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SAUNDERS, ROBERT CHARLES

THE LIFE AND PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MATTHEW MANN II
TO COMPETITIVE SWIMMING IN THE UNITED STATES

The Ohio State University

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THE LIFE AND PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MATTHEW MANN II
TO COMPETITIVE SWIMMING IN THE UNITED STATES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
Robert Charles Saunders, B.S., M.A.

** ** **

The Ohio State University
1980

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

For the majority of his adult years in North America, Matthew Mann II had three great loves — his family by his second marriage, competitive swimming, and his summer camps. So intense and stable were those love relationships that his daily, monthly, and yearly activity patterns, both personal and professional, were in most instances highly predictable and routinely scheduled for almost forty years. But in a rather simplistic sense, swimming was his life, and the earliest of his three great loves.

Matthew Mann II, born in Leeds, Yorkshire, England, was a good example of the "only in America" success story, traced from his youthful days as a recreational swimmer in a mill river basin, to his adult life as swimming coach of NCAA champions, and the position of United States Olympic men's swimming coach in 1952. This climb to the proverbial "top of the ladder" was accompanied by a wide variety of occupational and competitive athletic experiences, which served to develop an intense philosophy for his life and work with others. This philosophy, based essentially on his premise that success in life was attainable as the by-product of clean living and dedicated hard work, created a positive magnetism between the coach and his athletes. This magnetism fostered a lifetime of respect and devotion among many of the athletes for their coach. But this same philosophy which endeared him
to so many, often led to his being disliked by certain opposing coaches, their athletes, and officials of various swimming organizations.

Although his formal education was quite limited, his knowledge of the sport of swimming and his ability of transmitting this knowledge to students, from the beginning to advanced levels, enabled him to develop a reputation as one of the top swimming instructors in the United States, relatively early in his professional career. His stature in the swimming world, blended with his outgoing personality, provided him with frequent opportunities to associate comfortably, during social and professional occasions, with individuals from diverse backgrounds -- from youngsters in municipal learn-to-swim programs, to socially prominent private club members, to various segments of university academic communities.

During a successful coaching career spanning some fifty-four years in the United States, with different clubs, schools, and universities, Matthew Man. II fostered certain nicknames, such as "Professor" and "Daddy," as each seemed to name his primary role at his place of employment. But the name he preferred and wanted people of all ages to call him was "Matt." He emphasized this point late in his life when he met with a group of University of Oklahoma officials and members of the press corps, he stated: "First of all, the name is Matt, not Mr. or Coach Mann, I worked 50 years to get the name Matt known, and I don't want it lost here at O. U."¹

His dynamic personality and boundless energy were two prominent qualities which marked his brilliant career in the swimming coaching profession which began in the high schools of Buffalo, New York in 1908.

Major elements of the United States societal structure (industry, politics, education, family life, and athletics) have been influenced, in significant ways, by the technological, scientific, and knowledge explosions, during the second half of the twentieth century.

Many of the discoveries and advancements, particularly in the areas of electronics, telecommunications, and mass media have had profound effects upon the administration, conduct, participation patterns, and popularity of many competitive sports, including swimming.

Sophisticated electronic devices have been utilized in the starting, place picking, and timing of a swimming competitors, in some cases to the 1/1,000 of a second. Via the modern miracles of satellite projected telecommunications certain individuals, relatively unknown youthful high school or college students, have been projected as national "heroes" and international personalities within seconds following an important swimming race in the Olympic Games. Similarly, complex computer systems, containing extensive personal data on pre-race favorites, were tapped as race results were posted, for feature stories in newspapers and a variety of periodicals.

It should also be noted that as quickly as many of the young swimmers were catapulted to "fame," and their names had become
household words, that similar mechanisms of technology had projected new personalities from different sports into the limelight, thus obscuring or wiping out the remembrance of the swimmer's names in the minds of many individuals. The medal winners and record setters had established their place in history, by virtue of their performances, in the official record books.

But, what about the many coaches who had assisted the swimmers on their roads to success? Did the former deserve their moments "in the sun" and appropriate recognition in the record books? In most cases the coaches were mentioned briefly or as afterthoughts in certain portions of the media's projections of the swimmers. This kind of treatment was an injustice to those swimming coaches who had assisted in the development of numerous champions and record setters.

The popularity and excitement of competitive swimming events, on various levels, has been generated to a great extent by the close races of the participants and by the potential for record setting performances. The constant onslaught on the records has been attributed to the continued efforts of coaches from a wide variety of affiliations, but particularly men's collegiate coaches; they are continually devising, implementing, and evaluating improved methods of training and motivating their swimmers.

While the accurate compilation of collegiate, American, and World records has been maintained in recognized sources, the coaches behind these individual and team performances have not been duly recorded.

Through the personal efforts and accounts of many "pioneer" collegiate swimming coaches in America, a major chapter of the
historical development of competitive swimming in the United States has been maintained. The NCAA Swimming Guide for 1915-1916 included such an early narrative:

The first swimming and dual meets on the collegiate level were started in the year 1897, when George Kistler was engaged as swimming instructor and coach of swimming at the Houston Club, University of Pennsylvania. He was recognized as the first man to hold those positions in an American college. This may be looked upon as the actual start of the colleges in aquatics. The autumn of 1899 saw Yale and Columbia follow Pennsylvania's lead and organize squads. All three met at the Sportmen's Show in swimming and water polo, with Pennsylvania winning both events.\(^2\)

During the next twenty years, competitive swimming experienced a steady growth as private athletic clubs and intercollegiate conferences in the Northeast and Midwest sponsored the sport. The inclusion of swimming in the physical education programs of public schools and higher education institutions provided a continued impetus to pool construction, thus affording competitive swimming enthusiasts opportunities to expand their programs each year, to the point where some eighty years after Kistler's hiring, approximately 360 NCAA institutions sponsored the sport.\(^3\)

For persons who have pursued historical studies dealing with collegiate swimming events, times, conference/national champions and championships, the official NCAA Swimming Guides, from 1915 to the periods of the researchers’ interests provided much of the needed data. As limited efforts have been made to compile and develop


historical studies of competitive and collegiate swimming, most of the works have dealt with the evolution of times for various events and the competitors; members of the coaching profession have, all too often, been omitted or passed over.

Two notable studies, The Life and Professional Contributions of Michael Peppe by William Hotchkiss, Jr., and The Life and Professional Contributions of Robert Herman Kiphuth by Peter Kennedy, were completed as doctoral dissertations, and established a needed pattern for future researchers; an accurate and meaningful history of competitive, and especially intercollegiate, swimming was to be compiled in the ensuing years. Dr. Kennedy made this point very clear when he wrote:

... that a student of history who ignores the influence of great leaders is remiss in his duty. By the same token, the historian of competitive swimming who disregards the personalities involved in the evolution of the sport cannot fully understand that evolution.

There were, of course, many coaches whose roles had significant impacts on the various stages of the continuous growth of collegiate swimming during its first fifty years, as the sport spread across the United States. Some of those former collegiate coaches, from different sections of the country, whose professional contributions have appeared to warrant historical research projects and appropriate recognition, for future generations to appreciate, were George Kistler (University of Pennsylvania), Edward Kennedy (Columbia University), Frank Sullivan and Howard Stepp (Princeton University), Hal Ulen (Harvard University), Robert Muir (Williams College),

---

Michael Kennedy (Amherst College), James Reilly (Rutgers University), Peter Morrissey (Lehigh University), Radford McCormick (City College of New York), Frank Wall (New York University), Thomas Robinson (Northwestern University), Matthew Mann II (University of Michigan), David Armbruster (University of Iowa), Richard Papenguth (Purdue University), Charles McCaffree, Jr. (Iowa State and Michigan State Universities), Alfred "Red" Barr (Southern Methodist University), Julian "Tex" Robertson (University of Texas), Ernst Brandsten (Stanford University), Fred Cady (University of Southern California), and Arthur Eilers (Washington University).

During the long coaching career of Matt Mann II, he was frequently compared and honored with one, or both, of his coaching contemporaries and greatest rivals, Bob Kiphuth of Yale University and Mike Peppe of The Ohio State University. The swimming teams of Mann, Kiphuth, and Peppe, and numerous individual members of those teams, virtually dominated and garnered most of the major national and international swimming records and titles for a period spanning the early 1930's through the 1950's. But, with the exceptions of Kiphuth and Peppe, the legacies of Mann and the group of aforementioned coaches did not match their brilliant records and contributions.

The collegiate coaching careers of Matt Mann II and Bob Kiphuth preceded 1920, with the former serving as mentor to several teams from 1912 to 1918, while the latter assumed the start of his reign at Yale University in 1918. Actually, Kiphuth became the coach of a program that had already been established as a swimming power in the Northeast, especially in the Intercollegiate Swimming Association. In the seasons of 1916, 1917, and for part of the 1918
season, Mann had served as the Yale swimming coach, and were it not for his obligation to a signed contract with the Duluth Boat Club, Minnesota, he might have enjoyed the success and recognition Bob Kiphuth received at Yale University, for Mann had been offered the swimming coach's position in 1918. Kiphuth, who had learned many of his early coaching methods directly from Mann, went on to become the world's most famous swimming coach in the first 60 years of the sport's twentieth century history.

It was both interesting and rather "unbelievable" to have noted that Menke in the swimming section of his *Encyclopedia of Sports* and Oppenheim in his *History of Swimming*, each had included the name of Robert Kiphuth as the only American collegiate swimming coach worthy of recognition in their treatments of the history of competitive swimming. Surely several coaches, including Matt Mann II, should have been included in those recognized historical works. As a matter of fact, it was quite difficult to find any personal and professional background information about Mann in general biography reference sources, with the exception of the *Who's Who in Michigan, 1936*. The authoritative swimming texts of the times were also devoid of such data, except for the two books co-authored by Mann, *Swimming* and *The Sports Illustrated Book of Swimming*.

In addition to the outstanding records established by Matt Mann at The Universities of Michigan and Oklahoma, for a combined period of thirty-seven seasons, his dynamic personality and wholesome philosophy of the values of swimming, helped promote the development of competitive swimming throughout the United States. Swimming aficionados of years past recognized him as showman and promotor "par
excellence," although certain facets of his professional life have
served as major hindrances to the recognition he so rightly deserved.

This study unveiled a vivid picture of a successful man with
unadorned lifestyle, who reached the apex of his profession, on the
basis of achievements, but whose major coaching honors and awards were
not received until his twilight coaching years, and after his death.

PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were:

1. To investigate and portray the life and professional
   contributions of Matthew Mann II to the development of competitive
   swimming, especially on the intercollegiate level, in the United
   States.

2. To research and recognize the specific achievements of
   Matt Mann II and the swimming teams he coached as they contributed to
   the swimming and athletic programs of The University of Michigan and
   The University of Oklahoma.

3. To examine and elucidate the ideals, beliefs, and practices
   of Matt Mann II which had a significant impact upon his daily lifestyle
   and the framework of coaching-teaching patterns he utilized throughout
   his career.

4. To research and determine, in part, (a) the impact of
   Matt Mann II's coaching philosophy and techniques upon his former
   swimmers, especially those from the University of Michigan, who later
   became collegiate and/or high school swimming coaches, (b) the
   geographical parameters which were directly effected by the Matt Mann II
   coaching disciples.
LIMITATIONS

At the outset of the study, it was planned that all possible avenues of relevance were to be pursued to their fullest extent, so that the purposes of the study might be best achieved. During the preliminary research processes, it soon became apparent that finances and time needed to visit Matt Mann's birthplace and each of his places of professional employment, were not available to this researcher. It was ascertained by a variety of procedures that most of the schools and clubs where Mann had been employed prior to 1925 did not retain personnel records which might have supplied specific dates of employment, contractual agreements, and job descriptions.

Due to the length of his coaching career in the United States, it was a task of primary importance, and great difficulty, to select a group of individuals who might best provide the type of pertinent information about the various stages of his personal and professional life, so necessary for the study. The list of persons was indeed comprehensive, but various factors prevented many of those individuals from contributing to the study; therefore, it was surmised that certain kinds of important data about Matt Mann II were unavailable to this researcher.

The athletic departments of The University of Michigan and The University of Oklahoma retained scant files of the Mann coached swimming teams, while he was employed at each institution; contents proved to be of very limited value to the overall study.

Since certain phases of Mann's coaching career became associated with controversial issues, major professional frustrations,
and intense rivalries with certain opposing coaches, an attempt was made to investigate the bases of some of these events. His keenest rivals were Kiphuth and Peppe, but the dissertation studies of those great coaches bypassed the rivalries and various controversies with Mann. Dr. Kennedy acknowledged in his study that Kiphuth was at the core of certain areas of discord which existed in collegiate swimming, and the American swimming scene in general; some of the areas which involved Matt Mann were his opposition to the membership of the Swimming Rules Committee, and the process of selecting swimming coaches for the Olympic Games and other United States international swimming teams. Kennedy elected not to include this material in his study.

An attempt was made to gather as much pertinent information concerning the issues, especially with the interview technique, with those individuals who were closest to the involved parties. But during the interviews, it was apparent that some of the interviewees withheld certain pieces of information; possibly they did not want to defame certain personalities, or in other cases, memories of the incidents or issues had indeed "mellowed" over the years. With these recognized limitations, certain issues were included in their proper perspective because of their historical significance to the development of competitive swimming, and as potential areas for future research.

Due to the length and success of his professional career at The University of Michigan, and the fact that his permanent residence was maintained in Ann Arbor from 1925 until his death in 1962, much of this study was devoted to the Michigan years. However, it was also believed that different stages of Matt Mann's illustrious career were filled with
enough significant events to warrant separate studies by this researcher, or other individuals, sometime in the future.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The processes of collecting and analyzing pertinent data about Matt Mann II incorporated the widely recognized methods, procedures, and generally accepted scholarly activities of biographical and documentary research. The primary documentary sources included official records, proceedings, reports, doctoral dissertations, newspaper articles, letters, memorials, and written, eye witness accounts of relevant events. Personal interviews with several of Mann's friends, family members, and professional associates were also used extensively in the data-gathering process.

The initial research activities began with a visit to the Department of Athletics of The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. The intercollegiate swimming files of Mann's era, though incomplete, did reveal the names, and the chronological order of many of his previous places of employment. While most of that information was rather general, it did provide starting points for other areas of necessary research. The Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library contained many primary sources of Mann's Michigan years, which included his employment with the Detroit Athletic Club and his thirty seasons at The University of Michigan. The Detroit News and Detroit Free Press reported the exploits of the Mann — coached D.A.C. swimmers during the winter seasons of 1919 through 1924. The Michigan Daily, The University of Michigan newspaper; The Michigan Alumnus, the publication of the alumni association; and The Ann Arbor News provided excellent coverage
of The University of Michigan's swimming seasons, plus other major university-related trips and activities in which Mann participated, from 1925 through 1954. The Proceedings of the Board of Regents, University of Michigan provided specific data on his official dates of employment, university ranks, salaries, and other actions which the Board enacted regarding his position. The University of Michigan's All-Time Athletic Record Book (1972) presented an accurate and complete accounting of Mann's dual meet seasons, and team standings in the Big Ten and NCAA Swimming and Diving Championship meets from 1925 through 1954. It was noted, though, that this latter source incorrectly cited a team standing for The University of Michigan in the NCAA prior to 1937, when in fact, that was the first year that team scoring was recognized by the NCAA.

The Michigan Historical Collections, located on The University of Michigan campus, contained several documents and assorted sources which proved to be invaluable for gaining additional insight into various periods of Mann's years at Michigan. A considerable amount of data concerning the relationship of the intercollegiate swimming program to the total athletic program of The University of Michigan, and the athletic directors who administered those programs, was derived from the personal papers of Fielding H. Yost and Herbert O. Crisler; John Behee's biography Fielding Yost's Legacy To The University of Michigan (1971); Philip Pack's 100 Years of Athletics—The University of Michigan 1837-1937 (1937); and a personal interview with H. O. "Fritz" Crisler. A general knowledge about The University and its major program thrusts throughout Mann's years in Ann Arbor was provided by Walter Donnelly's The University of Michigan — An Encyclopedic
Survey (1958) in four volumes. Interviews conducted with William Power, Gus Stager, Phil Moriarty, Mike Peppe, Ted Webster, Burwell "Bumpy" Jones, Dr. Bob Bartels, Charles McCaffree, and Bob Moverson added a personalized dimension and better understanding of Mann's great record and intense rivalries, during his Michigan years. Several trips to Ann Arbor and The University of Michigan campus, in addition to various other cities, were necessary to research the aforementioned sources.

The library and rare book room located in the International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida contained numerous sources, which were of the utmost importance in terms of relevant data, so necessary for achieving the purposes of this study. The first of these sources was the extensive personal scrapbook collection of Matt Mann II, which traced his professional coaching career in the United States, from its inception at the Buffalo YMCA in 1908 through his final season at The University of Oklahoma in 1962. The scrapbooks which covered the years from 1908 to 1920 also contained articles about competitive swimming in different sections of the United States, which enabled this researcher to gain a better perspective of the early development of the sport in the northeastern and midwestern parts of the country. Highlights of Mann's first coaching assignments in Buffalo, New York were reported in articles from the Buffalo Enquirer, Buffalo News, and Buffalo Times; his one year appointment at Syracuse University (1909-1910) was covered by articles from the Syracuse Herald and Syracuse Post Standard.

Matt Mann's teaching and coaching position at the Brookline Gymnasium Athletic Association (1910-1915), his introduction and
participation in the American summer camp movement in New England, and his part-time coaching duties at Harvard University and Brookline High School were chronicled in numerous articles in the Boston American, Boston Post, Boston Globe, Boston Traveler, Brookline Chronicle, and Brookline Press.

During his employment at the New York Athletic Club in 1916 and 1917, Mann also assumed part-time coaching responsibilities at Yale University, Brooklyn (New York) Poly Prep School, and Lawrenceville (New Jersey) Prep School. The exploits of those teams were reported, in part, by articles in the New York Times and the Boston Traveler. Extensive coverage of his coaching positions at the Duluth Boat Club and the Detroit Athletic Club were provided by articles from the Duluth News Tribune, Duluth Herald, Duluth Tribune, Detroit News, and Detroit Free Press.

The glorious records of The University of Michigan years were contained in thirty of the scrapbooks with most of the articles coming from The Michigan Daily, Ann Arbor News, and the Detroit newspapers.

The victory-filled era of the final phase of Mann's coaching career at The University of Oklahoma (1956-1962) was portrayed in six scrapbooks designated as the Oklahoma years. The sources for the articles were the school newspaper, The Oklahoma; and The Norman Transcript and The Oklahoma City News.

The second major source of the Hall of Fame library was the collection of twenty audio cassette tapes produced by Matt Mann in 1961 during a series of interviews with his son-in-law, Buck Dawson, the director of the Hall of Fame. The contents of the tapes focused on the high points of Mann's association with competitive swimming,
from his childhood in England through his coaching years at The University of Oklahoma. Two additional tapes included in the collection were interviews, also initiated by Dawson, with two of Mann's former athletes and later professional associates, Robert Muir, formerly of Williams College, and Richard Papenguth, formerly of Purdue University. The Muir interview focused on his association with Mann in Brookline, while the Papenguth interview covered Mann's pre-hiring association with The University of Michigan swimming team, and Papenguth's work with Mann's Camp AK-O-MAK for girls. The contents of the tape collection greatly personalized much of the data which had been gathered from printed sources, by filling in gaps between newspaper stories, or adding meaning to many events which were only touched upon in those sources.

Another significant source, from the Hall of Fame library, was a memento book entitled *Matt Mann of Michigan* (1941), the contents of which were organized by Mann's former pupil, coaching rival, and long time personal friend, Charles McCaffree, Jr. The book was presented to Mann in recognition of his thirty-three years of successful swimming coaching in the United States. Its contents consisted primarily of congratulatory letters from professional associates in the intercollegiate coaching ranks, and from former University of Michigan swimming team members; the latter group included both varsity "M" award winners and non-winners. Many of the letters, from members of both groups, contained expressions of personal gratitude for Mann's devotion to the continued development of competitive swimming and his sincere interest in the young men who participated on his teams. Those personal comments provided a softening touch to the Mann facade which
had often portrayed him as the hard-nosed, totally demanding coach who had exhorted his "chargers" to compete without concern for their opponents.

The complete collection of The Official Intercollegiate Swimming Guides, also maintained in the Hall of Fame library, verified Mann's designation as swimming coach at each of the previously-cited educational institutions, with the exception of the Buffalo, New York high schools and Syracuse University, since the guide was not published until 1915.

The scrapbook information served as a launching pad for research efforts into various facets of Matt Mann's background which had only been covered to a limited extent in some of the other sources.

Certain aspects of the subject's schoolboy competitive swimming efforts in England were authenticated by correspondence with Austin Rawlinson, who also sent photostatic copies of early race programs; Rawlinson was the historian of the amateur Swimming Association of England for many years. A general perspective of the social, political, and educational conditions which existed in England, from Mann's birth to his time of emigration, was gained from Social England, Volume VI (1909) edited by Traill and J. S. Mann; The Cambridge History of the British Empire - Volume III 1870-1919 (1959) edited by Benians, Butler, and Carrington; and A World History of Physical Education (1971) by Van Dalen and Bennett.

Mann's participation in the American summer camp movement in New England was touched upon in many of the previously mentioned sources. Additional information about the early camp movement, as a
whole, during the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the
twentieth centuries, was also gathered from A World History of
Physical Education. His later experiences as an owner and director of
Camp Chikope and Camp AK-O-MAK were covered in detail in each of the
following sources: his personal tapes; several interviews with former
campus, counselors, and members of his family; and certain pieces of
descriptive literature which had been prepared for the parents of
prospective campers.

An interview with Edward Kennedy, Swimming Coach Emeritus of
Columbia University, and selected issues of The Winged Foot, the
official monthly publication of the N.Y.A.C., provided helpful data
about Mann's New York City period. Invaluable insight into Mann's
association with Yale University was gained from sections of
Peter Kennedy's doctoral dissertation, The Life and Professional
Contributions of Robert Herman Kiphuth To Yale And Competitive
Swimming, and an interview with Dr. Clark Hopkins, Professor Emeritus,
The University of Michigan, a former member of the Mann-coached Yale
swimming team of 1916. During his seasons at The University of
Oklahoma, Mann only took up residence in Norman for slightly more than
two months each year. His association with persons outside the
University's athletic community were very limited, since most of his
days were devoted to preparing the swimmers for their season, and
related athletic department business. Correspondence with
Charles "Bub" Wilkinson, the former athletic director who was
responsible for Mann's hiring at The University of Oklahoma, interviews
conducted with Gordon Collet and Robert Connor, both of whom were
former Oklahoma swimmers, and an interview with Jack McGuire, the
swimming coach at Iowa State University, all pointed to Mann's fresh enthusiasm for collegiate coaching in the Big Eight Conference, an ingredient of his coaching style which had faded in his waning years at Michigan. A survey of the administrative structure, processes, and major rule changes of intercollegiate swimming in NCAA member institutions from 1913 to 1949 was presented in Richard Jamerson's report *The Administration of Intercollegiate Swimming In The United States* (1949). Although the source was void of the various coaching personalities who held prominent positions on the Swimming Rules Committee for many years, it did illuminate the fact that the sport's development was essentially determined by the eastern coaching "establishment."

In addition to many of the aforementioned friends of Mann who contributed information about his personal life, the deepest insight into the true personal nature of Matt Mann II and his primary interests and goals in life was derived from interviews with his children by his second marriage Mrs. Rose Mary Dawson and Matthew Mann III, and his son-in-law Buck Dawson.

The compilation of data from the preceding described sources provided a truly comprehensive picture of the life of Matthew Mann II and his impact upon the development of competitive swimming, especially on the collegiate level, in the United States.
Chapter 2

MATT'S EARLY COMPETITIVE YEARS IN ENGLAND

Matthew "Matt" Mann II was born December 21, 1884 in Leeds, Yorkshire, England. He was one of eight children, the first born of four sons, of Mary nee Rilot and Matthew Joseph Mann. When Matt started his education at the White Hall Road School in Leeds, the family lived in the small community of Holback, which was located on the outskirts of Leeds. Matt's father, better known as Joe Mann, was a publican or pubkeeper by trade, with the residence quarters of a public house being the site of Matt's birth.¹

During Matt's first year in school, when he was seven years old, an opportunity arose for the boys of that grade level to participate in a learn-to-swim program. From an educational standpoint, this was an unique experience for those students; the physical education programs in the English public schools, of that period preceding 1900, were heavily laden with team sports and various forms of gymnastics.² Approximately forty boys elected to receive the swimming instructions, which were offered two days each week for the better part of that school year. The swimming lessons were taught by

¹Matt Mann II Audio Cassette Collection, (Recorded during the summer of 1960), Hall of Fame, (Rare Book Room), Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Tape 1.

"Professor" Tomlinson, a swimming instructor, at the Cookridge Street Baths, a public swimming facility, which was located within walking distance from the school. The students were taught the breaststroke as their beginning stroke. The lesson progression then took the boys through the sidestroke, and finally the overarm or "English" sidestroke. The early lessons were simplistic and brief, in that each session consisted of each boy being towed in a pulley system the length of a twenty-five yard pool. By the end of the school year, Matt and many of his classmates had progressed to the proficiency level which entitled each boy to a beginning swimmer certificate.3

The Mann family operated on a modest budget, with only a very limited source of money for family needs outside of the basic necessities. Matt's newly developed swimming skills, therefore, fit in nicely with that economic status for they provided him with numerous recreational opportunities, at little or no cost, and with countless enjoyable experiences in a variety of facilities near his home. Leeds was characterized by the presence of several industries, which had appeared in many cities throughout England, in response to certain needs of the Industrial Revolution. Within walking distance of Matt's home, there was a large water-filled spillway which was used by several woolen mills to discharge liquid wastes. The spillway emptied into a large basin, called The Beck, which also served as the local "swimming hole" for Matt and his friends on many occasions. The Beck had been declared "off limits" for Matt, by his mother, but that not deter him from an occasional swim; she was always able to tell

3Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 1.
when he had broken the rule, since his skin would take on the tinge of the dye color which the mills had pumped into the spillway. Harsh punishments were not the order of the day in the Mann household though, and, The Beck served as the site for many of Matt's early swimming experiences.\footnote{Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 1.}

Matt was able to pursue his swimming interest in a more suitable, public bath facility, located a short distance from his home, but each visit cost money. The public pools of the city were operated without filtration systems, which therefore necessitated emptying the pools of their water twice each week, Wednesday and Saturday nights, to provide clean water for the persons frequenting those facilities. Each pool had a sliding rate scale for different days, based upon the water clarity, for the persons who used the facility. Since Mondays and Thursdays were the "clean water," three penny days at Matt's neighborhood pool, most of his swimming took place on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the "dirty water," one penny days.\footnote{Ibid.}

When Matt was nine, the family moved inside the Leeds city limit to his father's new place of employment, the Weaver's Arms public house. Matt's interest and ability in swimming had developed to such an extent, that his father brought him a year's membership in the Leeds's Swimming Club, located at the Union Street Baths. This membership, which Matt used often, entitled him to free admission to the pool during the sessions scheduled daily for club members.\footnote{Ibid.}
Soon after the family had moved, Matt changed schools to the Woodhouse Higher Grade School, which was almost a thirty minute walk from his home. That school's curriculum did not include swimming lessons, but Matt did have many opportunities to continue his swimming during the school day's two hour lunch break. On many days, Matt hurried home for a quick lunch, and on his way back to school, he and some friends, Horace Moreley, Spencer Foxcroft, and Herbert Crowther, all the sons of pubkeepers, visited the Union Street Baths for an hour of swimming and water polo. Matt's fondness for swimming exceeded his desire to be back at school on time. Always the last boy out of the pool, he was usually late returning to school following those sessions, and he had signed the school's late book more than any other student, most frequently using the excuse that the clock at the pool was slow.7

His recreational sessions were not devoted entirely to play, since he had improved his stroke techniques and gained the reputation as quite a proficient performer, for his age group, of the English overarm, the racing stroke of that period. Matt displayed his skills frequently at the monthly swimming meets, or "galas," sponsored by the club.8

In those days, the gala was more than a swimming meet, with standardized races for various age groups of competitors. The gala was an entertainment occasion for many people, especially those living in the community of the host club. While some of the swimming events provided competition for particular age groups to engage in "scratch" start races, many other events were conducted as handicap

7Ibid. 8Ibid.
races, with competitors leaving their marks at predetermined time intervals in each race. But the gala program attracted many spectators to witness various novelty events. Those events, commonly included in many galas, were the underwater plate retrieval, the top hat-umbrella race, fancy diving, animal imitation exhibitions, and when the galas were held in larger outdoor river basins, various boat races were included in the program. Since the galas were such popular spectator events, with the outdoor programs often attracting several thousand interested onlookers, the winners of certain scratch races often gained considerable popularity in their communities and throughout a region.

Matt's first major success in swimming competition took place at the annual Leeds Swimming Club Gala, an event which was open to contestants from the city and the surrounding communities. His victory came in a 50 yard race for boys of his age, and his awards were an attractive silver medal and a large silver plated shield. The ownership of the latter prize was retained by the club, but along with the award, a provision had been made for the shield to be retained by the respective champion, for him to display in an appropriate manner, for a period of one year. The shield that was won by Matt was proudly displayed by his father at the Weaver's Arms public house for all patrons to easily observe.

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9Official Programme, Whitby Regatta, August 24, 1896. Whitby, England. (Photostatic copy made in August 1975, of the original program which was in the possession of Mr. Jim Robinson, Hon. Secretary of the Whitby Seals Amateur Swimming Club, Whitby, England).

10Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 2.

11Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 1.
Joe Mann was interested in many competitive sports, both, as participant and spectator, and he was very enthusiastic and supportive of Matt's participation in competitive swimming. The two traveled around the neighboring communities attending as many galas as they were able to work into their schedules, so that Matt was able to compete quite regularly. In addition to the featured age-group handicap races, which rewarded the top place winners with very handsome prizes, Matt often participated in as many of the special or novelty events as his youthful stamina would permit. Each gala had its own specific set of prizes, but it was common practice, for the period, to award various silver-plated pieces of fine tea services and dinner ware, each of which carried substantial monetary value.

During the years of 1896, 1897, and 1898 on the gala circuit, which included some ten towns within twenty-five miles of Leeds, Matt's successes in the various swimming races had enabled him to acquire numerous attractive awards. Many of those prizes were placed on display in the Weaver's Arms, or in the family china cabinet.

It was at the Whitby Regatta, a major outdoor gala, that Matt performed exceedingly well against some very fine competitors.

In the 1896 Regatta, as an eleven year old, Matt Mann placed second to a boy, named A. Campbell of Stockton, in the swimming race for boys under 14 years. Matt received a watch, valued at ten shillings, as his prize. In both the 1897 and 1898 Regattas, Matt won the swimming races for boys under 14 years, and he a gold medal, valued at one pound (£1), on each occasion.

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12 Ibid., Tape 1.  13 Ibid., Tape 1.

14 Based on information contained in personal correspondence between Mr. Austin Rawlinson, Historian of the Amateur Swimming Association of England, and the writer, August 19, 1975.
It was common practice for the promoters of various galas to advertise that their schedule of events included races which recognized the winners of those events as Schoolboy Champions of England, but the practice was actually illegal in terms of the amateur rules of the sport. The Amateur Swimming Association, the governing body in England, had not sanctioned any such races. During Matt's schoolboy racing days, he won several unofficial schoolboy champion races. In 1896 an official schoolboy championship race, a relay team event for boys under 14 years of age, was sanctioned and won by a team from Liverpool. Matt was not a member of any sanctioned schoolboy championship team during his years of schoolboy competition.\textsuperscript{15}

As Matt approached his fourteeneth birthday, he left school so that he might secure a job. For those times, it was rather common for children at that age, who came from other than wealthy families, to finish their formal education and seek employment or work in their homes. The higher educational levels were primarily private institutions, with curriculums and costs geared to "upper class" traditions.\textsuperscript{16}

A variety of jobs were available for a boy of Matt's age, and he took advantage of that situation by working at a number of different jobs, before he accepted an apprentice's position at the Holden Company, a wholesale drapery firm. Gone were his care-free school days and frequent gala competitions; in fact, Matt had little time for the regular swimming practices which were so necessary for successful

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., Rawlinson letter.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{16}Van Dalen, op. cit., p. 286.}
gala competition. For the next two years, while he served his apprenticeship, Matt engaged in very few competitions.17

One factor, which had enabled Matt to retain a high level of interest in competitive swimming during that period, was the opportunity he had to hear many stories about England's finest swimmers. The site for these story-telling sessions was the Weaver's Arms, since the "pub" catered to an athletic-type crowd, and Joe Mann encouraged many of the patrons to relate swimming stories when Matt was present. During some of these sessions Matt had gained considerable knowledge about, and respect for, several of the English champion swimmers of that era. He enjoyed hearing the stories about Stevie Jones, a man who had dominated the gala racing scene, during the 1880's and early 1890's, using the English overarm stroke; and especially the stories which described the great races between Jones and J. B. Johnson of Lancashire, the latter, a top flight practitioner of the underarm sidestroke.18

Matt was a competitor at heart, and the competitive swimming stories seemed to have kindled his desire to return to active competition. In order to satisfy that desire he decided that it could best be achieved if he left the Leeds area. Matt, then sixteen, moved to London where he found employment at Cook, Son and Company, a large dry goods business.19 Soon after his arrival he joined the famous Ravensbourne Club, an athletic club, whose membership roster included national champions from several sports. The club members had access

17Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 1.
18Ibid., Tape 1. 19Ibid., Tape 1.
to a swimming pool, a large field with several tennis courts marked off, and a running track. Those facilities, with a clubhouse, were located at the Great Smith Street Baths in the Westminster section of London.\(^{20}\)

Matt became a member of the Ravensbourne swimming team which held organized practice sessions on each of the two club nights every week. In addition to the regularly scheduled practices, each team member was expected to practice on his own, as often as possible. Although the team participated in several big galas each year, in which different national championship events were contested, the team's big meet of the season was the London City Championships. This meet was conducted in a very standardized fashion with the competitors in each race being started from scratch. At Matt's first city championship meet in 1901, he placed second in several events to Al Harvey, a Ravensbourne teammate and national champion in several events that year.\(^{21}\)

Along with the busy swimming training which Matt followed, he took a very active interest in bicycle racing. Since the bicycle served Matt, and many other Londoners, as a primary mode of transportation about the city, it was quite natural that a number of cycling clubs were organized to meet various recreational and competitive needs of certain cyclists. The Ravensbourne Club had a cycling section within its organization for men and boys interested in competition, with an appropriate area for the cyclists to practice some phases of their training. Matt spent many hours performing

\(^{20}\)Rawlinson, loc. cit.

\(^{21}\)Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 1.
conditioning exercises and learning the competitive skills of bicycle racing at the club's facility. During his second year in London, his interest in cycling actually reached a level when he devoted considerably more time for that training than for swimming. In addition to his Ravensbourne membership, Matt joined the Polytechnic Cycling Club so that he might intensify his training to better prepare himself for the season's extensive racing schedule. A major portion of his training, which took place on the weekends, involved 50 to 100 mile bicycle trips, on the not so evenly graded highways, in and about London. The highlight of Matt's competitive cycling endeavors in 1902 was his victory in the City of London Championship Race for One Mile, held at the Hern Hill Track.\textsuperscript{22}

Although some of Matt's desire to stay active in the competitive swimming scene had diminished, his interest as a "student" of the sport remained at a high level. During his two years in London, he was able to reflect on the development and evolutionary adaptations to different strokes, which had occurred in speed swimming. In the nine years that Matt had been competing in the sport, the fastest stroke for the 100 yard and 220 yard events had evolved from a few proficient men using the underarm sidestroke, moving next to the overarm sidestroke domination from 1890 to the mid 1890's, followed by the Trudgen-stroke practitioners of the late 1890's through the turn of century, and finally to the introduction of the Australian crawl and Trudgen crawl strokes.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid., Tape 1.  \textsuperscript{23}Ibid., Tape 1.
Matt had experienced the speedstroke evolution as a competitor and as a spectator. Since his first club affiliation in Leeds to his membership at the Ravensbourne Club, Matt had been able to successfully adapt his speed swimming stroke throughout the transition periods to keep pace with his competition. In addition to his participation as a competitor in the evolutionary development of speed swimming, Matt, on several occasions, had witnessed competitions and exhibitions in which some of the men who were responsible for the initiation or early development of the speed strokes, participated. The English competitive swimming scene was instrumental in the early development of the sport, due to the organized nature of competition in the country, dating back to their first national championship in 1871, through the beginning of the twentieth century. Prior to the very early 1900's, English swimmers held most of the world records for the internationally recognized events, including the prestigious 100 yard event by J. H. Tyers, with a time of 1:02.5.24

Although the Trudgen stroke had been introduced to England during the early 1870's, by a South African sailor named John Trudgen, it was regarded as being quite revolutionary for its time. The performer, who used the stroke, took on an awkward appearance since each arm was recovered over the water in an alternating pattern, with the head carried rather high. But during the 1890's, the Trudgen stroke gained in popularity due to certain refinements which had been made in the propulsive and recovery actions of the arms and legs.

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More swimmers tried the refined stroke, and as faster times were recorded in competition by some of those men, it gained widespread popularity.25

As the "over the water" arm recovery strokes, exclusive of the English overarm, were introduced into competition, many competitors using a new stroke believed it to be too difficult to sustain for an entire race. Even in the 100 yard events, it was a common sight to observe Matt and his fellow competitors swim the first and fourth lengths using the Trudgen stroke, and English overarm for the second and third lengths or recovery phase of the race. As Matt developed his new stroke skills, it was not long before he was capable of using that stroke for an entire race.26

Matt had been fortunate to observe one of English's most skillful Trudgen stroke swimmers, J. H. Derbyshire, in several major races on the gala circuit. Derbyshire, an English national champion in several events, achieved international recognition by his world record performance of 60 seconds for the 100 yard freestyle race on November 2, 1897.27 That record stood for a few years, and the time of one minute flat represented a type of barrier to the top competitors of the day, for as Matt stated, "We thought we had sounded botton in speed when someone went close to a minute, that chap had gone very, very fast."28

25Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 1. 26Ibid., Tape 1.
28Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 1.
The English competitive swimming scene seemed an inviting and challenging environment for certain foreign swimmers in quest of top competition, and possible world recognition. During 1901 and 1902, two Australian swimmers, Richard and Percy Cavill, had traveled throughout England performing in major competitive events and exhibitions in several important galas. Richard and Percy were two of four brothers, each of whom had experienced competitive swimming success in Australia. Their English tour was marked by large crowds at each gala, as people came to see the new stroke, called the Australian crawl, which enabled the brothers to easily defeat their competition. Richard Cavill was credited with the "creation" of the new stroke which used a Trudgen-type arm action with a heavy, two beat, thrashing action of the legs, called a flutter kick, for each stroke cycle. During their tour, Matt had several opportunities to witness the Cavills in competitions and in exhibitions. The Cavill name and Australian crawlstroke received international acclaim, in swimming-minded countries, when, in 1902, Richard established a new world record for the 100 yard freestyle event with a time of :58.4. Many swimming trainers and competitive swimmers soon included the Australian crawlstroke in their training regimens, but at the same time many of the competitors had difficulty in feeling comfortable with the kick of the new stroke, which led some of them to return to the Trudgen stroke.

\[29\] Armbruster, loc. cit.
\[30\] Menke, loc. cit.
\[31\] Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 1.
While living in London, Matt had yet another opportunity to observe another very fine foreign swimmer, Charles M. Daniels, a young man from the United States. Daniels, who represented the New York Athletic Club at home, had come to London in 1902 to represent the Amateur Swimming Club and to meet some sterner competition than was available at home. During Daniels' first English season he used the Trudgen stroke, but the best time he recorded were three to four seconds behind the top English swimmers, who used the Australian crawl, for the 100 yard event. After the season he returned to New York determined to make a better showing the next year in England.32

In 1903, Charlie Daniels returned to competition in London and brought with him a stroke which appeared to blend movements of the Trudgen stroke and the Australian crawl. Daniels' changes were essentially to the legs, where his action provided for a narrower scissor kick than used in the regular Trudgen stroke, followed by two to four beats of a shallow flutter kick. His adaptations produced a faster stroke for him and improved his standing in the competitive ranks. Although Daniels did not dominate the competitive scene with his new style, called the Trudgen crawl stroke, he did win many converts on the competitive circuit and predictions by several experts that he would someday achieve international recognition with that stroke.33

The frequent opportunities to observe great swimmers, during his two years in London, rekindled Matt's interest in devoting more time to his competitive swimming training, especially in the latter

32Ibid., Tape 1. 33Ibid.
part of that second year. But soon after Matt's nineteenth birthday, he received word from his father that it was time for Matt to return to Leeds. As the eldest son in his family and at his age, Matt was expected to begin an apprenticeship to his father in the Star and Garter public house.34

While the business of selling alcoholic beverages and "smokes" did not appeal to Matt, it did provide him with an opportunity to be with his family again. He assumed his apprentice responsibilities soon after his arrival in Leeds, but he was anxious to resume his swimming training, and to accomplish this need he renewed his membership in the Leeds Swimming Club. In order to find additional training time Matt joined the Leeds Church and Hunslet Swimming Clubs. Most of Matt's free time was devoted to swimming training, and with his rigorous training schedule, it was not long before he regained top form, and once again became a dominant figure in the local galas.35

Matt's avid interest and success in competitive swimming, and the common knowledge, in that part of England, that Joe Mann's pub welcomed sports personalities, local and foreign, led an Australian swimmer, Barney Kieran, to the Mann household. Kieran at age eighteen held several world records for events ranging from 250 yards on up to five miles; he was on a tour of several countries throughout the world to display his swimming skills. While Kieran's trainer maintained his position as captain of the ship they had arrived on, Barney arranged to stay at the Mann household, during several months of his English tour. Matt and Barney struck up a friendship at once

34 Ibid. 35 Ibid.
and soon spent a great deal of time together. Matt trained with Barney as often as his work schedule at the pub permitted, but Kieran spent far more time at the pool than any top swimmer with whom Matt had previously been associated. Matt studied, with interest, Barney's daily training routine which usually included a morning, post-breakfast session of a couple of miles of continuous swimming. In the afternoons, Barney devoted those sessions to sprint-type workouts, keeping each of his sprint swims at less than 200 yards. After dinner, the evening sessions were composed of doing a set of 200 yard or 250 yard swims.36

During Kieran's exhibition tour, which covered several months in 1904 and 1905, Matt served as his competitive partner on most occasions, with the pair swimming non-competitive races in several events. In regular competition, Barney was undefeated against England's finest distance swimmers. One of the highlights of the tour for Matt was when he saw Kieran become the first man to swim the 500 yard freestyle race in six minutes. Matt attributed that outstanding time, for 1904, to the daily triple workouts which Barney followed quite religiously.37

For Matt, the Kieran tour of England came to an end much too quickly. The frequent opportunities to be Barney's companion and exhibition partner, were among the most meaningful and enjoyable occasions Matt had experienced since his return to Leeds. After Kieran's departure, late in the winter of 1904, Matt's competitive

36 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
37 Ibid., Tape 3.
interest in the local galas had waned, and he spent a considerable amount of his time thinking about his future. He read the newspapers frequently, seeking ideas for potential employment opportunities. Included in Matt's reading list, on a monthly basis, was a Sunday edition of the New York Times, which the Mann family received regularly from a friend. As each month passed, Matt's thoughts for the future were directed at the opportunities which he believed existed in the United States.38

Matt's interest in leaving England for employment in another country, and particularly the United States, was not unusual for that period in English history. Following 1895, the most striking feature of the British imperial economic history was the relentless search for food and raw materials, and the related necessity of an expanded shipping industry. English citizens were encouraged to consider emigration to a Dominion of the British Empire, to supply the necessary manpower for industrial development in those countries.39 But England's relations with the United States had improved in the late 1890's, resulting in improved trade relations, therefore enhancing the attractiveness of America to many English citizens. During 1904, between 150,000 and 200,000 persons emigrated from England to the United States and Canada.40 By December of 1905, Matt had made up his

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38 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 1.


