

BEYOND CLOTWORTHY AND AQUATICS ST. LOUIS 1904 - FANCY DIVING: A CENTENNIAL VIEW OF SWIMMING AND DIVING AT THE GAMES OF THE THIRD OLYMPIAD

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The grand St. Louis Exhibition Fairgrounds site.

Bob CLOTWORTHY'S article in the last issue of the *Journal of Olympic History* stimulated us to take yet another excursion into the proceedings of what passed at St. Louis in 1904 as the Olympic Swimming, Diving, and Water Polo events. We are indebted to Bob CLOTWORTHY for his help and motivation in this regard. We proceed!

To begin with, there were no women. There were no fast-skin suits, no starting blocks, no turning boards, no tumble turns, no lanes or lane lines, and no trials or even qualifying times, for that matter. And there was no water polo ball, per se, or even a diving board in the beginning. In fact, there wasn't even a swimming pool, but there was swimming and water polo competition and, for the very first time, a diving event at the first Olympic Games ever held in the United States. The year was 1904. The site was St. Louis, Missouri.

The Games of the XXVIII Olympiad in Athens this past summer marked the centennial celebration of those 1904 Games in St. Louis, an Olympic festival that was beset by difficulties from the very beginning. The initial complication lay in the

fact that the Games of the 3rd Olympiad were not originally awarded to the city of St. Louis. Shortly following what passed for the Paris Olympics in 1900, the founder of the modern Olympic movement, the Baron Pierre de COUBERTIN, and his then fledgling IOC, awarded the '04 Games to the city of Chicago.¹ That decision aside, and following a long scenario of political argument and arm twisting, the Games were finally moved to St. Louis in February 1903, where they were eventually staged as an appendage to the Physical Culture Exhibit of the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition, more popularly remembered as the *St. Louis World's Fair*. Compared to the current era's spectacular pageantry, and despite being staged against the impressive and ornate backdrop of the Fair itself, including the world's first consumption of such novelties as hot dogs and hamburgers, *Dr Pepper*, and ice cream cones, the Games were, in large part, forgettable, and in some instances, even regrettable. However, given the conduct of the Games in general, and the aquatic events in particular, it might have been not only fortuitous but fortunate that fewer

¹ For a complete version of the events leading to the award of the 1904 Olympic Games to Chicago and their transfer to St. Louis, see, BARNEY, Robert K., "Born from Dilemma: America Awakens to the Modern Olympic Games, 1901-1903," in: *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 1(1992), pp. 92-136.

than 2,000 spectators viewed the swimming, diving, and water polo events as compared with the 20 million people who attended the Exposition itself during the half year duration of its tenure in St. Louis.

International tension in Europe, caused in part by the Russo-Japanese War, discouraged many of the world's top athletes from attending the Games, thus practically eradicating COUBERTIN'S idea of international competition. Indeed, only thirteen countries even bothered to send athletes to St. Louis, while only three foreign nations, Germany, Austria, and Hungary, actually competed in the aquatic events. Further diminishing the idea of international team competition was the fact that some of the competitors from abroad were merely "fairgoers" who were primarily in the United States as either participants in cultural exhibits or merely visitors to the Exposition itself. A graphic example of this phenomenon concerned two Zulu tribesmen, both participants in the Boer War exhibit at the Exposition, who entered the Marathon event on a whim, thus becoming the first Africans, black or white, to compete in Olympic competition.² In addition, and similar to the case of the Paris Games four years before, other participants were totally unaware that their particular presence in the competition was even part of a festival called the Olympic Games. These factors combined to make most of the events conducted during the Games appear more like intramural competitions or "in-house" pickup affairs than an international festival of sport. We have only to review the final medal count to fully understand why that demotion is not entirely out of order: the United States won a total of 207 medals in St. Louis while the rest of world combined won a mere forty-six.³

To its credit, the competition in swimming, diving, and water polo, had a much more international face. This is especially evident when one compares the medal distribution for the aquatic events with the Olympics' traditional and signature competition, track and field. In track and field, for instance, the United States won a total of

sixty-eight medals; foreign competitors won only seven. The medal count for the aquatic events, on the other hand, was more evenly balanced, especially when one considers that three events (nine medals) were, either by hook or crook, uncontested by foreign countries. For the record, the United States won twenty-two medals in the aquatic events; foreign countries won fifteen, nine of which were won by Germany. An interesting footnote to this summation is the fact that prior to the 1904 competition in St. Louis, the United States had not won a single medal in aquatic competition in the first two renditions of the Games of the modern era.

Although the events labeled "Olympic" were conducted over an almost five month period, the aquatic events were compressed into three days. The organization and officiating of those events, all dominated by American input and influence, was shoddy at best and marked by blatant demonstrations of elitism, racism, and nationalism, not to mention a fair measure of some good old fashioned "home-towning." Understandably, foreign reaction to this heavy handedness was laced with angst and argument, which ultimately and predictably led to controversial repercussions.

