

Victory of Chicago Girl In Short Distance Event Was Greatest Surprise

Some Consolation in That Her Time Only Equalled Weh-selau's Record Made in Trials — New Champion Is Practically Unknown in Aquatic World — Has Been "Under Wraps"

By MIKE JAY

Only the "die-hard" optimists of Hawaii felt their expectations foiled when Johnny Weissmuller beat Duke Kahanomoku in the 100 meters free style for men at the Olympic games in Paris, France, yesterday, but everybody suffered the pangs of sorrow when Mariechen Wehseleau of the Outrigger Canoe Club was nosed out by Ethel Lackie of Chicago in the 100 meters free style for women. That was the biggest surprise of the day.

However, there is some consolation!

A little bit of the edge of the disappointment was nicked when Miss Lackie only equalled the Olympic record of 1 minute 12 2-5 seconds which Mariechen made in the trials Saturday. That helps for it makes Mariechen tie with the Chicago girl in the record books. Another bit of consolation is the fact that the victory went to an American girl.

In the aquatic events at the Olympic games United States made a clean sweep with the exception of four, the men's dive, the water polo, the 1500 meters and the women's breast-stroke. We may have overlooked one or two other events, but that's all that could be located by a close scrutiny of the reports.

Duke's defeat in the century for men was not unexpected. Duke, in fact, has accomplished a wonderful thing in having placed second. Consider for a moment that he is over 30 years of age, that he has won the 100 meters in two previous Olympic games and also consider the fact that he has been swimming in star fashion for almost 15 years. The war really robbed Duke of the chance to make first place in three Olympiads. Had the 1916 Olympic been held there is no question that he would have won the blue ribbon event in that meet for he won in 1912 and in 1920. So, all things considered, he did not do so badly even though he came second.

The showing of Sam Kahanomoku, who finished third in the century, was good and that Arne Borg of Sweden came fourth was a real surprise. The island fans are also delighted that the Japanese sprint star, Takaishi, finished in the money.

Ethel Lackie, the new girl champion, is a newcomer to aquatics. She has come to the front only this year for Coach Bill Bachrach has had her "under wraps" for some time. He threatened something like this in a letter he wrote this spring when he said he had something under cover for the women's free style sprints. Bill has taken a tip from George ("Dad") Center and is not rushing his girl swimmers into competition too quickly, preferring to bring them along slowly and keep them in the game longer. Bachrach's remark about a "dark horse" was made at the time that somebody had printed a yarn that Mariechen Wehseleau was the only real competitor against Gertrude Ederle of New York.

"From laurel wreaths to razz-berries" covers the floral tributes that can be received at Olympic games.

Speaking of the Olympic games

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some very interesting material on the ancient classic can be gleaned from a book written by P. Lamos and N. G. Polites some years ago.

The part that interested us was in regard to food. Bill Bachrach used to say that Olympic swimmers and Olympic athletes generally had baseball players backed off the map when it came to sprinting at the dinner table. But the modern athletes have to take a back seat when it comes to getting on the outside of food when one thinks of the ancient athletes and their capacity.

There was one Milo of Greece whose broad brow was crowned six times with the laurel wreath. When Milo felt the pangs of hunger he would appease them with seven pounds of meat, the same amount of bread and wash it down with five quarts of wine.

In a single day at Olympia he devoured a small bull. The book does not say so but probably he complained later because there was no dessert offered with the meal.

Milo was some athlete with the knife and fork though forks hadn't been invented yet. At the same time he had competition. A cow-herd named Titormus snatched the laurel from Milo's brow when it came to the long distance feeding championship. In a trial the cow-herd devoured a whole ox.

This Titormus had had a lot of playful tricks such as carrying around huge stones which Milo could hardly lift. The shotput probably started from that because Titormus used to toss these immense stones playfully at the spectators and chortle with glee when some of them did not do a Pad-dock fast enough to get out of the way. The well-known athletic event "tossing the bull," was started by Titormus. He would seize the hoof of a bull and twist and over the baby would go.

To compete with these low and vulgar stunts Milo would take a pomegranate in his hand and show such strength that no one could either succeed in forcing him to open his hand which held the fruit so lightly that it was not harmed by any squeezing. Another of Milo's circus stunts was to stand on an oiled disk so firmly that no one could budge him from it either with a rush or by steady pushing.

Milo it was also who first proved the sport axiom that "they never come back." In his old age, the legend says, he went out in the wood one day and to see if he had his old strength tried to tear a tree apart which workmen had started felling and in which they had left some wedges. Milo opened the rift and the wedges fell out. Then the wood closed again and held him fast. He could not release himself and stayed there until the wolves came and devoured him.

The idea of holding the 1928 Olympic games seems to be "in dutch" with Holland, as it were!

Mariechen Wehseleau's work in the 100 meters semi-final Saturday, when she made a new Olympic record of 1 min. 12 and 2-5 sec. tickled George ("Dad") Center, Outrigger Canoe club coach, who discovered and trained the island girl swim star.

So "Dad" sat down and wrote out a telegram which read like this:

"Congratulations, sausage."

The telegram should have reached Mariechen by now.

"Why do you call her sausage?" he was asked.

"Well, it doesn't do to let a swim star get puffed up over a new record and she hates to be called sausage worse than anything else," replied "Dad" with a grin.

So over in Paris somewhere is the island girl swimmer with her lips in a pout no doubt because of that message while here at Waikiki is her coach smiling over his little joke.