40 Ibid., p. 479.
mind that managing a pub was not what he wanted to do then, or in the future, and so he decided to emigrate to the United States, before his twenty-first birthday.\footnote{Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.}
Chapter 3

MATT BECOMES A COACH

The occasion of Matt's departure for the United States of America, on that day in December of 1905, was rather inauspicious. There was no big send-off party by family and friends for Matt; but instead, a rather routine boarding of a Carmen Line passenger ship, with hundreds of other Englishmen, who like himself, were seeking new opportunities in the distant land. Matt and Jimmy Wamald, a friend who had recently resigned from a position as an apprentice engineer, had decided to make the crossing together with very limited financial reserves.¹

Due to the increasing numbers of persons who were leaving England for the United States and Canada, the major passenger ship companies were very competitive for the potential trans-Atlantic crossing business. While the competition made the price of five guineas quite affordable for Matt and Jimmy, the accommodations for the trip were very substandard. A wide variety of make-shift provisions had been for sleeping and eating in different places on each of the ship's enclosed decks. In spite of those relatively harsh conditions, for the several days of the crossing, Matt's enthusiasm for reaching the United States offset the negative aspects of the ocean voyage.²

¹Matt Mann II Cassette Collection, Tape 2.
²Ibid., Tape 2.
Upon the ship's arrival in New York harbor, and the discharging of its passengers at Ellis Island, the gateway for many immigrants into the United States, the experience was like a dream that had come true for Matt. But, these euphoric moments were abruptly brought to an end for Matt and Jimmy during the preliminary interview session with the immigration authorities. While Matt and Jimmy had received the appropriate information regarding the expenses for the ship's fare, neither one had been informed about the personal cash reserve which had to be displayed by each immigrant who wished to enter the United States. Matt had barely two pounds of English currency, and Jimmy little more; each man's holdings were insufficient to warrant his admission to the United States. They were given an opportunity to be transported to Canada on a special train. Each man accepted the chance to stay on this side of the Atlantic, and for a fare of five dollars each, they were transported to a very cold (25° below zero) Toronto the night after their arrival at Ellis Island.3

After each man invested his remaining money in a weekly meal and lodging package at a local hotel the next day, Matt and Jimmy started looking for employment. Jimmy found work that same day with an engineering firm, but it was three days before Matt got a position with Brock and Company, a wholesale dry good business, for $7.50 a week. In England, Matt had been employed in similar types of business establishments, which were referred to as drapery companies. Before the end of that first week in Toronto, Matt was on his way to

3Ibid., Tape 2.
Hamilton, Canada for a new job at the T. H. Pratt Company, a retail dry goods store, for $10 a week. At that time Matt and Jimmy Wamald parted company.4

Matt lived and worked in Hamilton for more than a year, and due in part to a lack of interest, he had virtually divorced himself from any type of regular athletic training during that period. It seemed that his primary interest, at that time, focused on his dream of eventually living and working in the United States. He had heard a great deal about Buffalo, New York, located about sixty miles from Hamilton, and it seemed like a place where he might be able to find some employment and to at last achieve the fulfillment of his dream.5

During the fall of 1907, Matt made the decision to enter the United States and to settle in Buffalo. Due to his work experience in Hamilton, he was able to find work rather quickly at the Hans and Kelly Store, a large dry goods concern. With his employment needs satisfied, Matt soon found the meals and lodging facilities of the Buffalo-Central Y.M.C.A. to his liking and a very convenient arrangement. Soon after settling into the routine of his new employment, Matt took advantage of numerous opportunities to engage in recreational activities, especially swimming, at the Y.M.C.A.6

The opportunity to swim most evenings, and the schedule of several competitive swimming events held in western New York, during the fall and winter seasons, stimulated Matt to pursue a regular training routine again. Matt soon learned that competitive swimming was in its early stages in that part of the United States, and

4Ibid., Tape 2. 5Ibid. 6Ibid.
although he had not engaged in serious training for almost two years, he was able to win the Western New York State Individual Amateur Championships for the 100 yard and 220 yard freestyle events. Those victories, plus other successes in various Y.M.C.A. meets, during the 1907-1908 indoor season, enabled Matt to become somewhat of a celebrity on the regional competitive swimming circuit.  

Early in 1908, Matt changed places of employment to the H. A. Maldrum Company, also a dry goods business, for fifteen dollars a week plus a slight commission on his sales. It was during that employment when Matt had the opportunity to meet with Mr. H. A. Maldrum's nephew, the internationally-known swimming star, Charles M. Daniels of New York City. It had been more than three years since Matt had seen, and been greatly impressed by, Charles Daniels compete in London. After those days in England, Daniels had refined his racing Trudgen crawlstroke, and demonstrated his proficiency by setting a new American record. He tied the world record for the 100 yard freestyle event with a time of :57.6 on February 22, 1906. Later that year, on March 23, 1906, he established a new world mark for that event with a time of :56.0, using what some experts referred to as the American crawlstroke.  

By 1908, Daniels held many national freestyle records for a wide variety of events. That winter, he had come to Buffalo for an extended visit with his uncle. During that period Matt got to know

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7Ibid., Tape 2.  8Ibid.
MATT MANN II,
WESTERN NEW YORK STATE AMATEUR SWIMMING CHAMPION, 1908
Charlie quite well, and the two men developed quite a friendship. On one occasion Charlie agreed to oblige a request of Matt for a swimming race between the two men. The site of that memorable event was the twenty-five yard pool at the 65th Regiment Armory in Buffalo. The race was a 220 yard freestyle event, in which Matt received a seven second lead before Charlie entered the water; in spite of that advantage, Matt was no match for the great Daniels, with the latter easily winning the race. Matt felt honored that he had raced with a man of Daniels' repute, and the event strengthened Matt's admiration of Charlie's abilities.\textsuperscript{10}

By the time the outdoor racing season began, Daniels had returned to New York City, and Matt was by far the area's top competitor for the 100 and 220 yard freestyle events. The summer swimming meets were often organized in the gala style which was used so successfully in England. The meet promoters used a variety of standardized swimming races and novelty events to attract large crowds of spectators.\textsuperscript{11}

Towards the end of his successful summer season, Matt traveled back to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, to compete in the swimming races and gala-like affair, sponsored by the Victoria Yacht Club. Matt had a wonderful time at the meet, which included his winning efforts in a novelty event and the big swimming race of the day. The novelty event was the duck chase, in which a live duck, with clipped wings, was turned loose in an enclosed area of deep water for a group of

\textsuperscript{10}Matt Mann Collection, loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., Tape 2.
swimmers to chase. The crowd greatly enjoyed the frantic efforts of
the swimmers to capture the duck. Matt actually did very little
swimming in winning that event, since he merely stayed in one area and
let the other swimmers chase the duck into his grasp. The novelty
events set the stage for the major swimming races of the program
though.12

The principal event of the afternoon was the 100 yard swimming
race for the championship of the bay and the Adam Brown medal.
Twenty nine swimmers were entered in this event. The contestants
were organized into two heats, the first with fifteen men and the
second with fourteen. Each heat raced the required distance, with
the first four finishers from each heat qualifying for a final
race. The final heat was won by Matt Mann of the Buffalo Y.M.C.A.,
an old country crack. Mann was easily the class of the race and
he won by himself. At the conclusion of the afternoon,
Mr. Adam Brown, long one of the most eager enthusiasts of swimming
in these parts, presented his medal to champion Mann, and in a
nice address complimented Mann upon his prowess.13

It was not too many days after Matt, the proud champion, had
returned home to Buffalo, that he received word from the regional
representative of the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States,
which informed him that he should have secured an AAU travel permit to
compete in the Canadian meet. His failure to secure such a permit was
a direct amateur rule violation, and consequently, he was informed
that he would be prohibited from competing in any amateur swimming
races for a period of six months, beginning that September. That

12Ibid., Tape 2.

13"M. Mann is Champion," Hamilton, Ontario Spectator, August 31,
1908, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 1.
decision hurt Matt deeply for he had grown fond of the frequent competitions, and the recognition he had received in the Buffalo community. ¹⁴

During September, Matt felt rather low when he thought about his suspension, and that the indoor competitive swimming season of 1908-1909 would be almost completed before his suspension would be lifted. But before Matt had gotten too depressed about the matter, Mr. J. Y. Cameron, a director in the Buffalo Y.M.C.A. organization, and local promotor of Y.M.C.A. swimming meets, offered Matt a viable alternative to his predicament. Mr. Cameron suggested that Matt should take advantage of his reputation as a swimming personality by becoming a professional swimming instructor. The thought of permanently giving up his amateur status, and removing himself from the competitive swimming circuit was a difficult decision for Matt. ¹⁵

By October, Matt had made his decision when an article in a local newspaper read:

Matthew Mann, who has been Buffalo's star performer in all swimming events for the past year, has decided to enter the ranks as a professional teacher, and will start at once as the instructor of swimming at the Central Y.M.C.A. While losing a great amateur Buffalo will be the gainer, as the city is in need of instruction in the art of swimming. ¹⁶

Matt recognized the potential financial benefits which he hoped would accrue from his decision, but he also hoped that his impending

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¹⁴Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.

¹⁵Ibid., Tape 2.

¹⁶"Swimmer Mann is to Teach at Y.M.C.A.," Buffalo Enquirer, October 9, 1908, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 2.
instructional program would provide opportunities for many of his future pupils to derive a wide range of benefits from learning to swim skillfully. Mr. Cameron had worked out an arrangement with the Central Y.M.C.A. for Matt to have a section of the 60 feet by 25 feet pool for instructional purposes, each weekday evening from 7:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. While Matt had an extensive competitive swimming background, he was not quite certain as to how the instructional program should be organized. With the assistance of Mr. Cameron, a program was planned and advertised at the Y.M.C.A., whereby Matt was to teach a series of ten lessons for one dollar, or ten cents a lesson, per person.17

The new lesson program was received very well by the membership, and in a short time Matt had a full schedule of boys and men signed up for his lessons. Many high school boys were among those persons participating in the evening swimming lessons, and Matt, who taught his beginning students to swim using the American crawl stroke, was quick to recognize the potential competitive swimming talent which existed in that group. In a period of a few weeks, the skill level of the high school boys had progressed to the point where Matt held some impromptu races during the lesson sessions, much to the students' delight. The interest among the boys in organized swimming competition reached a sufficiently high level to warrant Matt's meeting with the Central High School principal. At that meeting Matt requested permission from the school administration to organize a swimming team for boys at the school. Since the high school was located just around the corner from the Central Y.M.C.A., Matt

17Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.
suggested that the noon hour of each school day would be an ideal time for scheduling the team's practice sessions. The principal liked Matt's manner and the plan, and in mid-November of 1908, competitive swimming was recognized for inclusion in the school's curriculum. A salary of fifty dollars was designated for Matt's coaching assignment for the entire season. 18

After his success in organizing the team at Central High School, Matt was soon interested in establishing a swimming team at Lafayette High School, the other high school in Buffalo, which many of his lesson students attended. The major problem with starting the sport at the second school was the lack of a work-out facility. Matt solved that problem by securing permission from the Central Y.M.C.A. for the use of its pool by the Lafayette High swimmers, from 6:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. each school day. Matt's proposal was accepted, and he received another contract for fifty dollars. 19

Matt worked his coaching assignments in between his job at the Maldrum Company and the lesson program at the Y.M.C.A., with his normal work day going from 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. The publicity of Matt's swimming work seemed to increase the demand for his instructional services, and before November was over, Matt was teaching swimming at the 65th Regiment Armory pool, two nights each week from 10:00 P.M. to 12:00 A.M. Matt justified his extremely busy schedule on the fact that he had came to this country in search of new

18 Ibid., Tape 2. 19 Ibid.
opportunities, and if he had anything to say about one, he was not
going to let it get by him.²⁰

Certain members of the local press were very supportive of the
region's much needed development in the various swimming programs,
which were being conducted in the area.

One of the lines of physical activity neglected the most in
America is swimming. . . . The Central Y.M.C.A. made a start to
develop an interest with the securing of Matthew Mann as swimming
instructor. His record for the past two months, at his different
employment positions shows what can be accomplished in a short
time by one man (Matt Mann). Mann as an instructor is an expert,
being able to point out a swimmer's weak points and develop speed
as well, he also quickly gets the confidence of a man, and that is
half the battle.²¹

Matt's weekend schedule was not much easier than that of his
weekdays, since Saturday and Sunday afternoons were devoted to giving
swimming exhibitions at Y.M.C.A. pools throughout the region. The
Y.M.C.A.'s in that part of New York State were making a determined
effort to increase the popularity of swimming as a year-round sport in
their programs. The primary vehicle for reaching many people in the
area, and stimulating interest in swimming, was the weekend
exhibition. Matt had been encouraged to participate in the exhibition
schedule by Mr. H. H. Corson, a well-known aquatics instructor from
Toronto. Until Matt had appeared on the local swimming scene, Corson
had conducted the swimming exhibitions in the region by himself.

²⁰Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.

²¹"Swimming Has Been Neglected," Buffalo News, November 26,
1908, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 3.
Often Matt and Corson presented exhibitions together and their routine provided the spectators with an wonderful show.\textsuperscript{22}

In addition to the extra income Matt received for his exhibition performances, he greatly enjoyed himself, for each show took on the semblance of an English gala. Matt and Corson planned their exhibitions to be informative and enjoyable for the spectators in attendance. Each session usually started with both men demonstrating the basic styles of swimming: the breaststroke, underarm sidestroke, overarm sidestroke, Trudgen stroke, Australian crawlstroke, and the American crawlstroke. The demonstration then moved to strokes and swimming movements which were labeled as novelty skills: the rolling log, spinning tub, porpoise, bicycling, a jumping jack stroke, a double arm backstroke, moving feet foremost on the back and prone positions, and a "Chicago crawl" (the last stroke resembled a Trudgen stroke, with a major scissor kick on each side and a flutter action of the feet worked in between the scissor actions). The exhibition were very well presented by Matt and Corson, both highly skilled swimmers and "showmen" in their own rights.\textsuperscript{23}

The weekend exhibitions were a welcome relief from Matt's hectic weekday schedule, but the work he derived his greatest satisfaction from was the training of the high school swimming teams. He was especially pleased when boys, who had started in his early lesson series, improved their skill levels to enable them to join either the Central High School or Lafayette High School team. One

\textsuperscript{22}Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.
\textsuperscript{23}Ibid.
such Central High student was Paul Roberts. He had been one of the first persons to sign up for Matt's lesson program at the Central Y.M.C.A. Matt recognized very early in the lessons, that Paul had the potential to become a fine swimmer. Paul had an excellent attitude towards learning his swimming skills, and he spent many hours working on practice drills to perfect those skills. That quality of Paul's helped develop a close friendship between himself and Coach Matt. As the Central High workouts progressed, Paul distinguished himself as the team's top swimmer, and he was named as the team's first captain. Such was the closeness between Matt and Paul, that many days after school was dismissed, Paul stopped by the Maldrum Company to "talk swimming" with Matt. Many of their conversations focused upon the development of the high school teams and the impending decision for competition between the teams.24

In December, Matt held a meet between Central High School and Lafayette High School, at the Central Y.M.C.A. pool. The list of events included the 40 yard sprint, 100 yard swim, 220 yard swim, underwater swim for distance, plunge for distance, and the 160 yard relay race. An official score was not recorded, but the Central High swimmers, led by Paul Roberts' efforts in the 100, 220, and relay events were clearly the winners of that first high school swimming meet in the city of Buffalo.25

24Ibid., Tape 2.
By January of 1909, there was an extensive list of influential supporters, who favored the expansion of instructional and competitive swimming programs in the Buffalo area. In response to that demand, the executive committee of the Buffalo Public Schools Athletic League met on January 16, 1909 and added swimming to the league events, with Matt Mann as the instructor. A special committee made up of Superintendent Henry P. Emerson, Chairman; Matthew Mann, Instructor of Swimming, Central Y.M.C.A.; and Fred R. Dennis, Physical Director — Boys Department, Central Y.M.C.A., was designated to organize and administer the new swimming program. The proposed plan called for as many as twenty schools to participate in the instructional and competitive components of the swimming program. The pool facilities of the Central Y.M.C.A. and the Genesee Street Y.M.C.A. were to be used for the swimming sessions. Each of the participating schools was to provide at least twelve participants, but not more than twenty, so that the available pool times could be effectively scheduled for the instructional and competitive programs. Provision was also made to divide the students who were interested in competition into two weight classes; Class A would include boys who weighed 100 pounds and over, while Class B would include events for boys who weighed less than 100 pounds.26

The Central Y.M.C.A. had become an informal meeting place for swimming enthusiasts of various ages and different walks of life. Whenever Matt was not busy with a team practice, or his swimming

26"Swimming For Public School Youngsters," Buffalo Times, January 17, 1909, Matt Mann Collection, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 5
lesson program, which was not very often, someone managed to "catch his ear" for some small talk about swimming. On one such occasion, the manager of the Walkover Shoe Company in Buffalo, who was also an active member of the Y.M.C.A., took time to commend Matt for the job that had been done with the swimming program in the area. The businessman took advantage of that occasion to present Matt with a large silver cup to be used as a type of perpetual award championship swimming attainment in the Buffalo area. Matt and the award donor decided that the award would be called the Syracuse Cup, since the latter was an alumnus of Syracuse University; and that the award would be presented to the high school team which won the championship of Buffalo and the surrounding areas. After those decisions had been made, Matt announced to the local media that a special award, the Syracuse Cup, had been made available for the winner of the high school championship swimming meet, thus attaching immediate publicity and a measure of prestige to the award.27

Following the newspaper articles acknowledging the acceptance of swimming as a Public School Athletic League event, and the establishment of the Syracuse Cup award, it now appeared that swimming programs, for many male students in the Buffalo area schools, were ready to experience a dramatic and widespread growth. But certain major factors intervened to abruptly curtail those expectations. Those factors included the lack of a full time salaried position for Matt in the public schools, the absence of other salaried

27Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.
positions for qualified personnel to assist Matt in the program, and the limited availability of adequate training facilities.\textsuperscript{28}

Although most of the features of the proposed public school swimming program plan were held in abeyance, Matt continued his work with the students from Central High School and Lafayette High School. Matt organized the training regimens of the swimmers so that the championship meet for the Syracuse Cup would be the high point of the season. Even though only two teams were to compete for the prize, the advanced publicity for the meet was very good and a high level of interest was created in the community.\textsuperscript{29}

On February 12, 1909, the second interscholastic swimming meet, to be held in Buffalo, was contested between Central High School and Lafayette High School, at the Central Y.M.C.A. The winner of the meet and the Syracuse Cup was Central High School by the score of 39 to 22. The two teams had entered contestants in the same program of events which had been used in their December meet. A highlight for the meet was the performance by J. Gilchriese, Central High School, in the underwater swim for distance in which he covered 206 feet. Matt was well pleased with the meet, since the times in the winning efforts for each of the events bettered the winning times of the December meet.\textsuperscript{30}

The meet was witnessed by a full compliment of spectators in the small observation area. Included in the group was the editor of

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., Tape 2. \textsuperscript{29}Ibid. \textsuperscript{30}"Central High Swimmers Win Syracuse Cup," Buffalo Times, February 13, 1909, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 6.
the Syracuse University school newspaper, who had been attracted to the meet by the advanced publicity for the Syracuse Cup. After the meet he talked with Matt about the Buffalo swimming program, and during that conversation the student editor informed Matt that a pool was being constructed, in the new gymnasium, on the Syracuse University campus. Matt also gathered from the conversation, that the school would be hiring a swimming instructor-coach to take charge of the new swimming programs. Matt had enjoyed his work in Buffalo, but he was especially interested in applying for the proposed position, and the prospectus of becoming affiliated with a well known university. 31

Within two weeks after the Syracuse Cup meet, Matt had severed his employment relationships in Buffalo and had moved to Syracuse. Soon after his arrival, Matt learned that the new pool was not to be completed until September of that year. Matt was able to resort to his employment "standby" of the dry goods business, by gaining a position with the large Daylight Store. 32 More importantly though, from the standpoint of keeping his hand in the swimming business, he was able to secure a part-time position with the Syracuse Y.M.C.A. His presence in the city was promptly reported in the local press:

31 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.
32 Ibid., Tape 2.
The Syracuse Y.M.C.A., through the endeavors of Physical Instructor Roseboro, will hereafter include swimming in its athletic curriculum. With that intention in view, it has secured the services of Matthew Mann of Buffalo as swimming instructor. He will have charge of a class on Friday evenings.\footnote{To Teach Swimming,} \footnote{Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.}

For the next few months Matt maintained a work schedule of dry goods salesman during the day, and part-time swimming instructor for the Syracuse Y.M.C.A. on Friday night of each week. He missed his swimming work in Buffalo, especially with the competitive groups, but he believed that in order to be a bona fide candidate for the position at Syracuse University, he must build a name and reputation in the city of Syracuse.\footnote{Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.}

Matt's swimming lessons were essentially for men, in beginning and intermediate skill level groups. As a break from the routineness of the lesson schedule, Matt frequently gave aquatic exhibitions, similar to the ones he had presented in the Buffalo area for his classes or other Y.M.C.A. members. Matt and his work were often the subjects of frequent short feature stories on the sports pages of the local newspapers. It was in such stories, that Matt was quick to seize upon the opportunity to speak of his previous swimming achievements and experiences in the Buffalo area and in England. In a few short months, the name Matt Mann had become synonymous with swimming expertise and instruction in the minds of many people in the Syracuse area. To certain members of the Syracuse press Matt was referred to, in various articles, as "Professor" Mann, a title they
used to recognize his profound knowledge and skills in the art of swimming.35

During the summer Matt increased his lesson schedule by offering a special learn-to-swim program at the old reservoir in Syracuse. The lessons were offered one evening each week and were expanded to a full week's instruction, during the week of Matt's vacation.36

By the end of the summer, Matt had decided that the time was right to formally apply for the swimming instructor-coach position at Syracuse University. He went directly to the top administrator of the institution, Chancellor Day, to discuss the position. The Chancellor met with Professor J. A. Scott, Director of the Gymnasium, and together they decided to hire Matt as the Instructor of Swimming, at a salary of sixty dollars a month, to begin work in September of 1909.37

The new gymnasium building, which included the Archbold Pool, was completed on schedule. The pool, which measured 90 feet in length by 28 feet 8 inches in width, was hailed by some experts as the finest indoor swimming facility in the United States.38


37Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 2.

38Letter from Ted Webster, retired Syracuse University swimming coach and Secretary-Treasurer of the College Swimming Coaches Association of America, Inc., April 22, 1975.
Matt was delighted with the pool and his position at the university. Soon after he assumed his duties, he recommended a plan for the utilization of pool time to Professor Scott. The major portion of the plan, which was approved and was to be implemented that first semester, called for compulsory swimming and basic life saving instruction for those men in the freshman and sophomore classes who were not able to successfully complete a basic screening test. The plan also made provision for pool times to be scheduled for qualified groups interested in speed swimming and water polo.39

The instructional swimming classes were received very enthusiastically by the participating students. It was not long till a good number of the more highly skilled swimmers became interested in learning the skills and techniques, of both speed swimming and water polo. Matt was quick to point out to those students that skillful participation in either sport required several weeks of conscientious practice prior to an actual competition.40 His truthful words failed to dampen the students' enthusiasm for competitive aquatic sports, and consequently, he organized separate training sessions for speed swimming and water polo.41

The Archbold Pool, Matt Mann, and the wide range of aquatic activities, became focal points of interest for many students and


41 Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 3.
certain sports reporters from the local newspapers. Matt made himself accessible to members of the press, for he found it quite enjoyable to talk at length about the new aquatic programs which he had organized. His favorite topic was competitive speed swimming, for Matt ascribed many benefits to the participants in the sport. In addition to the sheer pleasure of having engaged in competition, which was enjoyed by many, Matt stated:

... that swimming excels all other forms of exercise as a developer of all parts of the body. I have had man after man come to me frail and delicate, with weak lungs and puny muscles, and by daily practice develop into strong, muscular healthy men. And it (swimming) has one advantage over almost every other branch of athletics, for the conditioned slim man has just as good a chance in competition as his strong, husky brother.42

To further the causes of the speed swimming and water polo groups, Matt formed the Syracuse University Swimming Association, with each group member paying a small fee for membership. The dues were used to pay for medals which were to be awarded at the future swimming meets and water polo contests.43

After several weeks of training the Syracuse University Swimming Association held the first indoor aquatic meet in the city, at the Archbold Pool on November 17, 1909. Matt had composed a meet program of two 30 yard handicap races (where competitors were sent off their starting marks on different time intervals), two novelty events,


43 Letter from Ted Webster, retired Syracuse University swimming coach and Secretary-Treasurer of the College Swimming Coaches Association of America, Inc., April 22, 1975.
and a water polo contest. The entire event was enjoyed by the competitors and a large, supportive crowd of students and faculty members which led Matt to remark:

I am delighted with the interest and enthusiasm displayed not only by our students, but by the members of the faculty who were spectators at this our first meet. . . . and the enthusiastic reception accorded the water polo team fits in well with the plans for the future.44

Matt hoped that the abilities of the participants, in both swimming and water polo, would continue to improve so that intercollegiate teams might be started for the following year. He increased the number of students engaging in competitive swimming and water polo, by arranging and supervising interclass and interfraternity contests.45

The various competitions served to heighten interest in the aquatic program to the point where instructional and exhibition classes were established for the women on campus. Matt and Professor Katherine Sibley organized the women's classes, and created the opportunity for the highly skilled women to participate on an exhibition team. On March 22, 1910, Matt and Professor Sibley unveiled the female exhibition group before a large, responsive group of spectators at the pool. It was a typical Matt Mann production, which included demonstrations of the basic strokes, some novelty events, and a series of fancy dives. The expansion of the aquatics


45Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
program to include the women on campus was indeed a "feather in Matt's cap," which in turn led to additional praise being directed to him from various sectors of the Syracuse community.46

The Swimming Association sponsored two meets the second semester for the men's competitive group. The first of those meets was held on March 4, 1910 at the Archbold Pool, with the meet program consisting of a 30 yard handicap race, a 30 yard backstroke handicap race, a 20 yard handicap race, and a novelty race in which the competitors each swam four widths blindfolded.47

The second meet was held on April 7, 1910, with a total of twenty-four association members entered in the various events. In this meet Matt included a longer sprint race of 60 yards, a 30 yard breaststroke race, a 30 yard race for beginners (men who had learned to swim since the start of the second semester), and a 30 yard novelty race in which each of the contestants carried a lighted candle in his mouth the length of the pool. Each meet received excellent spectator support and the first year competitive swimming program was recognized as being highly successful.48

As the popularity of the swimming program had grown, during the school year, some negative side effects had developed. The most


48"An Event For Beginners," Syracuse Post Standard, April 7, 1910, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 25.
immediate of those effects was, that the aquatics program was of such a size, that it demanded most of Matt's time while he was in the gymnasium building. Professor Scott had requested that Matt assist him with the instructional phases of other classes which were offered in the main gymnasium. Matt had refused to honor those requests, since he felt his employment was based on aquatic responsibilities, and there was plenty of work in that area to keep him busy. Matt also believed, that Professor Scott was upset by the fact that so many students were selecting swimming classes, over the Swedish gymnastics and calisthenic type classes which the latter offered.49

The campus conflict had continued to worsen during the second semester, and on May 25, 1910, Professor J. A. R. Scott announced that Matt would not be rehired for the next school year. As the news of Scott's announcement spread across campus, there was immediate disapproval by a large group of the students, accompanied by a student petition asking for Matt's reinstatement. While the campus support for Matt was obvious, the unpopular decision was upheld. Professor Scott repeated that his department was in need of a man with more varied teaching abilities, rather than just an aquatics specialist.50

Matt had refused to get publicly involved in the campus controversy regarding his former position. When he was interviewed by members of the press, he informed them that he had enjoyed his work on campus and that he was returning to Buffalo. A few days prior to

49Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 3.

Professor Scott's announcement, Matt had acknowledged that he would participate in a mass learn-to-swim program, sponsored by the Central Y.M.C.A. of Buffalo, during the month of June.\footnote{Swimming Class, Buffalo News, May 19, 1910, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 26.}

Matt had known that he was not going to be rehired, and the Buffalo work would provide some temporary employment in the future. Actually, Matt had very little in the way of any financial reserves, since the Syracuse position did not pay very much, and his university work also limited his opportunities for part-time work, with the exception of two second semester programs. The first program had been a swimming lesson program for some women from town, which was offered at the lunch hour each weekday. The second had been a Saturday morning program for the sons of university faculty members and a limited number of boys from the community.\footnote{Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 3.}

Matt arrived in Buffalo in June to make his preparations for the mass learn-to-swim program, which the Central Y.M.C.A. had scheduled for the city. The Y.M.C.A. had announced that the program was open to boys between the ages of twelve and eighteen, with no fee or membership required of the participants.\footnote{Free Swimming Lessons For Boys, Syracuse Enquirer, June 25, 1910, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 34.} The program was conducted for two weeks, July 5 through July 19, in which slightly
more than 500 boys participated. During those two weeks of daily sessions, lessons were scheduled from morning into the night.54

Matt was assisted in the program by his good friend, H. H. Corson, who had traveled from Toronto to work with the boys. After Corson found out about Matt's future employment status, he informed Matt about a position for a swimming instructor at the municipal baths in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Matt believed that the available position would be a wonderful opportunity for him, and he immediately applied. The people in Brookline were very impressed with Matt's credentials and the strong endorsement Corson had presented in Matt's behalf.55 By mid-July it was announced that Matt would be leaving Buffalo, at the completion of the learn-to-swim program, to assume the position as swimming instructor-coach for the Brookline Gymnasium Athletic Association at the Brookline Municipal Baths.56

54 "Y.M.C.A. Work," Buffalo Commercial, July 14, 1910, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 36.

55 Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 3.

Chapter 4

THE BROOKLINE YEARS

Since Matt had very few "worldly" possessions, his move to Brookline, Massachusetts in July of 1910 was easily made. He was extremely excited, for a variety of reasons, about his new position as swimming instructor for the Brookline Gymnasium Athletic Association (B.G.A.A.), located at the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium. From a very practical standpoint that position meant immediate and renewed full-time employment in the aquatics field, instead of a return to the tedium of the dry goods business. Also, the nature of his new job would permit him to develop a multifaceted community-oriented aquatics program. A third reason for his enthusiasm was that the site for his future aquatic programs, the Brookline Municipal Baths, had been acknowledged as the first indoor municipal swimming pool, built for use by the public, in the United States, and that his association with that facility could possibly bring him immediate notoriety in certain well-known newspapers in the northeastern United States. A fourth reason for his enthusiasm for the Brookline area was that he was at last employed in the section of the United States about which he had read and dreamed of so often, just a few years earlier when he lived in England.¹

¹Matt Mann Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
Upon his arrival in Brookline, Matt reported to the municipal gymnasium where he met with Mr. J. Leonard Mason, Director of Programs and Plant Operations. During that initial meeting Matt received information about his specific responsibilities and the director's expectations of how aquatics fit into the total program of activities offered to the citizens of Brookline. The meeting concluded with a tour of the entire gymnasium facility, including the Brookline Municipal Baths, which featured the swimming pool.\(^2\)

Matt was very impressed with the entire facility, but he was ecstatic about the pool, which had been designed to meet certain community needs for recreational, instructional, and competitive swimming programs. The pool's length of twenty seven and one-half yards had been selected so that many of the commonly contested racing distances of 220 yards, 440 yards, and the mile were to finish at the end wall where the races were started; this was not possible in the twenty yard or twenty five yard pools which were constructed by various organizations at that time.\(^3\)

During his first week in Brookline, Matt was called upon to demonstrate his wide array of aquatic skills in an exhibition for students attending Dr. Dudley Sargent's School of Physical Training, a part of the Howard Summer School, in nearby Cambridge. The aquatics demonstration was similar to the ones Matt had presented so often in the swimming facilities of Buffalo and Syracuse. The crowd of approximately three hundred persons, made up principally of students and teaching staff, responded enthusiastically to Matt's performance.

\(^2\)Ibid., Tape 3. \(^3\)Ibid.
The reception by that audience and Dr. Sargent's praise for the entire demonstration served to reinforce Matt's positive feelings about his decision to locate in the Brookline area. 4

That early meeting with Dr. Sargent proved a "stroke of good luck" for Matt, when Dr. Sargent informed Matt after the exhibition that there were part-time employment opportunities for a man with Matt's aquatic skills at many of the children's summer camps in New England. Matt was immediately interested in the prospectus of the summer camp work. His initial duties at the Brookline Municipal Baths required his presence on weekdays to supervise and administer the scheduled recreational and instructional swimming sessions, which left his weekends free. It was his philosophy to take advantage of all possible opportunities related to his chosen field of endeavors, especially when there were financial rewards to be gained; thus, Matt happily accepted the suggestion of Dr. Sargent. 5 Matt was referred to Dr. Luther Gulick by Dr. Sargent, as a starting point for his summer camp employment, since Dr. and Mrs. Gulick operated separate camps for boys and girls in New England. 6

The Gulicks, along with some other leaders in the early development of physical education in the United States, had become intimately involved with the American summer camp movement during the

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5 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.

6 Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 4.
first decade of the twentieth century. The summer camp experience for boys and girls was believed to contribute to their optimum growth and development, and to complement the social education trend movement, which was taking place in public education at that time. Such was the perceived relationship between the camping movement and public education, that a very prominent educator, President Charles Eliot of Harvard, was moved to remark that, "The organized summer camp is the most important step in education that America has given to the world."

Matt took an immediate liking to the Gulicks and to the summer camp idea of providing a wide variety of experiences for boys and girls in the outdoor environments of woods and forests. The Gulicks' camps featured a wide range of camp craft skills, hiking, rustic overnight camping activities, several athletic games, and some basic aquatic skills. It was in the area of fundamental swimming work that Matt drew particular favor with the Gulicks. During those early years of the camping movement, swimming activities were especially popular among the youthful campers, but the camp directors found it difficult, if not impossible, to find competent swimming instructors and lifeguards to staff their lake-side facilities. Based upon Dr. Sargent's recommendation, Matt was employed as a swimming

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instructor by the Gulicks for the remaining weekends of that summer camp season.\footnote{Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.}

The typical weekend swimming schedule for Matt at one of the camps included at least one exhibition of traditional strokes and novelty events for the campers, followed by several ability-grouped instructional sessions for learning the basic strokes. Matt also made provision for instructing the camps' aquatics staff members in certain basic swimming and life saving techniques, and some fundamental swimming teaching progressions so necessary for effective camp instructional programs.\footnote{Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.}

By the end of August, Matt had gotten acquainted with many families in Brookline, due to their frequent visits to the Brookline Municipal Baths for swimming lessons and general recreation sessions. Actually, the summer had been an opportune time for Matt to assume his new position, since the number of people that used the facility, during the warm weather months, was lower than the preceding seasons because of the availability and proximity of many fine beaches at lakes and the Atlantic coast in New England. Many of the persons, who swam at "The Baths" that summer, had been very impressed with Matt's ability and interest in working with children in the various instructional sessions. Matt had also become quite "well known" for his impromptu lesson sessions. It was a common occurrence during recreational swimming periods, that when he observed an individual moving rather inefficiently through the water, Matt got the individual's attention
and immediately involved that person in some type of drill to improve the stroke imperfection. As the word of the new swimming instructor circulated throughout the Brookline community, the attendance at the municipal swimming facility continued to increase.\textsuperscript{11}

With the end of the 1910 summer season close at hand, Matt decided that the timing was right to announce the formation of the Brookline Gymnasium Athletic Association (B.G.A.A.) Swimming Club for boys interested in competitive swimming and water polo. The B.G.A.A. actively promoted and sponsored successful athletic teams in crew, track and field, and tennis; and it was believed that sufficient interest and potential existed among the boys of Brookline to warrant the formation of a second swimming team in the community.\textsuperscript{12}

For several years, the town of Brookline had been regarded as the home of some of the fastest competitive swimmers in New England. Those individuals had represented the well-known Brookline Swimming Club (B.S.C.), a private club whose membership roster was made up of men and boys, from essentially "upper class" backgrounds. The proposed formation of the B.G.A.A. swimming team was regarded by some members of the community as an attempt to undermine, in part, the successful B.S.C., by drawing off some of its members to swim under the tutelage of the highly regarded Matt Mann II. That accusation was immediately refuted by Leonard Mason, in his capacity as director of the municipal gymnasium, who let it be known that the newer swimming club was to be formed as a

\textsuperscript{11}Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., Tape 4.
part of the comprehensive community oriented competitive sports program, offered by the Brookline Gymnasium Athletic Association.\(^{13}\)

The initial meeting of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club attracted a large crowd of potential members and interested "onlookers" which included several B.S.C. members, for Matt had publicized the occasion as one which would provide information and an exhibition. He provided an interesting and enthusiastic talk about his plans to start competitive swimming and water polo teams. He stressed that his water polo program would feature the English version of the sport, which featured clean play and fast swimming, rather than the "rough-house" tactics of the American game. His talk was followed by his lively water exhibition in which he displayed the basic competitive strokes and several novelty strokes; the latter display brought much delight to his audience.\(^{14}\)

For many of the boys in attendance at that initial meeting of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club, the words of Matt's talk had been expressed to them on a more personal level. During the preceding weeks of August, Matt had made it a point to speak about competitive swimming to various boys who had displayed some basic potential as they swam recreationally at "The Baths." Those boys who had displayed an interest in speed swimming were taken aside and received private instruction from Matt on certain competitive swimming fundamentals. So prior to the formal club formation meeting, Matt had actually developed

\(^{13}\)Ibid., Tape 4.

a solid nucleus of talented swimmers. That fact became obvious when, less than a week after the organizational meeting, several members of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club participated in what had to be called a "typical" Matt Mann swimming exhibition on Labor Day at the Brookline Gymnasium pool.\textsuperscript{15}

So popular was the new club that Matt organized the group into a junior section for boys aged fourteen and under, and a senior group for boys and men over fourteen. Each group had one two-hour session of advanced swimming instruction and speed swimming practice every week. The B.G.A.A. Swimming Club members were required to pay a fee for their use of the pool. The municipal facility had an admission fee schedule for persons or groups using the pool for recreational, instructional, and competitive swimming sessions. Matt would like to have worked with each group more than once a week, but he had felt that the financial circumstances of many of the new members would not permit a more extensive practice schedule.\textsuperscript{16}

Matt had envisioned an aquatics program of broader scope when he had assumed his position at the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium. After the program for boys and men had been set in motion, he quickly started to work on a similar program of advanced swimming instruction and speed swimming for interested girls and women in Brookline.\textsuperscript{17} In less than a month's time after the all male B.G.A.A. Swimming Club had been formed, Matt organized a division of that same club, the Brookline Woman's Association, for girls and women. The age range of the approximately

\textsuperscript{15}Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., Tape 4. \textsuperscript{17}Ibid.
sixty girls and women club members was such that Matt divided the group into junior and senior divisions, similar to the arrangement he had worked out for the male members' instructional and speed swimming practice sessions. The female members were scheduled for pool time at different hours than their male counterparts, however. During the primary organizational phase it had also been decided that the women's team members would compete in specially designed swimming costumes, each suit bearing the winged B, the official club emblem. The municipal swimming club with an officially recognized women's division was believed to be the first of its kind in the United States. Matt assumed the leadership, teaching, and coaching responsibilities for each of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club's divisions.¹⁸

In addition to his work with the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club, Matt maintained a very busy daily schedule of swimming lessons, throughout the fall season, for persons of different ability groups. During some of his early instructional work at the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium, especially with beginners, Matt was questioned by some parents about his approach of starting their youngsters with the crawlstroke. Since his initial teaching experiences under the supervision of Professor Corson, in western New York, Matt had experienced success in teaching youngsters and adults "how to swim" with the crawlstroke-first-method; and he answered many of those doubting parents with the positive results he produced with their youngsters. Matt based his teaching approach on his belief that many individuals, first learning the basic movements of

swimming, seemed to adapt to the aquatic environment more easily and efficiently, when they were first instructed with crawlstroke techniques. His opinion was based upon his observations of many people who had learned to swim using the more complex movements of the breaststroke and sidestroke, as presented by some swimming instructors. Matt's great interest in competitive swimming had also influenced his teaching progression for beginners, in that many of his former beginning pupils had made the transition to the competitive ranks quite smoothly. Part of that transitional ease was attributed to the fact that much of the speed swimming of that period was dominated by swimmers using the crawlstroke in the frequently contested freestyle events of various distances.19

By early November, Matt had decided that the time was right to expose the members his junior teams to their first competitions. He organized and conducted two meets, one for junior boys' team, and the other for the junior girls division. Since these were the first meets for each team, which included a 55 yard freestyle race, a 27.5 yard freestyle race, and a 4 width novelty race, was open only to the members of the respective divisions. Matt organized each race on a handicap basis by sending competitors, in each heat, off at different time intervals so that the finish of each race was fairly close. Additional excitement was produced in the meets by each child who managed to win a team badge for finishing in the top three places of a particular event. Those first meets were deemed a success by Matt, for not only had they produced several very good swimming performances, but

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19Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
the children had also displayed good fellowship throughout the friendly rivalries among teammates.20

Matt was extremely pleased with the progress of the swimmers in each of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club's divisions, which prompted him to schedule the first major exhibition of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club for the public to view in early December. The exhibition event was held at the municipal pool with a "standing room only" crowd in attendance. The affair, which was under the complete direction of Matt, was conducted in the style of an English gala. Matt had scheduled a series of standardized competitive events for the speed swimmers in the various divisions, but he had interspersed that schedule with several novelty events. Those events in the latter category, which drew great responses from the crowd, included the Siamese Twins race (teams of two persons raced the length of the pool with the partners holding inside hands), the Chariot race (teams of three people were organized, with two of those persons pulling a tub, in which the third person sat, the length of the pool), and a short version of an English-style water polo game. Matt had skillfully planned the entire exhibition so that most of the club members, including himself, performed more than once. Matt's demonstrations of the competitive strokes and selected novelty strokes brought forth the loudest, most sustained applause of the evening affair. So well received was the exhibition by the members of the community who had attended, that Mr. J. Leonard Mason, Director of the Brookline Gymnasium, publicly declared: "Nowhere in the country are

there such possibilities for proficiency in swimming athletics, with the facilities and the swimming material as are found in Brookline. Mr. Mann, though having the young people under his charge but a few months, has worked wonders, . . . ."21

Although the competitive swimming program of the B.G.A.A. had attracted a great deal of publicity and had gained considerably community popularity since its inception, Matt had held to his practice schedule of one official weekly session for each of his club's divisions. Those practice sessions were scheduled so that the male seniors swam on Tuesday evenings from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.; the female seniors swam on Wednesday evenings from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The junior divisions swam on Saturday, with the boys scheduled from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and the girls from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.22 Matt had realized early in his coaching career the value of good public relations to the success of his competitive program, therefore he elected to keep formal practice sessions to a minimum, so general recreation and instructional sessions occupied the major portion of the pool's weekly schedule. But it was common to see many of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club members at the general recreational sessions working on competitive techniques under the watchful eyes of Matt.23

The arrival of springtime in 1911 seemed the appropriate time for Matt to expose his blossoming boys' team to competition with

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22Ibid.

23Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
swimmers from other towns. During the first week of April, the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club team, composed of boys from the club's senior division, soundly defeated schoolboy teams from the towns of Rockridge and Waltham, with the respective scores of 32 for Brookline, 11 for Rockridge, and 3 for Waltham. While the scores did not reflect the closeness of that meet, held at the Brookline Municipal Pool, many of the races were not decided until the last few yards of each event. The meet was attended by a large crowd who had braved rather inclement weather to get to the meet site. The entire meet atmosphere seemed to be a great treat to most of the Brookline boys, who had been mere beginners in competitive swimming several months earlier.24

The B.G.A.A. Swimming Club's boys team continued its winning ways, during the spring, against competition from other local townships. As those successes were recorded in the local press, it became inevitable by late spring in 1911 that the people of Brookline would call for a meet between the established "kingpins" of New England swimming, the Brookline Swimming Club, and the youthful upstarts from the B.G.A.A. Although the boys from both clubs had not met in official competition, there was a considerable rivalry between the two clubs. That rivalry had been building since the B.G.A.A. was formed, for the new club had gained much recognition within the community under the very capable and dynamic leadership of Matt, and the B.S.C. had felt its undisputed position challenged. The B.S.C. also trained one evening each week at the municipal pool, so that members of each club had numerous

opportunities to observe their rivals going through workouts. Since Matt supervised the pool operation, he was on hand for the B.S.C. practices, and over the period of months he had developed several friendships with B.S.C. team members.25

Matt believed the rivalry was wholesome, and that the spirit among the boys of both clubs would be an important ingredient for their continued improvement in swimming performances, and for the development of the sport in the region. In the early summer, a meet between the two Brookline teams was scheduled to be held at the resort area of Revere Beach. Mr. Mason of the Brookline Gymnasium and a man representing the interests of the Brookline Swimming Club had arranged the meet site outside the community, because they believed some potential conflicts, which might arise between partisans of each team, would be avoided at a neutral site. The large outdoor pool at Revere Beach accommodated a very large crowd, which included supporters of each team. The meet was very close and extremely exciting for the spectators. The B.S.C. team, composed of many boys with extensive competitive experience defeated the youthful and less experienced contingent from the B.G.A.A. by a mere one point, with the final score being 41 1/2 to 40 1/2. Matt was extremely pleased with the showing of his first year "natators" at that meet and with their performances for the entire season.26

The big dual meet between the Brookline clubs marked the end of the competitive season for the B.G.A.A. swimmers, and the start of Matt's summer work schedule. After almost a year's association with

25 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
26 Ibid., Tape 4.
the municipal pool, Matt had developed quite a following among the youngsters and the adults of the Brookline community. Many of those persons continued their instructional sessions with Matt during the summer. But for the most part, the attendance at the Brookline Baths was greatly reduced in the summer, when compared to the number of persons using the facility during the indoor or "school year" months. The nearby lake and bay beaches were frequented by the Brookline citizens for a variety of reasons, one of which was the opportunity to swim free-of-charge, for "The Baths" maintained its normal fee schedule for instructional and recreational sessions in the summer.27

At the start of the summer, Dr. Gulick had contracted the services of Matt to appear at the Gulicks' camps for several weekends, for the purpose of providing expert aquatic instruction and performing exhibitions. Matt found that by organizing his schedule carefully, he was able to provide similar aquatic services to other summer camps. This extensive schedule of summer camp work, which had him traveling in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine, meant quite a bit to him financially. Part of his salary from the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium was arranged on a commission basis, which was related to the number of lessons he taught. Consequently, when the attendance dipped in the summer, so did Matt's salary. While the weekend hours were long for Matt, and the schedule demanding, he thoroughly enjoyed his work in the outdoors and his associations with people like the Gulicks. Rather than starting each new work week at the municipal pool "bushed" from

27Ibid., Tape 4.
his weekend odyssey, he was refreshed and ready for the schedule of instructional and recreational sessions. 28

As the end of the summer season approached, Matt started thinking about the second season for his B.G.A.A. Swimming Club and a full schedule of events. His enthusiasm for the upcoming competitive season had received additional impetus by the scheduling of a swimming race for the Girls' Amateur Championship of New England. The racing event and the awards were sponsored by the Boston American newspaper, with the event being held in the Charles River lower basin. The two mile race had attracted a field of twenty eight female swimmers, who ranged in age from twelve to twenty. Matt had been selected as race referee, and prior to the event he remarked:

... that this enterprise, established by the American, is one of the best that could have been undertaken. It inaugurates the water sports for the Charles River Basin that the Metropolitan Park Commission has had in mind. The race will be a splendid thing for swimming interests all over New England, and swimming is one of our most universal and valued sports.

The race, won by Rose Pitnoff, was witnessed by several thousand persons who lined the banks of the race course. 29

That major swimming event had served to stimulate a heightened interest in swimming, even though the end of the summer season was close at hand. An appropriate atmosphere was created in the community, for Matt to approach Mr. Mason with some ideas for increasing the use of "The Baths." Matt's first proposal was for the municipal facility to

28 Ibid., Tape 4.

29 "Some Little Boston Mermaids Compete in American's Swimming Contest," Boston American, September 1, 1911, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 61.
offer free swimming lessons, on different ability levels, to the citizens of Brookline. Matt had recalled, from his previous affiliation with the Buffalo Y.M.C.A., how well the free instructional sessions had been received in that area, especially in terms of the number of participants. The idea was favorably received by Mr. Mason and other members of the municipality's administration. The plan of free swimming class instruction for men and women, boys and girls, to be taught by salaried instructors, and financed by the town of Brookline, was recognized as the first of its kind in the United States. The program was to be implemented with Matt supervising the beginning, intermediate and advanced swimming classes for boys and men, while a Miss Mary Maxwell was hired to teach the classes for girls and women. It had also been decided that each class was to be limited to ten persons with each lesson session being a half hour in length.30

As if the free instruction program and the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club practices were not enough to keep Matt busy, he soon started to work to see if he could get a second major program initiated in Brookline. That second plan called for the incorporation of learn-to-swim classes in the Brookline public schools. With the support of Mr. Mason and some influential community leaders, the Brookline public school administration accepted Matt's plan of incorporating beginning swimming classes into the curriculum. The idea for that plan had come from Matt's early experiences, as a schoolboy in Leeds. The Brookline plan had Matt traveling to each of the elementary schools, where he talked

with students in the fourth through eighth grades to determine which students were unable to swim. After the names had been recorded, Matt organized the boys and girls in separate classes and arranged the teaching schedule, so that students from the same school came to the municipal pool at an assigned time each week. As soon as the students were able to complete a basic swimming test, their names were removed from the beginning list, and they were encouraged to continue their swimming outside of school time in the free instruction program, offered by "The Baths." As the younger students completed the tests and left the school program, the secondary level non-swimming students were scheduled into the program. Many of the students who participated in school instruction program continued their swimming in the free instruction program, and successfully moved to higher skill level classes.31

The Brookline municipal pool had indeed become a major center of community activity, each day and most evenings, as Matt had envisioned its potentiality, when he first assumed his position. One facet of the total program, in which Matt had taken particular pride, was the B.C.A.A. Swimming Club's teams for girls and women. He believed that many female swimmers were capable of withstanding the rigorous training schedule required of competitive swimmers, and Matt went on to declare:

... Women can become phenomenally expert at swimming in a short time, and it is a surprising fact that they can vie with men, and often beat them in certain events, even if the women are less robust. As to our woman's team, we expect to do things which will surprise people and make the club worthy of being the

31Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
only municipal club for swimming for women in the country. I hope
to show by it my idea that women can perfect themselves in swimming
to a really remarkable extent.\textsuperscript{32}

Matt did envision some difficulties in testing some of those
training and competitive theories though, since the number of women's
swimming teams in New England was very limited, and open competition,
between women and men, was almost nonexistent. But he had hoped that
other communities might follow the lead of Brookline in the development
of comprehensive aquatic programs, which would include competitive
swimming for women.\textsuperscript{33}

Various organizations in communities throughout New England,
and especially in Massachusetts, had indeed taken note of the popular
development of swimming as a year round sport in Brookline. During the
fall of 1911, Matt had found it necessary to organize exhibition teams
from the different divisions of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club to meet the
demands from different communities to help dedicate their new swimming
facilities. Matt's touring groups demonstrated a wide variety of
aquatic skills which usually included the standardized competitive
racing skills, several novelty strokes, life saving skills, and water
polo scrimmages. In most cases the exhibition teams performed before
standing room only crowds in the rather small spectator areas of the
new pools. The speed swimming and life saving drills displayed by the
junior girls were often scheduled last on the exhibition program, for
Matt had learned, by previous experience, that they were the "crowd

\textsuperscript{32}="Strokes for Special Cases," Brookline Press, September 16,
1911, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{33}Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
pleasers" and often drew the loudest applause. Matt had tried to arrange the exhibition schedule so that the normal competitive training of the swimmers was altered as little as possible, since the local Brookline championship swimming meet was scheduled for mid-December.  

As the year drew to a close, the popularity of the swimming lesson programs, initiated by Matt, Mary Maxwell, and Mr. Mason, had flourished. From the time the programs were started in the early fall of that year, almost 2,900 individuals had received some form of swimming instruction. Matt had continued the heavy emphasis on teaching the crawlstroke to beginning level students, and on stressing the perfection of that stroke to students on higher skill levels. He regarded the conversion of persons, who had been former devotees to the old style of breaststroke, to the crawlstroke as a major accomplishment of his work in the instructional programs.

The divisional teams of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club had experienced significant growth, due especially to the increased number of children who had learned to swim skillfully, and who had been encouraged to test those skills on competitive levels. During the second full season of competition for the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club, several of the senior division boys, namely Leo Handy, Phillip Nason, Russell Dean and Mike Prendergast, had repeatedly distinguished

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35 Ibid.

36 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
themselves in successful individual and relay race competition. While many of the senior boys were regarded as "heroes" by the junior division youngsters, Matt was almost revered by the team members, who then commonly addressed him as "Daddy." 37

Many of the boys on the B.G.A.A. Junior division team actually spent more time with Matt at "The Baths," then they did with their fathers at home. Matt felt obliged to assume some fatherly roles with the youngsters he worked with at the pool. On frequent occasions, Matt took time away from practice sessions to gather the group around himself, so that he might talk with the youngsters about the virtues of clean living. He spoke very resolutely about the dangers of cigarette smoking and the drinking of alcoholic beverages to the body, whether athlete or not. Other themes for Matt's poolside "chats" were the importance of those youngsters to respect and honor their parents, and the need of young swimmers to get to bed on time each night. The youngsters took his words to heart, for as Bob Muir, one of Matt's favorite juniors remarked:

"... the boys tried to imitate Matt. We used to call him Daddy Mann. Everybody called him Daddy at the time, and he certainly was a daddy to us, and the only daddy many of the boys ever had." 38

When the boys' junior team traveled to other pools in the area for competitive meets or exhibitions, the mode of travel was the streetcar system. Often times, Matt was the only adult with the group of forty to fifty boys, but the respect the boys held for him, and his

37Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 22.
38Ibid., Tape 22.
infinite patience and understanding of boys, enabled the team to complete its trips with success and enjoyment. During the lengthy streetcar rides, which might cover twenty miles each way, Matt did use a few methods which kept the boys from getting out-of-hand. At different points in the trip, he would get the attention of the group and then proceed to go over the upcoming meet or exhibition schedule. When the boys' interest in the events discussions diminished, to the point of their becoming restless, Matt then appealed to their appetites as a means of behavior control. He had found that the boys seemed "always" to be hungry, and that by passing out a few ginger snap cookies to each boy who behaved in an appropriate manner, at various stages of the trip, group order could be effectively maintained.39

While aquatic exhibitions, which featured the competitive swimming skills of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club members, were usually in the greatest demand by various organizations with swimming pools, there were frequent requests for demonstrations of lifesaving skills. Each of the team members received instruction in lifesaving water skills and artificial respiration methods, so that the selection of a life saving exhibition group was accomplished quite easily.40 On one occasion during the winter of 1912, Matt selected two lifesaving crews from his boys and girls junior divisions to present a full demonstration of lifesaving skills for the delegates to the recreation institute of the Playground and Recreation Association of America. The convention was held in the facilities of the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium which

39Ibid., Tape 22.
40Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
enabled the swimmers to display their skills in their "home" pool. Many of the delegates were literally amazed by the lifesaving proficiency the youthful performers displayed, and the ease with which the latter moved through the water. Matt was accorded many complimentary tributes by various delegates for his work with the youngsters.41

Matt's work in the lifesaving area gained considerable recognition for him as a leader in that dimension of aquatics, in the northeastern section of the United States. The acknowledgement by various newspapers of Matt's involvement with lifesaving exhibitions led to his meeting with a prominent pioneer in the American lifesaving movement, Commodore Wilbert E. Longfellow.42 For several years prior to their meeting, Longfellow had been an active proponent for the increased teaching of lifesaving skills to the general public, especially in his home state of Rhode Island. The Commodore had worked in an official capacity with the United States Volunteer Life Saving Corps for a few of those years, and in 1910 that organization appointed him to the salaried position of Commodore-in-Chief and general superintendent of the organization. Following his appointment, much of his lifesaving program organization work took place in the New York City area, where most of "the Corps" operational funds were raised. Matt believed he could "waterproof" America, and in order to achieve that goal, he

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42 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
would need the support of other prominent aquatics specialists.\textsuperscript{43} Since Matt had become widely known and respected in New England for his organizational and teaching efforts in aquatics, it was only natural that Longfellow would initiate the meeting between the two men in Brookline. The common interests which the two men shared in aquatics enabled them to strike up an immediate friendship. Matt was very supportive of the Commodore's ideas for a national water safety program. Matt did inform Longfellow that much of the B.G.A.A.'s life saving exhibition work would continue to be limited to the Boston area, due to limited travel expenses for such purposes, and his employment commitments to the other facets of the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium's aquatic program. Longfellow was impressed by the "waterproofing" activities for the members of the Brookline community, and he hoped that the two men (Matt and Longfellow) might work together in the future towards the goal of "waterproofing" America.\textsuperscript{44}

The indoor competitive season for the B.G.A.A. swimming team members was marked with numerous successes. The divisional teams, especially the senior boys, distinguished themselves in meets which varied from small team dual competitions to large regional championship meets. The women's teams were still limited in the number of competitive meets which included women from other clubs, since there were very few of the latter in New England. Matt had maintained the women's competitive enthusiasm by making the B.G.A.A. (Swimming Club)

\textsuperscript{43}Commodore Wilbert E. Longfellow, American Red Cross Publication No. 2110 (The American National Red Cross, November, 1963), p. 5.

\textsuperscript{44}Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
intra-club meets big affairs, usually attended by large crowds from the community. The club records for various events also served to motivate many of the female and male swimmers, since Matt held such record holders in a rather high esteem. An additional honor that was indirectly accorded to Matt and the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club that season was the employment of Phillip Nason, a former captain of the B.G.A.A. Senior Boys Team, as swimming instructor and coach of the swimming team at the YMCA, in nearby Salem. Nason's success as a competitor, and his association with the teaching and coaching expertise of Matt were the prime considerations for his hiring.

As the summer season approached, Matt reflected with personal pride upon the success of the various aquatic programs which had been instituted that year and had become integral components of the total Brookline Municipal Gymnasium program. The free swimming instruction program for community members and the learn-to-swim program for public school youngsters had attracted large numbers of participants. In addition to the high percentage of persons who learned to swim efficiently, the increased and effective utilization of "The Baths" contributed to more positive support from community members for the publicly funded programs. The summer meant a slow down in the use of "The Baths" and the resultant reduction in program offerings. But, Matt's less demanding schedule at the municipal facility would permit

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45Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 74-85 (period covered was the fall of 1911 and early winter of 1911-1912).

his return to the natural beauty and relaxed atmosphere of the summer camps.\footnote{Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.}

Matt was prepared for another summer of traveling to many of the children's camps throughout New England, when he was approached by Dr. Dudley Sargent to consider the proposal of working at a new camp founded by Dr. Sargent and some of his staff members from Harvard. There was no hesitancy on Matt's part for accepting the camp's head swimming instructor position, since he had a great deal of respect for Dr. Sargent and his work at Harvard. Matt believed the camp would be organized and conducted in a first rate manner, and one with which he would be proud to be associated. Matt's responsibilities called for him to organize the swimming instructional and recreational sessions, to prepare the staff members who would work at those sessions, and to be in attendance at the camp on each weekend, and during his two week vacation, to work personally with the campers.\footnote{Ibid.}

Dr. Sargent's camp, the Outdoor School for Girls, was located in New Hampshire and was advertised as a camp experience which offered a combination of light and strenuous athletic-type activities. While the program did include opportunities for the girls to engage in various competitive ball games, a great deal of emphasis was placed upon non-competitive activities such as partner and group dances, hiking, calisthenics, and swimming. So popular was the swimming activities, due in part to the camp's lakeside location, that two instructional sessions were scheduled each weekday, with one session in

\footnotetext[47]{Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.} \footnotetext[48]{Ibid.}
the morning and the other in the afternoon. Matt had designed the swimming instruction sessions, so that some of the advanced swimmers assisted the regular aquatics staff members with the campers participating in the lower skill level classes. The camper's quarters were located in very close proximity to the designated swimming areas of the lake. The girls resided in twenty tents, with each tent quartering four girls, arranged in a semi-circle pattern around the central lodge. The lodge, which housed the kitchen and dining areas, and also served as the indoor recreation hall, was located just one hundred feet from the lake. Thus the scenic beauty and the availability of the lake gave aquatic activities a position of prominence in the total camp program.\(^49\)

That summer association with Dr. Sargent and his camp was so well received by Matt, that he decided that he would someday like to own, organize, and direct a summer camp. Matt felt that he possessed the basic skills of designing and promoting activities for youngsters, which would, in the future, enable them to become better Americans. Matt realized that his goal of being a camp owner would take some time to achieve since it would require a very tight budget to save a sufficient amount from the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium salary and his summer camp wages.\(^50\)

\(^49\)"A Girl's Camp That is a Paradise for the Tomboy," Boston Herald (Magazine Section), September 22, 1912, Scrapbook 2, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 4.

\(^50\)Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
Early in the fall of 1912, Matt again set in motion the full schedule of aquatic programs which the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium had offered prior to the summer season. Since the different programs had been so well received and participated in by members of the community the previous year, Matt merely organized the new total aquatics program in "carbon-copy" fashion with the schedule of the preceding year. By maintaining a similar schedule for the different program components, it seemed that the former program participants got back into the routine of coming to "The Baths" quite easily. The number of persons who enrolled in the instructional programs continued to grow steadily. The B.G.A.A. Swimming Club's divisional teams also experienced significant growth in membership, due to the number of individuals who had learned to swim efficiently in the instructional program, and who had been encouraged, especially by Matt, to test their aquatic skills in competition.51

Matt was particularly pleased with both the quantitative and qualitative development of the boys' senior division team. He envisioned the potential of a very fine high school swimming team, composed of boys from his B.G.A.A. team and others from the Brookline Swimming Club. After the fall school term had been in progress, Matt went before the appropriate school administration personnel with his proposal to initiate a boys swimming team at Brookline High School. The school authorities, who had been favorably impressed with Matt's school-based, learn-to-swim program, endorsed the proposal and gave Matt permission to start the new program.52

51Ibid., Tape 4.  52Ibid., Tape 4.
Each of the Brookline High School swimming team members maintained his former club affiliation and attended the scheduled club practice sessions. In addition to the club workouts, Matt held required practice sessions for the high school team members so that a team spirit and unity might be developed among the boys who had been drawn together from rival clubs. Matt was very enthusiastic about the development of the high school team and the impending schedule of new competitive meets in which his boys would participate. The spirit generated by wholesome swimming competition seemed to fill Matt with almost unlimited energy to carry out his busy daily schedule in tireless fashion. He thrived on the many successes of his competitors from the B.G.A.A. and Brookline High School teams. Matt's enthusiasm for competitive swimming events and his pride for the teams he coached were "infectious" qualities among his respective team members. The B.G.A.A. and Brookline High School swimmers relished the competitive experiences encountered in small and large meets, and their vocal support for competing teammates during a race, filled the air of the different meet sites with excitement.53

Due to the opportunities for many of the B.G.A.A. senior division boys to engage in both club and high school competition, the caliber of the performances, especially those of Leo Handy, Mike Prendergast, and Eddie Duffy, improved significantly. Since there was such a wide range of ability, even among the more highly skilled range of ability, even among the more highly skilled senior boys, Matt

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53 Scrapbook 2, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 2-20 (period covered was the fall of 1912, and early winter of 1912-1913).
often organized "handicap" races to motivate those boys to swim faster during certain practice sessions. Matt actually used a system for handicapping the races that had been used successfully, during his boyhood swimming days in England. His system at Brookline called for him to organize the boys in several heats, with each heat containing swimmers of different speeds for a particular distance, the most frequent being 100 yards. Prior to a race, Matt introduced each swimmer with his best time. He started the heat race sending the slowest boy off first, followed at designated time intervals by the other members of the heat, with the fastest boy going off last. The objective for each boy in the race was to touch the finish wall before any other swimmers completed the race; for some boys this meant maintaining the time advantage they had been awarded, for others it meant making up the time handicap. Matt used this practice technique often, for various reasons. One was to provide meet-like speed work for his top swimmers, but another reason he used that system was to provide the slower swimmers with a chance to race against the team "heroes," and sometimes beat them by making the handicaps insurmountable, but not obviously so. Matt had a great feel for the type of race that was needed to add spark to a practice session, or to encourage a particular swimmer or a group of the team members.  

Matt's ability to organize and develop successful competitive swimming programs helped him to secure an additional employment opportunity at the Brookline pool, the fall of 1912. The position was that of part-time swimming coach for the newly-formed Harvard University

54Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 22.
swimming team. Many of the universities and colleges against which Harvard competed in several sports, had also sponsored swimming teams for several years, which competed regularly in the league schedule of the Intercollegiate Swimming Association. The Harvard Athletic Association had decided in November of 1912 to join the I.S.A., which included Yale, Princeton, Pennsylvania, Columbia, and the City College of New York. Since Harvard did not yet have a natatorium, it was decided that the Cambridge Y.M.C.A. pool would be used for most of the weekly practice sessions, but provision was specifically made for the team to have at least one practice each week with Matt at the Brookline pool. While Harvard appointed Paul Withington, a Harvard graduate of the 1910 class, as the regular swimming coach, it was felt that the effective development of the team, which had been formed after a one year discontinuance, would be greatly enhanced by Matt's coaching expertise. It was hoped that the scheduled practice regimen would enable the Harvard swimmers to compete in a full slate of dual meets that season.55

Matt seemed to function at his best when his schedule was the busiest, with the many facets of Brookline's aquatic program. By January of 1913, it was purported that all boys and girls in the Brookline public schools above the seventh grade were then capable of completing at least the basic beginning level swimming test which had been designed by Matt. In addition to the instructional program for the school children, the free swimming instruction program for the Brookline citizens had continued with increased popularity. The daily

attendance records maintained at "The Baths" indicated that more than 8,000 persons had received some instruction in the two program during the preceding year.\(^56\)

The B.G.A.A. Swimming Club continued its swimming and life saving exhibitions for various organizations in the state. Matt had been able to secure the sponsorship for the group's travel expenses to various towns from the Massachusetts Humane Society, an organization which had been formed to popularize swimming and various aspects of aquatic life saving. Matt and his group of youngsters initiated a series of exhibitions, under the sponsorship of the Massachusetts Humane Society, at Worcester Academy. The B.G.A.A. swimmers demonstrated various life saving water skills and the recognized Schaefer and Sylvester methods of artificial resuscitation. Matt believed that the resuscitation demonstration was a very important feature of the exhibition, and he stated his belief that:

No one has the right to give up on a rescued non-breathing body until after three hours have passed. A body may be in water two hours, and yet at the end of three hours in capable hands the victim may be resuscitated.

Matt concluded that exhibition, as he had others, with his demonstration of a variety of novelty and competitive strokes. He was a showman, and he thoroughly enjoyed the applause and reaction of the spectators.\(^57\)

As the season progressed for the Brookline High School boys swimming team, it became a matter of record that few other high


\(^{57}\)Ibid.
school contingents from the area, or for that matter much of New England, were able to provide much competition for Matt's boys. Leo Handy had been especially outstanding in the 100 yard and 220 yard freestyle events, during his initial season as a high school competitor. Matt had hoped to test Handy against competition from outside the region, but the prime difficulty was in finding such an opportunity. That problem was solved for Matt when he received information about the Eastern Interscholastic Swimming Championship Meet to be held at Princeton University in late February of 1913. Since travel funds for a meet of this nature, from Brookline High School, were non-existent, Matt decided to limit expenses by talking only his outstanding swimmer, Leo Handy, and Francis Jouanette, the team's fancy diver. Matt's resourcefulness of securing free round-trip tickets on a Riverline Steamship Company passenger boat from Boston to New York, and several one dollar donations from various Brookline businessmen and shop owners, enabled the three of them to make the trip. The meet attracted a large entry of very fine high school swimmers and divers from several northeastern state communities. Much to Matt's delight, his Brookline athletes distinguished themselves in excellent fashion, and brought acclaim to the Brookline area swimming

58 Scrapbook 2, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 18-26 (period covered was the early winter of 1912-1913).

59 "Brookline Swimmers to Compete," Boston Evening Herald, February 15, 1913, Scrapbook 2, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 27.

60 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
program, by Leo Handy winning the 220 yard freestyle event and Francis Jouanette placing second in the fancy diving. ⁶¹

While most of Matt's coaching responsibilities were directed at his B.G.A.A. and Brookline High School teams that winter, he had maintained his work with the Harvard University team. Matt had assumed the primary responsibility of selecting the squad of twenty men from the group of seventy, who had reported at the start of the season. The task of developing that group of twenty men into a competitive team was an arduous one for Matt, since most of them were mere beginners with competitive strokes and techniques. By late winter, six of the Harvard swimmers had developed the necessary skills to form a solid nucleus for a team ready for intercollegiate competition. The team did engage in meets with the Yale University and Brown University teams, and while losing both affairs, the season was looked upon with favor since the new intercollegiate sport had been successfully launched, with a brighter future in the years ahead. ⁶²

As the sport of competitive swimming continued to grow on the club and interscholastic levels, the sport was also experiencing a decided expansion on the collegiate level in the northeastern states. The Intercollegiate Swimming Association was able to foresee the impending rapid development of the sport on the collegiate level. The I.S.A. sought to increase its membership by establishing two leagues

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(Class A and Class B) of competition. The present member institutions of Yale, Harvard, Brown, Columbia, Pennsylvania, and the City College of New York were to be grouped in Class A with other larger schools which might join, while smaller institutions were to be grouped in the Class B competitive league. The plan was well received by the member institutions, and it was proposed to representatives of prospective member schools, with the understanding that the plan would be considered for several months before formal decisions were made."^^

During the spring season, Matt readied the Brookline Municipal Pool for the transition in aquatic programs, which had become somewhat routine, following the pattern established during the preceding two years. The "Baths" schedule offered a variety of instructional sessions for the summer season taught by Matt and Mary Maxwell, along with a significant increase in the number of "free-swim" recreational sessions."^^ Matt had also been rehired as the swimming instructor by Dr. Sargent to work at the Sargent Camp for Girls in New Hampshire. Matt reported to the camp on weekends and for his two week vacation from the B.G.A.A. to organize the camp's aquatic program, and to teach several skills to the sixty-five girls who attended the camp. Most of those girls were mere beginners in aquatic sports when they reported to camp, and by the end of their summer session, all of them were able to swim at least 50 yards using the crawl stroke. In addition to the basic

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"Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4."
distance swim, most of the girls had learned three other swimming
strokes, some fundamental fancy diving skills, and the basic canoeing
strokes. Matt thoroughly enjoyed his work at Dr. Sargent's summer
camp for a variety of reasons, but especially so because of its
beautiful location and efficient organization. Matt's two week period
in the outdoors seemed to refresh him, and when he returned to
Brookline, he was full of desire and energy for the busy fall and winter
schedule.

The end of the summer season in Brookline was welcomed by many
of the town's children and adults, for it marked the resumption of the
full schedule of aquatic programs at the Brookline Municipal Pool. The
free swimming instruction programs for the townpeople and public school
students were hailed as pioneer models for other communities to follow.
The free instruction was indeed a unique program feature, but the
organization of the classes by the criteria of age, sex, and skill
levels was the most highly regarded facet of the Brookline programs. A
special swimming class for public school teachers was also included by
Matt in the fall schedule. While Matt's teaching progression for
beginning swimming received an occasional public challenge by certain
persons, who advocated the breaststroke as the best initial stroke for
beginners, he steadfastly stood by the method of teaching crawlstroke.

65"Sargent Camp for Girls," Pittsburgh Sun, August 22, 1913,
Scrapbook 4, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 5.

66Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
first to the beginning students in his classes, and those taught by Mary Maxwell, and he proudly spoke of the Brookline programs' successes.67

As many of Brookline's citizens readied themselves for another exciting indoor season at the municipal gymnasium facilities, the announcement was made that the neighboring town of Cambridge had devised a plan for free learn-to-swim lessons for the public school students. Cambridge's Mayor Barry, who had taken the credit for developing the plan, had stated that the swimming lessons were to begin with upper grade students first, and then as those students completed a basic swimming test the program would include students from the lower grades. The swimming classes were to be conducted at the Cambridge Y.M.C.A., with the entire program established much the same as the one in Brookline.68

During the fall season Matt's coaching interests were divided among the four divisional groups of the B.G.A.A. Swimming Club and the Brookline High School boys' team. Since the competitive opportunities for each of his teams with groups from outside the Brookline area were rather slim during the months of September, October, and November, Matt scheduled frequent intra-squad and exhibition meets to maintain the competitive interests of his highly skilled performers. Matt regarded that period of the training season as necessary preparation

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for the New England Amateur Athletic Championship Meet and the Eastern Interscholastic Championship Meet, both of which were scheduled later in the winter. As the level of competition offered by clubs opposing the Brookline teams was lessening each season, Matt looked upon the big championship meets as opportunities to bring out the best in his top notch swimmers.69

The facilities of the Brookline "Baths" and frequent impromptu coaching sessions had also been made available to the returning Harvard swimmers that fall. At the end of the 1913 collegiate season the preceding winter, Matt had encouraged the Harvard swimming team members to devote as much time as possible to competitive techniques before the start of the new season in the winter of 1914, since most of those young men were really beginners at the competitive swimming "game." Matt's willingness to work with the Harvard swimming squad members for no remuneration, and their fondness for his coaching techniques were major factors for influencing the Harvard Athletic Association to employ Matt on a part-time basis as the swimming coach for Harvard's swimming team for 1914. Matt was very pleased with the opportunity to work on the collegiate level again, but he was also quick to inform the Harvard Athletic Association that his work with the B.G.A.A. and Brookline High School teams would take precedence over any practice and meet schedules to be arranged for the college swimmers. The Harvard Athletic Association accepted Matt's work proposition for the Harvard athletic administration believed that the

69 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
swimming program would be in the most capable hands with Matt, even on an abbreviated basis.⁷⁰

Matt relished his busy coaching schedule with the different competitive swimming groups for each team provided unique challenges for his coaching abilities.⁷¹ By the time Matt was ready to assume his official duties with the Harvard swimmers in early January of 1914, his practice and meet schedules with the B.G.A.A. and Brookline High School teams had become routinely established the preceding three months. As a convenience to the Harvard swimmers, the weekday afternoon practice sessions would be conducted at the nearby Cambridge Y.M.C.A. pool.⁷²

Soon after the Harvard swimming team had commenced its formal practice sessions, Matt had organized a schedule of five meets which included teams from three member institutions of the Intercollegiate Swimming Association. Less than three weeks after their initial formal practice had commenced, the Harvard freshman swimmers met the boys team from Brookline High School in a meet held on January 22, in accordance with collegiate rules. The high school boys rose to the occasion by swimming several fine races and defeated their collegiate opponents by a score of 32 1/2 to 29 1/2. Matt was pleased with the performances of the swimmers from both teams. He was especially delighted with the showing of his high school boys, for they responded

⁷⁰Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.

⁷¹Ibid.

successfully to stern challenges in several races. Close competition for the top Brookline High swimmers was an unusual occurrence since they won most of their meets with local schoolboy teams with relative ease. While Matt's talented high school group swam through a highly successful season leading up to the big interscholastic meet to be held at Princeton University later that winter; the Harvard swimmers were able to win only one meet, that being against the Cambridge Y.M.C.A. boys teams. The Harvard team closed its season later in February and during that period lost meets to I.S.A. members Amherst College (33-20), Cornell University (29-24), and Brown University (34-19).73

As the Harvard swimming season came to a close, Matt had little time to evaluate the accomplishments which had been made that season by the team members, for he was totally consumed with the task of preparing his Brookline High School team for the Eastern Interscholastic Swimming and Diving Championship Meet. The training of his swimmers was but one aspect of the preparation; the other major concern for Matt was arranging the travel and lodging accommodations for the team's round trip to Princeton University from Boston. As he had done the preceding year, Matt secured free passage for the team on a steamship from Boston to New York and return, and several monetary donations from many of Brookline's merchants to be used for meals and overnight lodging.74

73 Scrapbook 2, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 74-92 (period covered was the winter season of 1913-1914, with many articles including the summaries of B.G.A.A., Brookline High School and Harvard meets).
74 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
While Leo Handy continued as the top swimmer on the Brookline High School team, several other boys had turned in some fine performances during the dual meet season. Since Matt was set on winning the team championship at Princeton he selected eight swimmers and the team's fancy diver, Francis Jouanette to make the trip. Matt's group performed in excellent fashion as Leo Handy won the 50 yard and 100 yard freestyle events, Jouanette won the diving event, a relay team anchored by Handy captured the 200 yard freestyle relay event, and two third place finishes in other individual swimming events, enabled the Brookline team to record 27 points and win the team championship. A second place total of eight points was achieved by Peter Stuyvesant High School and Horace Mann High School, both of New York City.

Upon the team's return to Brookline, Matt acclaimed his team as national champions since certain newspaper reported to their readers that the meet at Princeton was a national interscholastic championship affair, even though the meet organizers labeled the event as the Eastern Interscholastic Swimming and Diving Championships. Matt sought the highest possible recognition for his group of hard-working swimmers, and he was not about to argue with those sportswriters who labeled the meet a national championship.75

During the team's return to Brookline, from Princeton, Matt had learned of another major meet for high school swimmers, that one to be

76Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
hosted by the New York Athletic Club in early April. The N.Y.A.C.
promotion was billed as a National Scholastic Swimming Championship
Meet composed of five individual swimming races and one relay event.
Matt returned to New York with his team, and the Brookline swimmers,
led by Leo Handy's two first place titles, won four of the events and
the meet. Handy and his teammates capped off an already very fine
season when they joined their B.G.A.A. divisional team to easily win
the New England Amateur Athletic Union Swimming Championships. The
Winged "B" swimmers, led by Leo Handy's five victories in the
50 yard, 100 yard, 220 yard, 440 yard and 1 mile freestyle events, won
every event with pool record breaking performances in that championship
meet, which was held in their own Brookline Municipal Pool.

Later in the spring, as Matt evaluated the achievements of his
various teams, he was extremely proud of the performances of his high
school and club teams. While the supremacy of the Brookline High
School swimmers was widely recognized throughout New England, and in
general, the eastern part of the United States, a team from the Midwest,
Evanston Academy, Evanston, Illinois, did not permit the "license" of
certain newspaper reporters, who had acclaimed the Brookline boys
"National Champions of Interscholastic Swimming," to go unchallenged.
The Evanston Academy swimming coach, Tom Robinson, had stated in a
letter reprinted in the Pittsburgh Sun Daily, that his team, composed of

77"Brookline Swimmers Win Titles," New York Times, April 10,
1914, Scrapbook 4, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 38.

