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By Dennis Matuch



In the 3rd Professional Swim race of the '73 season, the 25 mile Lake St. John marathon, a spectacular finish and record were recorded by Horatio Iglesias of Argentina and Ossama Rashad of the United Arab Republic — both of whom finished the 25 mile race in a dead heat, in a time of 8:20:43. This broke the old record of 8:27 set by Herman Willemse of Holland in the 1967 Lake St. John marathon.

A surprise 3rd place finish by Argentine newcomer, Claudio Plitt, was the most unexpected surprise of the race. His time of 8:25:30 was also under the former record. Claudio, only 19 and in his 2nd Pro-race, is expected to be one of the top contenders in Pro-Swimming for years to come.

The best American finisher was Jon Erikson of Chicago, Illinois. He finished in 10th position in a time of 8:58.7. The next best American placer was Diana Nyad of Ft. Lauderdale. Twenty-three year old Diana finished in 13th position over all, and was second in the women's division to Corrie Dixon of Holland. Corrie finished in 9:02:39, only 2 minutes, 29 seconds in front of Diana.

In contrast to last year's St. John race where only 3 swimmers finished under the 12 hour time limit due to cold 58° water and 6 and 8 foot waves, this years 75° water and mirror like surface enabled 20 swimmers out of the 23 starters to finish the race in good form. Officials of the race said the lake this year was by far the calmest in the 19 year history of the Lake St. John International 25 mile professional swim.

The last professional swim of the pro-circuit, and probably the most outstanding by far of any pro-swim race in the last 5 years, was the 10 mile open water race held in Lake Michigan off Navy Pier — directly in front of Chicago's beautiful and stylish Gold coast.

Johan Schans of Holland broke his own world's record of 4:01:35 by 2 minutes and 10 seconds, when he sprinted in at 78 strokes per minute on his last mile to record a new world's record of 3:59:25 for the 10 mile event. Schans never led the race until the 6th mile, sitting in 6th place, 50 yds. behind a pack of 5 swimmers for the first 3 miles, and staying with Dennis Brittain of Houston, Texas, when Dennis sprinted 50 yds. ahead of the other 4 swimmers he was sharing the lead with, which he then held for the 4th and 5th mile. Brittain gained the 50 yds. on every other competitor except Schans, who again stayed 50 yds. behind

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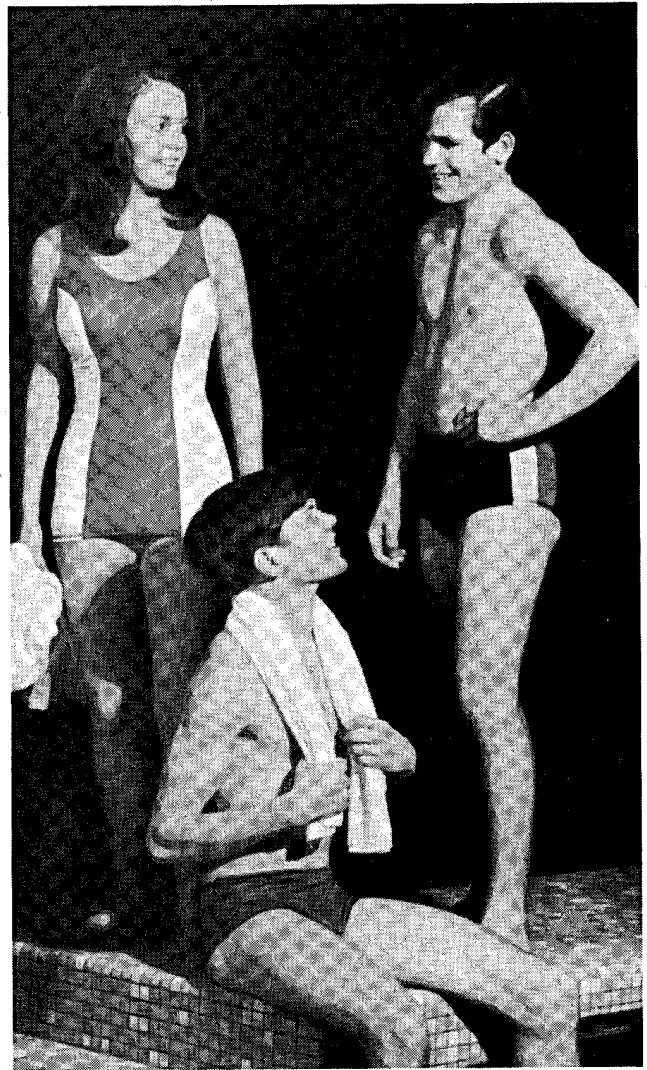
Brittain on his 4th and 5th mile. Schans then had a large feeding of glucose and tea at the end of his 5th mile, and when Schans came around on his 6th mile, he was in front of Brittain by 50 yds., at the 7th mile Schans was 100 yds. ahead of his next competitor and increased his lead slowly after that, to where he finished the race almost 200 yds. ahead of his next competitor. Schans swam the fastest 10 mile pro-swim ever, and in alot of pro-swimming coaches and competitors thinking, also swam one of the smartest races ever.

After the race, with Schans having been awarded the large Sam Greller Memorial Trophy and a check for \$3,000, Schans said he would be back next year to compete in a proposed 15 mile race, that is now being planned by Colonel Reilley, Mayor Daley's special events director for the city of Chicago. Colonel Reilley received praise by the swimmers and spectators for his excellent organizing and directing of the first Chicago Lakefront Festival Marathon Swim.

A surprise 2nd place was posted by Sandra Bucha of Hinsdale, Illinois. In her first Pro-Swim and competition over 1500 meters, she was 1 second under the former world's record and collected \$2,000 for second place. Third place went to Claudio Plitt of Argentina in 4:07:27 and fourth place to Horatio Iglesias of Argentina in the time of 4:08:9. Both of these men passed up Dennis Brittain of the U.S. who was ahead of them for 9½ miles, Brittain finishing 5th in 4:10:20.

The big disappointment of the swim was the poor showing of the UAR professional swim team. They had 8 of their finest competitors in the race, but 19 year old Ossama Rashad could only manage to finish in 7th place. In the last three races Ossama had been first twice and tied for first once. El Soussi, head coach, said that three weekends of competition before this race and three days with no practice (waiting for their visas in Montreal) really took their toll of the energy and strength of these swimmers.

Out of the original 60 entrants in this 10 mile swim, 31 swimmers showed up and began the race. Nineteen swimmers completed the entire race in the flat 75° water of Lake Michigan. Over \$12,000 in cash prizes were given out to the competitors of this very successful swimming event for the city of Chicago.



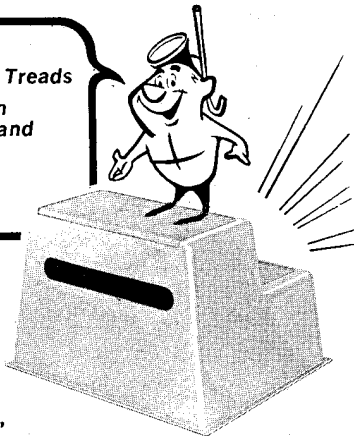
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