The Aquatic Venue

The site chosen for the Exposition and, in part, the Games of the III Olympiad was Forest Park, a sprawling public land site located on what was at the time the extreme west side of St. Louis.⁴ The aquatic venue was not a pool at all. Rather, it was an oval-shaped, artificial body of water created by the *Louisiana Purchase Commission* (LPC). The lake was located immediately north of the magnificent Palace of Agriculture Exhibition Building and adjacently west of the giant Chicago Ferris wheel that dominated the western skyline of the fair. Long before the Games were relegated to St. Louis, the aquatic facility was designated "*The United States Life Saving Exhibition Lake*," primarily because the body of water was created initially to stage a series of open-boat demonstrations of life saving techniques

² The two "Zulus" have been mistakenly identified by some writers as being members of the so-called "Anthropology Days" exhibit of the Exposition. In effect, they had no relationship to the "Fair affair" that many, including scholars, have labeled as an outright exhibition of racism, indeed, a celebration of white superiority. See, for instance, GOKSØYR, Matti, "An Image of the Third World in the White Man's Arena: The Anthropology Days in St. Louis, 1904, and Their Aftermath," in: RENSON, Roland / LÄMMER, Manfred / RIORDAN, James / CHASSIOTIS, Dimitrios (eds.): *The Olympic Games Through the Ages*, Athens 1991.

³ For the best documented record (to date) recording who competed in the aquatic events of the 1904 Games, the finishing places achieved, and some commentary on description of the action, see MALLON, Bill, *The 1904 Olympic Games. Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary*, Jefferson, North Carolina 1999 (Diving, pp. 128-129, Swimming, pp. 173-179, and Water Polo, 219-221).

⁴ For a thorough description of the Forest Park site preparation for the St. Louis Fair, see POSEY, Carl A., *III Olympiad: St. Louis 1904 and Athens 1906* (The Olympic Century Series, vol. 4), Los Angeles 2000, pp. 5-44.

performed by the *United States Coast Guard*. Use of the lake as a venue for the aquatic events became, in retrospect, an unfortunate choice. The small body of water turned out to be an even more turgid venue than the polluted River Seine, the site of the aquatic events at the Paris Games four years earlier.



The United States Life-saving Exhibition Lake.

Whereas the Exposition opened in April, the aquatic portion of the Games did not begin until early September. By that time, the Life Saving Exhibition Lake had become contaminated by a variety of toxins that eventually found their way to the lake's water table, including manure residues from livestock pastured near the Agricultural Building. Some historical accounts claim that the lake was fed by a muddy and polluted tributary of the Mississippi River.⁵ Such was not the case. Nor was it fed by a large water main running directly beneath its excavation, as other historians have asserted. Indeed, the lake's water level depended on an initial filling of the man-made basin and then, subsequently, the high water table of the land on which the low-lying lake was located. At best, the aquatic venue posed as a fill-and-limited-draw kind of facility, where the water remained, for the most part, stagnant and potentially lethal. There was, of course, no filtration, and no form of purification.⁶ Numerous aquatic participants became ill, both during and following the various competitions. To this point, we shall return later in this essay. Several modifications were made at the lake to create a racing course of sorts. A small, floating pontoon dock served as a starting point for the races, some of which finished at a rope stretched between two stakes across the laneless course. The dock, which was positioned near the storage slips for the *Life Saving Service* boats and which could be accessed from shore along a narrow gang plank, was so flimsy that swimmers in large heats often found themselves standing on a

The unstable pontoon dock from which all races were started.

sagging and tilting surface while awaiting the start. The 50 and 100 Yard races were conducted on a straight course with no turns. Races longer than 100 yards were swum in 110 yard lengths. In races where turns were involved, swimmers simply used an open "touch-and-go" kind of turn to reverse direction at either the rope or the pontoon dock. The judging and timing for the short races was done either from the *Life Saving Service* boats positioned near the stakes or, unfortunately, as was the case in the 50 yard freestyle, from a rise of seats located on shore some distance from the actual finish. The LSS boats were also used to help hold the water polo course in place.



Despite much organizational chaos as well as the primitive conditions at the Life Saving Lake, the aquatic events opened on September 5th to a fair measure of fanfare heightened by the martial strains of John Phillip SOUSA's *United States Marine Band*, a hugely popular and well attended "draw" at the Exposition.