78"Brookline's Good Season," Pittsburgh Sun Daily, May 22, 1914,
Scrapbook 4, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 44.
many fine swimmers, who had established an excellent record in the Midwest, was willing to challenge any team in the United States, including Brookline, for the right to be called "The National Championship Team." Matt answered Coach Robinson's challenge in a later issue of that newspaper by stating:

I would like to meet the Evanston Academy team with my Brookline High School Team. I think we would have a very interesting meet. But remember, Brookline won both so-called national interscholastic meets earlier that past season. Since it was financially unfeasible for such a dual meet confrontation to take place, the question of which of the two teams was superior was unanswered. 79

Before Matt discharged his various Brookline team members for the leisurely, non-competitive summer season, he informed them about the achievements of one of his former schoolboy swimmers from Buffalo. The swimmer, Paul Roberts, who had captained the Yale University swimming team during the 1914 indoor season, had been voted his varsity "Y" by the Yale Athletic Association for winning the 50 yard and 100 yard freestyle championships at the 1914 Intercollegiate Swimming Association Championship Meet. Matt was especially proud of Paul's accomplishments, for Paul was the first talented and dedicated swimmer Matt had an opportunity to introduce to the sport of competitive swimming. 80

Soon after Matt had organized what had now become a rather typical summer schedule for his personal activities and the swimming

79Ibid.

opportunities at "The Baths," he received an employment inquiry from the Amateur Swimming Association of England. Word of Matt's accomplishments in the coaching of competitive swimmers in the United States had reached certain persons affiliated with the organized English competitive swimming scene. During the early 1900's many of England's top competitive swimming trainers had been slow or completely remiss to adopt the teaching of the crawlstroke to beginners in deference to the teaching of the overarm sidestroke and breaststroke. Some swimming experts of the period attributed the demise of the English dominance of competitive swimming records to that teaching philosophy. By the summer of 1914, it seemed that the "powers to be" of the Amateur Swimming Association were prepared to make some major changes in the nation's competitive swimming program, and it seemed that Matt would be an excellent person to organize and administer the new program. The proposed position would also call for Matt to coach England's next Olympic swimming team, and for him to conduct an extensive tour throughout England to present the crawlstroke as the basic swimming stroke for beginners. 81

The offer to return to his former homeland was very tempting to Matt, but he was very happy with his present employment opportunities, and the potential for future business endeavors was also favorable. He respectfully declined the offer, that summer, while he continued his busy work schedule at the Brookline Gymnasium and his role of itinerant swimming teacher for various summer camps,

throughout New England. Matt devoted a portion of most weekends that summer, plus his two weeks of vacation at Dr. Sargent's Camp for Girls at Peterboro, New Hampshire, again, as the head swimming instructor. Matt was especially proud of his teaching accomplishments at that camp, since each of the 85 girls who had attended the camp had learned to swim, of that group, 80 of the girls had successfully passed the advanced swimming test requirements. That test had included a 200 yard continuous swim, a ten minute float, the ability to swim more than one stroke, and finally to demonstrate the ability to recover after being tipped from a canoe. Matt also did not miss the opportunity to point out that each of the campers had learned to swim using the crawlstroke as the beginning stroke.

The early fall was the time Matt organized his B.G.A.A. and Brookline High School swimming teams' practice and meet schedules. Each of the divisional teams and the high school group had a large nucleus of talented swimmers returning from the previous season, which enabled Matt's teams to make the transition into the graining phase of the new competitive season in a smooth fashion. Matt approached the fall training sessions with great enthusiasm, since he believed that his spirit was infectious among his team members and that their enthusiasm for the upcoming season would enable them to overcome some of the pre-season training tedium.

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82 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
83 "Mann At Sargent Camp," Pittsburgh Sun, September 25, 1914, Scrapbook 4, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 60.
84 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
One day during the fall training sessions, a young man came to "The Baths" and requested permission from Matt to participate in a senior division practice session. Following a brief conversation between the two men, Matt learned that the visitor was a midshipman from the United States Naval Academy. The young man had been a member of a New England swimming club which had competed against the B.G.A.A., during his high school years, and he had continued his competitive swimming at the Naval Academy. Following the guest's workout, he and Matt talked at some length about the intercollegiate program at the Naval Academy. The relatively new program at that institution was not slated to have a coach with swimming expertise at the reign for the 1914-1915 season. Matt observed the potential for another part-time coaching assignment, and he quickly informed the midshipman that he could arrange his schedule so that he might coach the Naval Academy swimmers for part of the pre-season training. The midshipman informed Matt that he would mention the coach's offer to the appropriate person upon his return to Annapolis.  

The fall preparation of the B.G.A.A. divisional teams and the Brookline High School team went very smoothly for many of the swimmers, although youthful, were seasoned veterans of Matt's training programs. While each team had scheduled a full season of dual meets, Matt directed their preparatory training towards the championship meets at the end of the season. Matt had also decided to move the official practice sessions for the Harvard team members to November, instead of

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85 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
86 Ibid.
the post Christmas start used in the preceding seasons. In addition to
the early start for the Harvard team, an expanded schedule of a dozen
contests, which included meets with swimming clubs, prep schools, and
Intercollegiate Swimming Association members, was announced.87

Late in that fall of 1914, Matt received word from the Naval
Academy that his offer to serve as part-time coach had been accepted.
Matt was very excited about this new collegiate coaching opportunity.
He organized the workout schedule for his separate teams so that
another B.G.A.A. staff member would be able to supervise the sessions,
during his two week vacation in early December, when he went to
Annapolis to work with the Naval Academy swimmers. Following that two
week stint of concentrated work with the Naval Academy swimming team,
Matt informed the boys that he would mail them weekly workouts for the
remainder of the season, and, if possible, he would come down from
Brookline when his schedule permitted.88

Although the winter season of 1914-1915 was probably Matt’s
busiest in terms of coaching responsibilities for different teams, it
was also his most successful. The B.G.A.A. had continued its dominance
of the New England swimming club and A.A.U. competitions with
Leo Handy leading the way in the boy’s divisions, and Mildred Wyman
distinguishing herself in outstanding fashion for the girls. The
B.G.A.A. swimmers capped off a fine dual meet season by successfully
defending its New England A.A.U. Championship crown in late

87"Harvard Swimmers Report Monday," Boston American,
November 19, 1914, Scrapbook 2, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room,
International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 97.

88Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
March of 1915. Leo Handy also led his Brookline High School teammates through another successful dual meet season. Handy's sheer dominance of the various freestyle races and sterling relay anchor by performances made the team overpowering in dual competitions. The Brookline High School swimmers completed their fine season when the team of eleven boys easily won their second consecutive Eastern Interscholastic Swimming Championship at Princeton University. Handy led the way in that championship meet by winning the 50 yard and 100 yard freestyle events and anchoring the winning freestyle relay team.

Matt's experiences in the collegiate ranks also proved successful that winter season. The 1915 season seemed to mark a turning point in the attitudes of the Harvard swimmers. Until that season the team members did not take their training seriously. The improved spirit of the team was attributed by Matt to the presence and talent of five, non-native Hawaiian young men on the team. Paul Withington was the most spirited of the lot; his younger brother, and the three Hitchcock brothers made up the contingent from Hawaii. Practices, during each of the three scheduled evening sessions, in the small forty foot Harvard dormitory pool were lively affairs. Occasionally the team worked out in the Cambridge Y.M.C.A. sixty-foot

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89 Scrapbook 2, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 98-108 (period covered was the winter season of 1914-1915).

90 Ibid.

pool for a series of time trials in events which the boys swam in collegiate competition. The Harvard team composed of nine men started rather slowly on the expanded schedule with losing efforts against the teams from Worcester Academy and Andover Academy, but recovered in excellent fashion winning six of the remaining seven meets, the last five consecutively. Those winning efforts came against Cornell University, C.C.N.Y., Springfield College, Andover Academy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Brown University. The other loss of that 6-3 season was to the Columbia University team coached by the highly regarded Edward T. Kennedy.

While Matt had little opportunity to work directly with the swimming team in Annapolis, the team of eighteen members recorded a perfect 4-0 record against some superbly coached teams. The Naval Academy won meets with the University of Pittsburgh, Columbia University, Princeton University, and its most difficult opponent, the University of Pennsylvania.

By the time the various teams, which Matt had coached that season, had completed their schedules it was soon time to begin planning for the summer season. While the salaries Matt received from his various coaching positions were quite modest, he was a frugal man by nature, and thus he had managed to accumulate a small cash reserve for the right business venture which might come along. Such an opportunity arose that spring, when Matt heard about the availability

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\(^{92}\)Matt Mann Tape Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.

\(^{93}\)Intercollegiate Swimming Guide 1915-1916, op. cit., p. 103.

\(^{94}\)Ibid., p. 104.
of some acreage, near Worcester, Massachusetts, which would lend itself to development as a summer camp. Since his involvement in summer camp programs, soon after his arrival in Brookline, Matt had aspired to one day own and supervise a summer camp. The time appeared right for Matt, along with some other financial backers, to purchase the property and to develop a summer camp for boys, and then to expand the facilities into a year-round camp for men. To embark on such a venture meant that Matt had to make probably the most important decision of his professional life. He decided to give up the security of his position at the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium, and with it went the several coaching assignments at the B.G.A.A., Brookline High School, and Harvard, and the wonderful associations with the children and adults of Brookline. He believed that the founding of his own camp was an opportunity which he could not pass up.  

The site for the Matt Mann Camp for Boys was some eighty acres of beautiful land located along a lake in the township of Rutland. Matt had hoped to build much of the camp's facilities along the lines of Dr. Sargent's camp and some of the others he had visited the preceding summers. The camp's activities were to evolve around such sports as golf, tennis, horseback riding, swimming, canoeing, and hiking. Since the property was quite undeveloped, Matt solicited the help of some of his older boys from the B.G.A.A. and other friends from Brookline in order to construct the necessary facilities, so that the camp would be ready for campers that summer. Matt and his work crew constructed a riding ring, a four hole golf course, cleared a shallow

95 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
portion of the lake and the adjacent shoreline for a swimming area, and finally a tennis court. One of the volunteer workers from the B.G.A.A. team, Francis "Prince" Wall, a city boy, remarked how comical he felt, as he moved along behind a horse and plow with Matt's instructions on how to prepare the ground for the camp's only tennis court. But even with the very amateurish construction team, the camp's facilities were ready for the first group of boys that summer.

The camp for boys went quite well, with many of the boys being B.G.A.A. swimming team members, and others being former pupils from the learn-to-swim classes. But the year-round facet of the camp, the program for men, failed miserably. The premise for Matt's camp for men had been based upon a similar camp which operated outside New York City and was run by a boxing trainer, Bill Muldoon. The New York camp had been developed so that men might escape the pressures of their businesses in an outdoor environment. The programs set up by Muldoon were designed to refresh the businessmen in a week or two, so that they were able to return to the rigors of their jobs. Matt had hoped that his camp would derive its businessman campers from the Boston area, but Matt's partners, who had said they would recruit workers, did not do their jobs. The Matt Mann Camp for Men did not attract enough campers that

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96 Ibid.

97 Based on a portion of a letter from Francis P. Wall to Matt Mann II, February 21, 1941. (Letter contained in a bound volume of letters presented to Matt Mann II as a memento of his 32 years of coaching. Volume bound in the Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 33.)
fall; therefore, by necessity, the camp was closed, and Matt was left without employment. 98

Matt was quite depressed that fall, not only because he was unemployed, but because he already missed his coaching responsibilities and his various aquatic teaching assignments. He felt that he had made a terrible mistake in giving up his Brookline position, but he was too proud to return to his former employers to seek reinstatement to his previous positions. It was well into the fall before Matt had the camp grounds cleaned and the facilities prepared for the long Massachusetts winter. Aside from the part-time coaching assignment with the Naval Academy swimming team for fall of 1915, for the first time since he started his aquatics work in Brookline, Matt was without a full time swimming teaching and coaching position. He had survived similar employment adversities before, and his resourcefulness in the United States, the land of opportunity, would see him through that trying period. 99

98 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
99 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
Chapter 5

THE BARNSTORMING YEARS

The fall of 1915 was an especially unusual period in Matt's life, because he was without a definite plan for reestablishing himself, on a full time basis, as a leader in the "profession" of teaching and coaching swimming. While the importance of teaching children and adults how to swim was accepted as a most worthy civic objective by many communities in the northeastern section of the United States, those same towns and cities were not ready to follow the Brookline model by the hiring of a full-time swimming teacher and coach. Matt found the part-time aquatic employment opportunities so limited in November, that he actually left earlier than had been scheduled for his position as swimming coach at the United States Naval Academy.

The trip to Annapolis seemed especially long for Matt, when compared to the similar journey the preceding fall. Matt's emotional state was decidedly different as he approached his second season of coaching the Navy swimmers. On that occasion, rather than the collegiate work being a refreshing and challenging change of pace from his Brookline responsibilities, that assignment was the only coaching, or swimming work for that matter, in which he would be involved all

\[1\] Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.

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that fall. Regardless of the temporary nature of his assignment at the Naval Academy, Matt gave the midshipmen team members as much stroke technique work and event preparation training that they were able to tolerate, during the three weeks of his stay.2

Those three weeks at the Naval Academy seemed to pass all too quickly for Matt. He truly enjoyed his coaching assignment with the midshipmen for they seemed to continuously display a genuine enthusiasm for their academic and athletic endeavors. Matt had hoped that his successful coaching effort with the Navy team the preceding year, plus his obvious rapport with the 1915-1916 swimming team members, might lead to an offer to be employed on a full-time basis by the Naval Academy athletic administration, especially since it was widely known that Matt had severed his ties with the Brookline Municipal Gymnasium. But the Naval Academy had not felt the need, at that time, to hire a full-time aquatics specialist to work with its swimming team. Matt understood the institution’s position for there were few colleges and universities which employed such specialists for their aquatic programs. Even though Matt would only retain his consultant’s role for that season’s Navy team, he felt greatly privileged to have had the opportunity to work with such fine young men.3

Instead of returning directly to Brookline following his work in Annapolis, Matt decided to visit some friends from the "swimming business" in New York City. Soon after his arrival in the city, in mid-December, he learned of a possible employment opportunity at the

\[\text{2Ibid., Tape 4. \hspace{1cm} 3Ibid., Tape 4.}\]
New York Athletic Club (N.Y.A.C.). He had hoped that some type of swimming job might be open in that area, but he had never dreamed that he might have an opportunity to apply for an aquatics position at the internationally famous N.Y.A.C. That club had stood out in Matt's mind, since his competitive days in England, when he watched with awe the great Charlie Daniels of the N.Y.A.C., as the top competitive swimming location in the world.¹

Matt went directly to the N.Y.A.C. and applied immediately for the opening on the aquatics staff. The persons responsible for hiring at the club did not require a lengthy screening process of Matt's credentials for his successes with the B.G.A.A., Brookline High School, and Harvard swimming teams were widely recognized by competitive swimming followers in that part of the country.⁵ A local reference source, who was most familiar with Matt's varied coaching achievements, was Edward T. Kennedy, the swimming coach at Columbia University. Coach Kennedy, one of the first full-time swimming teachers and coaches in the United States, had first become acquainted with Matt when the former's brother represented the Brookline Swimming Club in competition against Matt's B.G.A.A. Coach Kennedy was so impressed by Matt's accomplishments in those early years, that several years later Ed remarked:

... that your (Matt's) dynamic capacity for work and your (Matt's) intelligence in directing your work have made you (Matt) a pretty difficult adversary to match even when the rest of us (opposing coaches) have had the breaks. ... ⁶

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¹Ibid., Tape 4. ⁵Ibid., Tape 4.

Matt was offered the job, and he accepted the position as swimming instructor and coach at the N.Y.A.C. with his responsibilities to begin January 3, 1916. His job description included the provision that his primary duties would be to organize and teach various swimming classes for the N.Y.A.C.'s all-male membership. Matt had let it be known that men participating in his swimming classes would be instructed in the crawlstroke as their basic stroke from beginning to advanced level classes. In addition to those teaching sessions Matt was also to work with the competitive swimmers.7

It did not take Matt long to "square his accounts" in Brookline, but to say farewell to so many dear friends in that area was difficult. He made that latter task a bit easier by promising those acquaintances he would see them again, specifically when he would be returning to the region for his summer camp in Ruthland. Matt was very excited about his position at the N.Y.A.C., especially from the competitive swimming standpoint, for the athletic clubs, located in certain major cities across the United States, were having a dramatic impact on the sport. Competitive swimming held a rather prominent position in the sports programs of the Illinois Athletic Club, Chicago Athletic Association, Missouri Athletic Club, Cleveland Athletic Club, Los Angeles Athletic Club, San Francisco Olympic Club, and the Multnomah Club (Seattle). Most of the United States' national swimming champions and record holders of that period were affiliated with

athletic clubs, with the N.Y.A.C. serving as the home club for the highest percentage of the champions. 8

As soon as Matt started his work at the N.Y.A.C. he had the membership enthused about the wide variety of swimming classes which were made available to them. In addition to that schedule of classes which he offered at various times each week, he soon established a class for the members' sons on Saturday morning. He was also anxious to greet the members of that season's swimming team, which included noted swimmers Phil Herbert, John Curren, Ted Cann, Hal Vollmer, Jim Reilly, Joe "Egghead" Wheatley, and probably the most prolific swimming record holder of the time, Bud Goodwin. 9 Reilly, in his last season of competitive swimming, was impressed by the "cocky" manner in which Matt took charge of that excellent group of swimmers, which included many seasoned veterans. Matt convinced those swimming team members that he was impressed with their achievements, but that with his coaching and their hard work, new successes awaited them. While Matt expected those swimmers to apply themselves with dedication at each practice session, he always found time for a cheery hello and a smile for each swimmer. 10

It did not take Matt very long to strike up a friendship with Bud Goodwin, for the latter was Matt's "kind of man." The N.Y.A.C.

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8 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
9 Ibid., Tape 4.
10 Based on statements made by Jim Reilly, former Rutgers University swimming coach, contained in personal correspondence to Matt Mann, March 1, 1941. Matt Mann Memento Book, 1941, op. cit., p. 26.
trophy cases contained many of Goodwin's awards for his achievements in local, regional, and U.S. national championship swimming events, in distances ranging from 220 yards to one mile, in previous years. But success had not spoiled Bud for he exemplified the qualities of a perfect gentleman, in addition to being an outstanding athlete. Matt truly admired Bud's dedication to the training regimen. Seldom did Bud miss a self-imposed morning workout of 500 to 1000 yards which was supplemental to the team's evening workouts. Matt often swam with Bud in the mornings for the former believed strongly in maintaining his aquatic skills by working alongside his finest swimmers. Matt also derived a great deal of information from Bud about the competitive swimming scene in the New York City area.11

Within a very short period of time, Matt knew which meets on the schedule his N.Y.A.C. swimmers were most interested in turning in their top performances. Most of those swimming team members appeared to be filled with a desire to excel in their particular events and as a team. Matt's initial workouts with N.Y.A.C. swimmers were varied and vigorous, and were received enthusiastically by the squad. His major coaching task seemed to be the blending of the newer team members, some with the potential to become champions of the future, with the nucleus of successful veterans who hoped to retain their top places on the team during that winter season.12

Matt was very happy with his coaching position at the N.Y.A.C., but his swimming instructor's duties during the daytime hours, with

11 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
12 Ibid., Tape 4.
the exception of his Saturday morning class for the members' sons, were very limited. His swimming classes for members and coaching sessions were conducted during the evening hours of Monday through Friday. Matt's salary was based on his hours on the job, which meant a rather meager income since his daytime hours were void of responsibilities.\[^{13}\] The prestige associated with the N.Y.A.C. swimming coach's position did enable Matt to secure part-time employment early that January, at the Polytechnic Preparatory Academy in Brooklyn as swimming coach for the high school aged boys' team. Matt devoted a couple of late afternoons each week to the coaching of those boys. He was so encouraged by the spirit and talent of the Poly Prep boys that he remarked, "... if they work hard, they may be in the running for the interscholastic meet in Princeton. I haven't a Leo Handy, but that takes a little time."\[^{14}\] The Poly Prep swimming meet schedule, which had already been arranged before Matt's appointment, was made up of other private high schools and several high schools from the New York City Public School Athletic League.\[^{15}\]

The job at Poly Prep was a step in the right direction towards improving Matt's financial status, but since it was only a part-time for the swimming season, the salary was quite limited. The word of Matt's availability to coach on a part-time basis became widely known,

\[^{13}\] Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 5.


and soon reached Larry Prentice, the athletic director at Lawrenceville Academy, Lawrenceville, New Jersey. Prentice, also a swimming enthusiast, knew Matt and was very familiar with Matt's numerous successes at Brookline High School. Prentice arranged a meeting in New York City with Matt, to discuss the Lawrenceville coaching position. Matt gladly welcomed the opportunity to work with the prep school swimmers at the New Jersey school on the weekends. In addition to Matt's brightened financial outlook, his weekly work load with the various groups kept him on the move, but he was happy to be well "immersed" in the swimming business again.16

Matt barely had time to get his "feet wet" in his position as New York Athletic Club swimming coach when one of his fine young swimmers, Herbert (Hal) E. Vollmer, who also represented Columbia University in intercollegiate competition, established a new world's record for the 150 yard event, with a time of 1:29 4/5. Vollmer set the new record at the twenty-five yard Mercury Foot natatorium of the N.Y.A.C. located on the corner of Sixth Avenue and West Fifty-ninth Street in Manhatten. Vollmer was competing in a trial heat of the Metropolitan A.A.U. 100 yard championship race on January 10. The record attempt had been arranged by the local A.A.U. committee; it called for Vollmer to continue swimming past the 100 yard mark for the extra two lengths, so that he would have the opportunity to establish the new record. The old record of 1:32 2/5 was held by one of the N.Y.A.C.'s early stars, and former hero of Matt's, Charlie Daniels, when the latter established the record

16Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
shortly after his winning efforts in the London Olympic Games of 1908. Vollmer's record swim, which also broke Daniel's American mark of 1:32 3/5 set at Yale in 1911, was recognized as a particularly outstanding effort, since many top swimmers, including Duke Kahanamoku of Hawaii and Perry McGillivray of the Illinois A.C., had unsuccessfully made attempts at the record in the preceding years. The other trial heat of the 100 yard event added some additional excitement to the evening by exposing the crowd to the N.Y.A.C.'s schoolboy star, Ted Cann of Hamilton Institute, Brooklyn. Cann's winning of the second heat placed three N.Y.A.C. swimmers in the four-man field of the Metropolitan A.A.U. 100 yard championship event to be held later that week.17

Vollmer retained his racing sharpness that week by setting a new Metropolitan A.A.U. 100 yard record of :55 1/5 as he won the championship event by twelve yards over his closest competitor Ted Cann at the Mercury Foot pool. Prior to the race there had been some talk that Vollmer might break Kahanamoku's world mark of :54 2/5. While Hal missed that mark with his slower early pace, he did break the American record of :56 1/5 set by Charlie Daniels in 1911.18

Matt thoroughly enjoyed the excitement generated by Vollmer's record-setting swims at the N.Y.A.C. pool. There had been very good crowds in attendance during the trials and the championship event for the 100 yard title. The Mercury Foot natatorium was an excellent


setting for championship events, since it accommodated between 1500 and 2000 spectators in its marble-faced balcony sections. The pool environment resembled some of the large "baths" of England in which Matt had competed as a young man.\(^{19}\)

Matt now felt that he was an integral part of the "big-time" swimming scene. He was proud of his association with Hal Vollmer, but Matt was also ready to admit that Hal was really Ed Kennedy's Columbia University swimmer. Although Vollmer did train on occasion with the N.Y.A.C. swimmers under Matt's guidance, he maintained his regular training program at Columbia. It seemed only natural that many talented young swimmers from the high school and collegiate ranks wanted to be affiliated with the N.Y.A.C., because of its tradition for being recognized as a club for national swimming champions and world record holders.\(^{20}\)

Matt credited the N.Y.A.C.'s prominent position as the host club for many local swimming championship events to the vigorous efforts of Otto Wahle, who was a N.Y.A.C. member and the chairman of the Metropolitan A.A.U. Swimming Committee. Wahle often organized and publicized the attempts of N.Y.A.C. swimmers to establish new records, including Vollmer's successful efforts. Wahle informed Matt, soon after the latter's hiring by the N.Y.A.C., that as the local A.A.U. official, he would like to visit practice sessions to observe the top swimmers in training. Wahle further explained to Matt that if one of the N.Y.A.C. swimmers looked especially sharp in practice then he

\(^{19}\) Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., Tape 5.
wanted to be informed, so that he might set up an attempt at a record. Otto Wahle believed that the publicity received in the newspapers for new records was a most effective way to promote the N.Y.A.C. and Metropolitan A.A.U. competitive swimming. Additional evidence of Wahle's efforts was the announcement that the N.Y.A.C. had been selected as the site for the Metropolitan A.A.U. 220 yard swimming championship. The local A.A.U. Swimming Committee had informed the press that the trials for the event would be held on February 18, with the championship race scheduled for February 21 at the Mercury Foot natatorium.

Matt's busy schedule with multiple coaching responsibilities for various teams was not unusual for the period. The sport of competitive swimming was growing increasingly popular on the inter-scholastic, intercollegiate, and athletic club levels, but there was not a sufficient number of qualified coaches available to meet the individual demands of each team. Therefore, it became necessary for qualified coaches, such as Matt, to assume several coaching positions simultaneously to foster the continued growth of competitive swimming.

Matt's first three weeks in New York City were reminiscent of his early days of employment in both Buffalo and Brookline, as he filled his schedule with various aquatic teaching and coaching responsibilities. Matt was surprised and delighted when Russell Dean

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21 Ibid., Tape 5.


23 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
and another man, a former Yale swimming captain, paid him a visit at
the N.Y.A.C. to discuss the Yale swimming coaching position. Dean, a former B.G.A.A. swimmer, was then a member of the Yale University swimming team; the former Yale captain (1903-04), Ogden Mills Reid, was then the president of the New York Tribune, and had served, since his graduation in 1904, as the unofficial coach of Yale's swimming and water polo teams through the 1914-1915 season. Both men informed Matt of Yale's fine swimming tradition, including the four consecutive Intercollegiate Swimming Association championships; the present team was having difficulty, due in part to Ogden Reid's limited schedule to work with the team. In an attempt to maintain Yale swimming supremacy, Dean and Reid were authorized by Robert N. Corwin, Chairman of the Board of Athletic Control of Yale University, to offer Matt the position as Yale swimming coach. Matt accepted the position, and he informed the men that he would supervise the training sessions at the Carnegie Pool, on the Yale campus, for one or two evenings and an afternoon each weekend every week. The announcement of Matt's hiring was released on January 21, in New Haven.

When Matt arrived at the various team locations to conduct the swimming workouts, he did not let a "clock-on-the-wall" govern the amount of time he would devote to a team practice. Rather, he worked

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24 Ibid., Tape 5. 25 Ibid., Tape 5.


with the swimmers as long as they were capable of moving efficiently through the different phases of a workout. Matt was highly motivated in his work with the young men, who made up the different teams, and their enthusiasm during workouts further stimulated his coaching energies.28

The Poly Prep swimming team opened its season on a winning note by defeating the team from Barringer High School, Newark, New Jersey. The Poly Prep team, which had several returning letterman, including Jack Remmey, the Eastern interscholastic champion for the 220-yard event, J. Shields, R. Wetherbridge, and C. Shields, dominated the meet held at the Fourth Avenue Bath in Brooklyn, with six first and four second place finishes in the seven event-meet program to account for the final score of 44 to 18.29

Matt was anxious to begin his work with the Yale swimmers. His first workout visit to the New Haven campus was preceded with the pronouncement in the Yale News that, "... Mr. Mann is without doubt one of the foremost, if not the foremost, swimming coach and instructor in the world. ..."30 Ogden Reid accompanied Matt on some of the latter's early trips from New York City to the Carnegie Pool. Reid

28 Based on statements by Edward T. Kennedy, Swimming Coach Emeritus, Columbia University, in a personal interview, Cleveland, Ohio, March 27, 1975.


believed his presence on those visits enabled Matt to more easily become acquainted with the members of the Yale team and the campus.  

Matt had arranged his weekly practice schedule with the Yale team so that one workout was conducted on a mid-week evening, usually Wednesday, and another workout on the weekend, most often on Sunday after the swimmers had attended chapel. Matt varied his workouts for the Yale swimmers, but typically each workout was quite strenuous for the team members. Most of the Yale "natators" were usually so tired following each of Matt's early workouts, that on the days between his sessions the team members merely went through very light swimming sessions, so that they might recover from the preceding workout and then build up some energy for an upcoming session.  

Matt organized each Yale workout so that the swimmers engaged in a number of 50 yard and 100 yard swims at an easy pace which allowed each individual to concentrate on certain crawlstroke techniques important to his race. Specific time was also allotted for the swimmers to work on their turns at race pace. The most difficult phase of each workout was the group or set of several swims, usually of 50 yard, 100 yard, or 150 yard distances, to be performed at a fairly rapid pace, towards the completion of each workout. Those hard swims left the swimmers quite fatigued, but Matt also required that a hard workout be completed with a "long," moderately paced 500 yard swim which brought vocal objections, though compliance, from the

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31 Peter E. Kennedy, loc. cit.

32 Based on statements by Clark Hopkins, Professor Emeritus, University of Michigan, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, July 20, 1973.
sprinters. Since Matt was such a "devout" crawlstroke advocate he also demanded that his swimmers devote particular attention to their breathing techniques during their practice swims. He believed so strongly that an efficient breathing pattern was essential to the development of a successful competitive swimmer that he remarked:

> The breathing is one of the chief reasons why so many men fall down on the crawl; they do not pay enough attention to it, and when they do meet someone who does breathe right they are usually second. It is best at all times to take a breath on every stroke cycle, when the man is breathing correctly.

Clark Hopkins, a Yale junior, who was in his third season of collegiate swimming competition, was very impressed by the rapid improvement of his performances and those of his teammates after Matt assumed the coaching reign. At the start of the season it had appeared that the Yale team, without a star-studded roster, was ready to be dethroned as the Intercollegiate Swimming Association champion, but Matt drove the Yale swimmers hard. Hopkins recalled, "... the swimmers went along with Matt's workouts because they respected him, and this rigorous training was probably the greatest factor in producing the faster times." The Yale team got off to a fast start that season by recording two victories over the C.C.N.Y. swimmers, and a sound "dunking" of the Cornell team by a score of 48 to 5. In the Cornell meet, the victors took the first and second place finishes in

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33 Ibid.


35 Hopkins interview, loc. cit.
the six events, with Hopkins winning the 100 event with a time of
1:04 3/5.36

Just a few days prior to that display of power by the Yale
swimmers, the Carnegie Pool served as the site for a very fine
interscholastic swimming championship meet. The meet brought together
some of Matt's former swimmers from the Brookline High School to match
their skills against some of his current crop of schoolboy natators
from the New York City area. Leo Handy of Brookline High School was
the star of the meet as he won two individual races with record-setting
performances. Handy won the 100 yard race with a time of :57 2/5 and
the 220 yard event with a very impressive 2:33 4/5; both times were
new interscholastic marks. Ted Cann of Hamilton Institute won the
50 yard event with a record setting :25 1/5. Handy "capped off" his
outstanding meet with a brilliant anchor leg for the Brookline High
School 200 yard relay team; his effort enabled his team to win the
event by mere inches over the fine relay contingent from Brooklyn's
Poly Prep. The Brookline swimmers garnered the team honors, as they
had done often at similar interscholastic affairs during Matt's reign
as coach.37

By mid-February the Yale swimmers had discovered that retaining
the I.S.A. champion's "crown" would indeed be a difficult task, since
the team from the University of Pennsylvania had recorded a convincing
33 to 20 victory over Yale. But Yale responded with victories over

36"Yale Routs Cornell Swimmers," New York Times,
February 9, 1916, p. 8, col. 4.

37"Records Fall In Tank," New York Times, February 6, 1916,
Sect. I, p. 17, col. 2.
the strong Columbia team led by Vollmer and Herbert, and the talented Princeton University team, by the scores of 29 to 24, and 31 to 22, respectively.\(^{38}\)

Whereas Matt and Hal Volmer were opponents on the collegiate scene, they united under the Winged Foot emblem of the N.Y.A.C. for A.A.U. competition, within days of the Yale and Columbia dual meet. Vollmer brought more fury to his Mercury Foot club by setting three new world standards, during his winning effort in the Metropolitan A.A.U. 220 yard championship race held at the N.Y.A.C. natatorium. Vollmer displayed great speed that evening as he easily swam away from his opponents to match his skills against "the clock." His winning time of 2:24 4/5 for the 220 yards broke the world marks of 2:25 2/5 for 220 yards and 200 meters set by Charlie Daniels in 1909. Since a separate finish line was not set up for the timers at the shorter 200 meters, Vollmer's time for 220 yards was also submitted as the new record for 200 meters. On the way to the finish of that race, Vollmer recorded a time of 2:10 4/5 for 200 yards which surpassed the fastest listed time for that distance of 2:11 1/5 by J. Healey of Australia. The time for 200 yards was not submitted for official world record recognition because that distance was not a standard distance for competition. Somewhat overlooked in the excitement which followed the record-setting swim was the fine performance turned in by the N.Y.A.C.'s schoolboy competitor, Ted Cann, who finished only ten yards behind Vollmer.\(^{39}\)

\(^{38}\)Intercollegiate Swimming Guide 1916-1917, op. cit., p. 121.

By mid-February there was little opportunity for Matt to savor the role he played in assisting Hal Vollmer to his wonderful swimming efforts. Matt's high school and college coaching responsibilities were very demanding at that time. At the big interscholastic water carnival held at Princeton University, Matt coached the swimmers from Poly Prep and Lawrenceville Academy as they attempted to dethrone the defending champions from Brookline High School. Leo Handy's record-setting efforts in the 100 yard and 220 yard individual races, and his relay leg on the winning relay team, provided the necessary points for Brookline to retain its team championship with a score of 27 points, followed by Poly Prep with 10 points, and Lawrenceville with 9 points.

In addition to the schedule of frequent interscholastic swimming championship meets which were attended by Matt's teams, he found himself charged with the responsibility of helping the Poly Prep swimmers maintain their undefeated dual meet record of three seasons. At that point in the season Poly Prep's record was 5-0, with victories over Commercial High School, Barringer High School, Manual Training High School, St. Paul's School, and Erasmus Hall High School.

A clear leader for the Intercollegiate Swimming Association title was very much in doubt in late February, as the teams from Yale, Columbia, and Princeton each appeared to be in definite contention.

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42 Ibid., p. 110.
Yale's schedule in March, which included meets with Pennsylvania, Princeton, Harvard, and Columbia, within a span of two weeks, would decide Yale's fate in its attempt to retain the championship.¹³

Amidst all of the excitement the 1916 competitive swimming season was bringing to Matt's life came the news that the great Duke Kahanamoku of Hawaii had agreed to compete in several National A.A.U. swimming championships throughout the United States. The announcement of Kahanamoku's plans to compete in two championship events, which were scheduled for the eastern part of the United States in April, brought immediate speculation in the press about the possible head-to-head meeting of the new world record holder Hal Vollmer and the "human fish" from Hawaii. Kahanamoku's plans stipulated that he would compete for the national 100 yard championship in Pittsburgh on April 8, and then travel to New York City within a week to compete for the national 220 yard championship.¹⁴ Matt looked upon "the Duke's" impending competitive visit to New York City with great anticipation. Matt had heard and read about the highly-skilled eighteen-year-old from Hawaii, but he had not seen Kahanamoku in action. The potential for a head-to-head meeting between Vollmer and Kahanamoku in the 220 yard event, to be held at the N.Y.A.C. natatorium, seemed to Matt too good to be true. According to Matt, such an event would be reminiscent of some of the feature races at the big swimming galas during his

¹³Scrapbook 3, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 7-10. (Period covered was a portion of the 1915-1916 I.S.A. dual meet season with meet results.)

competitive days, which brought together the top swimmers from various parts of England. 45

Along with Matt's coaching responsibilities at the N.Y.A.C., he enjoyed the opportunities to schedule various types of swimming meets at the Mercury Foot pool. In many of the meets Matt scheduled, he brought together swimmers from various team or club affiliations, but a common entity among many of those competitors was that Matt was presently their primary swimming coach, or he had served in such a capacity sometime in the past. Such meets were a practical arrangement, on occasion, since they allowed Matt to observe many of his swimmers in competition without the necessity of traveling to separate locations. 46 Although the Naval Academy swimming team was no longer under Matt's tutelage, he enjoyed seeing those enthusiastic young men in competition when his schedule permitted. The Navy team traveled to the Mercury Foot pool in late February for a dual meet competition with the N.Y.A.C. swimmers. The host club handily defeated the visitors from Annapolis in the meet which was conducted similar to a collegiate dual affair. The N.Y.A.C. winning efforts, in all but one event, were highlighted by the very fine performance of Yale swimmer Rusty Dean in the 40 yard backstroke with a time of :23 4/5. 47

In early March, Matt was able to attract a select group of metropolitan area high school teams for an interscholastic meet at the

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45 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
46 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
N.Y.A.C. pool. The team title was won by Hamilton Institute with 10 points; tied for second place were Stuyvesant High School and DeWitt Clinton High School with 9 points, while Matt's Poly Prep swimmers and those from the St. Paul's School tied for the next place with 8 points. The Hamilton Institute victory was made possible by the winning efforts of the N.Y.A.C.'s schoolboy star, Ted Cann, in the 50 yard and 220 yard events. The highlight of the meet for the Poly Prep swimmers was the second place finish of their 200 yard relay team.

The "race" for the I.S.A. crown was indeed a thrilling one as the season entered its final weeks. During the first week of March, the Yale swimmers "turned-the-tables" on the fine team from the University of Pennsylvania with a hard fought 32 to 21 victory in New Haven. But in a week's time, Yale suffered a second meeting reversal to the inspired Princeton team by a score of 29 to 24. Princeton's victory made for crowded conditions at the top of the league, since Yale, Columbia, and Princeton then shared that position with identical dual meet records of six wins and two losses. In the last week of the season the Yale natators scored lopsided victories over Harvard and Columbia, by the scores of 45 to 8 and 39 to 14 respectively. That strong finish by Yale University, accompanied by an additional loss for Princeton to a league opponent, enabled the swimming team to win its fifth consecutive Intercollegiate Swimming Association championship with a record of eight wins and two

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49 Scrapbook 3, Matt Mann Collection, op. cit., pp. 11-18.
losses in league competition. The two victories over non-league opponent C.C.N.Y. gave the twelve member Yale team an overall dual meet record of 10-2. So unexpected was that title for Yale, that a reference was made in the Intercollegiate Swimming Guide, which covered that season, and stated:

Great credit is due Carl V. Schlaet, Yale Captain, and Matthew Mann, the squad coach, for the cable manner in which they developed rather mediocre material and gradually built up one of the strongest and best balanced teams ever turned out at New Haven.50

With one championship in hand for his collegiate efforts, Matt capped off that busy season by guiding Poly Prep to the first place position in the Greater New York championship meet.51 The Poly Prep team also finished the dual meet season with a 7-0 record, which extended their undefeated record in dual competition through three seasons.52

During mid-March of that season, it seemed that Matt had a major swimming event to attend each day, in which one of the teams he was affiliated with was involved. In addition to his successful collegiate and interscholastic endeavors, various N.Y.A.C. swimmers engaged in some significant A.A.U. competitions. Hal Vollmer led a three-man sweep of the Metropolitan A.A.U. 500 yard championship held at Rutgers College. Vollmer led Joe Wheatley and Ted Cann to the finish line with a time of 6:23 2/5, but missed in his announced

attempt to set a new American record for the event.\textsuperscript{53} In a meet hosted by the N.Y.A.C. and "billed" as a qualifying or tryout meet for the National Junior A.A.U. swimming championships, Russell Dean, competing for the N.Y.A.C., equaled the world's record for 100 yards backstroke with a time of 1:08 2/5. His time matched the record of H. J. Hebner of the Illinois A.C. set in 1911.\textsuperscript{54}

As the interscholastic and intercollegiate dual meet schedule came to a close for the 1915-1916 season, Matt was soon searching for new ways to supplement his modest salary from the N.Y.A.C.\textsuperscript{55} Even with his very busy coaching schedule of the preceding weeks, Matt's salary probably did not exceed one hundred dollars a month. There was an obvious need for skilled swimming coaches at that time, but most institutions allotted very meager funds for their employment.\textsuperscript{56}

An opportunity for additional employment occurred when Matt was approached by a N.Y.A.C. member, Dr. John Henning, to start a swimming class for women. Dr. Henning had been a swimming "student" of Matt's in one of the N.Y.A.C.'s adult classes; and the former had been so impressed with Matt's conduct in the pool, that he invited Matt to institute a program of light swimming for one of his patients, a Mrs. John Phillip Souza, the wife of the famous bandmaster and composer. Dr. Henning believed very strongly in the therapeutic value


\textsuperscript{55}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.

\textsuperscript{56}Based on statements by Edward T. Kennedy, in a personal interview, Cleveland, Ohio, March 27, 1975.
of light swimming for persons with various orthopedic ailments. He arranged for Matt to have access to an indoor pool on Long Island, one afternoon a week during the spring season for the women's class, since the N.Y.A.C. did not permit women members or swimming guests. Matt welcomed this teaching opportunity with Mrs. Souza and several wives of N.Y.A.C. members, since it would follow his previously successful patterns of teaching adult women in Syracuse and Brookline.\(^{57}\)

Actually, Matt was relieved to be free from his hectic travel schedule of the preceding weeks, so that he might direct his coaching energies towards the impending and potentially most exciting individual championship competition of his coaching career.\(^{58}\) The event was the United States 220 yard championship, with the long awaited confrontation between the swimming sensation from Hawaii, Duke Kahanamoku, and the N.Y.A.C.'s Hal Vollmer. The New Yorker had experienced an outstanding season, and he appeared exceptionally fit to meet the challenge of the great Olympian and world record holder, at 100 yards, Kahanamoku. There had been some talk among certain "swimming people" in the Northeast that Vollmer had become tired and stale by the end of March due to his heavy schedule of intercollegiate dual meets and Metropolitan A.A.U. competitions. Matt used the days following Hal's last Columbia dual meet in mid-March, and leading into early April, to bring the latter back to a very sharp state. It had been reported that Vollmer had recorded a near world record time for the furlong during a practice time trial. The stage had been set for

\(^{57}\) Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 7.

