

WETNOTES

Newsletter of International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics

Gay Games V Update

by Charlie Carson,
IGLA Delegate to the
Federation of Gay Games

On Friday, 10 April, the IGLA Executive Officers sent a letter to the Royal Dutch Swimming Association (KNZB) regarding our concerns about the swimming competition at Gay Games V. We took this action reluctantly but we decided we had no choice because the Amsterdam swimming meet organizers have repeatedly refused our attempts to engage in direct conversation.

A week later, IGLA's officers issued a press release specifically regarding the age group divisions and their effect on older swimmers attending the Games. We consider the planned age groups such a direct violation of the Gay Games' original goals of participation and inclusion that public comment was necessary.

Suzanne and I will continue to lead our efforts to have the Games' competitions run according to international standards. Water polo

seems to be pretty much on track, but it is a huge disappointment that there will be no new teams to join the IGLA regulars in Amsterdam. IGLA has taken no official position on the recently announced exhibition diving. Very few divers from past Gay Games are attending and those who have been interested in participating have met with confusion about how to register.

As for swimming, much has already been written about IGLA's collective objections to the proposed age groups, the limits on relay entries, and of course the fact that the meet should be sanctioned as a masters competition. But rather than rehash those topics now -- especially since we hope some agreements may be reached by the time this is published -- I want to speak just a moment on the bigger picture.

We have created many positive relationships with our local and national FINA affiliates in the last decade.

Safeguarding those relationships is a major reason why the officers decided it was necessary to write to KNZB. We wanted KNZB to know that we consider the FINA masters rules not just important but vital for insuring fairness at competitions.

We also wanted KNZB simply to know that IGLA exists, which we are not at all sure has ever been communicated to them by the meet organizers. When substantially more than half of the participants at the Games meet belong to one organization, our organization, it is not overstepping our bounds to let our views be known.

Writing to KNZB and issuing the press release are protective

measures, not only of IGLA's reputation with our teams' home federations but to the reputation of the Gay Games itself. We have learned far too much since Gay Games I in 1982 about participants' and organizers' needs alike to risk needless arguments on deck if they can be avoided ahead of time. KNZB officials will be running the meet, and word about the competition can be expected to spread within the FINA world rather quickly at the Games' conclusion. I cannot imagine being in disagreement with a FINA signatory -- here, KNZB -- when IGLA itself advocates following FINA's masters rules.

While we may have differences with some non-IGLA athletes or teams attending the upcoming Gay Games, I truly believe that IGLA's position as the largest gay and lesbian aquatics organization is not only the result of our having been first but also our commitment to be best. We still have many internal issues we're working on and those who join us in full partnership will have a voice in helping us resolve them to grow even stronger. As the ongoing representative of our sports in the Federation of Gay Games, we will continue to use what we learn for the good of the Games themselves.

The days are ticking off. Gay Games V will not only be here before we know it, it will also be over before we know it. We have an exciting week ahead of us in August. Let us all hope that communications improve to the point that, come August 9, our reflections back on Amsterdam will be positive for participants, officials and spectators alike.

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Taking the Active Position

**Jessica Seaton,
Pacific Co-President**

I hope you're all back in the water again — swimming or playing water polo. It is often easy to lose sight of what originally motivated us to begin and then continue to swim or play water polo with a master's team.

Many IGLA representatives, and certainly all of the IGLA Executive Committee members, are either serving in several capacities at once, or over the years, have held various positions both in IGLA and on their respective teams. Jan Suchomski, currently chairperson of IGLA's Women's Development Committee, is also President of the Atlanta Rainbow Trout. Doug Fadel was elected IGLA's Secretary one year after founding QUAC, Queer Utah Aquatics. The current co-chair of the Policy and Procedures Committee, Jon Bauer, and the current co-chair of the Championship Rules Committee, Roberto Mantaci, were both most recently co-presidents of IGLA, and over the years have both been involved in their respective teams. Charlie Carson, the IGLA Delegate to the Federation of Gay Games, was the co-meet director for swimming at the Gay Games IV in New York City, and actively holds committee positions within the Federation. The list goes on,... you get the picture.

The advantages to having Executive Committee positions filled by people with a lot of involvement both within their teams and the community are many: experience with boards, experience with swimming/water polo related problems, organizational experience.