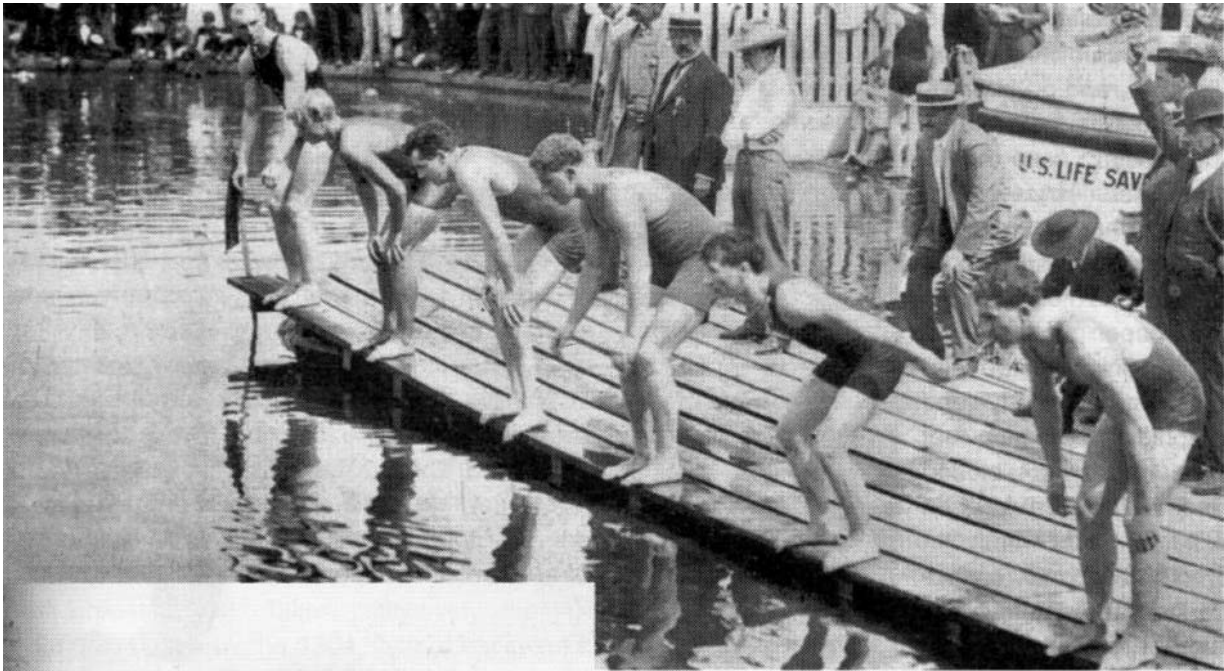
The First Day: Monday, 5 September 1904

Three events opened the aquatic competition on September 5th. Held for the first and only time in Olympic history, the Plunge for Distance, commencing with a standing dive followed by no more than a 60 second glide underwater, was won by American William DICKEY with a relatively mediocre plunge of 62'6".⁷ The United States was the only country represented in the event. Disappointingly, the two best "plungers" in the world at the time, both British and both of whom could plunge well over 75 feet, did not attend the Games. Indeed, a short time later, one of them, John Arthur JARVIS, won the 1904 *U.S. Amateur*

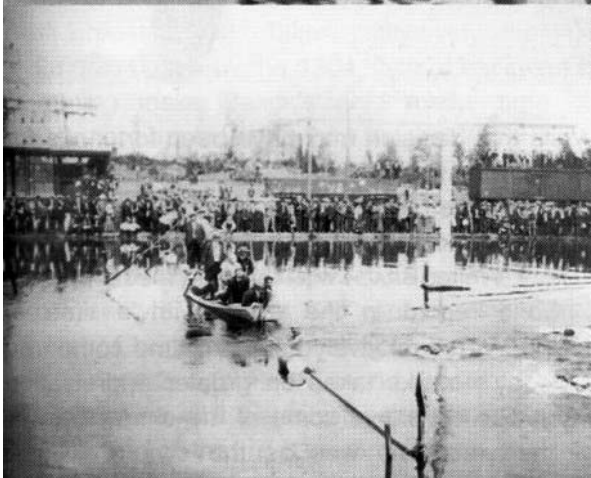
⁵ Ibid. p. 59.

⁶ We are indebted to Duane SNEDEKKER at the *Missouri Historical Society Library and Research Center* for his assistance in providing primary source map material of the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition grounds in Forest Park.

⁷ For the published results of the Plunge for Distance, see "World's Swimming Record," *New York Times*, 5 September 1904.



The start of the 100 yard freestyle. A seemingly disinterested and relaxed Zoltan HALMAY (far left), the eventual winner, glances at his competition and they tense themselves for the starting signal.



The finish of the 100 yard freestyle.