\(^{58}\) Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
the big event, with the local experts giving Vollmer the favorite's role due to his world record performance in the event in February, and his familiarity with the Mercury Foot pool.\textsuperscript{59} Matt was also preparing two other N.Y.A.C. swimmers, Ted Cann and Joe Wheatley for that championship event, with the hope of placing all three in the finals with Kahanamoku.\textsuperscript{60}

Two days prior to the heralded appearance of the "Duke" at the Mercury Foot pool, word was received that in his initial competition, in the National A.A.U. 100 yard championship in Pittsburgh, he had placed second to Perry McGillivray of the Illinois Athletic Club. The winning time of \(0:56\,1/5\) in the 30 yard pool was regarded as relatively slow, since Kahanamoku's world record was almost three seconds faster.\textsuperscript{61} There was some speculation that the "Duke's" long trip from the West Coast, preceding the competition, had left him tired, but that he would be ready for his race with Vollmer in New York.\textsuperscript{62}

The publicity preceding the National A.A.U. 220 yard championship had created such an interest among swimming fans in the New York City area, that all seats at the N.Y.A.C. natatorium for the championship final heat had been sold prior to the swimming of the preliminary heats. On the day before the championship event, two heats with three competitors in each were arranged and swam, with the first


\textsuperscript{60}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.


\textsuperscript{62}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
two swimmers in each race qualifying for the final race. But it was during those preliminary heats that the plans for the great match competition in the championship race went awry. The heats had been set up with Vollmer, Ted Cann and Harry Hebner, Illinois A.C. in the first, and in the second Kahanamoku, McGillivray, and Joe Wheatley. The meet officials had believed that such a seeding of the heats would enable Vollmer, Cann, McGillivray and Kahanamoku to swim in the "big" race. The first heat went according to plans with Vollmer winning easily and Cann second, but in the second heat McGillivray was the winner and Wheatley managed to "nip" Kahanamoku at the finish. The meet officials were dismayed by Wheatley's performance for it would prevent the well publicized meeting between Vollmer and Kahanamoku. The officials were also concerned about the reaction of the crowd at the championship race, for many of those ticket holders had purchased seats merely to see "the pride of New York," Hal Vollmer, meet the great Hawaiian Duke Kahanamoku.

Following that second trial heat, the championship race committee met hurriedly to discuss the impact which the elimination of Kahanamoku might have on the credibility of the National A.A.U. 220 yard race and the negative publicity which might befall the N.Y.A.C. for billing and selling seats to an almost certain match up of contemporary swimming champions. The officials first asked Wheatley if he would withdraw from the championship final in favor of Kahanamoku. When Wheatley promptly refused that proposal, the committee considered disqualifying him from the final event, but a

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63 Ibid., Tape 5.
valid reason for such a disqualification could not be arrived at, and Wheatley retained his place in the championship race with Vollmer, McGillivray, and Cann. The race committee did get Kahanamoku to agree to swim an exhibition 100 yard race with some local sprinters, and received his permission to announce that he would attempt to establish a new world record for the event. 64

On the day of the championship event, Matt was concerned that some of Vollmer's competitive drive might have diminished with Kahanamoku out of the race. In an attempt to keep Hal keyed up for the event, Matt cautioned Vollmer that McGillivray would certainly offer stern competition, especially after his most recent victory over the "Duke" in the National A.A.U. 100 yard championship race. Matt also pointed out that if Hal could set a new record for the 220 yard event, such a performance, following an obvious emotional let down, would enable the latter to be recognized as the top 220 yard man in the world. 65

Immediately preceding the National A.A.U. 220 yard championship race, the exhibition 100 yard race, which featured Kahanamoku against local sprinter Walter Ramme, N.Y.A.C. and Russell Dean, a Yale swimmer, who had on occasion represented the N.Y.A.C., was to be held. As Kahanamoku prepared himself for the race, a native Hawaiian band was brought into the N.Y.A.C. natatorium to play "Island" music for the "Duke" in an attempt to fire up his spirits for the attempt at the record. The crowd was very enthusiastic and gave Kahanamoku loud vocal support during and following his exhibition race victory. The

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64 Ibid., Tape 5. 65 Ibid.
Duke's winning time of :54 3/5 broke Vollmer's local record by 1/5 of a second, but missed by almost a second his own world record. The exhibition race seemed to excite the crowd for the championship event. Vollmer seemed very determined from the start to want to capture the enthusiasm of the crowd in his behalf, for he started out at a fast pace of :25 4/5 for the first 50 yards, with McGillivray and Cann in close pursuit. Through 100 yards (:57 2/5) and 150 yards (1:32 1/5), Vollmer maintained his advantage, and began to open a more substantial lead through 200 yards (2:07 4/5). Vollmer won the race in a new world record time of 2:23 2/5; he finished five yards ahead of second-place McGillivray with Cann in third and Wheatley fourth. The overflow crowd left the Mercury Foot natatorium well pleased with the afternoon's competitive activities, which also included a sweep of the first four places by N.Y.A.C. divers in the National A.A.U. fancy diving championship, with the winner of the event being Arthur McAleenan, Jr. 66

The winter season of 1916 had been very demanding and extremely successful for Hal Vollmer. Following the 220 yard championship race he decided that he needed a rest, and that he would pass up an attempt to win the National A.A.U. 500 yard championship, even though Kahanamoku had indicated his intention to compete in the event. Vollmer's decision to refrain from further competition and serious training, until the summer season, provided a perfect

opportunity for Matt to devote more of his coaching time to the emerging young star, Ted Cann, of the N.Y.A.C.\textsuperscript{67}

Cann had expressed an interest to enter the 500 yard championship which was to be held in late April at the Missouri Athletic Club, St. Louis, Missouri. Matt had been very pleased with Cann's competitive enthusiasm and dedication to the training regimen throughout the season. Although Cann was regarded principally as a sprinter, based on his fourth place finish in the 100 yard national championship race, and his third place in the 220 yard national championship race, Matt believed that Cann's training had prepared him for an excellent race at the longer distance. With less than two weeks time between the upcoming national championship and the recently completed 220 yard race, Matt had Cann devote considerable time in practice to breathing and turning patterns for the longer race.\textsuperscript{68} Matt believed that in close competition between top flight swimmers that, "... The man who breathes correctly will win nine out of ten times...",\textsuperscript{69} and "... the man who can get a little advantage on a turn is the man who is going to win."\textsuperscript{70}

On April 22, 1916 in St. Louis, Ted Cann reaped the benefits of his hard training by winning the National A.A.U. 500 yard championship in convincing fashion over the second place finisher,

\textsuperscript{67}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
\textsuperscript{68}Ibid., Tape 5.
\textsuperscript{70}\textit{Intercollegiate Swimming Guide 1916-1917}, op. cit., p. 94.
Duke Kahanamoku. Cann used some of his sprint speed to open an early lead, and then maintained an even tempo to widen the lead over the "Duke" to win by half a pool length with a time of 6:24 2/5.\textsuperscript{71}

On that same day in April, a Yale relay team of four swimmers, who had maintained training under Matt's supervision, won the Intercollegiate Relay Championship at the Chicago Athletic Association natatorium. The Yale team of Ferguson, Schlaet, Mayer, and Rosener recorded the winning time of 4:01 2/5 and defeated the relay teams representing Northwestern University, the second place finisher, and the University of Chicago.\textsuperscript{72} Although Matt did not accompany Ted Cann to St. Louis or the Yale swimmers to Chicago, he was very happy when he read about those winning efforts. Matt also felt proud that swimmers trained under his system fared so well against top competition from other parts of the country.\textsuperscript{73}

Matt's coaching successes at the N.Y.A.C. seemed to "sit well" with many of the men in the general membership who showed a marked increase in their interest to discuss competitive swimming and to participate in the club's recreational swimming activities. Such was the popularity that swimming had achieved at the N.Y.A.C., that the club's monthly periodical, Winged Foot, carried an article which stated:


\textsuperscript{73}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
Mann is proving the kind of instructor who inspires confidence and gets results. The racing men already swear by him, and the business men’s classes, started under his supervision, are becoming larger daily. His advent has brought convincing proof that most men are thoroughly interested in up to date natation. . . .

Matt’s coaching record also merited attention from other members of his chosen profession on both the collegiate and interscholastic levels. Such professional recognition was accorded Matt, when he was one of several prominent coaches who was asked to contribute to a special section of the Intercollegiate Swimming Guide 1915-1916. That section, entitled "Symposium on the Crawl Stroke," contained the responses to several questions about crawlstroke racing techniques. Although Matt was regarded as a relative newcomer to the coaching ranks, his comments were of particular interest to many other coaches because of the significant achievements made by several of his swimmers on the collegiate and scholastic levels. Matt prefaced his thoughts on the racing techniques by affirming:

I am a crawl stroke man from the beginning to the end. I teach the crawl as an elementary stroke and have done so much better than ever I could have done with the breast stroke that I never teach anything else. . . .

Matt wanted the readers of his symposium section to understand that his success in coaching crawlstroke swimmers was, in part, a product of his belief, "... that good competitive swimmers were developed from

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teaching programs which emphasized the crawl stroke. . . "77 In Matt's teaching programs, including those of the Buffalo and Brookline days, the beginners were exposed to each of the strokes commonly used in competitive and recreational swimming, but only after the students had become fairly accomplished at the crawl.78

In the body of the symposium article, there were many common points of agreement regarding crawlstroke techniques among the contributing coaches; but Matt had submitted several unique suggestions for improving racing techniques. Those techniques may have been taught by the other coaches, but were not described in their symposium sections. Matt's points, described in an easy to understand language for coach and competitor, were:

. . . The reach and catch are characterized by a drive of the arm into the water with the finger tips entering first, before any other part of the arm. . . . A roll can be initiated for the 220 or longer swims by driving the arm deeper, this makes the breath a bit easier, and also brings out a distinct small side kick, which is quite an asset in longer swims. . . . For sprinting less than 100 yards, the body should be kept flat, with arms catching slightly in front of the head, but out to each side a bit, with a thrashing kick and loose knees. Over a 100 the knees should be kept straight and the ankles extended throughout the kick, with a slight toe in. . . . Take a breath each stroke cycle for races other than sprints. . . . 79

By May, when the indoor competitive season had finally come to a close, Matt thought often about the reopening of his camp in Rutland, Massachusetts for the summer season. The various coaching positions he had held that winter of 1916, plus the length of the

77 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
78 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 3.
season, did not permit Matt to do much in the way of advertising the camp's dates and program offerings. Even though his name had become quite well known in "aquatic circles" around the New York metropolitan area, he believed his best opportunity to recruit campers would be from the Brookline and Boston areas. His swimming classes and instructor's position at the N.Y.A.C. ended for the season in late May, therefore allowing only June for the recruitment of camp staff, campers, and the preparation of the camp's facilities.®0

Early in June, Matt arrived in the Boston area to meet with old friends, and to publicize his summer camp. Matt's previous successes with swimming teams in the area, his successful season in the New York City area and with the Yale University team, plus his enthusiastic spirit, made him popular with many of the Boston area sports reporters. Matt often kept an audience of reporters "enthralled" as he told them stories about his former competitive days and prior coaching assignments. In addition to the stories of the past, Matt's assessment of the rapid growth patterns of swimming, as a major recreational pursuit in many of the large northeastern cities, was also worthy of a newspaper story which reported, "... that swimming was rapidly pushing to the fore in the recreation field ... and in the New York City area, swimming appears to be taking on the craze proportions as dancing did. ..."81

®0 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.

Matt enjoyed the hard work of preparing his camp for the boys who would be attending the different sessions during the summer season. He looked upon the outdoor experiences at the camp as an opportunity to refresh himself from the rigors of the hectic indoor swimming season, as well as a pleasant way to draw a salary for the summer months. But the enrollment of campers was not what Matt had hoped for; and he found it necessary, from a financial standpoint, to return to the N.Y.A.C. each week to conduct some swimming lesson and competitive training sessions.  

The summer season swimming meets began on a "high note" for the N.Y.A.C., as swimmers representing the Mercury Foot club garnered the top place in the early competitions. Hal Vollmer showed that the break between the winter and summer seasons had not impaired his record setting ability when he established a new world record for the 500 meter event with a time of 6:51 3/5. Vollmer swam alone in the record setting effort in the N.Y.A.C. pool. The event, attended by a large gallery of spectators, had been organized and promoted by Otto Wahle, the Chairman of the Metropolitan A.A.U. Wahle had a flare for publicity, and following a practice session at which he timed Vollmer, the former believed that Hal was fast enough to break the record of 6:56 4/5 set by J. G. Hatfield of England in 1912, thus, the record attempt was set up and sanctioned. On the way to the 500 meter record, Vollmer passed the 300 meter mark in 3:55 2/5 and in so doing, broke Charlie Daniels American record of 3:57 3/5 set in 1910.  

\[^{82}\text{Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.}\]
In less than two weeks after his record setting effort, Vollmer was successful in winning two hard-fought races, those being the 440 yard and 880 yard Metropolitan A.A.U. championship events. In each of those races the winner was followed closely by his teammate from the N.Y.A.C., Ted Cann. The quarter-mile event was held at the outdoor pool on Travers Island, while the half-mile race was contested at the 110 foot pool of the Deal Beach Swimming Club in Allenhurst, New Jersey. It was in the 880 yard race that Cann, with a time of 11:42 2/5, came very close to defeating Vollmer, whose winning time was 11:41 1/5. Vollmer had maintained a "string" of consecutive victories in Metropolitan A.A.U. championship events which extended back through the indoor season.

Although Matt took great pride in the accomplishments of the N.Y.A.C.'s younger swimmers, his favorite among the team members was the "old-timer," Bud Goodwin, who at age thirty-four was approaching the end of his competitive career. Matt had assisted the seasoned veteran, Goodwin, with his training that summer for the One Mile Metropolitan A.A.U. championship race. Goodwin won the one-mile event, probably one of the most difficult races of his career, by defeating his sensational teammate Hal Vollmer, thus breaking the latter's "string" of consecutive Metropolitan championship victories, and another teammate, Joe Wheatley, who was the defending champion in the event. The fact that the event was held in the 80 yard pool at

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85 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
Steeplechase Park, Coney Island, Brooklyn, was to the advantage of the
vile veteran Goodvin over the skillful, but less experienced Vollmer. The long pool reduced the number of turns Goodvin had to execute during the race, and this was an advantage, since Goodvin's turns were quite slow when compared to those of Vollmer. The most distinct advantage of the long pool was Goodvin's ability to use the open water to lead Vollmer off a straight course. Early in the race Goodvin opened a lead and thereafter managed, either intentionally or unintentionally, to send Vollmer off course, and on one occasion Vollmer and Wheatley collided, thus causing a valuable loss of time for both of Goodwin's opponents. Goodvin's winning margin was 20 yards over Vollmer, and almost a pool length over Wheatley. 86

In the final championship event, the five mile race of the Metropolitan A.A.U.'s schedule of summer races, Bud Goodwin would test his skills in the Hudson River. The N.Y.A.C. was responsible for conducting the race, which was to be swum over a course from a point in the river adjacent to Columbia University and 116 Street, with the finish line north in the river adjacent to 216 Street. Five swimmers were entered in the race on a late afternoon when the weather turned quite cool with a strong head wind making the river rather choppy. While Goodwin's one mile title race was very demanding because of the competition he faced, the five mile event in the river was a sheer test of his emotional and physical stamina to endure the severe race conditions. The late starting time on that day was selected so that

the competitors might be able to swim with the current, but this was not the case for the first hour of the race. Due to the adverse water conditions Goodwin and his fellow competitors were required to follow a "zig-zag" type course towards the finish line. Goodwin was also directed off his racing line many times because his course placed him in line with several large ferry boats and day-line excursion vessels. Darkness set in before the competitors had reached the intended finish line, and the race committee had not made provision for marking the finish line after sunset. During the darkness, the competitors each had a small launch to follow, but Goodwin had no idea where his opponents were in relation to his position. Four hours and fifty-one minutes after the start of the race, an exhausted Bud Goodwin was hauled from the water by members of the race committee, near 247th Street, some two miles beyond the intended finish line, and declared the winner. Two of the other competitors, Charles Kaufman of the American Life Saving Society and John Curren of the N.Y.A.C. were awarded the second and third positions. The summer racing season of 1916 was brought to a close with that rather bizarre race. Matt was very pleased that Bud was able to conclude his illustrious competitive swimming career with those two championship victories; as Bud's coach, Matt was extremely proud to have been associated with a "real gentleman" of the sport.

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88 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 4.
Matt's official employment at the N.Y.A.C. for the indoor season of 1916-1917 was resumed on September 15, 1916. His teaching and coaching responsibilities at the club were to remain essentially the same as the preceding indoor season, except that the enrollment in Matt's instructional classes was expected to be greater, due to the increasing popularity of swimming, and a desire by the members to learn the "art" of natation from "the best teacher in the business." During much of the fall season Matt's teaching sessions at the N.Y.A.C. pool occupied the major portion of his professional aquatic responsibilities. Matt and a few of his N.Y.A.C. swimming team members did perform in some special aquatic exhibitions at the Mercury Foot pool and several other pools in the metropolitan area to promote the sport of swimming and more specifically, the upcoming competitive season.

While Matt encouraged most of the competitive swimmers he was affiliated with "to swim" as much as possible during the off seasons, his official competitive training regimen with the N.Y.A.C. swimmers was not begun until late November. His work with the Yale, Poly Prep and Lawrenceville teams was also initiated at about the same time; but in a coaching advisory capacity with the two prep school programs, since each school had designated a member of its staff to assume the coaching responsibilities. With his high school coaching schedule reduced, Matt tried to increase the number of visits he made each week to New Haven to work with the Yale swimmers, from one evening and one

90Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
91Ibid., Tape 5.
weekend afternoon, to two evenings and on some occasions, both days of the weekend. Matt had received a sum of money, amounting to less than two hundred dollars, for his coaching services and travel reimbursement from the Yale Athletic Association for the 1916 season, and he had agreed upon a similar arrangement for the 1917 season. The money for Matt's services was made available to Yale by the donations of Ogden Reid.

The indoor competitive swimming season at the N.Y.A.C. was officially ushered in with a four-event program in mid-December. Matt had organized a program which included a 100 yard novice race for high school boys, a fancy diving event, a water polo match between the N.Y.A.C. and an All-Star team composed of players from local teams, and the featured 100 yard Handicap Race for the Bratton Memorial Cup. The program drew a large gallery of spectators who seemed to enjoy each event. The Bratton Memorial Cup Race was a sealed handicap event in which the time allowance for each competitor was enclosed in an envelope which was not opened until after each contestant had completed his 100 yard swim. The top swimmer in the event was Ted Cann, and because of his prowess he was the event's only scratch competitor. Cann recorded the fastest time of :57 4/5 for the distance, but Charles Hanner of the West Side Y.M.C.A. with a time allowance of 14 seconds was declared the winner. The very strong N.Y.A.C. water

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92 Hopkins interview, loc. cit.
93 Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 23.
polo team easily won the match by a score of 9-0 to complete the evening's schedule of events. 94

Matt was quite ready for the start of the Intercollegiate Swimming League season, since many of the members of Yale's league champion team of the previous season had returned to defend the team's title. The Metropolitan A.A.U. championship event series was also of particular interest to Matt because he believed that Ted Cann appeared ready to dethrone Hal Vollmer as the "kingpin" of local swimming. Cann, a freshman at N.Y.U., was working very hard with Matt at the N.Y.A.C., while Vollmer had decided to devote more of his training time to Ed Kennedy, his coach at Columbia University. 95 Vollmer, a junior at Columbia, had been elected as Captain of his collegiate team for the 1916-1917 season the preceding spring. While reducing his practice sessions at the N.Y.A.C., Vollmer would retain his affiliation with the Mercury Foot club for local and national A.A.U. competition. 96

The Yale University swimming team of ten members, led by Captain Ferguson and former Captain Schlaet, opened the season in January with impressive victories over C.C.N.Y., 48 to 5, and the University of Pennsylvania, 35 1/2 to 17 1/2. 97 That month also marked the first of the Metropolitan A.A.U. championship events with


95Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.


Ted Cann winning the 100 yard race with a time of :57 2/5, a mere 1/5 of a second ahead of his teammate and the defending champion, Hal Vollmer. While that race was a thrilling competitive contest for the spectators at the N.Y.A.C. pool, the winning time was much slower than Vollmer's record time of :55 1/5 set the preceding year. 98

Many of Matt's friends and former associates in the Boston area were kept abreast of some of his accomplishments in the "swimming business" by occasional articles in the Boston press. Prior to the first New York Metropolitan A.A.U. championship race, Matt had informed certain Boston area sports writers that Ted Cann was going to be the new swimming sensation of the 1917 indoor season. An article in the Boston Traveller indicated that Matt had predicted Cann's victory over Vollmer, and that such a prediction was based on Matt's exceptional ability to be able to recognize and develop an outstanding talent; and Matt's move to New York was a significant loss to the Boston sports scene. 99

On the interscholastic level, the two teams, Poly Prep and Lawrenceville Academy, to which Matt served as a coaching advisor, were both having very good seasons. Poly Prep had recorded a convincing victory in the Rutgers College Invitational Interscholastic meet, when the boys from Brooklyn won four of the six events contested. Poly Prep's Rudy was the meet's individual star as he won the 50-yard and 220-yard


races, and anchored the winning relay. 100 Two weeks later, the Poly Prep team fared no better than third in the big interscholastic meet hosted annually by Princeton University. Lawrenceville swimmers easily captured the team title in the meet, which had been dominated by the Brookline High School swimmers in the preceding years, by winning four of the six events and scoring 30 points. The individual high point winner was Luke of Lawrenceville, who won the 220-yard race, placed second in the 100-yard event and anchored the winning relay; but the top individual performance of the meet was the winning time of :59 3/5 by Leo Handy in the 100-yard event. Handy represented the Irving School of New Jersey and led his team to a surprising second place finish with 16 points. This was, in fact, the same Leo Handy who had so dominated the Princeton meet in preceding years, when he swam for Matt at Brookline High School; Irving's Handy had entered only one individual event because his training program prior to the meet had rendered him quite incapable of meeting the stern competition of the well-trained Lawrenceville and Poly Prep swimmers in three individual swimming races and the relay event. 101

During February, Yale University swimmers continued their winning ways in New Haven by recording three lopsided victories, the first over Brown University, 44 to 9; 102 and then C.C.N.Y., 39 to 14. In the latter meet Yale swimmers won five of the six events, including


an uncommon awarding of first place, due to a disqualification, to Yale's Clark Hopkins in the 220-yard race after his teammate Alexander, the apparent winner, failed to touch the finish line. The third meet victory was a sound "dunking" of Pennsylvania for the second time that season, 46 to 7.

In mid-February, the N.Y.A.C. pool served as the site for the second major Metropolitan A.A.U. championship event, the 220-yard race. By race time the event had been advertised as a virtual match race between the N.Y.A.C. teammates Cann and Vollmer, since most of the eligible competitors from the area realized there was little hope in finishing better than third against the likes of Cann and Vollmer. Although Cann had been victorious in the 100-yard championship earlier that season, Vollmer was regarded as the favorite, on the basis of his standing as the world record holder and his sheer dominance of that event the previous season. By race time, the N.Y.A.C. pool spectator section was filled with a crowd, which seemed equally divided in its support for the two main contestants, Vollmer and Cann. In the early part of the race, Vollmer used his well known tactic of going out hard and establishing an early lead, but Cann was patient, and by the half-way mark the latter drew even with Vollmer. By the finish, Cann had established a winning margin of four yards over Vollmer, but the winner's time of 2:25 2/5 was well off Vollmer's record. Based on the two metropolitan championship races of the 1917 season, Vollmer


appeared not to be properly conditioned to meet the successful challenges of Ted Cann in the unofficial competition. Cann was recognized as the newest outstanding swimmer in the New York metropolitan area.105

As the end of February approached, it appeared that the Yale swimmers were ready to make their defense of the Intercollegiate Swimming League title a "run away," but that was before its dual meet with Columbia. On the day of the meeting between the two league leaders, Coach Ed Kennedy unveiled a superbly conditioned Hal Vollmer and "company." Vollmer was sensational that day as he anchored Columbia's winning relay team to open the meet, and then proceeded to win each of the individual swimming events, 50-yard, 100-yard, and 220-yard, to lead Columbia to a surprising 33 to 20 victory over Yale. The New Haven swimmers and Matt were clearly disappointed since they had their only managed victories in the fancy diving, Benjamin, and the plunge, Schneider. The meet also appeared to reveal a Hal Vollmer who had returned to his form of the preceding season.106

In early March, the Yale team had returned to its winning ways by recording a convincing 38 to 15 victory over the Princeton team. The meet, held in New Haven, was dominated by the Yale swimmers, highlighted by very fine individual efforts as Mayer won the 50-yard race, Schlaet the 100, and Alexander and Hopkins provided a one-two


sweep in the 220-yard swim. Princeton's only winning effort came in
the plunge.\textsuperscript{107}

By mid-March the stage had been set for the biggest dual meet
of the Intercollegiate Swimming League season, as Yale prepared to
meet Columbia for the second time. The Vollmer-led Columbia team had
a 7-0 record, and the league championship was within its grasp, if it
could defeat Yale in New Haven. Matt had the Yale swimmers extremely
fit for the rematch, as the opening event of the meet, the 200-yard
relay, gave the Columbia swimmers an indication of how they would fare
that afternoon in New Haven. The Yale relay team of Ferguson, Thomas,
Mayer and Schlaet swam to victory with a time of 1:45 1/5, which
established a new world record for the event by one fifth of a second
and was 2 1/5 seconds faster than the intercollegiate record. The
outcome of that event seemed to deflate the spirit of the Columbia
team, for the only event a Columbia swimmer managed to win was the
50-yard race by Vollmer. After the relay event Yale recorded impressive
performances in the 100-yard race when Mayer and Alexander finished one-
two, and in the 220-yard event when Alexander and Hopkins tied for
first. Yale's lopsided 42-11 victory had placed the league race in a
tie with both teams posting 7-1 season records. The league title would
have to be decided by a third meet between the two teams, to be held
at a neutral site.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{107}"Yale Overpowers Princeton," \textit{New York Times}, March 10, 1917,
p. 12, col. 2.

\textsuperscript{108}"Yale Swimmers Victorious," \textit{New York Times}, March 22, 1917,
p. 12, col. 5.
Admired the excitement of the race for the league title, Matt still managed to keep Ted Cann in top form. In a special 200-yard race sponsored by the N.Y.A.C., and held at the Mercury Foot pool, it had been arranged for Cann to race against an entry of local swimmers for the first 200-yards; at that point his competition finished the race, but Cann continued for an additional four lengths of the pool, in a quest for new records at 250-yards and 300-yards. Cann achieved his goals by establishing two new American records for the distances, with a time of 2:48 4/5 for 250-yards and 3:28 for 300-yards, the latter breaking Vollmer's record of 3:34 2/5.109

Prior to the final dual meet between Yale and Columbia for the league title, the previously scheduled Intercollegiate Swimming League Individual Championships were held at the University of Pennsylvania. Swimmers from each of the league's teams, plus invited swimmers from the Amherst and Wesleyan teams, competed for individual honors. Hal Vollmer was recognized as the outstanding swimmer in the meet following his victories in 100-yard and 220-yard races. Whereas the Columbia swimmers recorded a number of fine performances, the best event for the Yale contingent was the 220-yard event in which Ferguson, Alexander and Hopkins finished behind Vollmer. At the close of the meet the league swimming committee announced that the decisive dual meet between Yale and Columbia for the league championship would be held at Princeton University on March 30.110


Three days before the "big" dual meet, the N.Y.A.C. was the site of the National A.A.U. 220-yard championship. The promoters of the event had hoped for a final heat which would bring together Ted Cann, who was having an outstanding winter season, Hal Vollmer, the defending champion for the event, and Norman Ross, the sensational young swimmer from the West coast, representing the Olympic Club, San Francisco. On the evening of the championship event, the final heat contained two of the three hopefuls, Cann and Ross; Vollmer had elected not to defend his title, due to the rigors of the collegiate season and the very important upcoming dual meet with Yale. The crowded gallery of the Mercury Foot natatorium was not disappointed though, for Cann and Ross staged a great stroke for stroke competition for the entire race. Ross was the winner of the national 220-yard crown with a new world record performance of 2:22 2/5, while Cann finished a yard behind with his time of 2:23 2/5 tying Vollmer's former mark. In the only other event of the evening, the National Fancy Diving championship, Albert Downers of the N.Y.A.C. easily defeated the competition.111

Two days after his second place finish to Ross, Ted Cann successfully "turned-the-tables" on the young California in a shorter race in Pittsburgh. Cann won the Middle Atlantic 100-yard championship with a time of :55 1/5 in the 90 foot pool of the Pittsburgh Aquatic Club. Cann opened an early lead which the powerful Ross was unable to make up. Cann had learned from his earlier competition with Ross, for

in the 220-yard race Cann had allowed Ross to establish an early lead which held up at the finish. 112

It seemed that there was some bit of significant swimming news in the Sports Section of the New York Times, each day, during the last week of March 1917. Local swimming fans had followed closely the exploits of the local standouts Ted Cann and Hal Vollmer. The day preceding the Columbia and Yale dual meet, Columbia coach Ed Kennedy did not surprise anyone when he revealed that Columbia’s chances of winning the league title would rest squarely upon the shoulders of his star, Hal Vollmer. Kennedy had explained that no special strategy was planned other than to use Vollmer on the end of the relay and in the 50-yard, 100-yard and 220-yard races, the same pattern used earlier in the season when Columbia was the victor. Coach Kennedy had raised another issue which was to be discussed at the league meeting after the season, that being the eight points awarded to a winning relay team at the start of a dual meet. Kennedy and some other coaches felt that the point total was too high, and that the team winning such an event definitely had a "psychological" advantage, which was difficult for the other team to overcome. But that matter would have to wait, as the existing rule would be in effect for title dual meet. 113

On the day of the decisive meet at Princeton’s pool, Matt had arranged his swimmers, for the relay event, in the same order as the one that had established the world record in the second meet between


the two teams. The Yale relay team, a talented quartet of individual event swimmers, composed of Alexander, Thomas, Mayer and Schlaet won the opening event by a comfortable margin. Vollmer realized how important that relay point total was for his team's chances for victory that day, as he gave a valiant effort to overtake Schlaet on the anchor leg, but Yale's lead was too great. Vollmer did not let that defeat detract from his individual efforts against the "mighty" Yale team, for he went on to win the 50-yard, 100-yard, and 220-yard events; but his teammates were only able to provide token support with three third place finishes in the individual events. Yale's one-two finishes in the plunge and fancy diving events, and the strong swimming efforts of Mayer, Alexander and Hopkins in the 50-yard, 100-yard and 220-yard events, respectively, enabled Yale to score a convincing 35-18 victory, and to win another Intercollegiate Swimming League championship with an 8-1 dual meet record. 114

Matt's coaching achievements on the collegiate level had attracted considerable recognition among the members of the swimming coaching "profession." Matt was one of a select few of college swimming coaches, who was asked to contribute to the "Symposium on Training for Speed Swimming" published in the Intercollegiate Swimming Guide 1916-1917. Each contributing coach had been asked to provide written responses to a list of questions, which dealt with different facets of a training program for swimmers preparing for events of 50-yards, 100-yards, or 220-yards. Matt's first responses were

directed to points to be considered when training the swimmers early in the season. He believed that since races of 220-yards and less emphasized sprint-like efforts from the competitor, then the training program should place that kind of stress upon the swimmer, with certain exceptions in the early season. Matt suggested that during the first week of training each swimmer should swim 400 to 500 yards slowly, each day, Monday through Friday. In the second week, after the swimmers had done their easy swimming, the coach should add some 50-yard sprints, and also devote some time for work on starts and turns, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday, a 220-yard swim at half speed should follow the easy swimming. On Saturday each swimmer should swim a fast 100-yard effort. During the third and fourth weeks of training, the coach should include time trials for the distances to be swum in competition for each swimmer.115

Matt presented a more detailed outline of a workout plan for a week as the swimmers entered the fourth week of training. He suggested that on Monday, each swimmer complete a fast 100-yard swim, rest for ten minutes, then swim a fast 50-yards, then a short rest followed by a slow swim of 300-yards. Tuesday: most of the work should be devoted to the practice of starts and turns, at least ten of each, then have each swimmer complete 300 to 400 yards at an easy pace. Wednesday: following several lengths of easy swimming, each individual should swim 440-yards at half speed. Thursday: each individual should swim 300 to 400 yards at an easy pace, then in small groups, the swimmers

should complete four fast 50-yard sprints with each sprint followed by a ten minute rest. Friday: each swimmer should be timed for an all out effort at 50-yards, followed by a fifteen minute rest, then each swimmer should be timed for a very fast 100-yards. Saturday: following an easy swim of 300 to 400 yards, each swimmer should complete a fast 300-yard swim.116

In addition to the specific points concerning workout organization which Matt presented, he also offered several items which he believed might be helpful to new coaches and to certain "experienced" men in the competitive swimming business. He believed that swimmers did not require a special diet during the competitive season; and that a pre-competition meal should consist of whatever foods the swimmer desired, as long as sufficient time elapsed before the competitive event. Matt actually preferred his swimmers being hungry when they entered competition. He also suggested that the swimmers be timed in practices, for all out efforts, on a very limited basis, since the too frequent use of the watch was often responsible for the "cracking" and staleness of many good swimmers early in their competitive careers. In concluding his portion of the "Symposium," Matt felt that he spoke for the other featured coaches when he stated, "We would advise all swimmers, especially high school and college candidates for honors, to abstain from tobacco and alcohol at all times, whether during swimming season or not."117

In the weeks that followed the thrilling 1917 collegiate swimming season, Matt thought often about how much he would enjoy the

116 Ibid. 117 Ibid., p. 68.
opportunity to become a "full-time" swimming instructor and coach at a university, especially Yale. Matt had discussed his interest in such a position on numerous occasions with his Yale swimmers. The popularity of Matt with the Yale swimming team members and the lack of a qualified swimming instructor for class instruction on the Yale campus, each served as an impetus to initiate a course of action designed to promote Matt's hiring on a full-time basis at Yale University.

In March of 1917, a Yale undergraduate student, Andrew Wilson, Jr., wrote a letter to the Chairman of the Board of Athletic Control of Yale University, Professor Robert N. Corwin, in which the former requested that some positive action be taken by "The Board" regarding the campus "swimming situation." Mr. Wilson had stated that the lack of systematic swimming instruction at Yale had permitted many men to graduate who were unable to swim, and that situation was deplored by concerned undergraduate and graduate students. Wilson further stated that Yale's recent success in swimming competition had been achieved by excellent talent being attracted to the campus. He cited three reasons for the attraction: because of the Yale "academic" reputation, a very attractive swimming facility, and the "good fortune" of hiring a coach with Matt Mann's qualifications on a part-time basis. Wilson concluded his remarks by stating that the problems with the lack of a systematic swimming instruction program, and the dependence upon

118 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.

chance for the maintenance of a "first rate" swimming team could be corrected by the hiring of Matt Mann. 120

Wilson's letter was soon followed by a letter from Richard B. Mayer, the captain-elect of the Yale swimming team for 1918, in which the latter requested that Professor Corwin strongly consider the hiring of Matt Mann as resident instructor in swimming. 121

Following Mayer's letter, Professor Corwin received several letters from Yale alumni who had been swimming team members, each letter containing a request that Matt Mann be hired as the swimming coach and instructor. Mayer had initiated the letter writing campaign among a select group of Yale alumni who had been swimming team members. The message of the letters was, in essence, a request for better instructional and coaching services in the aquatic area, than the university was then providing with the employment of Max Schwartz as pool director. The latter was looked upon as being competent to handle pool maintenance duties, but swimming instructional responsibilities were not within the realm of his qualifications. 122

It was apparent that Professor Corwin was not about to charge his board to make a hasty decision, regarding the hiring of a full-time swimming instructor, for several weeks had passed since the early letters of Wilson and Mayer had been received by Corwin, with no evidence of any definitive action being taken on the matter. On at least one occasion, Corwin had informed one of the "swimming" alumni group that a committee was to be organized to consider candidates for the swimming position. Corwin had also mentioned, that a major

120 Ibid., p. 24. 121 Ibid. 122 Ibid., p. 25.
"stumbling block" in this hiring process was the lack of funds to employ a qualified person for the position. One additional piece of evidence, concerning the displeasure some of Matt's supporters had for Corwin's lack of action, was the preparation of a petition, which requested student support for the hiring of Matt Mann as swimming instructor and coach at Yale University. But throughout the spring, Corwin remained undaunted by the barrage of requests for Matt's hiring, as the former failed to take any specific action with regard to the "swimming job."\(^{123}\)

Matt was most interested in the Yale position and would gladly have accepted a reasonable offer from Professor Corwin. But Matt's need for summer employment required that he devote some portion of each day, during the spring, to inquire about the availability of summer swimming work, leaving him little time to worry about the Yale situation. Matt's position at the N.Y.A.C. gave him a high degree of visibility in several parts of the country, which enabled him to make contacts quite easily about the availability of certain aquatic positions at athletic clubs, Y.M.C.A.'s and camps in the northeastern and midwestern sections of the country. Matt's outstanding record and successes with various swimming groups, in addition to the visibility provided by the N.Y.A.C. position, led to a letter of inquiry about his availability for the summer season of 1917, from a Mr. Julius Barnes of Duluth, Minnesota.\(^{124}\)

\(^{123}\)Ibid., pp. 26-27.

\(^{124}\)Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 6.
Julius Barnes, a wealthy grain businessman, had agreed to provide the funds for a new indoor aquatic complex at the Duluth Boat Club (D.B.C.), where he had a membership. Since the D.B.C. had established itself, in recent years, on the national level, in competitive rowing events, it was the desire of Julius Barnes to attract the best possible swimming instructor and coach to the new facility, so that an excellent aquatic program might be developed. When Matt's availability was made known to Barnes, the latter immediately contacted the former at the N.Y.A.C. Matt liked the idea of being the new instructor-coach at the "yet-to-be-opened" complex, and the ambitious plans of Julius Barnes. Matt responded promptly with a note of acceptance to the offer of Barnes at the D.B.C. During May, Barnes sent the D.B.C.'s successful rowing coach, Jim Ten Eyck, to New York to secure Matt's signature on the contract. Matt's meeting with Ten Eyck was a pleasant occasion for both; since it was a reunion of sorts. During Matt's employment at Syracuse University he had the opportunity to work with Jim, who was then an undergraduate student, and a member of the swimming team. Matt and Jim discussed the "Syracuse days," including Jim's year as swimming coach, as Matt's successor, at Syracuse University, and the opportunities which awaited Matt in Duluth. After his conversation with Jim, Matt felt certain he had made the right decision for his summer season employment, which was to begin in mid-June. While Matt had hoped to receive the news about the Yale position before he left for Duluth, he would look forward to receiving an employment offer from Professor Corwin for the
swimming instructor and coach position at Yale University, so certain was Matt of getting the "swimming job."\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{125} Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 7.
Chapter 6

GO WEST YOUNG MAN

During the long train ride from New York City to Duluth, Minnesota, Matt thought often about his new position and the unique challenges which awaited him at the Duluth Boat Club. He was prepared to begin his swimming instruction program soon after his arrival, for he was well aware that many of the instructional class students would serve at the "spawn" for his future competitive team. Much to Matt's surprise, his initial reactions to Duluth were quite similar to those he had felt, several years earlier, when he stepped off the train in Toronto, after being sent out of New York City, following his arrival in this country. While Matt had dressed in accordance for the weather he expected during the second week of June, he encountered instead, a cold, whipping wind with a temperature near the freezing mark at the Duluth Boat Club. There was no greeting committee for Matt at the D.B.C.; as a matter of fact, the only persons on the premises were a group of construction workers, who were only in the early stages of work on the site that was to become the new natatorium. As Matt looked out upon some twenty small boats, still encased in the ice of Lake Superior, he doubted that the pool could be completed that summer, and he indeed wondered if he had made the wrong decision in leaving his familiar surroundings on the East Coast.¹

¹Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
The word soon got around Duluth that Matt had arrived, and it did not take long before many people, including Julius Barnes and Jim Ten Eyck, made the new swimming coach feel quite "at home." Matt was assured that his employment was still secure, and that his work could commence as soon as he desired at the indoor pool of the Duluth Y.M.C.A. There was a definite enthusiasm, among the D.B.C. club members, for Matt to initiate his swimming program. His hiring seemed to appeal to a wide cross section of the D.B.C. membership, since his instructional program would offer classes for children, men and women, with no additional fee charges. The new aquatic complex at the D.B.C. had been designed for instructional and competitive programs. The indoor facility would house a main pool of 75 feet by 36 feet, with a separate and smaller pool for beginning instruction. Mr. Barnes had hoped for an opening date for the $100,000 complex sometime early in July, but due to weather conditions that would be delayed.

As Matt prepared his plans for his instructional and competitive programs, he was interested in meeting with any people in the community who might have a strong swimming background, especially with the crawlstroke. Matt was able to meet only one person with those credentials -- a young man named Louie Ordwean, who was probably in his early twenties. After some discussions, Matt invited Louie to the Y.M.C.A. pool, to see how good the latter was in the water. The Duluth swimmer had good stroke fundamentals, but he certainly was not

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2 Ibid.

3 "B.C. Instructor is Noted Swimmer," Duluth Herald, June 8, 1917, Scrapbook 3, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 82.
fast, and Matt soon let Louie know it by getting into the water with him, and matching strokes with him, across various distances. But Matt was anxious to befriend Louie because he believed that the young man would make a good initial team member, and that his membership would help attract other young men to the new team.

