



OM PRAKASH ANEJA

SWIMMING

Skills & Rules

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Published by:

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I.S.B.N. - 81-7524-582-4

PRINTED IN INDIA 2010

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Laser Typeset by:

Jain Media Graphics

Delhi-110035 (Mob.) 9911151534

Printed by:

Vishal Kaushik Printers

A-49, Gali No. 6, Jagat Puri Extn.,

Delhi-110093

Price: Rs. 600/-

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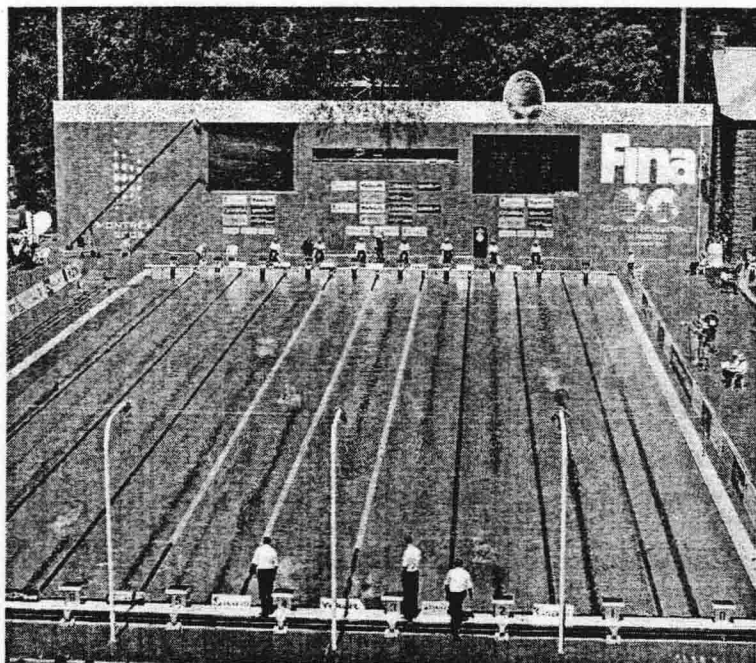
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INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY OF SWIMMING

The aquatic sport of swimming involves competition among participants to be the fastest over a given distance under self propulsion. The different events include 25(8&U), 50, 100, 200, breaststroke, backstroke and butterfly, the 25(8&U), 50, 100, 200, 400, 500, 800, 1000, 1500, and 1650 free and the 100, 200, and 400 individual medley (IM, consisting of all strokes). The order of the individual medley is butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle. In the 100 IM you swim a 25 (one lap) of each stroke, 200- 50 (2 laps) 400- 100 (4 laps) of each stroke in the IM. Swimming has been part of the modern Olympic Games since inception in 1896. Along with the other aquatic disciplines of diving, synchronised swimming and water polo, the sport is governed by the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA).

History

Competitive swimming in Europe started around 1800, mostly using breaststroke. In 1873 John Arthur Trudgen introduced the trudgen to Western swimming competitions, after copying the front crawl used by Native Americans. Due to a British disregard for splashing, Trudgen employed a scissor kick instead of the front crawl's flutter kick. Swimming was part of the first modern Olympic games in 1896 in Athens. In 1902



Richard Cavill introduced the front crawl to the Western world. In 1908, the world swimming association, Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA), was formed. Butterfly was developed in the 1930s and was at first a variant of breaststroke, until it was accepted as a separate style in 1952.

Development of Swimming in Human Society

Swimming can be traced back a long time in history. Swimming, not as a sport but as a useful practice, has played an important role in all societies and on all continents where people lived near lakes, rivers or oceans. Apart from the role played by swimming in seeking food or in overcoming water obstacles encountered in hunting, another important reason why swimming is such a popular activity is the hygienic and

salubrious influence of bathing and swimming.

This review of the historical development of swimming is designed to help the reader understand the dependence of the developments in this field of physical culture on the conditions of production prevailing during the periods of development under consideration and on the class forces acting during these periods. In the course of this review we shall also discuss the trends in development of the techniques and methods in use in all swimming sports in order to enable sports educationalists to work in such a way as to bring maximum benefits that can be derived from swimming to as many people in the German Democratic Republic as possible and to train our swimmers in such a way as to give them an opportunity to play a role in international swimming competitions commensurate with their social development.

Swimming in slave society

In slave society, which was the first historical form of class society, swimming was one of the most popular sports pursued by the aristocracy and freemen. In Greece and Rome, the two leading slave-holding states in antiquity, swimming was a popular pastime and bathing was at the height of its popularity.

The swimming pond ("Colymbethra") was an integral and the most important part of the gymnasiums, which were the public educational institutions of the free Greeks. Swimming had become an important component of physical training of the sons and daughters of the well-to-do. Swimming also played a vital role in the military conditioning of young men.