The Second Day: Tuesday, 6 September 1904

If journalists had cared to, they could have labeled September 6th as a day of disgust. The day in question was marked by heated outbursts, followed by charge and counter-charge, withdrawal from events, refusal of medals, cries of foul, then even fisticuffs, and, finally, the first instance in Olympic history of what we call today a swim-off but what was called at the time, a "run-off." Two events especially were fraught with controversy. The first and most volatile was the 50 Yard Freestyle, an event discontinued after the '04 Games and not reinstated in the program of events until the 1988 Games in Seoul, South Korea. Two heats were contested initially. Five Americans, led by ace sprinter J. Scott LEARY, and the Hungarian Zoltan HALMAY advanced to the final. HALMAY, a lean, angular individual, who swam practically kick less but high in the water with powerful arm strokes, appeared to lead the final from beginning to end. However, some American judges, seated far from the finish line, proclaimed that HALMAY had stopped swimming short of the finish-rope and that LEARY was the rightful winner. LEARY, himself, added to the confusion by claiming that the Hungarian had interfered with his line of swim. The scenario that ensued resembled a Russian-Hungarian water polo match of a later era or a pub brawl than it did a swimming race. Following the disgraceful scenario described above, and unable to resolve the situation in favor of one swimmer or the other,

Swimming Association's Plunge Championship with a distance of 75'4". The second event, the 100 Yard Freestyle, was won by Hungary's world-class sprinter, Zoltan HALMAY, in a not-so-close encounter with America's first premiere swimmer, Charles DANIELS.⁸ HALMAY'S winning time was 1:02.8. His margin of victory was almost three and a half seconds. While some historians have placed the Mile Swim on September 6th, it was, in reality, contested on September 5th. Germany's premiere distance swimmer, Emil RAUSCH, won the Mile (1,760 yards) by more than a minute in the time of 27:18.2.⁹ It was the first of two gold-medal swims for RAUSCH at the 1904 Games. RAUSCH'S time set a world record for the mile swim in open, still water. He made fifteen turns during the course of his performance, being credited with ten other world records for specific distances "set" at various "turn-touches" during the 1,760 yard swim (See "Comment" in Appendix C: World Record Assault).

⁸ Ibid., *New York Times*, 5 September, 1904.

⁹ Ibid., *New York Times*, 5 September, 1904

the race officials called for a "run-off" between LEARY and HALMAY. Despite two false starts, the event was finally completed. HALMAY won by less than half a body length in the world record time of 28.0.¹⁰ Later, newspaper photo images of the finish of the disputed race clearly and graphically proved that the Hungarian indeed had been the victor in initial 50 Yard Swim.



Water polo
action in the
polluted
Lifesaving
Lake.

The second controversy of the day involved the Water Polo competition. The United States swept the medals in water polo, but, again, the scene was marred by argument and controversy, and, ultimately, fatal repercussions. A strong German team entered the competition, but they withdrew in a huff when they discovered that the contests would be conducted with a partially deflated ball, which at that time resembled a volley-ball, and that goals could only be scored if a player in possession of the ball held it stationary in the opposing goal. The Germans sneered at what they referred to as "*softball water polo*." Further clouding the round-robin competition was the *Missouri Athletic Club's* hostile refusal to play the *Chicago Athletic Club* for the silver medal. A team representing the *New York Athletic Club* won the gold medal handily, shutting out both the Missouri and Chicago teams.¹¹ Earlier in this essay, a reference was made to the condition of the water at the aquatic venue. The Water Polo players, who were subjected to longer immersions in the polluted and turgid water than either swimmers or divers, were especially affected by the contamination. Indeed, within a year, four American players would die of typhoid fever, probably contracted from the e.coli bacteria in the, ironically labeled, "*Life Saving Exhibition Lake*"¹² In retrospect, the Germans may have dodged a bullet by virtue of their refusal to compete.

While that decision may have been fortuitous for the Germans, they left little to argue about by sweeping the medals in the 100 Yard Backstroke, an event contested for the first time in Olympic history. Walter BRACK won the gold medal and set a world record in the event with a time of 1:16.8.¹³ This relatively snail-like time compared to today's marks takes on greater appreciation when one considers some of the characteristics of the venue as well as the style that was employed at that time for swimming on one's back. First of all, the race was conducted over a straight 100 yard course. There were no turns. As did the other swimming events, the race began from the flimsy, floating, pontoon dock and finished at a rope stretched across the course 100 yards down the lake. The event was conducted as a final as only six swimmers, three from the USA and three from Germany, competed in the event. It did, interestingly enough, allow for an in-the-water start. However, six swimmers, pushing off simultaneously from the floating dock, provided more momentum for the dock than it did the swimmers, nullifying any possibility for the kind of explosive, torpedo-like start seen in backstroke today. All the backstrokers used a common style. In truth, the stroke resembled what we would call today, a hybrid version of elementary backstroke and inverted

¹⁰ See "World's Record for N.Y.A.C. Swimmer," *New York Times*, 6 September 1904.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, *New York Times*, 6 September 1904.

¹² The only known commentator on the medical condition leading to the deaths of the four water polo players, Carl POSEY, incorrectly labels the cause of death as typhus. See POSEY, *Olympiad*, p. 64. In effect, if one follows POSEY's assertion, the deaths of water polo players were caused by lice infections, rather than by e.coli bacteria that induces typhoid fever, an affliction often resulting in death. The medical evaluations of Linda FISHER, who examined the medical records surrounding the death of the water polo players, confirm typhoid fever rather than typhus.

