

International Swimming Hall of Fame, Inc.

May 14, 1970

Mr. Buck Dawson
Executive Director
SWIMMING HALL OF FAME
501 Seabreeze Boulevard
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. 33316

Dear Buck:

By a strange quirk of fate, your letter arrived while I am still in the States! I was really happy to hear from you and even happier to know that you're still marathon swimming's talent scout of the bikini set.

Your news about your young Greek mermaid hits me just right. This may be the biggest glamor year marathon swimming has ever known. Margaret Macrae (who is now a police officer in Auckland, New Zealand) is coming back to race this summer (she was here in 1968, but didn't then, and probably won't now, set any records), and with Stella Taylor and your young lady, there'll be some shape and looks that has had only Judy DeNijs to look at since Marty [Sinn] quit!

Here's the schedule of DEFINITE races to the moment: June 27, Utrecht, Holland, 12.5 miles; July 12, Capri-Naples, Italy, 21 miles; July 18-19, La Tuque, Que. (24-hour team race); July 26, Hamilton, Ont., 10 miles; August 1, Lake St. John, Roberval, Que., 25 miles; August 8, Newport, R.I., 15 miles; August 29, Chicoutimi, Que., 28 miles. (We expect on or two races between Aug. 8 and 29, but nothing is certain at this time.)

Hamilton will only accept 25 swimmers this year (and confidentially, this is Labatt's last year as sponsor and in all probability, the race will fold - that's a strict secret until Labatt's announces it in July, Buck. The committee has been asking my advice on new swimmers, since they want to allow several newcomers in the race (I've convinced them the sport will dry up from lack of new blood if this isn't done). Therefore, can you send me a photo of your discover two, preferably, so I can make some publicity with the other one) and a resume of her swimming career. Invent something if you must! I'll pass this along to Walt Samek with my recommendations. As long as the race is on the way out, I'd prefer to think of the sport instead of Labatt's.

If you will, you can do me another favor: it'd be terrific for the Federation if we had a Greek member (will make 21 countries -- our last Greek -- Jason Zirganos -- died swimming the Irish sea). As you know, voting (active) membership is open only to people who have been in at least one pro race, whether or not they finished or whether or not they've won any loot. Dues are \$5 a year plus a once-only \$5 initiation fee. But there is a Affiliate Member category, for people who are interested in the sport, or who are sweating out becoming eligible for active membership. The dues for this are \$10 a year. I suggest that Diana (a goddess, yet!), whose last name you didn't mention, join as an affiliate member and the moment she's been in her first race, I'll transfer her membership to active with no further financial

obligation. One of the reasons I hope this can be done is that I can then send her name to all the race committees as a new member who seeks to swim in races this summer, which presumably carries somewhat more weight than if I just said my pal Buck has a friend, etc.

In either case, if you'll send me her photo and some background on her, I'll do a big publicity release on the return of glamor to marathon swimming and perhaps awaken some interest on the part of some publications and, particularly, the dullards at ABC's Wide World of Sports (who have written they're interested and want to know what I suggest, so I told them in a letter that rivals "Gone With the Wind" in length!). Also, Sports Illustrated called me home a week ago Sunday to say they're going to do a piece on some of the races (apparently after they've covered several of them, in a feature piece), and that way help, too. Sponsorship (for races and individuals) is what we need now -- as I don't have to tell you!

Also -- in connection with the Labatts business, I'm going to try and con them into placing the Labatts Trophy (for the World champions) in the SHOF. Also, a new award is being created this year for the first time in honor of two recently-deceased Federation members and marathon aficionados, Irving Davids of New Bedford, Mass. (who was a trainer in the 1927 Catalina race and later a half-assed historian of the sport), and Capt. Roger Wheeler of Providence, who created the Rhode Island races of 1968 and 1969. It's to be a large, engraved silver tray and will go to the person who has done the most for the sport, been the most sportsmanlike, done the most international good-will, or God knows what other fine quality, and I've suggested to the Committee, who like the idea, that it be kept at SHOF. I'm also working on Greta to keep her award to the most deserving new woman marathoner (which Stella won last year) in the Hall. Sound okay, or shall I mind my own business?

My trip was fabulous, but too long for my family's liking. Six or seven weeks would have been enuff, but 10 weeks was too long. Didn't have any physical troubles until I headed home. I have the distinction of being the first person ever to cross the Atlantic in a Pan-Am men's room! I'm entitling the chapter of my book about this African trip "From the Fleshpots to the Flushpots!" I'll be going back sometime this summer, but no word yet. Hope I'll be in Hamilton for the race and the Federation meeting. Anything else I can do, let me know. If you or Diana hasn't got \$10 at the moment, let me know and I'll list her paid and send a membership card. Best to Mary and Rosemary, and best to you from Betsey and the kids. Write soon -- while I'm still here!

Sincerely,