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO) in Saudi Arabia, and during her two-year stint there she trained in the tepid waters of the Arabian Gulf for a swim across the usually chilly English Channel.

In 1950, "Florence of Arabia" made her first Dover Strait crossing, over the France-to-England route, in 13 hours and 23 minutes. In doing so, she clipped 71 minutes off Miss Ederle's 1926 time.

The acclaim she received led her to return to the Channel coast in 1951, where she became the first woman to make the swim from England to France, swimming the 21-mile distance in 16 hours and 22 minutes.

In 1952, Florence set a speed record for the 22 miles from Santa Catalina Island to the California mainland in the San Pedro Channel, completing the swim in 13:47:32.

In 1953 Miss Chadwick achieved what newspapers called a marathon swimming "grand slam," she made her second England-to-France English Channel swim, setting a new women's record of 14:22 for the "hard way" crossing; lowered the men's and women's record for the Europe-Asia Gibraltar Strait swim to 5:06; then went to Turkey where she swam across the Bosphorus from Europe to Asia in 1:14:07 and swam a seven-mile "round trip" in the Dardanelles in 1:58:08.

The following year, Florence tried two Canadian swims: the frigid Strait of Juan de Fuca in British Columbia, and the almost-as-frigid Lake Ontario; but the cold water defeated her in both these attempts.

Undaunted, Florence returned to England in 1955 and made her third England-to-France swim, this time lowering her own record to 13:55, which set a new mark for the men to shoot at, as well.

In 1957, Miss Chadwick returned to England and conquered the 14-mile-wide Bristol Channel, swimming from Weston-Super-Mare to Penarth, in Wales, in 6:07. Then she made her first attempt to swim the 22 miles across the North Channel of the Irish Sea, a swim which only one person — England's Tom Blower — had been able to complete, but cold water frustrated her attempt.

But in 1960, she went to Ireland again, determined to conquer the Irish Sea — an unsuccessful attempt which almost cost her life. When she was taken unconscious from the water a mere 1.5 miles from her goal, her heartbeat was at first undetectable, but she soon recovered.

Miss Chadwick retired from active swimming after that 1960 disappointment and is now a stockbroker in San Diego. The honor of induction into the Hall of Fame must rank high among the kudos received by this champion distance swimmer during her lifetime — along with such memories as Gypsy Rose Lee telling a Sports Illustrated reporter she thought Florence Chadwick was the most beautiful woman in sports; and the 1953 day in the White House, when President Eisenhower, spotting her in the midst of a covey of sports champions, said to her: "You're Florence Chadwick. I'd know you anywhere!"

When she was six years old, little Florence Chadwick's uncle entered her in a swimming race in San Diego. When she finished last, she decided she'd work hard to prove his confidence in her had not been misplaced.

The following year, Florence improved to the point where, in a race at San Clemente, she was sixth among seven entrants, and probably would have fared even better had she not stopped in mid-course to retrieve her chewing gum, which had floated out of her mouth.

When she was eight, in 1926, Florence adopted as her idol the great Gertrude Ederle, who that same summer had become the first woman ever to swim the English Channel.

On December 28, 1970, at the International Swimming

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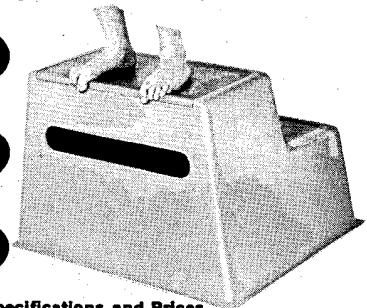
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THE MASTERS CORNER

By CPT. Ransom J. Arthur, M.D.

I hope all swimmers over the age of 25 (as of 31 May 71) are beginning their preparation for the Masters meets to be held in 1971. This is certainly the time to participate and hesitation would be a mistake. The times of the initial meet while good will probably be viewed in a few years as more akin to those of the 1928 or the 1932 Olympic Games than to those of 1968. The times should harden very rapidly with successive meets.