¹³ "World Record by N.Y.A.C. Swimmer," *New York Times*, 6 September 1904.

breaststroke. The pull was a simultaneous double arm-pull, and there was no over-the-water recovery of the arms that became the style a few years later. The kick featured an inverted breaststroke movement (frog-kick) of the legs. Both the arms and legs recovered simultaneously under the water, negating efficient forward progress. In addition, the stroke was swum completely in a rigid, supine position. There was no rotation of the trunk, no bent-arm technique to speak of, no rotation of wrists, and, in all probability, no downward thrust or throw of water at the end of the pull phase of the stroke. Despite all those negatives, BRACK won the 100 Yard Backstroke handily. He was also able to invert his elementary backstroke skills successfully enough on the following day to win a silver medal in the 440 Yard Breaststroke.¹⁴ Taken collectively, the impediments posed by the 1904 style of backstroke swimming make BRACK'S gold medal time of 1:16.8 more applaudable than laughable.

In the second day's concluding event, the *New York Athletic Club's* teenage phenom, Charles DANIELS, who earlier gained bronze in the 50 yard Freestyle and captured silver in the 100 yard Freestyle, won the 220 yard Freestyle and the first of his eventual three gold medals.¹⁵ His time of 2:44.2 was also a world record for 220 yards in open, still water with one turn. DANIELS remains one of the most important figures in the early history of American competitive swimming.¹⁶ He was a keen swimming skill technician and a young man of instinctual curiosity, who carefully studied a new method of freestyle swimming introduced to the United States only a year earlier. That style was called the "*Australian Crawl*."¹⁷ It featured a hand-over-hand arm stroke with an above-the-water recovery of the arms and hands, as well as a modified trudgen-like leg kick moving alternately up and down and back and forth in the water. In addition, a high head position with eyes often clear of the water was

used by most swimmers. DANIELS modified the Australian Crawl to include a faster, more extended arm recovery, a lower head position, as well as a fully vertical leg kick. He also introduced a synchronized six beat kick with each cycle of two arm strokes. Collectively, these modifications, in time, came to be called the "*American Crawl*" a style of swimming that became the prototype for competitive freestyle swimming as we know it today. DANIELS, by the way, became one of the world's great swimmers of any era. By the time he retired from competition in 1911, he amassed eight Olympic medals, including five golds. He also won thirty-one AAU National Championship titles, and, at one time, he held the world record for every open-water freestyle distance from 25 yards to the Mile Swim. And, in one ten day period in 1905, he set open-water world records at 15 different distances at the National AAU Open Water Championships (See Appendix C: World Record Assault).¹⁸

The Final Day: Wednesday, 7 September 1904

The final day of competition began peacefully enough on September 7th, the concluding day of competition. The Germans captured gold in both the 880 Yard Freestyle and the 440 Yard Breaststroke, two events held for the first and only time in Olympic swimming. Emil RAUSCH won his second gold medal of the Games in the 880 with a time of 13.11.6, a world record for a half mile swim in open, still water with seven turns. His countryman, Georg ZACHARIAS, captured gold in the 440 yard Breaststroke. ZACHARIAS' time, for what was at the time called the quarter-mile breaststroke, was 7:23.6. The bronze medal winner was a Chicagoan named Jamison HANDY. Handy was not only a championship swimmer and water polo player but became a brilliant and distinguished businessman as well. Being by nature an innovator, he became one of the early

¹⁴ See "Swimming Races at St. Louis," *New York Times*, 7 September 1904.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, *New York Times*, 7 September 1904.

¹⁶ DANIELS, "a 17 year old schoolboy," first came to the attention of American swimming followers in March 1904 when he won two events at the Metropolitan District A.A.U. Swimming Championships. Representing the *New York Athletic Club*, DANIELS set an American record of 6:02.4 in the 440 Yard event. See "District Swimming Championships," *New York Times*, 20 March 1904.

¹⁷ For a fascinating treatment of the origin and evolution of the first "true" crawl stroke (the Australian Crawl), see OSMOND, Gary, "'Look at that kid crawling': Race, Myth and the 'Crawl' Stroke," Paper presented at the Thirty-Second Annual Convention of the North American Society for Sport History (NASSH), Pacific Grove, California, May 2004. OSMOND'S analysis stems from his PhD dissertation currently in progress at the University of Queensland on sport, race, myth and social memory in the context of Australian swimming and surfing history. It appears that the first published reference to the word "crawl" in reference to a competitive swimming stroke was linked to a description of the style of swimming employed by the CAVIL brothers. See *The Arrow* (Sydney, Australia), 2 February 1901, p. 4. But OSMOND argues that the word "crawl" with reference to swimming was first noted as early as 1867 to describe the stroke we now call the Human Stroke, more familiarly known to us as the "dog-paddle."