During the week following Matt's arrival to Duluth, on June 14, he maintained a very busy schedule. In addition to his sessions with Ordwean, Matt had prepared an extensive schedule for instructional classes and recreational sessions for the D.B.C.'s new pool. Since the D.B.C. aquatic complex would not be completed for several weeks, Matt had planned to start the classes at the Y.M.C.A. His instructional plan, for the new pool, called for using the facility from about 9:30 in the morning until well into the night. He believed that such a plan would enable a great many club members to attend swimming classes, which would work into their personal daily schedules. Most of the proposed instructional and recreational sessions would be open to men and women, but Matt felt that the women should have some pool time to themselves; therefore, he scheduled two mornings, each week, for the exclusive use by the female members. The thoroughness of Matt's planning was further evidenced by his selection of an official gray swimming suit for the club members. The selection of a sleeveless style for the women's suits was a departure from the design most commonly seen in that part of the country, but Matt believed that such

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1Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.
a design would permit the women greater freedom of movement, while swimming the crawlstroke.⁵

A newcomer to the community would have found it hard to believe that the aquatics program at the D.B.C. was not yet underway. Local newspapers carried frequent articles on the sports pages about the new program and Matt was readily available for reporters' inquiries. One attractive piece of information, which was of interest to the Duluth Tribune, was that a special feature of Matt's instructional program would be a life saving course. From his earlier association with life saving groups in New England, Matt had retained a strong interest for incorporating the instruction of basic life saving skills in a total aquatics program. He reflected that belief when he stated:

... There is nothing on earth so satisfying as the knowledge that you have saved the life of someone in danger of drowning, or possess the ability to save someone, if the need should arise. You will without fear, be able to go in and rescue the misfortuned individual, who has not had the opportunity to learn to swim or life save. ... ⁶

Towards the end of June, Matt was quite pleased with the pool construction progress which had been made at the D.B.C. With the forms in place, and the "big" pool's dimensions of 75 feet by 36 feet becoming a reality, Matt had suggested to several people that the D.B.C. could have one of the fastest indoor "tanks" in the world. He believed that the pool's width, with regard to its length, would help to eliminate a good deal of the rough water created during competitive


events. Matt had witnessed world record performances at the N.Y.A.C. and Yale pools, both of which were very good facilities, but the pool under construction at the D.B.C. should exceed them both as an outstanding pool for competition. The potential of the new facility and the reservoir of swimming talent, which Matt believed, lived in the Duluth area, led him to speculate:

"There is no good reason why Duluth swimmers cannot go out and land some world championships, just the same as they have been bringing home medals for rowing. I am certain we can develop some of the best swimmers in the country (U.S.) right here."

The instructional classes, especially those for the boys, were going very well at the Y.M.C.A. Matt was extremely pleased at the ease many of the youngsters demonstrated in learning the crawl stroke. So rapid was the progress of several boys, from various age groups, that Matt was prompted to schedule, for early July, what was believed to be the first indoor swimming meet in the city at the "Head of the Lakes." Matt was full of enthusiasm as he declared, "The youngsters are so in love with the sport that it is easy to teach them, . . . they exert every ounce of energy which they possess. Several have shown the ability to be real stars. . . ."

The popularity of the new swimming program at the Y.M.C.A. had made Matt a "celebrity" of sorts. His views on the current status of the sport of swimming in the United States were often quoted in the


local press. Although Matt had not traveled extensively throughout the country, he did suggest that one reason why most Americans did not know how to swim, was due to the coldness of many of the outdoor bodies of water available for recreational swimming, for nine to ten months each year. He claimed the other major cause for America's poor "water literacy" rate could be attributed to the attempts by many swimming instructors to teach their beginners "... the mystifying and complex breaststroke, which often led most pupils to give up on their lessons..." Matt's lessons featured the crawlstroke, as they had from his early days in Buffalo. His teaching sequence for the crawlstroke started with the students learning the arm pattern first, followed by a separate lesson of the leg action. (He felt a four beat pattern was ideal, but he thought the learner should not worry about a specific number). Matt then had his pupils combine the arm and leg actions for a couple of sessions. After the students displayed a good degree of efficiency with the propulsive movements, Matt then introduced the breathing pattern of turning the head to one side. He believed that beginners could learn this crawlstroke sequence much easier than the breaststroke.9

Matt was particularly impressed and encouraged by the rapid progress of a group of "grammar school" boys. That group of eighth and ninth graders, which included Jack and Alex Gow, Dick Bennett, Leonard Draper, and Mel Cooley, displayed the spirit and competitive potential which seemed to permeate Matt's teams at the Brookline

Gymnasium Athletic Association. Matt was pleased with the willingness of the boys to spend additional time, after each stroke instructional session, practicing the fundamentals of the racing start and competitive turns. Many of the boys had an opportunity to test their developing swimming skills in a series of races, organized by Matt, in a practice meet format. The event was held at the Y.M.C.A., and attracted several spectators, made up principally of parents of the "neophyte" competitors, to the natatorium's small gallery section. The schedule of events consisted primarily of 25-yard races of the crawlstroke and backstroke, for the different age groups. A couple of 50-yard "handicap" races were included for the older boys. The short meet program had a number of close races and was well received by the competitors and the spectators. Matt predicted bright futures in competitive swimming for many of the boys, if they would work hard in the months ahead.

The construction crew for the D.B.C.'s aquatic complex had worked long days, and the weather had remained favorable, for in a little more than a month's time, after Matt had started his work in Duluth, the main pool of the new facility was opened on July 21. Matt had organized a program of events for the pool's "grand opening," which was reminiscent of an old English gala he had participated in as a boy. Matt had separate "scratch" races in various strokes for boys and young men, and some "handicap" races over longer distances for the

10 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.

11 "First Meet a Success," Duluth Herald, July 8, 1918, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 18.
more highly skilled boys. Those competitive events produced a great
deal of excitement in the large crowd, which was in attendance for the
pool's opening. But, the spectators seemed to get the greatest
enjoyment from watching the boys in several "novelty" races, and the
aquatic prowess of Matt as he demonstrated both competitive and novelty
strokes. The honored guest of the grand opening event was
Julius Barnes, the major benefactor of the new complex. He greatly
enjoyed the first major program to be conducted in the main pool, and
he predicted a great future for the D.B.C.'s competitive swimming
program under Matt's outstanding leadership. 12

The opening of the "big pool" at the D.B.C. permitted Matt to
expand his instructional program to accommodate girls and women, as well
as increase the class offerings for boys and men. 13 But Matt believed
that the efforts of the D.B.C., in the area of swimming instruction,
were only "scratching the surface," when the real need of the Duluth
citizenry were considered. As the almost daily accounts of drownings
of persons from Minnesota appeared in the Duluth newspapers, Matt was
deeply moved when he stated:

Every man, woman, and child in Duluth should learn to
swim... I think that swimming should be taught in every
school in America and should take its place alongside football,
baseball, basketball, and other branches of athletics. School
boards, as a rule, create a furore when this subject is taken up
with them, usually arguing the expense is too great for the
benefits gained... every parent should recognize that one
of the most useful lessons that a child could receive, and one
that would prove among the most lasting and valuable throughout

12"Boat Club Opens Natatorium," Duluth Herald, July 22, 1917,
Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 20.

13Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
life, would be the primary instruction in swimming. My argument, against those who believe I am advancing personal likes, is that if all children learn to swim, many tragic accidents could be prevented. . . . New York City has started a program of free instruction at its public baths, and Brookline requires children to pass a swimming test before leaving grammar school. 14

Judging by the immense popularity of the D.B.C.'s swimming program, and the increasing enrollment in Matt's classes, the association with the new D.B.C. aquatic program had become somewhat of a "fad" among the membership. Each week, new names from the various classes for children and adults were added to the growing list of members who had learned to swim. Matt was able to institute additional classes, including a life saving class, for more advanced skill levels, since many of the members were interested in improving their swimming techniques, well beyond the beginning level. He also created a noon hour class, especially for businessmen, which was both instructional and recreational. In the Duluth Tribune, Matt was heralded as the "father of the new era of swimming" for his successful efforts in such a short period of time in Duluth. 15

During August, Matt conducted at least one intraclub swimming meet each week. Most of the meets were small scale, generally consisting of a few "scratch" events for each age group. A highlight of each meet was a "handicap" race, usually of a longer competitive distance than the D.B.C.'s neophyte competitors were


15"Duluth is Crazy About Swimming," Duluth Tribune, August 6, 1917, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 15.
ordinarily exposed to; this event brought together most of the top
swimmers from the different age groups. Matt believed in giving his
"little fellows" a chance to beat the older boys, even if it was in a
"handicap" race. Matt marveled at the rapid improvement of the Cow
brothers, Dick Bennett, Mel Cooley, Tommy Doane, and "little"
Leonard Draper, as they appeared to thrive on the weekly competitions,
with their times for the different events improving with each
competition. Matt did manage one large scale meet, with several
events for the club members, and his own special novelty stroke
exhibition, at the D.B.C.'s major rowing regatta for August. In
between the rowing events, Matt put his group of young natators through
a series of exhibitions and races, in a specially marked course,
adjacent to the rowing area, much to the delight of the large crowd
attending the regatta.16

The controlling board of the D.B.C., after meeting with Matt,
had announced the club's intention to do everything within its
capabilities to improve the competitive swimming team, so that it might
achieve "world class" status. Matt had convinced the D.B.C.'s board
that with the club's outstanding natatorium and the talent "pool,"
existent in Duluth, a team capable of competing with clubs, like the
N.Y.A.C. and the Illinois A.C., could be developed. The board's
announcement meant a commitment to year-round training by the D.B.C.'s

16 Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room,
International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 26-42.
(Period covered was August, 1917, with many articles which included
the intraclub and regatta meet descriptions and summaries).
swimming team members, and financial support by the club for the team's expenses, throughout the indoor season.\(^{17}\)

Matt had hoped to receive an invitation, from Yale's Professor Corwin, to become the swimming instructor and coach at that institution for the 1917-1918 school year. Matt had not involved himself, that summer, with any negotiations for the Yale position, since he had devoted most of his energies to his work in Duluth.\(^{18}\)

Dick Mayer, the captain-elect of the Yale swimming team for 1918, had actually been working, most diligently during the summer, to promote Matt's hiring. Mayer had written to Professor Corwin on several occasions, regarding the hiring of Matt, but the former did not receive any information, which indicated that the latter intended to take any specific action, that summer, related to Matt's employment at Yale.\(^{19}\)

Since Matt had played a major role in influencing the D.B.C.'s decision to sponsor a competitive swimming team on a year-round basis, he could see the potential for his future employment in that city. After some careful consideration by Matt, about the uncertainty of the Yale job, plus the enthusiasm displayed by the members of the D.B.C. for his teaching and coaching accomplishments that summer, he decided

\(^{17}\)"Duluth Swimmers Will Make Great Drive for World's Title," Duluth Herald, August 30, 1917, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 47.

\(^{18}\)Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.

\(^{19}\)Peter E. Kennedy, "The Life and Professional Contribution of Robert Herman Kiphuth to Yale and Competitive Swimming" (Doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, 1973), p. 28.
to accept the position, in September, as swimming instructor and coach for the D.B.C. He vowed to do everything within his power to develop a high caliber swimming team, one of which the city would be most proud.  

In order to develop the kind of team at the D.B.C. which would be capable of competing successfully against some of the top swimming clubs in the United States, Matt proposed that the D.B.C. permit non-members to use its pool facilities. By making the aquatic complex and "expert" instruction available to Duluth's citizens, Matt would have the opportunity to select the D.B.C.'s swimming team members from a much broader talent pool. The D.B.C.'s controlling board approved Matt's proposal, and it established a schedule of times when the pool would be available for use by the public, accompanied by a system of admission and lesson fees for children and adults. The plan proved to be an almost instant success, for even though the summer season had ended, and the schools were back in session, Matt had to increase the number of instructional sessions, offered each week day, to accommodate the large numbers of children and adults who were coming to the D.B.C. to learn more about the "swimming game."

By late September, Matt believed that his swimming team had the sufficient number of team members, and the necessary quality

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20"Mann Secured as a Permanent Trainer," September 6, 1917, Duluth Herald, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 49.

21"Natatorium to be Opened for Use of Public," Duluth Herald, September 14, 1917, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 56.

22Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
performers, to warrant his writing to the two top teams in the state, the Minneapolis Athletic Club (M.A.C.) and the St. Paul Y.M.C.A., for the purpose of scheduling a dual meet with each team. Matt was not presumptuous enough to believe that his young team was capable of defeating the state's best clubs in the D.B.C.'s opening season, but he believed the meets would provide good experiences for his "stars of the future." In a couple of weeks, after his initial letter of inquiry, Matt was pleased to announce that dates had been agreed upon for separate home and away dual meets with both the M.A.C. and the St. Paul Y.M.C.A., during the indoor season of 1917-1918.

Although Matt seemed to be totally consumed with his work at the D.B.C., he had not let the Yale job escape his thoughts. Since it was early in the fall, and he had not received any kind of positive word regarding the position from Meyer or any Yale official, Matt decided that a letter, by his own hand, directed to Professor Corwin, was the best course of action. Corwin had retained the position as Chairman of the Board of Athletic Control of Yale University, and the decision to hire a swimming instructor-coach would depend essentially upon his recommendation to the Board. Matt's October letter was his first direct contact with Corwin concerning the former's interest in being employed as the Yale swimming coach. Matt informed Corwin that he had signed a three year contract with the D.B.C., but that it would

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23 "Duluth Team is Willing to Meet Big Swimmers," Duluth Herald, September 30, 1917, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 60.

be possible to secure a leave from the club of several months, from November 1 or December, and running through to April 1, to come to Yale. Matt offered that Yale could benefit not only by his coaching services, but that during his time on the New Haven campus he could establish swimming as a necessary and integral part of the physical work of the students. Matt had hoped for a prompt and positive reply from Professor Corwin, so that appropriate arrangements might be worked out with the D.B.C.25

As the December swimming meet between the D.B.C. and the M.A.C. seemed to be approaching all too quickly, Matt believed his contingent of high school-aged boys and girls could benefit from competition with the team from Two Harbors. The meet was held at the D.B.C. natatorium and attracted a good crowd of some 500 spectators to support the efforts of the young and unseasoned host team. While no official scores were recorded for the girls' events or the boys' events, it was reported that the D.B.C. boys had outscored the visitors in a rather convincing fashion, while the Two Harbors girls team had managed to win more events than the D.B.C. 'mermaids.' The D.B.C. supporters left the natatorium feeling that the competitive swimming program was off to an excellent start, and that amazing progress by the team members had been made in such a short period of time.26

25 Based on a personal correspondence between Matt Mann and Robert N. Corwin dated October 5, 1917, as described by Peter E. Kennedy in his dissertation on "The Life and Professional Contributions of R. H. Kiphuth . . .," pp. 28-29.

26 "Crowd at Swim Fest Shows Pep," Duluth Herald, October 26, 1917, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 76.
Matt's swimming lesson program had retained its popularity throughout the fall, as evidenced by the large number of his students who used the aquatic complex during the regularly scheduled recreation hours. The extensive use of the natatorium had prompted the D.B.C.'s governing board to announce that the swimming facility would be kept open, for member use, during the months of December, January, February, and March. Matt was very pleased with the board's decision, since it would permit him to more fully develop the potentials of his team members, than would the smaller pool at the Y.M.C.A. Following the announcement Matt had remarked, "... we're going to go big time from now on, there will be some great swimming at the club." The D.B.C. pool would be the setting for the scheduled home meets with the M.A.C., St. Paul Y.M.C.A., Minneapolis Y.M.C.A., and Shattuch Military College.27

Matt was certainly not going into the meet with the M.A.C. with a defeatist attitude. While he accorded the team from Minneapolis the advantage of "experience," he was doing his best to prepare the D.B.C. "neophytes" for their major natatorial encounter on December 1. The D.B.C. swimmers were not deterred from going through extensive workouts each weekday, in spite of the fact that the very cool weather seemed to make swimming a poor choice of activity to an outside observer. Matt had convinced his swimmers that their opponents would not be victorious, in the upcoming meet, on the basis of "conditioning," if the former would stick faithfully to his training regimen. The D.B.C.

swimmers seemed to believe Matt's message, for there was scarcely an absentee at each afternoon's workout session.28

With preparations for the "big" meet with the M.A.C. seeming to be going so well, Matt received a bit of bad news from Julius Barnes. Citizens of the United States, especially major businessmen, had been asked by the federal government to become more involved, on the homefront, in the country's effort in World War I. Barnes had decided that he and the D.B.C. could make a very positive contribution, in the area coal fuel conservation, by closing the club's aquatic complex for the months of December through April. Matt was informed that he would still be employed for those months, but that he would have to move his swimming program to the smaller facility at the Y.M.C.A. Barnes also agreed to keep the dual meet with the M.A.C. at the Boat Club's natatorium, with the completion of that event marking the close of the facility until the spring season.29

Matt did not let the news from Barnes upset the daily operation at the D.B.C. Matt tried to look on the matter in a positive manner by noting, firstly, that his position had been retained, and secondly, that he had maintained successful programs, in previous years, in pools similar to that of the Y.M.C.A. facility. His primary concern remained the preparation of his boys for the M.A.C. meet, as he


scheduled an intrasquad meet for his high school students. Matt organized the meet to include separate events for the girls and boys, with a team "flavor" being inserted into the affair, by pitting the freshman and sophomore students against the juniors and seniors. The meet was conducted along the same lines as the future M.A.C. meet, and it served as a competitive "dress rehearsal" for the enthusiastic, but inexperienced, D.B.C. swimmers. The talented swimmers in the freshman and sophomore classes proved superior to the upperclassmen in several events, both of the younger team winning by scores of 26-15 for the girls, and 25-19 for the boys.  

Matt was extremely pleased with the apparent readiness of the D.B.C. boys' team for the upcoming natatorial "battle" with the talented and experienced team from Minneapolis. The widely publicized meet was more than a friendly encounter, as far as Matt was concerned, for the meeting between the two teams had been hailed as the biggest and most important swimming meet ever to be held in that part of the country. Matt liked his role as the coach of the "underdogs," since he knew what kind of potential his team members possessed. He felt certain that the D.B.C.'s chance of winning the meet would be underestimated by the members of the state power M.A.C. team. Matt was banking on the thorough preparation of his swimmers, plus their seemingly "unquenchable thirst" for competition, to be the important factors for helping the D.B.C. team win the nine event meet. The list of events for the December 1 meet would include the 50-yard, 100-yard,  

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220-yard, 440-yard, 100-yard breaststroke, and 100-yard backstroke races, plus the plunge, the fancy diving and the 200-yard relay race.\textsuperscript{31}

The meet between the D.B.C. and the M.A.C. swimming teams was every bit as exciting as the advanced publicity had predicted it would be. A very large crowd of highly vocal fans had filled the D.B.C. natatorium spectator area to support Matt and his "mermen." Several very close finishes highlighted the exciting meet, which was won by the D.B.C. with the score of 41 to 36 points. Although second and third places finishes by several D.B.C. swimmers proved essential for the winning margin, the individual star for the host team was Tommy Doane. He won individual victories in the 440-yard swim, the 100-yard backstroke, and he joined three teammates in winning the 200-yard relay event. The meet was marked by two important official decisions which favored the home team. The first such decision involved a half hour meeting of the diving judges concerning the scores awarded to the competing divers. The officials decision enabled the D.B.C. divers to take the first and second places in the event. The other major official decision disqualified the apparent breaststroke event winner from the M.A.C. for an illegal hand touch by the swimmer on a turn. The decisions by the officials were accepted without protest by visiting team. The D.B.C. swimmers and a large portion of the highly

\textsuperscript{31}"D.B.C. vs. M.A.C. Tonight," Duluth Tribune, December 1, 1917, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 84.
partisan gallery enjoyed a brief, but enthusiastic, post meet celebration in the natatorium following the last event.\(^{32}\)

Following the historic meeting between the two clubs, Matt appeared both happy and relieved about the outcome. He had felt a degree of pressure going into the meet, although his team had been regarded as "underdogs;" some measure of his coaching status, as one of the finest swimming coaches in the United States, was "on the line," even if he had self imposed the pressure. Matt had convinced many people in Duluth, during the months preceding the M.A.C. meet, that the D.B.C. would have a world class swimming team in the immediate future, and many of the spectators had come to the "big" dual meet expecting a victory from the dynamic D.B.C. coach. During the post meet excitement, Matt was quick to offer an assessment of the meet, as he stated:

"... There is no comparison between the M.A.C. and D.B.C., when it comes to swimming. The M.A.C. athletes fight the water, make a billowy fuss, but waste a lot of effort. The Duluth boys showed they swim right, making every movement count for an advance. ... There is no question in my mind but that the D.B.C. will eventually take its place in swimming as the oarsmen (D.B.C.'s) have in world rowing. The boys did not exceed my expectations, they lived up to them, and we will win again when we meet the M.A.C. later this season.\(^{33}\)

Matt moved his instructional and competitive program operations to the Duluth Y.M.C.A., according to the previously designed energy conservation effort by the D.B.C., which would keep the D.B.C. natatorium closed until the spring season. Within days after the move,


\(^{33}\)Ibid.
Matt received a United States army communique which requested his immediate service as a chief swimming instructor for the branch of the armed forces. The Army wanted Matt to report to Washington, D.C. as soon as possible, and, providing a suitable agreement could be reached between the two parties, he would be responsible for organizing and directing a swimming branch of army athletics. Matt was honored by the Army's request for his services, but the suddenness of the invitation, coupled with his firm commitment to develop the program at the D.B.C., made it quite difficult for him to respond in a definite manner, other than for him to say that he was "... undecided about his decision...".

In addition to a wide range of personal commitments Matt had made to various persons and groups in Duluth, his decision not to "jump" at the Army's request was also influenced by his still strong interest in the Yale swimming coach's position. Although it had been better than two months since any official communication between Matt and Professor Robert N. Corwin had transpired, Matt still believed he was the best man for the position, and that the word of his employment would be forthcoming. In mid-December Professor Corwin, upon the persistent efforts of Dick Mayer, wrote to Matt and offered him the Yale position. Before any agreements were made, however, Corwin stipulated certain conditions which Matt was obliged to agree upon before a contract could be signed. Mayer had passed certain

34 "Army Wants Mann," Duluth Tribune, December 5, 1917, Scrapbook 5, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 84.

35 Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
information from Matt to Corwin, concerning the length of time Matt would be available to the Yale team, and the kind of salary he might expect for his coaching duties. Corwin reiterated, in his letter to Matt, those terms, which included that Matt would coach the University and Freshman swimming teams and the water polo team, for three months, beginning January 8, 1918, for a salary of $250.00 a month. The agreement also specified that Matt would live in New Haven, during his employment as the Yale coach, and that he would give his whole time to those duties. 36 While the Yale Athletic Association was the hiring agent, for the Yale University swimming position, the actual funds for Matt's employment would be provided by Ogden Reid, as stated in a guaranteed agreement obtained by Corwin. Reid's financial gesture was yet another example of his continued support for the Yale swimming program and Matt. 37

Corwin's letter brought the news that Matt had hoped for, but due to the high level of displayed interest and participation in the D.B.C.'s aquatic program by the club's members and several of Duluth's citizens, Matt was obliged to inform Corwin, in his letter on December 15, 1917, that:

Owing to some big changes in the swimming branch of the Club here, the officials have decided that it is impossible to grant me a three months leave of absence.

Am very sorry if I have caused you any inconvenience, I can assure you that it has been very unintentional, as I am with Yale to the last, and but for the fact that I am under contract here, and could not afford to break it, I should come anyway. 38


37 Ibid., p. 30. 38 Ibid., p. 31.
Soon after Corwin received Matt’s letter, the former quickly got off another note, on December 20, 1917, to Matt, in which the D.B.C. coach was asked if he could possibly get free for a three or four week period in January and February, sometime after the start of Yale’s second term on January 8, 1918.39

Matt forwarded a prompt reply, on December 23, 1917, to Corwin, in which the former stated:

I report at New Haven on January 7, 1918, and work until the Saturday Evening, January 26, making three full weeks, to do all I can to develop swimming in general throughout the Varsity and at the same time promote in every way possible the various teams, etc., the price to the University A.A. being $190.00. I pay for my own expenses to and from New Haven, and while at New Haven, except should I go away with the team.40

During Matt’s leave from Duluth, the D.B.C. swimmers had been left with a series of workouts which were to be covered during his stay in New Haven.

Upon his arrival at the Carnegie Pool, Matt was met by Robert H. Kiphuth, the director of the facility.41 Kiphuth was a member of the Yale physical education department staff, and he had been assigned to the position at the pool by Dr. William G. Anderson, Director of Physical Education. While Kiphuth had assumed his position at the Carnegie Pool during October of 1917, he had not been involved in swimming instruction or coaching; his primary duties included pool sanitation and maintenance.42 Kiphuth was anxious to learn about "the swimming game," and he quickly volunteered his services to Matt;

39Ibid.  
40Ibid., p. 32.  
41Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.  
42Kennedy, op. cit., p. 30.
the former admitted his limited aquatic background, but showed willingness to learn. Matt liked Kiphuth's enthusiastic spirit, and in the days that followed, Matt was very impressed with the ability of the "muscle man," or calisthenics specialist, from the gymnasium to pick up so many of the fundamental and finer points of coaching swimmers in such a short period of time.\(^4^3\)

In less than one week after Matt's arrival in New Haven, the Yale swimming team opened its season with a resounding victory over the C.C.N.Y. team in the Carnegie Pool by a score of 46 to 7.\(^4^4\) The next week Yale opened its conference season at home with a one-sided victory over the University of Pennsylvania, with a final score of 42 to 11. The Yale mermen recorded victories in the 50-yard swim, Fancy Diving, 220-yard swim, 100-yard swim, and the 200-yard relay events, while they lost only the Plunge for Distance. The highlight of the meet was the near-record swim of the Yale Captain, Dick Mayer. His winning time of \(0:25 \frac{2}{5}\) for the 50-yard event just missed the intercollegiate record for the event by one fifth of a second.\(^4^5\) Bob Kiphuth had added another experience to his developing knowledge of competitive swimming by serving as the starter for that meet.\(^4^6\)

With Yale's dual meet record at 2-0, Matt turned the coaching reigns over to Kiphuth, during the last week of January. Matt was

\(^{43}\) Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
\(^{44}\) Kennedy, op. cit., p. 312.
\(^{46}\) Kennedy, op. cit., p. 34.
sorry to leave the Yale team just as the bulk of the season's meets were approaching, but his agreement with the D.B.C. officials called for his return to Duluth at that time. Bob Kiphuth volunteered his services to serve as the Yale swimming coach for the remainder of the season. Although Kiphuth's gesture was acknowledged by his appointment as coach, the Board of Athletic Control of Yale University regarded his status as unofficial, with an official designation to be made at a later date.

There was little time for Matt to contemplate on what might be taking place at Yale, after his return to Duluth, for he was immediately confronted with selecting and preparing a group of D.B.C. swimmers for the huge "Patriotic Bonspiel and Swimming Gala" to be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, during the latter part of February. The events to be contested in Winnipeg were for men only. Matt selected Ray Beigle (the captain of the D.B.C. team), Jack Gow, Leonard Draper, Oliver Maggard and Tommy Doane, as the contingent to compete in the swimming events.

Back in New Haven, Yale had continued its winning ways in the Carnegie Pool as the "Eli" mermen posted a dual meet victory over C.C.N.Y., for the second time that season, by the score of 42 to 11. The meet marked the first time the Yale swimmers had completed under

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47 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
48 Kennedy, op. cit., p. 37.
the "volunteer coach," Bob Kiphuth. The easy victory helped to make his head coaching debut a successful occasion.50

At the "Patriotic Bonspiel and Swimming Gala," held at the Winnipeg municipal natatorium, the D.B.C. swimmers, following many record setting performances, received several "thunderous" ovations from the large crowd. The Duluth boys collected thirteen trophies and a variety of metals for their competitive efforts in the meet, which had been promoted as the greatest of its kind in Canadian swimming history. In addition to being recognized for his outstanding coaching effort, Matt also received the plaudits of the crowd for his solo exhibition of several novelty strokes, and a special demonstration of his expertise in the crawl and Trudgen strokes. Following the meet, Matt and his swimmers were accorded rather "royal" treatment, by many Winnipeg residents, prior to their return to Duluth.51

The Canadian meet had been an excellent competitive experience for Matt's rapidly improving D.B.C. team. Aside from some smaller meets in which the team would participate during late February and early March, the next major effort for the club would be the return meet with the Minneapolis Athletic Club (M.A.C.), at the end of March. During the later stages of preparation for the M.A.C. encounter, Matt and the D.B.C. swimming team received some bad news when it was learned that Tommy Doane, the team's most outstanding and versatile swimmer, had enlisted in the Army. With Doane scheduled to


51"Swimming Marks Broken At Gala," Duluth News Tribune, February 18, 1918, Scrapbook 6, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 5.
be at a basic training camp at the time of the big meet in Minneapolis, the chance of the D.B.C. scoring a second victory over the M.A.C. that season appeared quite unlikely. In an attempt to offset the loss of Doane to the potential scoring efforts of the D.B.C. in the upcoming meet, Matt instituted daily double workouts for the members of the boys swimming team. Matt had hoped the extra work would enable several of the boys to improve significantly, and thus make up for Doane's absence. The double practice sessions were conducted daily from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; the hour break permitted the boys to get a light supper and some rest.52

Just prior to the return meet between the D.B.C. and the M.A.C., a controversy concerning the number of entries each team would be permitted per event appeared to place the holding of the meet in jeopardy. For the first meet, in Duluth, Matt had made a concession to the M.A.C. coach by permitting each team to enter three contestants in each event, instead of the usual two, which appeared to favor the larger team from Minneapolis. For the second meet the M.A.C. had stated that each team would be permitted four entries per event. Matt immediately balked at the mere suggestion of such a rule change, and he informed the M.A.C. meet officials that the D.B.C. would not make the trip unless the rules of the first meet between the two teams were reinstated. The M.A.C. team, assuming the role of the favorite for the upcoming meet and anxious to reassert its claim of being the top

swimming club in the state, acceded to Matt's demand so that the meet might be held as scheduled on March 30.\textsuperscript{53}

The M.A.C. meet officials were rewarded for their excellent publicity efforts, as a full house of partisan home team spectators was in attendance on the night of the meet. Matt had done a superb job of preparing his youthful D.B.C. team for the contest. While the M.A.C. swimmers won seven of the nine events, as they captured the meet by a score of 46 to 31, the true character of the meet was not reflected by those statistics. Actually the youthful D.B.C. swimmers demonstrated great enthusiasm and skill as they pushed their experienced opponents to the limit in each race. A measure of Matt's coaching skill was reflected in the most exciting race of the meet, the 440-yard event. That race matched the M.A.C. star, Warren Pease, against the "slightly" built sixteen year old of the D.B.C., Leonard Draper. The young swimmer from Duluth, who had only begun his competitive swimming career in December of 1917, swam "stroke for stroke" with Pease for the entire race, with the M.A.C. veteran winning the race by a very narrow margin. Following the meet, the D.B.C. swimmers remained enthusiastic and vowed that they would soon start intensified training in Duluth for the state championship meet, which was scheduled for late in April.\textsuperscript{54}

Back in the East, the Yale swimming team, under the capable leadership of Bob Kiphuth, had continued its winning ways by


successfully retaining the Intercollegiate Swimming Association championship, with a perfect 7 and 0 record in conference competition, for its seventh consecutive league title.\(^{55}\) The championship was officially decided in the hard-fought dual meet victory of Yale over the Princeton team. As that meet entered the final event, the 200-yard relay race, Princeton was leading 23 to 22, but the Eli relay quartet, anchored by team captain Dick Mayer, swam to victory, enabling Yale to win the meet 30 to 23.\(^{56}\) The Yale team had finished the season with an overall record of nine wins and one defeat, that loss occurring in the meet with the N.Y.A.C.\(^{57}\) Bob Kiphuth had done an excellent job in his first season as a swimming coach, and for that matter, his first season as "swimming man" of any sort. Kiphuth gave credit for some of that success to Matt as the former stated:

\[\ldots\] in the Fall of 1917 (I) had taken over the swimming pool as part of my duties in the Department of Physical Education. Through the invitation of Captain Dick Mayer I became identified with the Yale swimming group and when you (Matt) came along for that special period (January, 1918) of coaching, you helped me tremendously. \ldots I can add my word of appreciation to you for your kindness and help to me personally and your contribution to swimming particularly. \ldots\]\(^{58}\)

Matt was very pleased that the Yale swimmers had been able to retain the Intercollegiate Swimming Association championship, for he

\(^{55}\)Kennedy, op. cit., p. 42.

\(^{56}\)"College Swimming Title Won By Yale," \textit{New York Times}, March 17, 1918, p. 21, col. 3.

\(^{57}\)Kennedy, op. cit., p. 38.

\(^{58}\)Based on statements made by Bob Kiphuth, former Yale University swimming coach, contained in personal correspondence to Matt Mann, February 28, 1941, Matt Mann Memento Book, 1941, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 12.
believed that his work with the team in January, and his coaching "tutorial" work of Bob Kiphuth had been essential ingredients for the team's success that season. Matt wanted to maintain a close relationship with the Yale swimming program, as he thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to work with such fine young men at such a prestigious institution, even if his coaching services were requested on a part-time basis.59

Prior to the Minnesota swimming championship meet, which would mark the close of the 1917-1918 indoor competitive season, Matt had received permission from the appropriate Duluth school officials to initiate a competitive swimming program for high school male students. Matt had announced, through the local press, that he would like to start swimming teams at Central High School, Cathedral High School, and Denfield High School, if sufficient student interest could be displayed. Matt was well aware that Central High School would have a decided advantage in starting such a team, since many of the teen-age boys on the D.B.C. team were also students at that school. Matt had also announced that no prior competitive swimming background was necessary for the interested team candidates. Matt had offered his services, and the assistance of certain D.B.C. swimming team members, for the purpose of instruction in basic stroke fundamentals and the finer points of competitive swimming.60 The initial announcements brought a total of twenty-five boys, most of whom were from Central High School,

59 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.

60 "High Schools May Have Swim Teams," Duluth Tribune, April 2, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 2.
to the first meeting at the Duluth Y.M.C.A. pool. Matt explained to the boys that he was going to serve as the coach for each team, and that the participants and their high schools would not be charged a fee for his coaching services. Matt issued a second call for boys who would be interested in joining one of the high school teams. He announced that several practice sessions would be available each day, so that he might organize the boys in similar ability groups, rather than conducting separate team workouts. His schedule for the week day practices called for a 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. session, a 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. session, both at the Boys' Y pool, and a 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. session at the bigger Central Association Y pool. Matt's plans called for the workouts to be conducted each week until school closed for the summer break.61

At the end of the 1917-1918 indoor season was rapidly drawing to a close, it was obvious that the D.B.C. swimmers had helped to put Duluth "on the map" as a potential hotbed of competitive swimming in Minnesota and the Midwest. In the D.B.C.'s first season of swimming competition, the team had distinguished itself in several meets, with the state championship meet still to come. D.B.C. swimmers held three official records and one unofficial Northwestern Swimming Association record. The D.B.C. swimming program had been built with "homegrown" talent, not by bringing in stars from other cities as was the common practice of many clubs. It was felt that the D.B.C. would continue to develop in size and quality when the summer program began; as one

writer of the local press wrote, "... it will not be startling to see more notables developed from greenhorns under Mann's guidance."

Matt had hoped that the D.B.C. might fight the M.A.C. right down to the final event in the state championship meet. But due to a variety of illnesses, which weakened and caused the absence of several of the D.B.C.'s top performers, including Leonard Draper, from the club's entries, the best Matt's squad was able to do was to finish second to the M.A.C. by a score of 34 to 24. The major portion of the D.B.C.'s point total was provided by a sweep of the first three diving places and the victory by the 200-yard relay team of Jack Gow, Oliver Maggard, Bruce Davis and Frank Beigle. The presence of Gow on that relay team marked the emergence of a star of the future, for he was only thirteen and he had "held his own" against many swimmers who were several years older. While Matt would have preferred winning the state title to his team's second place finish, he was proud of the boys' efforts, especially since some swimming authorities had predicted the illness weakened D.B.C. team for a fourth place finish in the state meet. Soon after that meet, the D.B.C. swimming team received another setback of sorts, when two of the team's best swimmers, Ray Beigle, one of the state's top ranked middle distance swimmers, and Bruce Davis, a fine sprinter, reported to Matt that they had received

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62"Duluth Swimmers Hold Records," Duluth Herald, April 16, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 3.

63"Coach Mann's Men Do Well In Swimming Meet," Duluth Herald, April 20, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 4.
their draft notices for military service, with orders to report for training within a month.64

With the winter competitive swimming season officially over, Matt had plans for the summer season at the D.B.C. well laid out. He had received approval from the governing body of the D.B.C. to hold a regular swimming training camp, at the D.B.C., on a par with the camp held annually by the club's rowing squad. Since Matt had been the prime mover in establishing competitive swimming on a solid basis in Duluth, the proposed swimming camp would certainly be the first of its kind for the area. The purpose of the camp was to develop the D.B.C. swimming team to a championship caliber, for the winter season, capable of excelling in state competition, and in some of the regional and national meets. Matt's plan called for the camp to be conducted similar to the strict and rigid features used by the D.B.C.'s rowing squad. The regular D.B.C. swimming team members were to start workouts in early May at the D.B.C. natatorium, with new candidates for the squad reporting later that month. The plan also called for many of the regular team members to work with the new team members on the stroke fundamentals of competitive swimming. The use of D.B.C. team swimmers for stroke instruction was a departure from Matt's usual pattern of working with new team members from the start, but he felt his team regulars were capable of doing a good job, and that he could more efficiently handle a larger group of swimmers. Matt would still

64"D.B.C. Loses Swimmers To Military," Duluth Herald, April 24, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 4.
be responsible for supervising the actual workouts for all swimmers, and for teaching the finer points of racing to the new boys.\textsuperscript{65}

With the opening of the D.B.C. natatorium, for the "summer" season, slated for May 15, Matt had worked hard to prepare a schedule of aquatic activities which would permit the D.B.C. membership to enjoy a wide variety of swimming experiences. On many days of the preceding summer season, Matt had instructed close to 200 individuals in some phrase of swimming. He believed his expanded weekday schedule, for use of the pool, of 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. for the 1918 season would permit him to increase his daily teaching schedule. The teaching program would provide fee instruction for all members; due to the increased level of interest in swimming among D.B.C. members, which had been generated, in part, by the success of the swimming team, Matt expected large classes throughout the summer. So busy did he envision his summer that he was moved to write his friend Harry A May, a sportswriter with the Pittsburgh Sun; in that note Matt stated,

\ldots I was giving over 200 lessons a day last year and expect to more than double that this year, so if you don't hear from me you will know I am either working or dead, and I don't think it will be the latter, as I am a tough old bird.\textsuperscript{66}

By late May, Matt had set in motion the D.B.C.'s extensive program for swimmers of varying abilities. The enrollment of the D.B.C. members in many of the swimming classes was not what Matt had

\textsuperscript{65}"Duluth Will Have Swimming Training Camp This Summer," Duluth Herald, April 30, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 5.

anticipated, but he expected that situation to change as the weather got warmer. He reasoned that the people of Duluth, although living on the shore of a great body of water, still were not sold on the values of regular year round participation in swimming. Actually, Lake Superior was not very conducive for developing the interests of many of Duluth's citizens in swimming, since it stayed much too cold for pleasurable swimming throughout most of the summer. Matt felt that the status of swimming, as a recreational pursuit by D.B.C. members, had improved significantly during his first year in residence. Matt had developed the practice of encouraging the D.B.C. to offer a family membership ticket for participation in the swimming program. Such a membership enabled each member of the family to receive free swimming instructions, and since last summer, in addition to male participants, many mothers and their daughters had learned the crawl-stroke under the tutelage of Matt.67

During May the D.B.C.'s swimming camp had gotten off to an excellent start. Many of Matt's regular team members had elected to reside in the large dormitories located on the grounds of the D.B.C. property, with the boys' meals served from the kitchen of the main clubhouse. Matt had each camp day start with the boys getting up at 6:00 a.m. to go directly to the club's pool for an hour of swimming. Most of those early morning sessions, for the camp participants, were devoted to stroke technique work, under Matt's close scrutiny, with each session concluded with a "crisp" middle distance swim. After

having breakfast at the club, the team members went off to school or
work. At the end of the day, the campers returned to the D.B.C. for an
evening workout from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. which was then followed by
dinner. Following dinner the boys were allowed to leave the club
grounds until 9:30 p.m. when they were required to be back at the dorm.
Matt had worked at the rate of $4.50 a week for room and board for each
camp participant with the D.B.C.'s governing board. He had also
managed another special financial arrangement for "campers" who were
not D.B.C. members. That arrangement called for an opportunity to join
the D.B.C., on or after June 15, at half price with swimming team
benefactor, Julius Barnes, paying the other half of each such member­
ship. Matt believed that Mr. Barnes' gesture would certainly help to
add regular members to the development D.B.C. swimming team. The
ability level of the prospective member did not matter to Matt, as he
had stated, "... I am constantly seeking new members, even if they
can not swim, if they are willing to work I will help them."68

As Matt continued his campaign to recruit new members for the
D.B.C. swimming team, he continually emphasized that years of previous
experience was not the necessary ingredient for success in the sport.
He contended that the application of sound stroke techniques and hard
workouts, throughout the training periods, by competitive "neophytes"
would bring positive results. Matt was quick to point to various
D.B.C. swimmers as prime examples of his premise for success. Matt
often mentioned Leonard Draper, who at sixteen was then one of the top
swimmers in Minnesota, with less than a year's competitive experience.