Over the past four years IGLA has benefited from the energy and expertise of the people who pooled their experience and brought the organization to a new

level. We now have two documents: Rules and Recommendations for IGLA Championships and Gay Games Aquatics Competitions and the Bylaws, Policies and Procedures Manual. As an organization, we have ironed out many procedural stumbling blocks so that things flow more smoothly. At the Federation of Gay Games level, we have gained an enormous amount of experience, and have applied what we've learned to try to insure that Gay Games VI in Sydney will follow the highest aquatics standards.

The other side of this picture, however, is one where we have many of the same people running both IGLA and their teams, and eventually getting just plain tired, if not burned out. Those of us in leadership positions need to move on, recharge our batteries, and take care of other aspects of our lives. At the same time, IGLA stands to gain a lot by having new people with new and different ideas. That is the way the organization can grow.

With the next IGLA meetings being held at the site of the Gay Games V in Amsterdam, I sincerely hope that we see a lot of European participation. These meetings will present a wonderful opportunity for both IGLA and non-IGLA teams to see how the organization functions and to volunteer to be an active part of IGLA. In order for IGLA to be truly international, we need international participation. Currently we have Jamie Coles from Australia as a Pacific Co-chair and Roberto Mantaci from Paris as Co-chair of the Championship Rules Committee. A stronger European presence is not going to be seen on the IGLA Executive Committee

unless more Europeans volunteer for Executive Committee positions. The only way to influence IGLA is to be an active part of the organization.

We warmly welcome and encourage all of you to consider running for a Board position at the General Meeting in Amsterdam. The positions that will be up for re-election are: Atlantic Co-chair (John Brown's position, not running again), Pacific Co-chair (my position, not running again), Secretary (Doug Fadel's position, not running again), and both the Delegate and the Alternate Delegate to the Federation of Gay Games positions (although there is a probably policy change in the works, whereby only one of the two positions would become available at the current election). We also invite anyone, IGLA representative or not, to join a committee. The standing committees are: Policies and Procedures (Jon Bauer, Cherry Robinson, co-chairs), Championship Rules (Roberto Mantaci, Rex Toltschin, co-chairs), Women's Development (Jan Suchomski, chair), and Products and Promotions (Robert Haas, chair).

**Swim hard, swim fast,
swim often!**

Gay Games V

**John Brown,
IGLA Atlantic Co-President**

As of press time, it appears that what we thought was going to be a Master's meet in Amersfort will now become an Open event. You may have heard rumblings of this or read it on web. This is very disappointing to those of us that have worked so hard for the past 2 years to ensure that your Gay Games are indeed sanctioned as a Master's meet under FINA rules by

the Dutch oversight committee, KNZB. Instead, to accommodate a small number of under 19 swimmers, the meet will be run as an Open meet, without the regular 5 year breaks beyond, say, 50 years of age. This is incredibly disturbing for several reasons. First, it is contrary to what Stichting has lead us to believe. In fact, we have been lied to. Second, it puts many of us at a disadvantage when competing for record times. Unless USMS recognizes this meet, your swims will be for naught. And most importantly, it is exclusionary and unfair to those swimmers over 50.

What can be done about this? Good question. Please be vocal through your teams' IGLA reps and to the board. I, personally, am at wits end and am very discouraged by this entire development. IGLA owes a great debt of gratitude to Charlie Carson and Suzanne Shriner for all their efforts on our behalf. But the job is not done. Please feel free to E-mail me at john.brown@sales.turner.com with your comments.

Post-Utah Thoughts

**John Brown,
IGLA Atlantic Co-President**

It was great to see new faces at QUAC's Ski and Swim Weekend. It was even better to see old friends. It was a total blast, and I encourage as many people as possible to attend next year. Doug Fadel, Dave Ferguson and the gang really know how to put on a great weekend. And the skiing ain't bad. My cap is off to them!

Gay Games Business

IGLA will hold its General Meeting in Amersfort during Gay Games. We will also hold elections for IGLA Secretary and Atlantic and Pacific Co-Chairs. If anyone is interested, now is a great time to start asking Doug, Jason, Jessica, Jamie and myself what it is exactly we do. There is a lot of reward and satisfaction that comes from helping make this organization run.

Pep Talk

**Jason Klugman,
IGLA Atlantic Co-Chair**

I recently wrote an article for the FINS (Philadelphia) newsletter that focused on competition and the competitive spirit. As a coach and swimmer, with twenty-odd years of experience, it is easy for me to forget that many members of my team do not have the history of competition or desire to compete that others, including myself, hold dear. I challenged members of my team to approach swim meets in new and imaginative ways. I reminded everyone of the benefits of goal setting and participation, and encouraged them to enter our 3rd annual swim meet this May. I make swim meet announcements at every practice, and I encourage members to work together to arrange transportation and housing to meets outside our area.