¹⁸ For DANIELS' sensational record setting feats, see "New York Records in A.A.U. Championships," *New York Times*, 26 August 1905, and "New Swimming Record Made by Daniels," *New York Times*, 4 September 1905.

patriarchs of American swimming. Among his innovations was the idea of creating painted lane lines on pool floors, called baths then, to guide swimmers along a straight course, an idea no doubt inspired by blindly thrashing his way through the turgid waters of the United States Life Saving Lake.

Charles DANIELS' second gold medal swim in the 440 Yard Freestyle, however, would initiate a series of crescendo-like controversies. His time of 6:16.2 was an American record, but the time was disallowed when it was discovered that his time had been taken with a faulty watch.¹⁹ Curiously, however, he was credited with a world record 1:16.0 for the first 110 yards of his swim. So much for faulty watches! None-the-less, DANIELS' victory was greeted by loud cheers from foreign and American spectators alike. But even that momentary festive gesture would soon sour. Concluding the swimming competition was the 4x50 Yard Freestyle Relay, an event held for the first and only time in Olympic history. Controversy erupted before the race could even begin. A formidable German team, comprised of swimmers from different athletic clubs, was disqualified from the competition when American officials claimed that the race was for individual clubs only and not for "all star" teams. As the Germans stomped away from the venue in disgust, three American teams swept the medals. The *New York Athletic Club*, with DANIELS swimming the anchor leg, won the gold in 2:04.6. Of the four N.Y.A.C. relay contestants, Louis DeBreda HANDLEY merits comment. He ultimately became the premier swimming coach in America for his era, mentoring, in particular, the 1920 Olympic champion female aquatic performers, Ethelda BLEIBTREY and Aileen RIGGIN.²⁰

As if that freestyle relay angst were not enough, German resentment rose to new heights during the Games' final aquatic event: Fancy Diving. What some historians have incorrectly stated was a platform diving event in 1904 was really a board competition. It was the first diving competition in Olympic history and an event that became a precursor four years later in London to what then and is now 3-Meter Springboard



Diving. Two countries, Germany and the United States, participated in the event. The Germans provided the board, which turned out to be little more than an 8-foot plank covered with cocco-matting. It was mounted on a crude fulcrum about twelve feet above the water on a rickety, floating platform. From the very beginning, the event was clouded by controversy. The judging favored the American style of diving, a style placing as much importance on entry or finish of a dive as that accomplished acrobatically in the air. The

Emil Rausch,
Germany's
premier
distance
swimmer.
Charles
Daniels (r.),
American
teenage
swimming
phenom.

The American
(New York
Athletic Club)
4x50 yard
free-style
relay team -
from left to
right (correctly
identified),
Joseph
Ruddy,
Charles
Daniels, Leo
Goodwin,
Louis
Handley.

¹⁹ See "Swimming Races At St. Louis: Two Records Broken in Final Events but Only One Allowed," *New York Times*, 8 September 1904.

²⁰ See, for instance, LUCAS, John A. / JOBLING, Ian, "Troubled Waters: Fanny Durack's 1919 Swimming Tour of America Amid Transnational Amateur Athletic Prudery and Bureaucracy," in: *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies*, 4(1995), pp. 93-112. See also, PHILLIPS, Ellen, *VII Olympiad: Antwerp 1920 - Chamonix 1924* (The Olympic Century Series; vol. 7), Los Angeles 1998, pp. 64-66.

²¹ We are grateful to Robert L. CLOTWORTHY, Olympic gold medalist in springboard diving at the 1956 Games in Melbourne and author of the as yet unpublished *Diving: A World History* for bringing this misidentification to our attention. As with the often-misidentified Charles DANIELS in many Olympic texts (DANIELS' true personage is confirmed by several pictures of him in issues of the *New York Times* in 1904-1905), KEHOE'S picture in books on the Olympic Games is similarly misidentified, being consistently referred to as SHELDON. For correct identification of KEHOE, see *Worlds Fair Bulletin*, October 1904, p. 21.