68 Ibid.
The first competition of the local summer season, the Duluth Mile championship, provided additional evidence to support Matt’s contentions about the rapid progress which could be made by dedicated young swimmers. Draper won the race with the excellent time of 30:39 4/5, and he was followed by three fifteen year old teammates. The D.B.C. had ten members finish the race, a remarkable achievement by local standards, since a year ago, when Matt first appeared in Duluth, there was barely a "handful" of swimmers who could negotiate a 100 yards in good crawlstrock form.69

Early in June, the D.B.C.'s swimming camp members had an opportunity to test their abilities in a dual meet with the team representing the Superior Y.M.C.A. The meet had been promoted as the second most important swimming competition to be conducted in the Duluth area. Before a capacity crowd at the D.B.C. natatorium, the Duluth swimmers, led by the individual and relay event victory performances of Leonard Draper and Jack Gow, won the meet by the score of 41 to 27.70 In the return meet held in Superior, the D.B.C., again led by Gow and Draper, managed another convincing victory, after several closely contested races, with the final score of 48 to 27. Gow

69“Sixteen Year Old Kid Breaks State and Association Mile Swimming Records,” Duluth Herald, June 1, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 7.

and Draper set a new record for the junior Northwestern Association 100-yard event at 1:13 as they tied for first in that race.⁷¹

As further evidence of the D.B.C.'s total commitment to develop a complete and "first-rate" competitive aquatics program, the club's governing board had authorized the construction of two outdoor high diving platforms. The platforms, one seventeen feet in height and the other twenty four feet high, were being constructed at Matt's recommendation, on the club's bay property. Matt had been associated with many champion divers in the New York City area, and his belief that diving champions could be developed in the Duluth area was best expressed when he stated:

"... Somebody has got to enter the championship events, there is nothing to stop the Duluth divers from entering and there is no reason why we haven't got a chance to win. With the right facilities and training programs the potential is here in Duluth." ²

Matt recognized and acted upon a wonderful opportunity to further promote the development of competitive swimming at the D.B.C., and to draw attention from other competitive swimming "hotbeds" across the country "to the presence" of Duluth, when he invited Duke Kahanamoku to visit the D.B.C. in early July. The "Duke" and three other Hawaiian swimmers were conducting a series of swimming exhibitions in various cities in the United States. Matt read of the

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tour, when it was first getting underway, and promptly contacted the "Duke" about the possibility of including the D.B.C. on the itinerary. Based on Matt's earlier acquaintance with the "Duke," from the former's N.Y.A.C. days, the great Hawaiian swimmer gladly accepted Matt's invitation for the touring group to be guests of the D.B.C. During the group's visit, they had agreed to give some aquatic exhibitions for D.B.C. club members and for a limited number guests from the Duluth community.73

For two days prior to the formal exhibition, the "Duke" and his teammates went through various phases of Matt's workouts along with the youthful and "starry-eyed" D.B.C. swimmers. It was an exciting two days at the D.B.C., for according to Matt, "... they (the Hawaiians swam with my boys . . . up and down the pool . . . just giving them (the boys) the thrill of their lives. . . ."74 The exhibition at the D.B.C. natatorium drew a capacity crowd to witness several stroke demonstrations and two races against the clock, by the talented Hawaiians. Much to the delight of the crowd, it was announced that the "Duke" had established a new world mark in the 125-yard freestyle, and the relay team of the four Hawaiians had established a new mark for the 500-yard relay. Matt had selected both of those distances for racing schedule, because of the high probability of new records being established, by such skilled performers, in events which were seldom used in competition. Matt wasted little time in releasing the news

73 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
74 Ibid., Tape 5.
about the record-breaking swims to the wire services, for he was anxious to put Duluth on the swimming map.\textsuperscript{75}

With the exciting Hawaiian exhibition concluded, Matt set to work preparing his D.B.C. swimmers for the first outdoor swimming meet in Duluth on July 20, 1918. The D.B.C. and Duluth Red Cross Chapter were co-sponsoring the Duluth Swimming and Rowing Carnival to be conducted in St. Louis Bay, adjacent to the D.B.C.'s property. The schedule of events for the meet would include a 440-yard race for men, a 220-yard race for women, a 100-yard race for boys aged eighteen and younger, and a 400-yard relay race for men. Matt had selected the events with the belief that his swimmers would be able to make a strong showing against some fine swimmers from other teams in the Northwestern Association.\textsuperscript{76}

For the two weeks prior to the competition, Matt had conducted the workouts for the swimmers, who would be competing in the Carnival, in the bay race course area, so that they might become accustomed to the cold and sometimes chopping water conditions. The weather for the first Duluth Swimming and Rowing Carnival was ideal. The large crowd on the shore enthusiastically supported the D.B.C. swimmers, who scored victories in each of the events for men and boys. Matt seemed to, "... beam with pride ...," as his three D.B.C. swimmers swam to the top three places in the grueling 440-yard race. In winning, Leonard Draper, pushed by Mel Cooley and Richard Bennet, established

\textsuperscript{75}"Aquatic Interest Now In Regatta-Swim Affair," Duluth Herald, July 6, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 9.

\textsuperscript{76}Ibid.
a new association record for the event. An added attraction for the spectators was the pleasant diving exhibition by the D.B.C.'s newly-formed diving team.77

As the summer season progressed, and the success of the D.B.C. was becoming more widely acclaimed, Matt was invited to Winnipeg, Canada, to speak with a special committee of adults representing various youth groups. The committee was very much interested in organizing a swimming team for boys to represent the city. The committee members were very anxious to hear from Matt about his recommendations for their program plans. During the meeting with the committee, Matt stressed his belief that the Winnipeg instructional program should be built upon the developing of sound fundamentals in the crawlstroke for swimmers of all ability levels. He pointed out that the crawlstroke had proven itself in recent years as the superior racing stroke. Matt also indicated, that swimmers who began with the crawlstroke in his programs made rapid improvements and outstanding achievements in relatively short periods of time. In addition to his discussion about stroke work, Matt devoted some time to other goals a new team should strive to achieve, as he mentioned:

... For the Winnipeg program to develop, the team must work for unity, outstanding individuals must compete against each other in practice, and also as relays, and don't try to keep the swimmers in the dark, with regard to their places on the team. . . .

Don't forget to tell your boys that smoking only makes the other fellow champion, and that plenty of good, sound sleep is necessary in the making of championship material. . . . 78

The D.B.C. swimming program had experienced such rapid growth and progress, with a nucleus of very fine high school boys, that by mid-summer, Matt had already made plans for a most ambitious winter schedule of meets for the Central High School swimming team. Each of Matt's top, high school aged D.B.C. boys would be attending Central High School that fall. He believed that the Duluth Central High School team of 1918-1919 possessed the potential to win the "interscholastic championship of America," the title which was often conferred unofficially, by certain members of the press, to the team that won the big interscholastic meet hosted by Princeton University each winter. If the Central High School team was going to achieve national status, then a schedule which placed the Duluth swimmers in competition with highly regarded interscholastic teams from outside the region would have to be organized. Matt's proposed schedule called for the Central High School (C.H.S.) team to engage some intra-state teams in competition early in the season, before starting a series of meets against some of the finest interscholastic competitors in the eastern part of the United States. 79


79 "Duluth Team Will Tour The U.S. Next Winter," Duluth Herald, August 3, 1918, Scrapbook 7, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 15.
Matt's proposed three week itinerary would open with a meet at New Trier High School or Evanston Academy on February 26, 1919. Then the C.H.S. boys would swim against the Washington High School team in the District of Columbia, or the Navy plebes in Annapolis, on February 28. On March 1, C.H.S. would participate in the Philadelphia Interscholastic Invitational Championships; followed by a March 3 meet with the Princeton University freshmen; a March 4 meet with the Rutgers University freshmen; and then on March 8, the biggest meet of the season, the Princeton University Interscholastic Championships. Matt's plan then called for the C.H.S. swimmers to meet Poly Prep in Brooklyn on March 10 or 11. The schedule would conclude in New England with meets against Brookline High School and the Yale University freshmen. Matt had hoped that the Duluth school administration, plus certain community leaders, including his D.B.C. team benefactor, Julius Barnes, would see fit to endorse and support the proposed schedule for Central High School to achieve national swimming prominence.80

In Matt's estimation, the D.B.C.'s summer camp for swimmers had proved to be a great success. The D.B.C. swimmers distinguished themselves on several occasions in various competitions, throughout the summer season. The number of D.B.C. members participating in swimming programs, of different skill levels, had also been greatly expanded, as community interest in the competitive swimming program had surged. Matt organized and conducted what he called, "The biggest night in the history of the Duluth Boat Club natatorium . . .,"

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80 Ibid.
the club's first major "gala." The event had attracted a capacity crowd for the complete schedule of regulation competitive events for several age groups and several amusing novelty events. Matt was pleased with the recognition his dedicated camp swimmers had received from the appreciative crowd. 81

As the summer season of 1918 was drawing to a close, Leonard Draper again entered his name in the Minnesota swimming record book. Draper established the new record of 26:47 4/5 in the state championship for the event. Matt was very pleased with the consistent pace Leonard maintained throughout the race, as his times for each 440-yards were 6:30, 6:47, 6:43 and 6:47. The young D.B.C. swimmer now held the state records for the 440-yard, 880-yard and one mile events. 82

Matt concluded the "summer season" with a small-scale gala meet at the D.B.C. natatorium in late September. The meet included Matt's typical blending of standard competitive events and strictly novelty events. Each member of the D.B.C. team had an opportunity to participate in at least two events. One unexpected highlight of the affair took place as Matt was speaking to the spectators about the accomplishments of the team. During his complimentary remarks, a group of the boys threw Matt into the pool, fully clothed, but he was "unruffled" by the event, as he proceeded to swim back and forth, using


82 "Draper Hangs Up New Mile Record," Duluth Herald, September 21, 1918, Scrapbook 8, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 4.
various strokes, much to the delight of the crowd. After the meet the swimmers and their parents moved to the club's dining room for the D.B.C.'s first swimming awards banquet. Matt, in a dry outfit, presented the team's Outstanding Swimmer Award to Leonard Draper for his wide array of accomplishment during the summer season.

As a part of his fall schedule at the D.B.C., Matt offered a great many swimming classes for both members and non-members. In a little more than a year's time since his employment with the D.B.C., Matt had a very high percentage of the membership capable of demonstrating the fundamental movements of the crawlstroke. The club, upon Matt's recommendation, opened its facilities for use by non-members, for a small fee, at selected times, most days of each week. It was a common practice for small groups to come from certain business for swimming lessons during the morning or afternoon designated times. One such group that Matt was especially fond of working with, was from the Duluth Board of Trade. The group was composed of six to eight women who managed to take their lessons near the noon hour a few days a week. Matt took a special liking to one of the women, Lea Brock, and as the fall progressed their friendship developed into a serious courtship. But his teaching and coaching programs at the D.B.C. still required the major portion of his daytime and evening schedules.

The fall competitive training programs for the winter season were initiated early in October for the D.B.C. and Central High School.

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84 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
swimmers. Matt realized, that with the meets still "a long way down the road," he should try to keep the team members mentally fresh. One way he accomplished that quality was to incorporate frequent intra-squad races in the regular practice sessions. Another technique that proved especially popular among the team members was when Matt raced many of the budding young stars. Since starting his coaching career in Buffalo, Matt had made it a regular practice to swim and race with his top team members. In each of the programs where Matt had used "the coach in the water technique," he believed it to be an asset, as he stated:

... We used to swim some pretty good races together, and my boys would strive very hard to stay with the coach. This helped tremendously in the development of the young boys. The greatest thing they had was their coach who could swim faster than they could. ... 85

When he was questioned by certain sportswriters or visitors, aspiring to be coaches, about that coaching techniques he remarked:

... If you were a swimmer, and because you become a (swimming) professional, don't lose touch with your own swimming. The boys think so much more of you when you can get in and swim a respectable hundred or two twenty, like you could before. They like to brag about their coach. ...

... You are not a coach until you have proved yourself. Be a good example at all times, on and off the tank side. You don't have to smoke, and of course, you don't have to drink (alcoholic beverages). Be a good example in the water. ... 86

By mid-fall of 1918, the governing board of the D.B.C. had made the decision not to maintain the instructional and competitive swimming programs during the winter season. The basic reasons for that decision were that it would be relatively expensive to keep the

85Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.
86Ibid., Tape 6.
natatorium open in the very cold months, and secondly, since most of
the membership had achieved the basic skills of swimming in the
preceding months, member interest in swimming classes would probably
be low throughout the winter. Matt was advised that his salary would
be terminated at the end of November, but that the D.B.C. would desire
his directorship of the swimming programs for the summer season of
1919, beginning in May. Although Matt was disappointed by the
governing board's decision, especially when he had planned such an
exciting schedule for the Central High School team, he was not totally
surprised. Before the official word was released to Matt, he had made
several inquiries about the possibility of full time employment with
other clubs. 87 Matt's availability was particularly attractive to the
prestigious Detroit Athletic Club, and after some brief negotiations,
Matt was offered a contract to become the swimming instructor. Matt's
employment with the Detroit Athletic Club (D.A.C.) was to begin the
first week of December 1918 and continue through May 1919, at which
time he would return to the Duluth Boat Club for the 1919 summer
season. 88

87 Ibid., Tape 6.
88 "Detroit Secures Mann," Christian Science Monitor,
December 5, 1918, Scrapbook 8, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room,
Chapter 7

DETROIT PROVIDES A HOME

As Matt approached his thirty-fourth birthday in December of 1918, he did so with an air of excitement, due to the challenges and opportunities of his new job at the Detroit Athletic Club (D.A.C.). It had not been pleasant for Matt to leave his enthusiastic and talented group of young swimmers in Duluth. But the opportunity to work in the city of Detroit, with its wide variety of organized competitive swimming programs, proved to be an excellent "antidote" for any doldrums Matt had experienced following his move. His contract with the D.A.C. would cover only the months of December, 1918 through April, 1919, at Matt's request, so that he would be able to return to Duluth for the summer season of 1919. The D.A.C.'s financial arrangement with Matt would be substantial enough to permit him to concentrate solely on his duties as swimming instructor and coach, without the necessity of looking for additional coaching assignments at other clubs, youth agencies or schools.

The D.A.C. had employed Matt with the expressed intention that his primary duties should focus upon improving the swimming skills of

\(^1\)Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.
\(^2\)"Detroit Secures Mann," loc. cit.
\(^3\)Mann Cassette Collection, loc. cit.
the membership. Matt's coaching of the D.A.C. swimming team, which included men, women, boys and girls, was considered, by the D.A.C., to be of secondary importance to the aquatics instructional program. It was a strict D.A.C. policy to make membership on any of its teams open to regular club members, with athletic memberships not available, not even for swimming. The D.A.C. had recognized his proven ability to establish and conduct effective instructional swimming programs, for adults and children, at many of his previous jobs. Following Matt's hiring, a proud member of the D.A.C.'s selection committee stated, "... He (Matt) knows the fundamentals of the game (swimming) and possesses the science and patience to impart his knowledge to others. We believe him to be the best man to be found in America...".

Matt's application for the D.A.C. position had been accompanied by several letters of recommendation from a contingent of Yale alumni, who were also members of the Detroit Athletic Club. So strong was their endorsement of Matt that the group was credited with the following statement, "... he (Matt) is as much of a genius with swimmers as Walter Camp is with football players...". The man, who was responsible for spearheading the endorsement of Matt by the Yale alumni was Paul Roberts. Matt had coached Paul in Buffalo when the latter was just a high school swimmer. Paul continued his swimming at Yale where he served as captain of the team in his senior year. Roberts had a part in helping to establish a winning pattern at Yale in the years prior to

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5Ibid.
Matt's arrival on the New Haven campus. After Matt and Paul had left Buffalo, their friendship had been maintained, as both men corresponded with each other frequently. It was through such writing that Paul had learned of Matt's need to find a new position for the winter swimming season of 1919. When Matt was informed by Paul about the opening at the D.A.C., the former set the "wheels in motion" which eventually led to his employment.

Although Matt had only been employed for less than a week's time, he made plans to host a ten-event exhibition meet at the D.A.C. on December 14. The schedule of events included separate races for men and women in regulation distances, plus a number of novelty races which would feature D.A.C. swimmers. Matt had invited and received the acceptances to his invitations from two of the finest swimmers in the Midwest, Marie Curtis and Perry McGillivray, both from the Chicago area. McGillivray had accepted the challenge of trying for a new world record in the 100-yard backstroke event. Several fine Detroit area swimmers had also agreed to enter the D.A.C.'s invitational meet. In setting up a meet with such a "star studded" lineup, Matt had wanted to serve notice to his club's membership and the many fine swimming clubs in Detroit, that competitive swimming would be on the upswing at the D.A.C.

While Matt's first meet at the D.A.C. did not attract a large crowd, those who did attend were very enthusiastic about the very fine

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6 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.

swimming and diving performances. McGillivray swam a beautiful race as he won the 100-yard backstroke, but he missed the world record by $\frac{4}{5}$ of a second. The sixteen year old Marie Curtis brought the crowd to its feet with her winning effort in the 100-yard race for women. The wide array of novelty events, which had become a trademark of Matt's meets, proved to be a delight to the participants as well as the spectators.  

Matt's move to the D.A.C. had attracted the attention of certain syndicated newspaper sports columnists. One such writer, L. de B. Handley, recognized as one of the foremost authorities on natatorial affairs in the United States, stated in an article printed by the Detroit News:

The presence of Matt Mann in this city (Detroit), is fortunate for local water sports participants. He is not only one of the most competent and up to date coaches in America, but a live wire, with inspiring enthusiasm and the knack of getting results. In the past few years he has handled quite a few club, college and school squads with much success.

The favorable coverage Matt had received in the Detroit press, plus the success of his opening invitational meet, seemed to create an instant surge of interest in swimming activities among the membership of the D.A.C. He responded to the obvious "demands" for swimming classes by the members, by creating a full schedule of separate classes for men, women, girls and boys. So popular was the demand by the wives of the

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male club members, that Matt offered a schedule of classes a couple of mornings each week. In addition to his initial workouts he had held with the club's swimming team. According to Matt's agreement with the D.A.C., the establishment of an effective instructional swimming program was to be his primary responsibility, with the competitive program holding secondary importance. Matt did not find that arrangement difficult to work with, since he believed that there would be a growing interest in competitive activities among many class participants as their water skills improved.10

The growth in swimming participation patterns by the membership at the D.A.C. seemed to coincide with a trend that was taking hold in various sections of the country. As a sports columnist for the Detroit Free Press noted:

American water sports never faced more brilliant prospects than they do this day (January 1), as the year 1919 makes its appearance on the calendar.

Not only will most of the crack watermen from the services be around, but also there is a promised nation wide effort to encourage aquatics for both sexes, owing to the universal realization brought about by the war of the importance of swimming as a means of saving lives, and of the value of competition in helping to develop the expert watermanship necessary for life saving.

The D.A.C. and Y.M.C.A.'s (in Detroit) will figure heavily in the programs with each possessing splendid material (instructors and swimmers). . . . 11

Matt found it hard to forget his group of high school swimmers from Duluth while he was molding his D.A.C. team into shape. Soon after his arrival in Detroit, Matt had seen an announcement regarding an

10Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.

interscholastic swimming relay championship meet to be held in Chicago on January 22, 1919. Matt notified his top D.B.C. relay team of Draper, Lindsey Edson, and the Gows, Jack and Alex, about the meet, and as their former coach, he advised the boys to enter the meet under the Duluth Central High School banner. Matt believed that the hard work the boys had done in the early fall, with some tune up swimming at the Duluth Y.M.C.A., would enable them to place well in the meet. The boys entered the meet with the school’s permission, and soon after began regular training sessions according to workouts spelled out by Matt in his letters. Leonard Draper accepted an invitation from Matt to train at the D.A.C. during the Christmas vacation so that the former would be "sharp" for the Chicago meet.¹²

Matt met the boys in Chicago for the championship meet at the Chicago Athletic Club on January 22, 1919. The Central High team of the Gows, Edson and Draper surprised the large crowd in attendance that day, as they upset many of the local favorites by winning the 400-yard relay race. The victorious boys were greeted by an enthusiastic group of high school classmates and D.B.C. supporters, as the swimmers returned to Duluth with the E. L. Mansure trophy.¹³

The D.A.C.'s aquatics committee, under Matt's capable leadership, was making every effort to establish its club as the center

¹²"Duluth Central Will Be Represented In Chicago Meet," Duluth News Tribune, January 3, 1919, Scrapbook 8, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 11.

for major aquatic competitions in the state and region. On January 26, the D.A.C. hosted the second annual Michigan State Swimming Championships for the largest number of entrants of any meet held in the state. In addition to the large field of female and male competitors, the spectator section of the D.A.C.'s natatorium was filled to capacity. The meet featured a number of closely contested races with D.A.C. swimmers winning seven titles. An added highlight of the meet was the exhibition performance by 16 years old Essie Harrison, a star swimmer formerly of Winnipeg, Canada, now representing the D.A.C. She was ineligible for state competition until she had lived in Michigan for a longer period.  

Prior to the Michigan championship meet, it was announced by Matt that the D.A.C. would serve as the site for the Central A.A.U. Swimming Championships, to be held in February, and the National A.A.U. Championships for Women's Fancy Diving, and the men's 150-yard Backstroke. Each of the national events would have the date of competition announced later in the season.

While Matt was attempting to build the D.A.C. into a "showcase" for competitive swimming in the Midwest, he was also working very diligently at improving the status of the D.A.C. swimming team. He had convinced Paul Roberts, now in his mid-twenties, to get back into the "tank" again as a competitor. Matt believed that Roberts would serve as

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a good leader for many of the younger swimmers. Matt had also made a move to bolster the women's team by getting the very fine Canadian swimmer Essie Harrison, after her family had moved to Detroit and joined the D.A.C. The presence of some highly skilled swimmers in the workouts served as excellent role models for the younger and less experienced swimmers in Matt's training program.¹⁶

In between the swimming meets on the D.A.C.'s winter schedule and Matt's busy teaching program, he returned to Duluth for his wedding with Lea G. Brock, that "special girl" from a D.B.C. swimming class, on February 1, 1919.¹⁷ Matt and Lea were married in the Christian Science church they both had joined and attended during their courtship the preceding fall. Matt had become a member of the Christian Science faith because he had found many of his personal beliefs and values to be compatible with the teachings and doctrine of that church.¹⁸

Matt believed that the D.A.C. competitive swimming program would become a successful program by the blending of some older, experienced swimmers with a larger group of highly enthusiastic, youthful "natators." From the "pool" of younger aquatic neophytes would come the D.A.C.'s stars of the future. Matt conducted an intraclub meet, the D.A.C. Junior Championships, for 50 of his younger swimmers. The meet program consisted of some handicap races for different age groups, a variety of races across the width of the pool, some short distance relays and a

¹⁶Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.
¹⁸Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 5.
featured exhibition of several novelty strokes by Matt. The spectators, made up of the competitors' parents, were quite responsive throughout the program, and applauded loudly when a five year old girl demonstrated an excellent dive from the board. The high point of the meet for most of the 50 youngsters seemed to be the awards ceremony when Matt presented each participant with a small trophy.19

Matt and the other members of the D.A.C.'s aquatic committee had worked very hard in preparing for the Central A.A.U. Swimming and Diving Championship Meet, to be hosted at the Madison Avenue Club. Matt wanted the six event championship program, consisting of the 440-yard Freestyle, 200-yard Breaststroke and 150-yard Backstroke, each for men and the 100-yard Freestyle, 50-yard Breaststroke and Fancy Diving events for women, to be conducted as a "first-rate affair." As an added spectator attraction, the D.A.C. swimming mentor had also scheduled an exhibition water polo match between two teams from his own club. Since many clubs in the area were initiating water polo into their competitive aquatic programs, Matt had wanted to depict the skills involved in the "real" game or European style, rather than the roughhouse game most common to many Americans.20

The Central A.A.U. Championships were conducted in an excellent manner for the largest and finest field of contestants ever assembled for


that annually held meet. While many of D.A.C. swimmers fared quite well in several of the events, the women's breaststroke and diving events were the only championships garnered by the D.A.C. team. Matt had hoped that at least one of his male swimmers would win a championship event, but due to the high caliber competitors he had attracted to the meet, such was not the case. He was pleased with the several fine performances recorded by his still inexperienced team members, as many of the D.A.C. men pushed their opponents right to the finish line. 21

The D.A.C. girls' swimming team had made amazing progress in the short time its members had engaged in Matt's training sessions. There was an ample number of quality invitational meets in the Detroit area for Matt's top female competitors, but Matt also recognized the need for his entire girls' team to participate in smaller meets, so that the younger D.A.C. "mermaids" might experience success. On March 1, Matt took his D.A.C. girls by train to Toledo, Ohio, for a dual meet with the girls' team from the Dayton Y.M.C.A. The team from Dayton was going to compete against the team from the Toledo Y.M.C.A. on March 2, and the Dayton coach had agreed to compete with the D.A.C. on the preceding day, at the Toledo facility. The D.A.C. scored a convincing victory over the Dayton girls and, in the process, recorded a number of very good times by various performers. It seemed that travel circumstances, rather than the competition, served as the impetus for the fast times. Prior to the meet, Matt had told his team, that due to

their delayed arrival in Toledo, "every second would count" if the D.A.C. was going to make the last train back to Detroit that evening. The D.A.C. girls, led by Essie Harrison and Marion Bland, seemed to take Matt's message to heart as they won six of the eight events, and following the meet, they rapidly departed for the train station, where they made their train with only moments to spare.22

The month of March was going to be a busy period for Matt and the members of the D.A.C.'s aquatic committee. In addition to his normal teaching and coaching responsibilities, Matt had assumed direction of the aquatic committee for the D.A.C.'s preparation as the host for the two national events, the Fancy Diving Championship for Women and the 150-yard Backstroke Championship for Men, on March 29. Matt and the committee members were working diligently with invitations to the top competitors, publicity and the selection of officials, so that the meet might be the finest of its kind.23

Matt seemed almost tireless as he pursued his normally demanding schedule at the D.A.C. and his national meet preparation work. Due in part to that unusual dedication to the betterment of competitive aquatic sports, Matt was asked to serve as the chief official at the National Water Polo Championships in Chicago, on March 17. Matt was very knowledgeable about the water polo game, and he gladly accepted the


invitation, since serving as the head referee at the nationals was recognized as quite an honor.24

With the final preparations for the national championship events meet at the D.A.C. all but complete, Matt made a surprise announcement of a probable entrant from the host club in the 150-yard Backstroke event. Matt released the information that Leo Handy, the former's interscholastic champion and record holder from Brookline, Massachusetts, had taken up residence in Detroit following the latter's official discharge from the Navy. Handy had done some competitive swimming during his military stint, and he was interested in continuing in the sport following his military release. Matt had corresponded with Handy throughout the years, since they had parted company in Brookline. During some of their past correspondence, Matt had informed his former swimming pupil of certain employment opportunities in Detroit, with the added attraction of being able to get back into the swimming game under the colors of the D.A.C. No sooner did Handy arrive in Detroit, than Matt announced that the former would initiate training for the national backstroke event. Matt recognized that one week of training would be terribly brief in preparing for the national title, but he gave Handy an excellent chance to defeat the pre-race favorite Perry McGillivray of the Chicago Athletic Association.25

24"Veteran Duluth Aquatic Coach Gets Rare Honor," Duluth News Tribune, March 7, 1919, Scrapbook 8, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 16.

On March 29, the spectator section of the D.A.C. natatorium was filled to capacity for the two national events. The Fancy Diving Championship for women was conducted very efficiently and drew considerable praise from the competitors. The spectators were especially appreciative of the fine dives executed during the competition. Following the diving event, the trial events for the 150-yard Backstroke Championship for men were held. The final heat for the championship was composed of world record holder Norman Ross, Multnomah Club, Washington, who was a late entrant in the competition, Abe Siegel and the D.A.C.'s new member, Leo Handy. The pre-race favorite, Perry McGillivray, did not show up for the meet. Following the championship race, which was won by Ross, a dispute arose. Matt issued a protest about the start of the race, in which Ross and Siegal clearly "broke" before the starter's pistol sounded. Handy was a full yard behind his competitors, as he left his mark with the official start, but finished in second place, just a foot behind Ross. The champion acknowledged that he had "jumped" the gun, and that he would swim the race again, later that afternoon, if that was agreeable with Matt and Handy. The new D.A.C. swimmer was not in condition to extend himself fully again that day, and therefore he declined. The starter, Charles Lynch, who was also the meet referee and vice-president of the Central A.A.U., informed Matt that the protest was official rejected since the race had been conducted without a recall.26 Lynch explained his action as starter by acknowledging that Ross had indeed jumped, but

it was not necessary to recall the race because he believed Ross to be a superior swimmer to Handy, and that the championship race would not be closely contested.  

Matt was livid about Lynch's official explanation for the rejection of the protest. As D.A.C. coach, Matt was not about to let the issue die, for he believed the starter's action was inexcusable and completely outside the realm of Lynch's official responsibility, especially in a national championship event. Matt made a declaration to members of the local press that he would refuse to enter any D.A.C. swimmers in future meets at which Charles Lynch was designated as the starter. Since Lynch had, in the past, been the starter for most of the major competitions in the Detroit area, Matt went on to state that unless the procedure of appointing Lynch as the starter during next year's season was changed, the former probably would not return to the D.A.C. for the 1919-1920 winter season. Matt's ultimatum to withdraw any D.A.C. swimmers from a meet in which Lynch was designated as the starter was to go into effect from April 1, 1919, as Matt declared, in part, "I will call off the Detroit Championships at the D.A.C. on April 26, if Lynch is the starter."  

With the well-publicized starter's controversy behind him, Matt was determined to conclude his first season at the D.A.C. on a positive note. He had conceived the idea for a Detroit area championship


28Ibid.
meet, open to Michigan residents only, so that local fans might get an opportunity to see the area's top swimmers in a meet not dominated by outstanding out-of-state competitors. The ten-event meet program would include separate competition for women and men in a variety of standard competitive events and several handicap races for younger competitors. As an added attraction, Matt had announced that a group of the D.A.C.'s male swimmers would attempt to break the national record for the One Mile Handicap race. Early returns of entry forms indicated that the field of competitors would be large for this first Detroit area championship meet.29

On April 25, the evening before the city meet, Matt took a group of the D.A.C.'s male swimmers to the Detroit Y.M.C.A. for an "unofficial" meet with the University of Michigan's first year team. A special meet program of six events had been organized, with the longest individual race being the 60-yard freestyle, followed by 20-yard races in the backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle. The meet also included an 80-yard freestyle relay and a fancy diving event. The D.A.C. men easily won the meet over the inexperienced University of Michigan swimmers by the score of 37-12.30

The spectator section of the D.A.C. natatorium was filled to capacity for the Detroit Swimming Championships, the final major meet.


of the 1919 winter season. The handicap events for the junior and senior competitors provided the crowd with a number of thrilling races, as the scratch swimmers swam with great determination to make up the handicap leads which Matt had skillfully awarded to the slower opponents. In the regulation events, Leo Handy showed that he was starting to "round into shape" as he won the 100-yard backstroke race with a new state record time for the event. The highlight of the women's competition was the state record setting, winning effort of the D.A.C.'s Margaret Woodbridge in the 50-yard freestyle event. For Miss Woodbridge, a high school junior, her winning effort, against such fine competition, was regarded as a major accomplishment, since this was her first season of competition. Matt had been impressed with Margaret's progress throughout the season, and following her record setting performance, he promised the spectators a very bright future for the D.A.C.'s teenage "mermaid."31

As Matt and his wife prepared for their return to Duluth for the summer swimming season at the Duluth Boat Club (D.B.C.), the D.A.C. openly recognized the dramatic improvements which Matt had made in the club's instructional and competitive aquatic programs. In previous years the D.A.C.'s swimming teams had been lightly regarded, but in one season Matt had developed the senior team into a real power in Michigan, as evidenced by the seven titles won by D.A.C. swimmers in January's state championship meet. The number of major competitions hosted by the D.A.C. during the 1919 season had identified the club as a rising

star on the horizon of competitive swimming in the Midwest. So it was with a feeling of genuine accomplishment that Matt would depart for his coaching responsibilities in Duluth.32

Matt had been so impressed by the performances of the D.A.C. women throughout the season, that before his departure for Duluth, he mentioned to some local sportswriters that Essie Harrison and Margaret Woodbridge should be considered as candidates for places on the 1920 United States Olympic team. Although the team selection process was still almost a year away, certain coaches, including Matt and L. de B. Handley of New York, were preparing a list of Olympic Games "hopefuls" for the women's swimming team. Handley, a nationally prominent swimming authority, coached the powerful Women's Swimming Association of New York City which seemed certain to have more than one representative on the 1920 United States team. Matt had hoped that such publicity for his D.A.C. girls would serve as an appropriate stimulus for them to work hard over the summer season in Detroit, while he was coaching in Duluth.33

During Matt's absence from Duluth, very little swimming had been done by the D.B.C. team members. But Matt was not deterred from his coaching task, for on his second day, April 29, in Duluth, he had a group of the D.B.C.'s junior swimmers in the Y.M.C.A.'s pool for a


33"Mann Plans To Send Girls Team Members To Olympic Games," Detroit Free Press, April 29, 1919, Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 3.
workout. The D.B.C.'s natatorium was scheduled for its official opening on May 1, but Matt was not about to waste a day of potential workout time, as he set to work to awaken the competitive spirit of his "hibernating splashers." The entire team had been alerted to Matt's return, and he was quick to take advantage of the obvious enthusiasm for a return to swimming which seemed to permeate the Duluth area. Now that a peace following W.W.I. seemed assured, the citizens of Duluth were anxious to return to a variety of peaceful pursuits.\(^{34}\)

In addition to preparing the D.B.C. swimmers for some competitive efforts during May, Matt also worked very rapidly to set up a full schedule of swimming instructional sessions for the club's membership. Most of the classes for women were conducted on weekdays, in the mornings and early afternoons. With the exception of noon hour time for certain businessmen, most classes for men took place in the weekdays evenings and on Saturday. While school was still in session, the junior teams worked out on weekdays in the late afternoons and Saturday mornings; in most instances the senior team workouts followed the juniors' sessions.\(^{35}\)

In less than a month's time, Matt had prepared the D.B.C. swimming team for its first competition of the season, that being an intra-squad gala to which the public was invited. Actually Matt had hoped to enter several of his swimmers in a large meet in Winnipeg the preceding week, but a severe strike by several unions in the Canadian

\(^{34}\)"Matt Mann Has 'Em Splashing And Training," Duluth Herald, April 30, 1919, Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 3.

city had caused the postponement of the meet. The D.B.C.'s meet featured exhibitions of the modern racing strokes by some of the senior swimmers, and a program of several handicap races which included junior and senior competitors. Matt included his solo routine of novelty strokes, and then introduced, for public view, the first water polo match in Duluth area. The game, which placed the junior boys against the senior boys, used the European fast game rules and was thoroughly enjoyed by the spectators. Matt was extremely pleased with the performances of his team members at this first meet, but he received an added bonus of some record setting efforts. Leonard Draper showed that he had lost little over the winter months, as he recorded a new state record of 2:46 1/5 for the 220-yard freestyle. Essie Harrison, who had come to Duluth with Matt so that she might continue her training under his tutelage during the summer, swam to a new state mark in the 25-yard freestyle with her time of :15 1/5; rounding out the record swims was Ted Raymond's new city record of :35 3/5 in the 50-yard backstroke. 36

By June, Matt had organized the D.B.C.'s swimming training camp on the club's grounds, using the same guidelines for its operation as he had instituted the previous summer. Matt had also worked up an attractive schedule of meets which would challenge the best of his senior swimmers. 37 The first major test for the D.B.C. swimmers that summer season would come at the club's big regatta in July. The Duluth Boat Club Regatta had been recognized as a major event on the national rowing scene for many years, and Matt had hopes that the swimming portion of

36 Ibid.

37 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.
the event would take on similar significance in future years. Matt had a committee of D.B.C. members working on the organizational elements of the regatta's swimming meet with guidelines which might be used for a national championship. Invitations had been mailed to the top swimmers and A.A.U. clubs in the boundaries of the Central A.A.U. Matt wanted the people of Duluth to see some of the top competitors in the Midwest, but he also wanted an opportunity to "show off" many of his youthful D.B.C. stars to the older, established A.A.U. teams of the region. In addition to the D.B.C.'s Draper, Cooley, Bennett, and the Gow brothers, Matt would have another team entry in the meet, in the persons of the D.A.C.'s Essie Harrison, Dave Nixon and Don Nixon. The latter trio was in Duluth for the summer to train at the D.B.C.'s swimming camp. Each of the D.A.C. swimmers held at least one major swimming title from the previous indoor season, with Miss Harrison holding the National A.A.U. Junior 100-yard Breaststroke crown, Don Nixon the Michigan titles for the 50-yard, 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle events, and Dave held the National A.A.U. Junior 500-yard freestyle title. Matt had hoped that the publicity for his rapidly developing D.B.C. swimmers, plus the presence of the D.A.C. champions would serve to attract other stars from the Central A.A.U. to the D.B.C.'s Regatta.\(^{38}\)

As a final preparation for the regatta meet, Matt conducted a full scale intrasquad competition. He organized the entire squad,

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seniors and juniors, into four teams, Pickerels, Pikes, Sharks and Pollywogs, and designated a senior swimmer to captain each team. The four-team rivalry brought out some excellent individual and relay efforts, which included two new Northwestern A.A.U. Association marks by Dave Nixon in the 50-yard freestyle with a time of :26 2/5 and in the 220-yard freestyle with a time of 2.40 4/5.  

The D.B.C. Regatta drew a fine field of competitors for the rowing and swimming races. A very large crowd, including many spectators from outside the Duluth area, lined the D.B.C.'s property along St. Louis Bay to witness the variety of aquatic races. Matt had set up a special 50-yard race course in the bay, so that the spectators did not have to go to the D.B.C.'s natatorium to watch the swimming exhibitions and races. Since the D.B.C. swimmers and the D.A.C.'s visiting trio had been training in "cool" bay waters and the new race course, they fared quite well in their races. The spectators were most appreciative of the swimmers' efforts in the regulation and handicap events, but the former reserved their most enthusiastic applause for the many D.B.C. swimmers who turned in sparkling performances. The swimming competition was marked by one major surprise though, as a 13 year old boy named Johnny Weissmuller, from Chicago, won the 50-yard freestyle in :27 seconds. By defeating the D.B.C.'s Gow brothers, Weissmuller established a new Northwestern Association record for the


outdoor, straightaway 50-yard event, while the time also came close to the American standard for the event.\(^1\) Even though the event had been billed as a "national championship" race, the 50-yard event was not recognized as a national championship competition on the official list of sanctioned competitions for the outdoor season.\(^2\)

Matt was so pleased with the progress of his swimmers that he decided to venture outside the friendly confines of Duluth to enter three of his swimmers in a national meet to be held near Columbus, Ohio. The title to be contested was the National A.A.U. Junior 440-yard freestyle to be held at the Buckeye Lake Yacht Club. Matt had entered two D.B.C. swimmers, Richard Bennett and Melvin Cooley, and one of his D.A.C. men, Dave Nixon, in the middle distance race. The trip for the competitors from Duluth was well worth their efforts, since Bennett won the race championship with a time of 6:30, and Nixon and Cooley placed third and fourth respectively. An added bonus for Matt at the meet was the victory by 12 year old Jessica Nixon of the D.A.C. in the invitational 220-yard freestyle race for women. Jessica had started her competitive swimming only the preceding December, when Matt had made a call for new team members at the D.A.C.\(^3\)

The week following the Columbus trip, Matt had organized a five team meet for the D.B.C.'s natatorium. The two day affair had been

\(^1\)Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.


billed as an international meet with the entry of a fine team from Winnipeg, Canada. The meet attracted "standing room only" crowds to the two days of racing. The quest for the team title turned out to be a battle between two teams in which Matt had a hand in coaching, namely the D.B.C. versus the D.A.C. The hometown boys, especially Bennett, Draper, Cooley and the Gows, proved too strong for the visiting and summer resident D.A.C. swimmers as the final score placed the D.B.C. in front with 42 points, followed by the D.A.C. with 30, the Winnipeg team at 16, Minneapolis with 13 and in fifth place, St. Paul with 5 points.14

Matt was very enthusiastic when he spoke of the progress and accomplishments made by his youthful and relatively inexperienced D.B.C. swimmers during the "short" summer season. It seemed that, just as the swimmers were beginning to round into top form in August, there was talk of the season's final meets and closing the D.B.C. natatorium for the winter season. Matt thoroughly enjoyed his work in Duluth, especially since he had started the swimming program at the D.B.C. He had been able to see boys and girls who had come to him as non-swimmers or rank beginners, rise from intrasquad competitive recognition to regional and national recognition. As Matt felt the summer season of 1919 starting to wind down, he wrote a letter to his good friend Harry May, a sportswriter and swimming authority for The Pittsburgh Sun, and stated:

"I am busy as ever here in Duluth; we have 1400 members this year, and as you know we give free lessons to everybody, and much of my time is devoted to beginners, with the other time going to the swimmers."