It is all part of the magic of masters swimming - queer style. Not only do you get to swim in a new and different atmosphere, you have the support of your team... like DCAC's cheerleaders... with wigs and pom poms - and you have a weekend full of events; ice-skating, skiing, roller-blading, brunches with a view of the city, and more. Hosted dinners and housing provide

additional opportunities to connect with people who not only have the common bond of chlorine bleached hair, but of the gay and lesbian experience - a truly remarkable thing.

As I reflect on the challenges we face in Amsterdam, I wonder what it must feel like to be a novice swimmer, competing in a meet for the first time and confronting the fears and nerves that arise during those tense moments behind the blocks. What impresses me most is the support and opportunity provided by IGLA teams for a new... generation (I'll call it) of swimmers to step up onto the blocks and challenge themselves to perform as they never imagined they could. We must remind ourselves that amid the controversy and chaos are over 1,000 gay and lesbian swimmers making a statement about community, culture and sport by taking the great step of competing in the Games.

I applaud, in fact I am often amazed by, the tireless efforts of our Federation of Gay Games Delegate, Charlie Carson and our Alternate Delegate Suzanne Shriner to insure that the upcoming Games meets the standards of fairness and inclusions established in previous Games. As a board, we continue to spend much of our energy on the challenges of Amsterdam. I am cautiously optimistic that we will be successful in making these Games fair and inclusive by enforcing FINA Masters rules. However, I would like to applaud the thousands of IGLA swimmers who will compete this year, some for first time in their lives, not just in the Games, but in local and regional meets around the world. I hope your goggles stay on during your dive, and remember... don't breathe off your flip turns!

Championship Rules Committee Report

Roberto Mantaci and Rex Tolschin, Co-Chairs

We intend to start to work on the updates and changes to the Rules and Recommendations Booklet that might be needed.

Our Committee for 1998 includes the following dedicated volunteers :

- ▶ Rick Brown (Montreal), rickbrown@sprint.ca
- ▶ Philip Hayman (West Hollywood), hibidibi@loop.com
- ▶ Evans Fowler (Atlanta), ETFrealtor@aol.com
- ▶ Terence Ma, TPMa@mindspring.com
- ▶ Roberto Mantaci(Paris, co-chair), mantaci@liafa.jussieu.fr
- ▶ Graham Perlman (London), echaos@dircon.co.uk
- ▶ Jessica Seaton (West Hollywood), JSeaton@aol.com
- ▶ Charlie Sullivan (Ann Arbor), Iglapolo@aol.com
- ▶ Rex Tolschin (Dallas, co-chair), tolschin@aol.com.

Anyone else who would like to participate in the committee is very welcome. If you are willing to do so, please contact one of the two Co-Chairs at the e-mail addresses here above.

All the committee members have e-mail access, therefore, unless some new member without e-mail access joins the committee, e-mail will be THE ONLY way of communication within the CR Committee this year.

You should have recently received the 1998 version of the Rules and Recommendations

booklet, which has been sent by the outgoing Committee, Co-Chairs, Phil Hayman and Jessica Seaton. If you have not received it yet, it will arrive to you sometime soon.

The 1998 booklet is the starting point for our work. We invite you to read it carefully before making any proposal. In particular, committee members should be well acquainted with the booklet. Any committee member, officer, representative or team wishing to submit a proposal for an amendment to be voted upon at the IGLA General Meeting of Amsterdam, must submit the proposal by APRIL St. 1998, to the two Committee Co-Chairs, in writing, by e-mail, snail mail or fax. This will give enough time to the Committee to discuss the issues and evaluate the proposals, and to inform the board and the membership about the amendments subject to vote in a proper time frame.

We look forward to hearing from you and we send you our best regards.