Germans, whose physical culture was rooted in gymnastic acrobatics, paid little attention to the ending of a dive, often landing on their faces, backs, and chests. Discussion, followed by heated argument, refusal to continue, withdrawal from the event on the part of some German divers, and even refusal of medals ended with George SHELDON, a young St. Louis physician, seemingly winning the gold medal, which he promptly refused to accept until the various disputes about the judging were settled. Georg HOFFMANN of Germany won the silver medal, but a dispute arose over the awarding of the bronze medal. German, Alfred BRAUNSCHWEIGER, and American, Frank KEHOE, who had somehow tied for third place in the competition, were ordered to "run-off" for third place. When BRAUNSCHWEIGER refused to take part in what was really a "dive-off," KEHOE was awarded the bronze medal, an ironic accompaniment to the tainted silver medal he had already won by default as a member of the *Chicago Athletic Club's* water polo team. KEHOE, by the way, in still another erroneous identification in St. Louis Olympic Games photographic history. The picture showing him entering the water at the completion of one of his dives (probably a reverse dive) remains consistently and erroneously interpreted as being SHELDON.²¹ It wasn't until a week following the competition that the autocratic James E. SULLIVAN, Chief of Physical Culture for the Exposition itself and Director of the Olympic Games and the man for

whom the prestigious *Sullivan Award* is named, declared the decision of the judges final, and SHELDON was officially declared the winner of the first Olympic diving event.²²

As the curtain fell on the first American Olympics, it was left to the September 8th edition of the *New York Times* to put in perspective, what was perhaps an appropriate perception of the aquatic competition, by dutifully reporting the final team scores for the events held at the United States Life Saving Lake: "*New York Athletic Club 40, Germany 32, Hungary 17, Olympic Club of San Francisco 16.*"²³ So much for the good old U.S. of A.

Epilogue

In retrospect, the aquatic competition in St. Louis did little to advance the fledgling Olympic movement other than to raise the bar, perhaps, on disorganization and displays of temper. However, as with everything else in sport, it is continuity and legacy that binds the present to the past, so even though the competition described herein appears cast in some sort of weird, almost intramural time warp, the Games of a hundred years ago, at the very least, managed to extend in their own provincial way Pierre de COUBERTIN'S vision of a world festival of sport. Within that context, merging an icon like Charles DANIELS with, say, Ian THORPE or Brian PHELPS, becomes, at least in an historical sense, not only believable, but perhaps obligatory.



Frank Kehoe, finishing a reverse dive. In many Olympic history texts, this picture of Kehoe is erroneously identified as the diving event winner, George Sheldon.

²² For more on this, see CLOTWORTHY, Robert L., "Aquatics St. Louis 1904: Fancy Diving," in: *Journal of Olympic History*, 12(2004)2, pp. 23-24.

²³ *New York Times*, 8 September 1904.

Appendix A: 1904 Olympic Aquatic Events

****Events held for the first time.**

*****Discontinued after 1904**

****Plunge for Distance*****

****50 yard Freestyle*****

(reinstated as 50 meter freestyle event: Seoul, 1988)

100 yard Freestyle

(precursor of 100 meter freestyle event: London, 1908)

220 yard Freestyle***

(reinstated as 200 meter freestyle event: Mexico City, 1968)

440 yard Freestyle

(precursor of 400 meter freestyle event: Stockholm, 1912)

****880 yard Freestyle*****

(precursor of women's 800 meter event: Mexico City, 1968)

Mile Freestyle Swim

(precursor of 1500 meter event: London, 1908)

****4X50 Yard Freestyle Relay*****

****100 Yard Backstroke**

(displaced by 200 Backstroke in 1964 in Tokyo but resumed in 1968 in Mexico City)

****440 Yard Breaststroke*****

****Fancy Diving**

(precursor of three meter springboard diving event: London, 1908)

Water Polo

(round-robin play, not completed)

Appendix B: Legend of Medallists in 1904 Olympic Swimming, Diving & Water Polo

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
50 yard Freestyle:	HALMAY (HUN)	LEARY (USA)	DANIELS (USA)
100 yard Freestyle	HALMAY (HUN)	DANIELS (USA)	LEARY (USA)
220 yard Freestyle:	DANIELS (USA)	GAILEY (USA)	RAUSCH (GER)
440 yard Freestyle:	DANIELS (USA)	GAILEY (USA)	WAHLE (AUT)
880 yard Freestyle:	RAUSCH (GER)	GAILEY (USA)	KISS (HUN)
1760 yard Freestyle (Mile):	RAUSCH (GER)	KISS (HUN)	GAILEY (USA)
100 yard Backstroke:	BRACK (GER)	HOFFMANN (GER)	ZACHARIAS (GER)
440 yard Breaststroke:	ZACHARIAS (GER)	BRACK (GER)	HANDY (USA)
Plunge for Distance:	DICKEY (USA)	ADAMS (USA)	GOODWIN (USA)
Diving:	SHELDON (USA)	HOFFMANN (GER)	KEHOE (USA)
4X50 yard Freestyle Relay:	G-USA, NYAC (RUDDY, GOODWIN, HANDLEY, DANIELS) S-USA, CAC (HAMMOND, TUTTLE, GOETZ, THORNE) B-USA, MAC (REYBURN, EVANS, SCHWARTZ, ORTHWEIN)		
Water Polo:	G-USA, NYAC (BRATTON, VAN CLEEF, GOODWIN, HANDLEY, HESSER, RUDDY, STEEN) S-USA, CAC (BREECH, STEEVER, SWATEK, HEALY, KEHOE, HAMMOND, TUTTLE) B-USA, MAC (MEYERS, TOEPPEN, EVANS, REYBURN, SCHREINER, GOESSLING, ORTHWEIN)		