There are a number of races which already shape up to be highly competitive and enormously exciting. For example, in the 35 to 44 year old age group the 50 freestyle should be a thrilling race. Ken Kimball, Mike Milliman, Bill Yates, and Dick Rahe, all from California, are working out very hard and Hubert Williams from Denver, Colorado, and Judge Bob Beach from St. Petersburg, Florida, are also getting ready to challenge in that event. As is the case in the NCAA championships, only a few tenths of a second should separate the first and eighth place. Similarly, the backstroke events will be highly competitive especially with the addition of Rube Wolff, the winner of the backstroke in the Senior Olympics, competing.

As the program grows we will very likely reduce the age groups to five year intervals rather than the present 10 year ones. The 10 year intervals are simply temporary until enough people participate to make five year ones feasible.

There have already been inquiries from England, Australia, and South Africa about Masters swimming and I look forward to the possibility of getting up a touring side to go to Australia to compete against various "old boys" teams there.

Regional meets are already set this year as follows:

Walnut Creek, California, 24-25 April 1971. Contact: Mike Milliman, Aquatics Supervisor, City of Walnut Creek, 1445 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek, Calif. 94696. This meet will be held in a delightful outdoor pool amidst all the amenities of the San Francisco Bay area.

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Denver, Colorado, 27-28 March 1971. Contact: Hubert Williams, 2971 South Macon Circle, Denver, Colorado 80232.

St. Petersburg, Florida, 27-28 March 1971. Contact: Harry Barnhardt, 12171 74th Avenue North, Seminole, Fla. 33540. This meet will be held at a beautiful outdoor pool right on the Gulf of Mexico. It is scheduled in conjunction with a week of festivities celebrated annually in the St. Petersburg-Tampa area.

Bloomington, Indiana. Contact: Dr. James Counsilman, Head Swimming Coach, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47401. We are very pleased to have Jim Counsilman hosting this meet as well as preparing a team of dedicated older swimmers for the Nationals.

Eventually we plan to go to as many as 15 regional meets all over the nation, however, that too is still in the future. Participation in the regional meets as well as being fun in its own right should be a good tune up for the National program.

The question of "professionals" participating in the meets has arisen. As a physician interested in the prevention of heart disease and high blood pressure my aim is to have as many older people as possible participate. I view these meets primarily as motivating forces to keep people exercising rather than as the highly competitive striving for records which is a goal among the younger age groups. The continuing Masters meets are merely a portion of an over-all physical fitness program for a sedentary population. Viewed in this light it is obvious that coaches and others should be welcome as participants since they often do not get the appropriate exercise even though they are constantly in the vicinity of a swimming pool. At this point in time the only group whose eligibility we would question would be professional marathon swimmers.

If any of the readers are interested in reading more about medical aspects of swim training in the older age group, please write me: Dr. R.J. Arthur, 4961 Ocean Boulevard, San Diego, CA 92109, and I will be glad to mail them some papers on the subject.

PRO MARATHON (Continued from Page 29)

Hall of Fame in Ft. Lauderdale, Florence Chadwick's status as a great champion was reconfirmed as she was installed as an honoree in the Hall of Fame, joining her idol, Miss Ederle, and standout marathon swimmers Captain Matthew Webb and Greta Andersen. Miss Chadwick became one of the very few Hall of Famers chosen to date who was not an Olympic medalist, underscoring the magnitude of the tribute thus paid her.

The honor, which came to her exactly 10 years after she retired from channel conquering, is richly deserved. After scoring numerous long-distance victories in the San Diego area, Florence left the amateur ranks in 1945 to go to Hollywood and appear in the MGM motion picture "Bathing Beauty," which starred her former Los Angeles Athletic Club teammate Esther Williams. Then she became a swimming instructor and, in 1948, she set out to fulfill a plan she'd formulated while attending law school and business college.

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1000 FREESTYLE	SCOTT SIMPSON 13:05.5	SIMPSON RIDER 13:05.5
200 BUTTERFLY	JIM KIBEL 2:37.2	SAHMS ELIZABETHTOWN 2:05.1
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