But swimming contests were still an exception rather than the rule (they were not included even in the Olympic programme). It can be assumed that the main reason for this was there was no suitable water in the

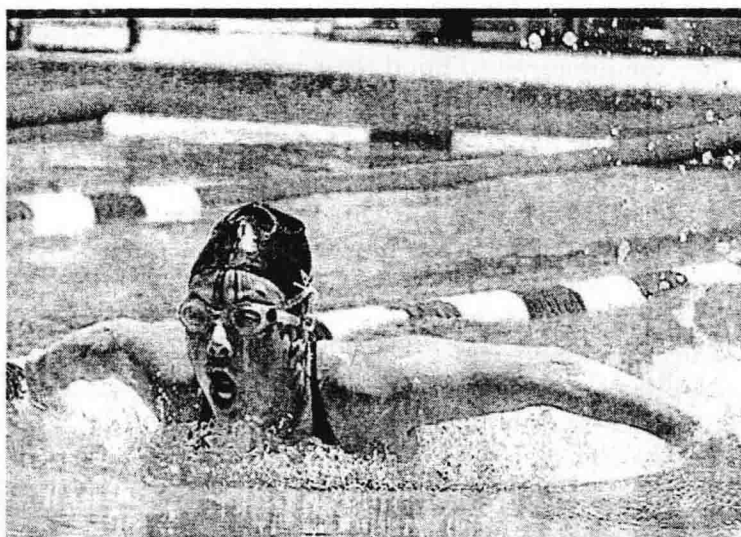
vicinity of the site of Olympic Games.

Homer makes frequent reference in his "Iliad" and "Odyssey" to the great swimming feats of the Greeks; the love story of Hero and Leander has achieved particular fame. Bathing was a favourite pastime among the ancient Romans. Crowds of well over one thousand are said to have froliced in their *thermae* (heatale swimming pools up to 70 meters in length). Swimming was part of the physical education of young people and played a particularly important part in the physical conditioning of young men belonging to the ruling class for military service. But the Romans just as the ancient Greeks did not take to swimming as a competitive sport. The fall of the roman Empire as a slave-holding state marked the beginning a steady decline of the *thermae*, which became establishment of moral decadence. They are neglected and Gradually fell into ruin.

Swimming on other continents

Historical studies show that the art of swimming and diving was also widespread in Asia and America. About Japan it is known, for instance, that some of the inhabitants of that island state were excellent swimmers and that they were able to dive considerable depths mainly in pursuit of fish or when looking for pearls. Swimming feats were often demonstrated in public shows held at the royal court in China; the art of swimming also played a role in military training for the purpose of crossing rivers.

Little is known about the swimming skills of the aborigines of Central and South America. A party crossing a river in boats is supposed to have been attacked by some 10, 000 Inca warriors belonging to the Mu-so-Chuco tribes. It is also known that forms of swimming belonged to the religious ritual of the



Chilbchans Indians of Colombia. No authentic evidence is available as yet about the swimming techniques used in that part of the world.

Swimming among tribes and peoples in Northern, Central and Eastern Europe

Around the beginning of the Christian era, northern and central Europe, which has many lakes and rivers, was inhabited by numerous Germanic tribes and peoples, which were in a process of transition from primitive to feudal society and which were subjects to a certain amount of influence from the declining Roman slave-holding society.

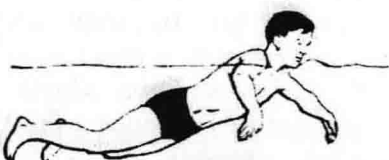
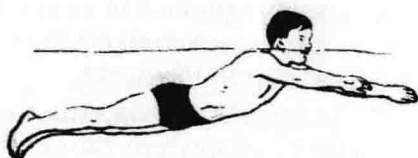
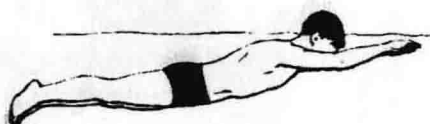
Owing to the fact their settlements were situated near lakes and rivers and to the necessity of crossing streams and rivers when hunting or in times of wars, swimming was a very popular sport of practical value. Both men and women went in for swimming. Judging from old myths and sagas there is reason to believe that there were also swimming contests. The east European regions

were inhabited mainly by Slavic tribes in those times. They too preferred to build their settlements near lakes and rivers and they too regarded swimming as a useful art. No conclusive evidence or myths exist at present about the techniques of locomotion in water or about swimming contests being held by them.

Swimming in primitive society

In their constant struggle to obtain food people were compelled to come to grips with various difficulties posed by their environment. Collective hunting and, in the case of tribes living near lakes, rivers or oceans, collective fishing were an important way of getting food. For these people swimming and diving were vitally important physical activities, which called for a certain measure of constant training on the part of those who possessed these skills.

Assyrian and



Egyptian cave drawings, seals and stone statues stemming from prehistoric times testify to how wide spread swimming was; they also tell us something about the techniques of locomotion in water used in those times. Different forms of alternate stroke swimming predominate in almost all representations connected with swimming from those times. Swimming skills, just as all other physical exercises, were not limited to any one section of the population in primitive society, differentiation began to appear in the period of transition to a class society, i. e., in the period of military democracy. Physical exercises began to play an increasingly important role in preparations for belligerent confrontations. Most drawings dealing with this subject that have survived through the ages show swimming in connection with river crossing operations with chariots, crossing water obstacles with the aid of inflated animal skins, transporting war machinery and similar military operations.