Appendix C: World Record Assault by Charles Daniels

The First Day:

August 26, 1905

Meet: National Amateur Athletic Union Open Water Championships

Travers Island, Long Island Sound, New York

Conditions: open, flat, salt water across tidal flats, negative wind, flood tide

Course: 110 yard straight (float to rope and return)

Total distance swum: 880 yards freestyle

Total lengths swum: 8

Total turns: 7

Competitors: 9

WR marks: (110y, 330y, 550y, 770y, 880y)

Distance	Turns	Splits	World Record
110 yards	Straight		1:14.4
330 yards	2	3:15.2(220)	4:29.4
550 yards	4	3:24.8 (220)	7:54.2
770 yards	6	3:24.6 (220)	11:18.8
880 yards	7	1:39.8(110)	12:58.6

The 220 yard distance was probably not timed because DANIELS already held the open water WR at this distance (2:44.2), having set it on the occasion of his first gold medal swim at the 1904 Olympic Games

in St. Louis a year earlier. The 440 and 660 records were also set on this day, but surpassed by DANIELS himself in phase two of the assault. (see The Second Day).

The Second Day:

September 4, 1905
 Meet: National Amateur Athletic Union Open Water Championships
 Travers Island, New York
 Conditions: open, flat, salt water across tidal flats, negative wind, flood tide
 Course: 110 yards (float to rope and return)

Total distance swum: One Mile (1,760 yards) freestyle
 Total lengths swum: 16
 Total turns: 15
 Competitors 7 (6 finishers)
 WR marks: (440y, 660y, 990y, 1100y, 1210y, 1320y, 1430y, 1540y, 1650y, 1760y)

Distance	Turns	Splits	World Record
440 yards	3		6:13.6
660 yards	5	3:22.8	9:36.4
990 yards	8	5:11.4	14:47.8
1100 yards	9	1:39.2	16:27.0
1210 yards	10	1:46.6	18:13.6
1320 yards	11	1:37.4	19:54.0
1430 yards	12	NS	20:41.8 Erroneous
1540 yards	13	NS	23:22.8
1650 yards	14	1:46.8	25:09.6
1760 yards	15	1:32.2	26:41.8

Comment:

Some historians have made much of Charles DANIELS' "fourteen" world records, set over what they have identified as a four-day period. However, when all the tangled parts of the puzzle are pieced together, they prove that DANIELS set fifteen (not fourteen) records over a ten-day (not four) period. The records were established in two swims eight days apart. Both swims were part of a limited schedule of open water events, including handicap races and events for novices. There was even a diving contest. All the events were governed by the United States Amateur Athletic Union. The events in which DANIELS competed were called "Championship Events" The first swim on August 26, 1905, in which five WRs were established, was a half mile (880 yards) in length. The second swim on September 4, 1905, in which ten WRs were established, was a full mile (1,760 yards) in length. At first glance, the feat appears spectacular, but when one begins to analyze the data and the scenario more closely, the performance begins to lose some of its luster. What we are left with, then, is an assault against a limited field of swimmers and the clock, a scenario not entirely unlike a free diver, for instance, setting various world depth records during a single descent.

Both of DANIELS' "accumulating" WR swims took place at the summer home of the *New York Athletic Club* on Travers Island, an expansive piece of ocean front real estate purchased in

1886 by Wall Street tycoon William TRAVERS. Like the Olympic layout at the United States Life Saving Lake in St. Louis, the course, which fronted the NYAC boathouse, was 110 yards in length, forcing a series of 110 yard straight swims from a floating raft to a "touch and go" turn at a rope, as was the case in St. Louis. Even though the swimming was done cross-current to the flow of a flood tide, and even if the course existed perfectly perpendicular to the tide, it remains highly unlikely that the flood did not in some way benefit the swimmers. The whole scenario, exclusive of the tide, was, with some variation, an echoic reminder of Emil RAUSCH's gold medal swim in the Mile event at the 1904 Olympic Games held a year earlier in St. Louis, an event in which RAUSCH was awarded world records for open-still-water swims on a 110 yard course (the United States Life Saving Lake) for various "touches" embraced by the mile distance. For the record, RAUSCH was awarded world records for distances of 660, 770, 880 (broken two days later in RAUSCH's gold medal and world record swim in the individual 880 event) 990, 1100, 1210, 1320, 1430, 1540, and 1650 yards, and, of course, for the Mile (1760 yards). Even Francis GALEY of the United States, and the eventual bronze medal winner in the Mile in 1904, was awarded a world record for 550 yards by virtue of the fact that he was leading the Olympic Mile Swim at that point (5th touch).