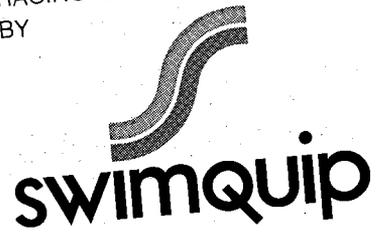


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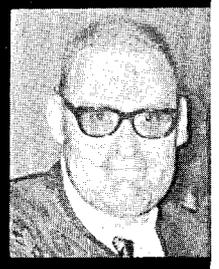
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**DISTANCE
SWIMMING**

By Dennis Matuch



I received the following letter from J.T. Smith of Akron, Ohio and decided to share parts of it with *Distance Swimming* readers.

He mentions he read my May column in *Swimming World* concerning the Mar del Plata swim and the failure of the swim officials there to pay the winners. As a result, Smith wanted to expand a little on the Argentine swimming organization and in particular, Horacio Iglesias.

He writes that when he was transferred to Argentina in October, 1973, he met Iglesias, who immediately took him under his wing and brought him to Buenos Aires to meet A.J. Sacco, president of the Confederacion Argentina De Natacion. Sacco, after receiving correspondence from the AAU office in Indianapolis telling him that Smith's son, Steve, was a registered AAU swimmer, published a resolution allowing Steve to swim on a team in Argentina.

With Iglesias' help, Steve joined the SITAS Club and trained with Professor Hector E. Urabayan.

In late December, Iglesias was voted both the outstanding professional swimmer in the country and the outstanding professional athlete in the country.

Smith concludes his letter, writing, "Although our stay in Argentina was shorter than we expected, I cannot say enough about the wonderful people there. I am sure the problem concerning the swim at Mar del Plata was beyond the Confederacion and Iglesias' control. As witnessed in this country at times, the bureaucracy of the government can do great harm to the innocent and well meaning citizens."

As I later wrote J.T. Smith, I am in total agreement with him concerning the integrity and popularity of Horacio. He is not only one of the world's great athletes, but a gentleman of the keenest intellect.

However, Horacio was an integral part in the promotion of the Mar del Plata swim. Although Smith suggests Iglesias was a victim of bureaucracy on the part of the sponsors, it is no excuse for Horacio's naivete. Both Horacio and myself have argued together with swim sponsors in Canada in order to clarify such points as the following — is the prize money there?; is it in escrow?; if not, we have both refused to swim in that particular race.

In years past, Horacio has been on the receiving end of some good-natured joshing by myself, Herman Willemse and Cliff Lumsden (who have all made history in pro swimming) for coming from a country where the sponsors did not live up to their promise of paying the advertised purse — such was the case with the 1964 Argentine swim. Rejean LaCoursiere, Canada's champion pro swimmer, still has that worthless check of \$1500 pinned to his wall.

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The notorious reputation of the South American swims can be found in such books as *Marathonswimmen (Marathon Swimmer)*, an autobiography by Herman Willemse, and *Wind, Waves and Sunburn* by Conrad Wennerberg.

The WPMSEF has designated representatives all over the world who supply it with information. Horacio is our South American representative. When I informed our members through our bulletin of the South American swims and monies offered, I was acting on Horacio's proven integrity. When the foreign swimmers were not paid for their eight hours of strenuous work, it was my obligation to inform the general reader by way of my column in *Swimming World* and the pro members of the Federation through our bulletin. We must not confuse pro swimming with amateur swimming.

The pro swimmer is either earning his living or supplementing it by swimming in pro races. When he is not paid for a foreign swim, his pocket is emptied further than usual because he has spent money to get there — money that cannot be regained. In the interest of pro swimming, especially, and swimming in general, the public must be informed. You can imagine what clamor would arise if a gold-medal winner in the Olympics was not awarded the medal.

On behalf of the Federation, I will be forced to take away the sanction of the Mar del Plata swim if the foreign swimmers are not paid for their efforts. This means that anyone who swam in that race will not be able to count it when the final tally for world's champion is made in the fall. These are the rules — no pay, no count.

MASTERS (Cont'd. from page 38)

medalist Gay Rosser swimming freestyle and Olympic champion Yoshi Oyakawa experimenting with the bent arm backstroke.

The 1955 Pan Am champion Wanda Werner swam herself, then watched her husband Cav Cavanagh set a Masters record. Sperry Jones Rademacher, two-time Olympic kayak paddler, put her paddle down to set two new Masters swimming records. Don Kane put down his synchronized swimming rule book, left his famous swimming wife and father-in-law at home in California, and won a couple of breaststroke races.

The Fogle girls, mother Florence, better known as "Sis," June (Krauser) and Joan (Cynthia Bruce) had quite a meet, but almost typical of Masters, "Sis" and June won far more races than eight-time National AAU Senior champion Joan, who was disqualified by her nephew Larry, who ran a good tight meet. "Aunt Cynthia was ahead, but she did not hit the touch pad."

We'd like to report that the Masters program is not only "staying afloat," it's here to stay as America's most substantial contribution yet to adult physical fitness. It's fun to report on the big names who were legion to great swimming reunions in the water at these Masters Nationals. That's what the Hall of Fame is all about. We'd like to have the meet back next year and have our Hall of Fame honoree ceremonies at the same time. This way even more swimmers could re-run their famous races of yore. This old home week of swimming makes a thrill for us all, but the real guts of the Masters is the unknown, never-was swimmer going her best time in a slow heat, or Watson Lawrence — the man who lost 100 pounds since he took up Masters "to get back in shape." We hope such necessary evils as cut-off times will never keep a swimmer out of Masters Nationals. An efficient timed final meet like this one held in a 16-lane pool is the current answer to overcrowding.

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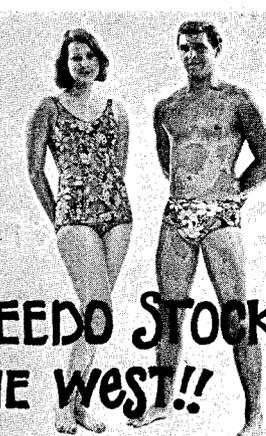
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