Swimming in the era of Humanism and Enlightenment

The intellectual era of humanism dawned in Central and Western Europe at the turn of the 15th century. The development of the early capitalist mode of production and the associated rise of the progressive middle class lay at the root of this development. In keeping with its trend people began to look up to the energetic, optimistic man. It is understandable that more attention was paid again to physical exercise. In the field of swimming the first steps were extremely timid. The world's first swimming manual, "Colymbetes", was published in 1523, but the aim of the author and humanist Nicolaus Wynmann was not so much to renew the teaching and learning of swimming as a form of physical fitness training as to reduce the danger of

drowning. Nevertheless the book contained some basics about the techniques and methods of swimming in general and breaststroke in particular. But the book could not gain the broad distribution it deserved owing to the social conditions prevailing at that time and the objectives pursued by the author. The era of enlightenment, which took root in England towards the end of the 16th century, had a more powerful influence on the spread of swimming as a means of physical training and toughening. Locke, Rosseau and the philanthropists Badedow, Salzman and GutsMuths were the eminent champions of this movement. People who worked as salt miners and labourers in the salt works of Halle in that period also contributed a great deal to the spread of swimming. In times of unemployment they worked as fishermen and boatmen, and as a result of always being close to water in this occupation they developed a liking for swimming. It is said that salt miners at Halle whose sons reached the age of three or four took them along when they went swimming in the Salle River. Fulda also mentions this fact in his *Philonexia*.

The salt miners of Halle are also frequently referred to as the "fathers of modern swimming". Their influence on broad sections of the population was much more effective than that of the humanists, who were more given to theorizing. The opening of the first public baths in Paris in 1760, in Frankfurt am Main in 1774 and in other cities in Western and Central Europe dates from that period. The seaside and mu-bath resort of Heiligendamm near Doberan was opened in 1793. It was the first German seaside resort and many more followed suit.

As the capitalist mode of production developed,



people increasingly focused their attention on life on earth instead of in heaven. Stimulated by philanthropists, far-sighted educationalists and medical men, more attention was again paid to the physical education of young people, and especially of middle class youth.

Swimming, which had been practised clandestinely for a long time, was again recognized as an excellent method of physical training and its teaching was introduced again progressive philanthropic educational institutions. Even the powerful influence of the church, which for a longer time had continued to oppose this

development could not stem this movement.

The pedagogic activities of Jobann Cribstop GutsMutbs at Schnepfenthal had a particularly positive influence on the development of swimming in Germany towards the end of the 18th century. He creatively analysed the experience of the salt miners of halle and founded a system of swimming instruction. He devoted a considerable part of his work entitled "Gymnastic fur die Jugend" to swimming, emphasizing the development of valuable character traits in connection with swimming skills and abilities. He wrote down his training method, which had been tried in practical work, in a self-teaching booklet entitled "Kleines Lehrbuch der Schwimmkunst zum Selbstunterricht", which appeared in 1798. GutsMutbs wanted to see swimming become "a principal component of education".

Swimming in feudal society

Knights, burghers and peasants practised different forms of physical culture but swimming played a certain role with all of them. Peasants practised swimming as part of popular exercises, while the burghers were very fond of their public baths. Among the knights swimming was regarded as an important part of the system of exercises known here as the "seven agilities". As the exploitation of the peasants and lower strata of the urban population became more and more severe they had less and less leisure time at their disposal. As a result it became almost impossible for them to go in for sports. The situation was aggravated by the fact that sports in general were prohibited under the influence of scholasticism, and bathing and swimming were particularly combated because they were connected with the unveiling of the body. Owing to the fact that immorality began to spread in the bathing establishments, which wee open only to the well-to-do

sections of the population, they fell into disgrace and were closed. Bathing and the art of swimming ceased to be practised, and those who were caught violating the bathing prohibitions were punished. Reporting about those times Friedrich Ludwig Jahn wrote that boys who were unable to resist the temptation and went swimming were caned. But the people preserved the art of swimming through tradition, and noted personalities continued to propagate the teaching of swimming.

Development of modes of instruction for swimming

Not only swimming in general but also the methods used to develop the abilities and skills of a swimmer depend on the stage of social development and on the progress made in natural sciences.

In the first swimming manual, "Colymbetes", which we mentioned in the preceding section, the author instructed the reader in the art of swimming in the form of a dialogue. Breaststroke movements are in the foreground, the instructor, standing in the water, actively supporting the learner. The author recommended reed bundles, cork belts, animal bladders and other swimming aids, but he pointed out that these "buoyant aids" impede the swimmers' movements and that through diligent exercise the learner should soon be able to do without them. Confidence exercises through which the learner gets used to water are not mentioned.

A work by the Italian author de Benardi entitled: "A complete concept of swimming instruction based on new studies of the specific gravity of the human body", whose translation appeared in Germany in 1797, gave swimming instruction a fresh impetus. De Bernard's teaching was based on his physical research into buoyancy in water. He said that the beginner should first