Under Reconstruction

Rick Windes, Top Ten and Records Chair

After a few years of fits and starts, the Records and Top Times Committee (RTT) is gradually piecing together Gay Games and IGLA swimming history. The first fruits of this revitalized project were seen last October in San Diego at IGLA X, where we provided IGLA Short Course Yards (25 Yard) Individual and Relay Records. Our database now holds over 13,100 individual and 5,760 (1,400 by team) records of splashes in Gay Games and IGLA Championships going back to Gay Games I in 1982. Our first 1998 report card shows the

following accomplishments and requirements:

- 1982 Gay Games I SCY-25 Yard Most medal finishes, 35% estimated total#
- 1986 Gay Games II SCY-25 Yard Most medal finishes, 75% estimated total of finals#
- 1987 IGLA I SCY-25 Yard Results completely entered
- 1988 IGLA II SCY-25 Yard Results completely entered
- 1989 IGLA III LCM-50 Meter Results completely entered
- 1990 Gay Games III LCM-50 Meter All individual and top 10 relays entered, have results
- 1991 IGLA IV SCY-25 Yard Results completely entered
- 1992 IGLA V LCM-50 Meter Top 10 for each event entered. R. Doore has printed copy
- 1993 IGLA VI LCM-50 Meter Top 10 for each event entered. C. Carson has printed copy
- 1994 Gay Games IV SCM-25 Meter Results completely entered
- 1995 IGLA VIII LCM-50 Meter Results completely entered
- 1996 IGLA IX SCM-25 Meter Results requested
- 1997 IGLA X SCY-25 Yard Results requested (C.Carson has e-file copy in NY)
- For Gay Games I-II our records are not close to complete. In the pre-IGLA era (even before the timed finals format was universally established) heat sheets and finals sheets were scattered all over and media reporting formats were sparse. We appreciate any additional leads for results sources!
- Print copies for IGLA V-VI are obtainable; anyone who

might possess an e-file of these two would save some scanning and typing by sending us copies. For IGLA IX-X we've been informed that e-file copies are available and we'd appreciate a copy.

If you wish to join the committee or contribute results or historical material, please contact the RTT Chair, Rick Windes, at 1527 Florida St., San Francisco, CA 94110-4851 USA, tel. (415) 285-5659, e-mail: wrwtsunami@email.msn.com. Charles Carson and Paul Fortoul of Team NY are current members of the committee. We welcome the participation of any IGLA member, especially as we get to resolving issues such as proofing the database, swimmers registering with different names in different meets, etc.

Enclosed with this issue of WetNotes are the Gay Games Long Course (50 Meter) Individual and Relay Swimming Records.

IGLA as a Nonprofit Corporation

by Jason Klugman,
IGLA Atlantic Co-Chair

At the IGLA general meetings in San Diego (October 1997), we discussed the possibility of incorporating as a non-profit organization in order to increase IGLA's ability to gain sponsorship and donations from corporate and community sponsors. In the United States, this process of incorporation will lead us to a non-profit status that allows corporations and others to make tax-deductible donations to organizations. In many cases, this facilitates the process of gaining financial support for championship meets and other activities.

The current IGLA board is moving forward with incorporation here in the United States. This does not preclude future IGLA Boards from incorporating in other countries, but at present, it is our best option for gaining non-profit status.

The process of filing is time consuming and labor intensive. Since the current IGLA Board features a lawyer (Doug Fadel, IGLA Secretary) who has done the legal work at no charge, we feel the time is right to make the move to incorporate.

If you or your team members have any questions or concerns about this process, please contact the IGLA Board. You can send your comments via e-mail to:

Jason Klugman,
Atlantic Co-Chair at
jasonrk@dolphin.upenn.edu
or via regular mail ;
807 Lombard Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19147 USA
and your comments will be forwarded to the entire IGLA Board. We would like to hear from team representatives by May 15, 1998. Shortly thereafter, we hope to move forward with the incorporation procedure.

Secretary Update

by Doug Fadel,
IGLA Secretary

First, the 1998 IGLA Directory has been published. The directory remains a continuous work in progress. Information changes on a daily basis. Most teams have been diligent in notifying me of corrections to their team information. Others have been somewhat less diligent. It is imperative that the information that I provide teams by e-mail and snail

mail fall in the hands of the right people on your teams. Who are the right people? The people who have a God given talent for getting the word out, the vocal ones. IGLA Representatives have a civic duty to talk, copy, distribute, and publicize!

Second, in the next newsletter, you will receive vital information regarding the gay games. It is important that you provide your teammates attending the games with the newsletter information.

Finally, I mailed the IGLA representatives a copy of the minutes from the General Meeting in San Diego. There have been no objections nor corrections to those minutes. Consequently, they should be accepted without discussion at the IGLA General Meeting at the Gay Games.