"We are trying up here to keep the game alive, but the worst part of it is, we close here on October 1st, and don't open again until May 1, making it dead here. I am booked up for the Detroit A.C. from October 1 to June 1 of next year, but I wish there was some way possible for me to stay right here, as I think I have the best bunch of kids in the country today. I have over a dozen of them (boys) under 65 seconds for the 100, and have 10 boys who could have gone under 30 minutes for the junior mile, and 4 boys who are close to 26 minutes, and when I tell you the oldest is not eighteen yet, you can understand how I feel about leaving them." ^5

During the remainder of August and through September the D.B.C. swimmers performed exceedingly well in several meets conducted at their home natatorium. In addition to the home triumphs, the boys team, led by the sparkling performances of Leonard Draper, Richard Bennett, Melvin Cooley and the Gows (Jack and Alex), won meets held in Minneapolis and St. Paul. ^6

The D.B.C.'s highly successful summer season was concluded with one of Matt's intrasquad "galas" and an awards ceremony. Matt presented awards to several girls and boys who had turned in top performances during the summer, but he also took time to publicly recognize the time improvements made by many of his younger swimmers. Matt tried to recognize as many swimmers as possible for their positive accomplishments.

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^5 H. A. May, "Duluth Boat Club Active," The Pittsburgh Sun, August 8, 1919, Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 13.

^6 Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 14-18. (Period covered was August and September of 1919)
He believed in leaving the team members with a "good taste" for competition, which he hoped they would retain during their absence from winter season training and meets. 47

Upon his return to the D.A.C. in the fall of 1919, Matt was determined to improve, to a greater extent, the instructional and competitive aquatic programs available to the membership. One area in which he set to work with great diligence was the swimming instruction program for women. He increased the skill levels of swimming classes for wives of D.A.C. members during four weekday mornings of each week, with classes for member's daughters scheduled for the weekday afternoon. The classes for girls and women proved immensely popular from their inception. 48

For a segment of the D.A.C.'s businessmen who enjoyed a mid-day swim at the club, on a regular basis, Matt formed a group called the Beavers. The men who joined this group had strong interests in both participating and promoting aquatic events at the D.A.C. Each Thursday, around noon, the Beavers membership came to the D.A.C. natatorium for a short program of races organized by Matt, followed by a water polo game in the shallow end of the pool. The aquatic activities were followed by a luncheon served in the pool area. If the group had any business pertaining to the sponsorship of certain swimming meets, it was conducted following the meal. The Beavers became quite popular


48 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.
among the male membership and soon became instrumental in the sponsorship of various events for the D.A.C.'s competitive teams.\footnote{Ibid., Tape 6.}

From a competitive standpoint, Matt had resigned himself to work within the D.A.C.'s strict membership rules in an effort to build up the swimming team's number of participants. The development of teams with boys and girls in high school had become a difficult task, because Detroit's interscholastic rules did not permit a student to be a member of a high school team and a club team during the same season. Matt often advised the students to stay with their school teams since that would probably mean more to them than competing for the club team. Matt did make a significant move to improve his senior men's team when he invited his former star "pupil," Teddy Cann, from the N.Y.A.C. to join him at the D.A.C. Following the war, Cann had resumed training and had been racing in excellent form in the fall of 1919 when he was contacted by his former coach. Matt had secured the promise from a D.A.C. member and Beaver, Al Wallace, to employ Cann in a position of selling stocks and bonds. Cann's employment by a Detroit firm and his sponsorship for membership in the D.A.C. by Wallace and Paul Roberts would enable him to swim for the D.A.C. Cann accepted Matt's invitation, and by late fall the former was training with the D.A.C. in preparation for the 1920 indoor season.\footnote{Ibid.}

During November and December of 1919, Matt had his D.A.C. swimmers engage in a number of intrasquad and exhibition meets to sharpen their competitive skills for the major state, regional and national meets already on the 1920 winter schedule. Matt had again secured the support
of the D.A.C. executive committee, and the financial backing from the
D.A.C.'s Beavers to host a number of big meets at the D.A.C.
natatorium. Some of the major competitions for the winter season,
which Matt had secured for the Madison Avenue club, included the
Michigan State championships, the Central A.A.U. Junior championships,
the Central A.A.U. Senior championships for men, and the National
A.A.U. Senior 220-yard Freestyle championship for men.\textsuperscript{51}

Although the winter season of 1920 was still in its very early stages in the beginning of January, there was already talk of the summer season and, more specifically, the Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium. A press release from the headquarters of the National A.A.U. had cited Detroit as a "hotbed" for some very strong candidates for the United States Olympic swimming teams. The A.A.U.'s release singled out four swimmers, Ted Cann, Leo Handy, Margaret Woodbridge and Marie Curtis, the first three being members of the D.A.C.'s swimming team while the fourth swam for Northern High School of Detroit. The 1920 Olympic Games would mark the first time a women's team would represent the United States in swimming competition. While the qualifications for the Olympic team were still several months away, it was quite an honor for the D.A.C. and Matt to have three of its swimmers accorded such recognition.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{51}Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 20-28. (Several articles cited intrasquad meet highlights and the meet schedule. Period covered was November and December of 1919)

Prior to the start of the D.A.C.'s busy winter schedule, Teddy Cann had returned to New York City to visit some family members and friends. During his visit he took time to go to the N.Y.A.C. to see some of his former teammates. He was anxious to tell them of his marked improvement in training under Matt's able guidance. The N.Y.A.C. mermen, convinced that Cann had made some boostful statements that he could not back up, quickly offered Teddy the opportunity to prove his claim when they set up an exhibition 50-yard race. Cann made believers of the New Yorkers as he easily defeated the N.Y.A.C.'s top sprinters when he recorded an excellent time of :24.0 for the two length race at Winged Foot club's natatorium.\(^5^3\)

During early January, Matt was actively involved in expanding the competitive schedule for his D.A.C. swimmers and the meets which would be held at the D.A.C. The water polo team of the D.A.C. had been developed by Matt with the squad membership coming primarily from the club's male swimming team. By making up the men's swimming and water polo teams of the D.A.C. with many of the same individuals, the scheduling of dual meet and match competitions, especially away events, was greatly facilitated. On occasions when formal swimming races were not scheduled along with a water polo match, Matt often included a number of exhibition races on an evening's program at the D.A.C. On January 24, Matt had the opportunity to take his water polo team to Cleveland, Ohio, for matches with the Cleveland Y.M.C.A. and an

all-star team from the Alleghany A.A.U. district. The D.A.C. poloists' superior swimming skills and level of conditioning appeared to be primary factors in enabling the Detroiter to win both matches handily.

Although the stringent D.A.C. membership rules had prevented Matt from building up the ranks of his women's and men's swimming teams the way he would have liked, he had added several quality swimmers to the teams during his rather brief reign as coach. The latest swimming talent to join the D.A.C. was Marie Curtis, a local high school star. As a member of Detroit's Northern High School team, Marie had established state records in the 100-yard freestyle and 50-yard backstroke events, in addition to being the recipient of the all-around swimming championship crown for Detroit high school girls the preceding season. She had changed her swimming affiliation to the D.A.C., so that she would be able to engage in more meets and at a higher level of competition than her high school program could provide. With the addition of Marie Curtis to the D.A.C.'s team, which included such regional notables as Margaret Woodbridge, Edwardina Kranitch, Ann Smith, Essie Harrison and Jessica Nixon, Matt believed his women's squad had legitimate opportunity to be ranked as one of the top three teams in the United States. The emerging D.A.C. women's team had been recognized by national swimming authorities for its rapid improvement;

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the time standards achieved by the Detroit "mermaids" were moving the team into recognition with the nation's top three teams, those being the Women's Swimming Association of New York, the Meadowbrook Club of Philadelphia and the Illinois Athletic Club of Chicago. 56

Matt rarely missed an opportunity to use the D.A.C. as a showcase for major aquatic competitions, especially when his team members had a chance to shine before the home crowd or to attract some national swimming attention to his developing program. When he received the news release that Mrs. Frances Shroth, the national record holder for the 100-yard backstroke event (1:27) from San Francisco, was going to be making a competitive tour of the northeastern United States, he was anxious for her to include the D.A.C. on the itinerary. Matt wanted to set up a match race between Mrs. Shroth and the D.A.C.'s Margaret Woodbridge, since the latter had negotiated the 50-yard backstroke in an unofficial world record time of :38 1/5 at a D.A.C. practice meet. Matt had left the available dates for such a race open to the convenience of the California swimmer. If such a race could be scheduled, Matt believed that Woodbridge could fare well in her own pool and gain important recognition for herself in the Olympic year. 57

The arrival of February meant the start of the big meet schedule for the D.A.C. swimmers. With the preseason intrasquad and


"gala" competition behind them, the D.A.C. swimmers would engage in some major competition during the first week of February. Matt had announced that he would take some of his women's team, including his two "aces," Margaret Woodbridge and Marie Curtis, to Chicago for the Central A.A.U. Senior Championships. The week following the Chicago meet, Matt would have the bulk of his men's and women's teams entered in the combined Central A.A.U. Junior championships and the Michigan State championships meet to be hosted by the D.A.C. In the combined meet, the junior A.A.U. events to be contested would include the 440-yard freestyle for men, and the 50-yard breaststroke and 50-yard backstroke events for women. The state meet schedule called for the women to compete in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle, the 50-yard breaststroke, the 50-yard backstroke and the fancy diving events. The title events for the men would include the 50-yard, 100-yard and 220-yard freestyles, the 100-yard breaststroke, the 100-yard backstroke, the plunge for distance and fancy diving. 58

Before departing for the Central A.A.U. meet in Chicago, Matt informed members of the Detroit press corps that his women's contingent of Margaret Woodbridge, Marie Curtis, Essie Harrison and Helen Mitchell should "run away with most of the events." 59 To some observers, the words of the D.A.C. coach may have served to cast him in the role of a braggadocio, but when the events were contested and the awards presented, Matt had merely predicted an accurate assessment of his


swimmers abilities for the field of competition. The D.A.C. swimmers had recorded three first, two second and two third place finishes in the meet hosted by the Illinois A.C. Margaret Woodbridge led a sweep of the top three places in the 440-yard swim, followed by Curtis and Harrison. Helen Mitchell won the plunge with a distance of 54 feet. Essie Harrison won the 100-yard breaststroke. Woodbridge and Curtis pushed Sybil Bauer of the Illinois A.C. to a new unofficial world record time of :37 4/5 in the 50-yard backstroke event. The small group from the D.A.C. had certainly impressed the rival competitors and spectators with their dominant showing.

The combined meet for the three Central A.A.U. Junior titles and the full schedule of events for the Michigan State championships drew a fine field of swimmers from several clubs within the state. The D.A.C.'s men's and women's teams swam to the top places in so many of the events, that the results read like an intrasquad meet for the host Madison Avenue Club. Margaret Woodbridge turned in the top individual effort of the meet, as she won the Michigan title for the 50-yard backstroke event with a time of :37 3/5. While her time was announced as a new world record, it would not be submitted to the appropriate international body, since the International Swimming Federation did not recognize world records at fifty yards. For the D.A.C. men's team, Leo Handy and Paul Roberts were recognized as the top male performers in the meet. Handy "took home" the State's first place honors in the 100-yard freestyle and 100-yard backstroke events, while Roberts, the

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"old man" of the team, finished first in the State Championship races of the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard breaststroke.

With the 1920 Olympic Games still some six months away, attention was being directed to the women's swimming events. The British Olympic committee had requested that a 500-meter freestyle race and a fancy diving event be added to the official schedule of Olympic swimming and diving events. The International Olympic committee and the Belgium Olympic committee, charged with the responsibility of establishing the official schedule of events for the Games, was said to be reviewing the request. The inclusion of those events in the Olympic Games would certainly favor the increased participation and medal winning chances for American women. Many of the top female swimmers in the United States had recorded leading world class times for the commonly contested 140-yard freestyle event, a fact which would seem to cast a favorite role on the U.S. girls should the 500-meter event be added. The addition of the fancy diving event would enable the United States to send some female diving representatives to the Belgium Games. Under the existing Olympic event schedule, the only diving event for women was the high dive from 30 feet, an event which was considered too dangerous for official competition in the United States.

The United States did not send any female swimmers or divers to the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm, Sweden. In the 1912 Games, women from various countries competed in the 100-meter

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Freestyle, 400-meter Relay and the Plain High Diving events. Participation by American women in the 1920 Olympic Games swimming, and possibly diving, events would mark the first such occasion for that competition.\(^{63}\)

In anticipation that the Belgium Olympic Games committee would include some additional swimming and diving events in the Games to be held in August, the United States Olympic committee had set up a schedule of invitational meets, for women and men, in different parts of the country. The purpose of those meets was to create competitive opportunities for swimmers and divers from different parts of the United States to race against each other, so that the top competitors might be selected for the final Olympic Trials, which were scheduled for July in Brooklyn, New York and Chicago, Illinois. Matt had entered the D.A.C.'s two young "star" swimmers, Margaret Woodbridge and Marie Curtis, and two divers, Mrs. Vonnie Malcomson and Betty Jones, in one such major invitational meet, to be hosted by the Cleveland Athletic Club of Ohio on February 20. Matt's swimming "pupils" would receive the sternest competitive tests of their careers, as they would be called upon to face the outstanding swimmers from the Women's Swimming Association (W.S.A.) of New York. Leading the list of entrants from the W.S.A.'s nationally top ranked team would be Ethelda Bliebtrey, Charlotte Boyle and the Smith twins, Ruth and Eleanor. Matt had entered Woodbridge and Curtis in the National

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Junior 100-yard freestyle championship and the special 100-yard freestyle handicap race. In addition to the excellent swimmers who had travelled to Cleveland from Detroit and New York, several other fine female swimmers from the Midwest and the East also competed in that first major invitational meet. Margaret Woodbridge swam well as she finished third in the National Junior 100-yard freestyle championship behind the winner Ruth Smith and second place finisher Eleanor Smith.

In the 100-yard freestyle handicap race, the D.A.C. entries of Woodbridge and Curtis brought a smile to Matt's face as they finished first and second, respectively, in the race. The D.A.C.'s divers, Florence Eby, a 16 year old "last minute" replacement for Betty Jones, and Mrs. Vonnie Malcomson, finished second and third in the fancy diving event. Matt was very pleased with the efforts of his D.A.C. competitors in this major pre-Olympic Trials qualifying meet.

The week following the Cleveland meet, Matt was busy getting things ready at the D.A.C. in preparation for the major Central A.A.U. meet, which was to be hosted by the Madison Avenue Club. Six Central A.A.U. senior swimming championships would be contested at the D.A.C.

The title events for men would include the 880-yard freestyle and the 220-yard breaststroke; while the women would compete for the "crowns" in the fancy diving, 100-yard breaststroke, 100-yard backstroke, and the 400-yard freestyle relay events. Team entries from the D.A.C.,

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Illinois A.C., Chicago A.A., Milwaukee A.C., and the Detroit Y.M.C.A. indicated that a quality field would be on hand for the championship events.66

Out-of-state swimmers garnered the limelight at the Central A.A.U. Seniors' meet, hosted by the D.A.C. The outstanding individual performer at the meet was 18 year old Sybil Bauer, of the Illinois A.C., who won the 100-yard backstroke title in a world record time of 1:22.0. Miss Bauer was challenged from start to finish in the race by the talented Margaret Woodbridge, who finished second in the exciting "head to head" race. Clement Brown and E. M. Chapman, both of the Chicago A.A., won the 880-yard freestyle for men and the men's 220-yard breaststroke, respectively. The D.A.C. women entered two teams in the 400-yard freestyle relay event, and finished first and second. The second relay entry was permitted, due to a withdrawal by the Milwaukee team prior to the start of the event. In a special feature event, included by Matt in the meet program, Ted Cann of the D.A.C. attempted to break the world record for 150-yards freestyle held by Hal Vollmer. The existing record of 1:29 4/5 was narrowly missed by Cann as he swam 1:30 3/5. In the record attempt Matt had Leo Handy swim the first 100 yards with Cann, with Handy serving as a "pacer." For the last 50 yards another swimmer from the D.A.C. was to push off with Cann, and challenge the latter to the finish. The first 100-yards went according to schedule with an excited crowd offering Cann their support, but a mix-up occurred for the last 50 yards, with no one entering the water

to push Ted for record attempt. The crowd did give Cann an enthusiastic applause for his near miss.67

In less than two weeks after his fine exhibition effort, Ted Cann won the National A.A.U. 100-yard freestyle championship in Brookline, Massachusetts. Matt had returned to the site of many of his early coaching triumphs with the Brookline Gymnasium Athletic Association, with Ted Cann and former B.G.A.A. swimmer Leo Handy. In the thrilling race, which placed each of the four finalists within a yard of each other at the finish, Cann's winning time of :55 3/5 broke the B.G.A.A. natatorium record of :58 set several years earlier by Handy. Clement Brown of the Chicago A.A. placed second to Cann, closely followed by Harry Hebner of the Illinois A.C. and then in fourth place Leo Handy. It had been an impressive race for the D.A.C. as two of its swimmers finished in the top four.68

Throughout the 1920 indoor swimming season the D.A.C. swimming teams distinguished themselves in several major dual and championship meet competitions. The junior and senior D.A.C. swimming teams had a combined total roster of 150 to 160 members. In the Detroit Championships the D.A.C. swimmers had won all of the titles; while in the Michigan Championships, only one individual title had escaped the D.A.C. natators. In the team standing for the Central A.A.U. crown, with points awarded for the places won by individuals and relay teams


in the junior and senior championship races, the D.A.C. women's team by late March, would easily win the title for 1920 season. In a major dual meet confrontation in March the D.A.C. women's swimming team led by Woodbridge, Curtis and Harrison had defeated the strong team from the Illinois A.C. 69

Many of the D.A.C.'s team victories were inspired by the outstanding individual efforts of Margaret Woodbridge, Ted Cann and Leo Handy. For the women's team, Margaret Woodbridge had become the most consistent winner in several events. Her Central A.A.U. record in both junior and senior competitions usually placed her in the top two in most of her races. She was the Central A.A.U. Senior 440-yard freestyle champion, and that championship served as a stepping stone to her triumph in the National A.A.U. Senior 500-yard championship, late in the indoor season. Ted Cann had really come into his own as the season progressed. Cann had won the Central A.A.U. Senior titles for the 50-yard, 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle events, while establishing new records in each of the events. He had also won the national titles for the 50-yard and 100-yard races with the 220-yard championship yet to be contested. Leo Handy had won the National A.A.U. Junior 220-yard freestyle championship as the highlight to his excellent indoor season, but he had also placed second in the National A.A.U. Senior 100-yard backstroke, fourth in the national 100-yard freestyle, and had scored several high place finishes in the Central A.A.U. competitions. Those

69 Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 30-44. (Several articles with meet results. Period covered was January through April of 1920)
three swimmers had certainly served as excellent role models for many of the younger swimmers throughout the season. 70

Towards the close of the 1920 indoor season, Ted Cann had established himself as the premier freestyles in the United States for events ranging in distance from 50-yards to 220-yards. He was being touted as a prime candidate to win a medal for the United States in the 1920 Olympic Games. On April 10, 1920 Ted Cann continued his dominance of the U.S. freestyle swimming scene, as he placed first in the National A.A.U. Senior 220-yard championship race. The event was held at the D.A.C. pool, before a capacity crowd of spectators. Cann provided his faithful onlookers with yet another treat, as he won the race over two rivals from the Midwest, Clement Brown (Chicago A.A.) and Perry McGillivray (Illinois A.C.), with a world record time of 2:19 4/5. At the same meet, two women's relay teams from the D.A.C. chased the New York Women's Swimming Association team to a new world record (5:03 3/5) in the National A.A.U. Junior 400-yard freestyle relay event. 71

Amidst the excitement of the national titles and big meets, which were won by the D.A.C. swimmers during the 1920 indoor season, Matt was working on some plans for the future, which might dramatically alter his summer employment patterns. Matt's thought for changing his association with the Duluth Boat Club had arisen after several conversations with Elmer Drulard, an assistant to Dr. George May in the

70 Ibid., pp. 30-44.

gymnasium at the University of Michigan. Matt had met Drulard at a swimming meet, during the 1920 indoor season, and soon a friendship was struck between the two men. In the course of some of their early conversations, Matt and Drulard had each mentioned a "dream" to someday build and operate a summer camp for boys. Matt had maintained a strong desire to become involved in the summer camp business since his New England camping days, and now, after talking with Drulard, it seemed his dream to own a summer camp had a chance to be realized. Both men had a similar plight, that being little or no capital reserve with which to start a camp. Drulard had an ideal piece of property for the summer camp picked out in Canada, but he did not have the cash necessary to make the purchase. While Matt admittedly had little money, he did mention to Drulard that through some D.A.C. members, it might be possible for the former to secure the necessary capital, in the form of a loan, to make the purchase. Drulard accepted Matt's proposal, and a partnership was formed between the two men, contingent upon Matt's procurement of the loan.72

Matt's good friend and present D.A.C. team member, Paul Roberts, had previously volunteered financial backing for the camp business enterprise. When the opportunity arose, Matt approached Roberts and soon after, Roberts secured the necessary financial commitment from two other D.A.C. members, Bob Alling and Gervis Webb, to buy the potential camp property. Matt and Druland bought the beautiful tract of acreage on Ahmic Lake in Central Ontario from John Hollard, a farmer. The natural surroundings of the future camp buildings

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72 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 6.
inspired Matt to select an Indian name, Camp Chikopi, meaning "Land of Birch," for the partner's camp for boys. 73

Matt's former camp experience from his New England days, plus his development of the summer swimmers' camp at the Duluth Boat Club, rendered him as the "camp expert" of the partnership. The loan secured from the D.A.C. members enabled Matt and Drulard not only to purchase the Canadian property, but it provided funds for the construction of some essential buildings on the camp grounds, such as camper cabins, a dining hall, a swimming-boat dock and some latrines. When Camp Chikopi became functional, Matt had hoped to base some of the physical design and camper activity program features on the wholesome camping principles, which had been used by Dr. and Mrs. Luther Gulick and Dr. Dudley Sargent in their New England camps. Matt and Drulard envisioned a ready market for campers, that being from the sons of D.A.C. members and the sons of University of Michigan faculty. It was decided that Drulard would have to oversee much of the preliminary camp construction work that first summer, since Matt was obligated, by verbal contract and financial necessity, to return to the D.B.C. for 1920 summer season. 74

With the development plans for Camp Chikopi set in motion, Matt directed his attention towards his summer position in Duluth. Before departing for the D.B.C., Matt had tried to encourage several of his top D.A.C. male and female swimmers to accompany him to the D.B.C., where they could reside and train for the summer season. He had hoped that Margaret Woodbridge and Marie Curtis would follow the lead of

73 Ibid., Tape 6.  74 Ibid.
Essie Harrison, but only the latter had made plans to train in Duluth. Matt had made arrangements to forward training routines, on a weekly basis, to his D.A.C. swimmers, who would stay in Detroit for the summer season. Matt believed that Ted Cann and Margaret Woodbridge had the best chances to make the 1920 Olympic team and to win medals, if they stuck to their hard training regimens. But prior to Matt's departure for Duluth, misfortune struck the D.A.C.'s Ted Cann as he was seriously injured in an automobile accident, in which one of his legs was fractured in six places. The early reports following the accident indicated that Cann would probably be out of competition for at least several months. Cann's accident was certainly not the kind of send off from Detroit Matt had hoped for, because he had wanted the D.A.C. to be represented on the Olympic men's and women's teams.

Soon after the arrival of Matt and his wife in Duluth, the D.B.C. natatorium had become a hotbed of activity. Matt had again made arrangements for his top male swimmers to move into the D.B.C. dormitory, so that the morning and evening training sessions could be instituted to benefit the swimmers, and make up for the boys lack of training during the winter season. In addition to a full schedule of swimming classes for the female and youth membership of the D.B.C., Matt had also instituted advanced swimming classes for businessmen on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from noon to 1:00 p.m., and beginning

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75 Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 44-47. (Several Detroit newspaper articles described Matt's plans for the summer and the training plans for the D.A.C. swimmers. Period covered was late April of 1920.)
classes for businessmen on Tuesday and Thursday from noon to 1:00 p.m., each week. Matt was impressed each summer by the unique enthusiasm displayed by his D.B.C. students and team members. Some of that enthusiastic spirit and some real talent displayed in the early training sessions by a couple of the D.B.C. men's team members, had prompted Matt to suggest to certain Duluth sportswriters that Jack Gow, a freestyle sprinter, and Miles Carter, a diver, had a chance of competing at the Olympic Trials in Chicago in early July. The prospect of having some D.B.C. team members at the Olympic Trials was exciting news for the Duluth community, and especially for aquatic sports fans, since only a few years ago, there had been no organized competitive swimming or diving in the city.76

About the time that the outdoor competitive swimming season was ready to get into full swing, the National A.A.U. announced that the Illinois Athletic Club (Chicago), coached by Bill Bachrach, had won the 1920 National Indoor Swimming Championship with a score of 33 points. The championship was awarded to the team scoring the most points throughout the season. The point total for each team was based upon awards made for the place finishes of various individual and relay team entrants, of respective teams, in the different national championship events, which were contested throughout the country. The other teams in the top six, which followed the Illinois A.C. in order of place standing, were the Olympic Club of San Francisco, 21 points; Chicago A.C., 19 points; Detroit A.C., 18 points; Detroit Y.M.C.A.,

6 points, and the Los Angeles A.C., 5 points. The D.A.C.'s Ted Cann was recognized as the top individual swimmer for the 1920 season based upon his three national titles in the 50-yard, 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle events.77

With the summer season rapidly approaching, Matt was kept extremely busy with at least four primary responsibilities. His first task was to build up the ranks of the D.B.C. swimming team, and then to prepare those swimmers for the upcoming meets. One such way that Matt hoped to increase the team membership was through a special meet that he would organize and promote for grade school youngsters at the D.B.C. in mid-June. The meet was to consist of a number of 25-yard races for children of different age groups, with separate heats for girls and boys. The winner of each race would be given an individual membership ticket to the D.B.C. for the summer season, with the bearer being entitled to free admission to the pool and the opportunity to join the swimming team.78

The second of Matt's major responsibilities was for him to increase the intensity of training for his senior swimmers, so that they might have the opportunities to challenge for some of the major outdoor Central A.A.U. titles, and possibly the qualifying "berths" on the 1920 Olympic Team. Matt maintained the hope that 16 year old


Jack Gow might have an outside chance of gaining one of the 100-meter freestyle places on that team. Matt realized how difficult the task of making the Olympic team would be for an inexperienced competitor like Gow; but based on an intrasquad meet sprint effort at 50-yards, in which Jack missed the national record by only 4/5 of a second, Matt believed that some hard work in the ensuing weeks could enable Gow to win that place on the team.79

Matt's other major responsibilities were associated with the training of Margaret Woodbridge and the opening of Camp Chikopi. Matt felt that both things, ideally, should have his personal attention, but since that was not possible that summer, Matt had selected two methods of accomplishing his tasks. In the case of Margaret's training, Matt sent her a series of workouts through the mail each week, for her to implement at the D.A.C. She was to go through the training sessions with some of the other D.A.C. girls who were continuing their training throughout the summer. In addition to training schedules by mail, Matt was also corresponding with Elmer Drulard regarding the opening of Camp Chikopi. The building plans had gone according to schedule, and Drulard had secured several members of the University of Michigan athletic staff to work as counselors and activity directors for the campers. Matt and Drulard had decided to organize a sports participation program for the campers. The Camp Chikopi program would provide instructional and participation sessions in many of the

"traditional" American sports. While aquatic activities would be included on the activity schedule, they would not receive the major emphasis Matt would have liked, due primarily to his absence from the camp's staff that summer. 80

The D.B.C. swimming team seemed to be off to an excellent start, based on the fine performances displayed by several team members at a few of Matt's "typical" intrasquad galas and in a couple of dual meets with intrastate A.A.U. teams. The time for the Olympic Trials for the men's swimming and diving teams had arrived. Matt would travel to the aquatic facilities in Chicago's Lincoln Park lagoon for the meet, which was to be conducted under the auspices of the Chicago Athletic Association July 10-14, 1920, with the D.B.C.'s two hopefuls, Jack Gow and diver Miles Carter. 81 Representing the D.B.C. at the men's swimming and diving trials was a real honor for Matt and his two team members. Although neither competitor gained a place on the 1920 Olympic Team, both represented themselves well in the competition. Gow swam very well in his 100-meter heat, and placed fourth, in spite of being accidentally fouled by a swimmer from the Naval Academy. Carter also completed a very good round of dives, but his score was not high enough to warrant his inclusion on the Olympic team. Matt was very pleased with the performances of his D.B.C. competitors; he stated publicly that if both

80 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 7.

boys continued hard training, they should have a good chance of making the 1924 Olympic Team.

Several hundred miles east from Chicago, the top female swimmers and divers in the United States were competing in Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, New York, for places in two swimming and two diving Olympic events. The list of women's individual events had been increased over the 1912 Olympic schedule by the inclusion of the 300-meter Freestyle event and the Fancy Diving event (contested from four meters). The 100-meter Freestyle and Plain High Diving (contested from eight meters) were retained from the 1912 schedule. The 400-meter Relay event was also retained from the previous Olympic Games, but the actual swimmers for that event would not be selected until the U.S. team of qualifiers was in Antwerp. The D.A.C. had sent Margaret Woodbridge to compete in the 300-meter Freestyle event and Mrs. Vonnie Malcomson as an entrant for both diving events.  

On the opening day of the women's trials, Ethelda Bleibtrey of the New York Women's Swimming Association gave notice to her competitors and the "swimming world," that she was indeed in top form as she won the 100-meter Freestyle event in the world record time of 1:12 3/5. Her record effort was particularly outstanding in that she overcame the obstacle of a collision with a competitor enroute to her


Miss Bleibtrey was also at her best for the 300-meter Freestyle event, as she swam to first place and another world record with a time of 4:34 1/5. Margaret Woodbridge finished fourth in the 300-meter race, but only because of a collision between two of her competitors. The collision occurred between the second place swimmer, Charlotte Boyle, and a slower swimmer in an adjacent lane with less than 100-meters to go in the race. Miss Boyle was caused to stop to regain her composure, and when she resumed swimming she had lost position in the race and finished the race in fifth position.

Margaret's fourth place finish did not automatically win her a place on the Olympic team, however; the final decision regarding the places on the women's swimming team, was to be announced the day after the trials were concluded. The D.A.C.'s other hopeful, Vonnie Malcomson, had been eliminated for automatic consideration by virtue of her ninth place finishes in both diving events.

On July 15, the president of the United States Olympic Committee, Gustavis T. Kirby, announced the selections for the women's swimming and diving team, along with the men's wrestling and water polo teams. According to some of the persons who participated in the selection process, the meeting was one of the "stormiest" sessions since the organization of the American Olympic Committee. The selection process had started early in the evening of July 14, but it was not concluded until 4:00 a.m. the next morning. President Kirby made the

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announcement that Margaret and Matt, the latter in Duluth, had hoped to hear, — that she had been selected as the sixth of six women swimmers. Margaret's trip to Antwerp, Belgium, still was not guaranteed though. A provision had been made for each team, that if there were insufficient funds to send all the representatives for a particular sport, then the committee would eliminate the last person selected from each squad first, and then continue that process until the available funds proved sufficient to send the remaining team members. Margaret would return home to Detroit and resume her training with the hope that her trip to the 1920 Olympic Games would be realized. Mrs. Malcomson had a less secure place than Margaret, as the former was selected as an alternate for the diving team.86

The D.B.C.'s swimming team had enjoyed a very successful summer season in meets conducted at the D.B.C. and other cities in the state. Various individual swimmers had also scored well in the several Central A.A.U. championship events contested at the different clubs in the association. Matt had hoped that his team would reach its "peak" for the major gala he had scheduled at the D.B.C. for August 21. The D.B.C. meet, which would be a concluding event for Duluth's North Star Festival Week, was scheduled to include three Central A.A.U. championships for women: the Senior 220-yard Freestyle, the Senior 880-yard Freestyle, and the Junior 220-yard Freestyle races. The awarding of three championship events to one club, in the outdoor season, was regarded as quite a compliment to the D.B.C. meet committee and Matt,

since two events was usually the maximum awarded for a club per meet.
In addition to the championship events, Matt had scheduled a full
slate of standard men's and women's events, several handicap races for
children, and some special novelty events. 87

The August "gala" at the D.B.C. was going to be Matt's final
big meet of the season with his D.B.C. team, and he wanted it to be a
very special affair. Matt had set up a 100-yard race course in
St. Louis Bay, out from the D.B.C.'s shore line property. At each end
of the racing area, Matt had placed a large floating platform, kept in
place with anchors securely fastened to the lake's bottom. He had also
implemented a rather innovative idea by dividing the race course into
eight 8-foot lanes, by using lines, covered with cork floats, attached
to each platform. The separate racing lane idea made not only for an
attractive race course, but it was hoped the lane lines would serve to
keep the competitors on line, and avoid the collisions between
competitors, which often occurred in many outdoor races where no lane
lines were used. Matt had set up the race course far enough in
advance of the meet, so that he was able to conduct several workouts
in the lanes to familiarize his swimmers with the racing environment.
On the day prior to the meet, he had many of the middle distance
swimmers go through several 100-yard swims at a fast pace, while the
distance swimmers swam a series of 220-yard efforts. Although the

87 "A.A.U. Championship Events To Be Decided In Duluth,"
Duluth Herald, August 14, 1920, Scrapbook 9, Matt Mann Collection,
Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale,
Florida, p. 58.
entry list included competitors from several teams, the D.B.C. swimmers were regarded as favorites for most of the races.

The D.B.C.'s gala meet seemed a fitting climax to Duluth's North Star Festival Week, as the weather was ideal for the competitors and a large crowd of spectators lined the shore to witness the meet program. As had been predicted, the D.B.C. swimmers clearly dominated the meet by capturing seven of the twelve regulation events. In the Central A.A.U. Senior 880-yard race for women, the D.B.C. captured the first three places, with first place going to Allison Bear, who used the breaststroke throughout the race. Ellen Neville of the D.B.C. won the Senior 220-yard race in a mild upset over Essie Harrison of the D.A.C. But it was Miss Harrison who was recognized as the top female performer in the meet, as she captured the first place honors in the Central A.A.U. Junior 220-yard Freestyle championship, and the meet's 100-yard Breaststroke event. While Miss Harrison swam officially for the D.A.C. in the meet, she had been training with the D.B.C. swimmers for the entire summer season. In the featured men's events the D.B.C. swimmers again proved too strong for the opposition, as the Gow brothers, Jack and Alex, finished first and second, respectively, in the 100-yard freestyle; Leonard Draper won the 220-yard freestyle; and Mel Cooley, Richard Bennett, and Mike Taylor swept the first three places in the men's mile race. Matt's lane lines had helped keep the

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swimmers on course throughout the meet, for none of the major races were marred by collisions between the competitors. 89

With the D.B.C.'s last home meet of the season concluded, Matt placed his wife, Lea, in charge of the last week of training for many of the D.B.C.'s senior swimmers. The designation of Lea as coach was not an unusual occurrence, since she had become well versed in Matt's coaching techniques during their marriage. On several preceding occasions, when Matt had to take a small group of his swimmers to championship meets in other cities, he had placed Lea in charge of the remaining D.B.C. swimmers. The need for designating Lea arose during the last week of the summer season because Matt had to be back in Detroit to assume his duties at the D.A.C. for the fall and winter seasons. Matt's early return was necessitated because he had scheduled an invitational meet at the D.A.C. for the Labor Day weekend. One interesting feature of the meet was that the D.B.C. represented by five of its top "seniors," with Lea Mann as coach, would be one of the major opponents for Matt's D.A.C. team. 90

With the D.A.C.'s Labor Day invitational meet still almost two weeks away, Matt had an opportunity to direct his attention to the daily newspaper accounts of the swimming and diving action in the Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium. Matt was particularly interested in the 300-meter swim for women, the event in which Margaret Woodbridge


had qualified for the Games. Each of the three heats for the 300-meter
was won by an American girl, Ethelda Bleibtrey, Margaret Woodbridge
and Eleanor Uhl, respectively. Miss Bleibtrey, in winning her heat,
had broken the world record of 4:43 and had established the Olympic
record of 4:41 2/5 for the event, since that was the first time the
300-meter race had been contested in the Olympic Games. The heat
winning times of Woodbridge and Uhl did not better the new record.91
In the finals of the 300-meter race, Ethelda Bleibtrey led an American
sweep of the first three places with her new world record of 4:34.
Winning the Olympic silver medal was the D.A.C.'s Margaret Woodbridge,
followed by Mrs. Frances Shroth of San Francisco in third place;
Eleanor Uhl did finish fifth in the event to give the United States
four of the top five places.92

Margaret's second place finish in the 300-meter race, coupled
with her time of 4:42 2/5, which had bettered the existing world
record for the event, enabled her to be selected for the women's
400-meter Relay team. On the last day of swimming competition at the
1920 Olympic Games, the American men's 800-meter Relay team of
Duke Kahanamoku, Perry McGillivray, Norman Ross and Pua Kealoha won the
gold medal for the event with their new Olympic record winning effort
of 10:04 2/5. Not to be outdone by their male counterparts, the
women's 400-meter Relay team of Ethelda Bleibtrey, Irene Guest,

91"New Record Is Set By Miss Bleibtrey," New York Times,
August 27, 1920, p. 13, col. 3.

92"Miss Bleibtrey Clips Nine Seconds Off World's Record,"
Frances Shroth and Margaret Woodbridge also won a gold medal and established a new Olympic record of 5:11 4/5.  

The news of Margaret Woodbridge's medal winning performances at the Olympic Games produced a great deal of excitement in the D.A.C. swimming team's practice sessions, as the Labor Day meet approached. The mere mention of Margaret's Antwerp achievements, by Matt, to the team members seemed to immediately enliven the demanding workouts. In the D.A.C.'s Labor Day meet, the home club swimmers performed as if they had been working under Matt for the entire summer season. Most of the first place positions in the men's and women's events went to D.A.C. swimmers. Mel Cooley of the D.B.C. did manage to break the D.A.C.'s complete domination with his victory in the National A.A.U. Junior Mile Championship. The outstanding female performer in the meet was the D.A.C.'s Marie Curtis. She won the title as the top all-around female swimmer in Michigan by winning the two-mile swim and 50-yard freestyle events, by placing second in three of the remaining four events: fancy diving, 50-yard backstroke, 50-yard breaststroke, and by being a member of the D.A.C.'s winning 400-yard relay. It had been hoped that Margaret Woodbridge would be able to participate in the meet, but she had stayed on in Europe for a brief vacation following the Olympic Games.


When Margaret did return to Detroit later in September, she received certificates and awards from certain city officials, her high school, and a special ceremony at the D.A.C. For that time, however brief it might have been, she was accorded a "star's" treatment, an unusual occurrence for female athletes in many sections of the United States. Matt had worked hard to get Margaret the appropriate recognition she so richly deserved. It was a special occasion for Matt and Margaret, for the latter had helped the former realize a coaching goal, that being, to develop an Olympic medalist. A staff sportswriter for the Detroit Free Press had succinctly captured the feeling at that time by stating:

... It was a remarkable achievement for a young girl (Margaret Woodbridge) virtually unknown outside of the Detroit area one year ago, and it reflects no end of credit on Matthew Mann, the above D.A.C. coach, whose clever handling has been very largely responsible for her brilliant success (at the 1920 Olympic Games). ... 95

It did not take long for the local acclaim for Matt and Margaret to subside; it was soon back to routine duties at the D.A.C. for Matt, while Margaret had settled into her first year studies at Detroit Teachers College and training for the 1921 indoor swimming season.96 As Matt prepared to embark on his third season with the D.A.C., he would have to do so with a severely depleted senior's squad. Due to a variety of reason, several of Matt's top female and


male performers would not be swimming for the D.A.C. during the 1921 indoor season. Among the male stars missing from the D.A.C.'s ranks would be Ted Cann, Don Nixon and Pete Russell. Cann had been forced to retire from swimming since his leg, which had been severely injured in the automobile accident, had not completely healed. Nixon and Russell were away at college, the University of Michigan and the Michigan School of Mines, respectively. The women's team would be very hard pressed to make up for the missing services of Marie Curtis, Essie Harrison and Mrs. Vonnie Malcomson. Curtis had moved to California where her parents had established a permanent residence. Essie Harrison was enrolled in a physical education teacher preparation program at the Posse School, Boston, Massachusetts. Mrs. Vonnie Malcomson, who had travelled to Antwerp as the alternate for the U.S. women's diving team but did not compete at the Games, had stayed in the New York City area after her return from Europe. She had sent word to Matt that her plans, for the 1921 indoor season, were uncertain and that he should not count on her competing. In spite of the reduced senior squad size, Matt had organized a full calendar of major meets from December through March.97

Throughout the fall, Matt continuously maintained a variety of swimming classes most weekdays for the D.A.C. membership. Matt believed that the more members who learned how to swim efficiently, and who were convinced of the virtues of regular swimming, the greater

the potential for increasing his D.A.C. team size, by class members
seeking team membership, or from parents enrolled in classes
encouraging their children to become team members.98

As Matt prepared his D.A.C. swimmers for the upcoming indoor
season, he recognized that Margaret Woodbridge would probably be his
lone contender for the various big races on the national title circuit.
He would lean heavily upon his experienced and reliable competitor
Paul Roberts for strength in the local and state meets. Two men who
would probably develop as the season progressed were Dave Nixon in the
freestyle events, and a very bright prospect, Ferdinard Ehrlich. In
the several intrasquad and small meet competitors, which Matt put his
team through during the fall, he had noted several bright spots for
the future. Rather than worrying about the stars who would not be
with the team for 1921 meet campaign, Matt was excited about the new
challenges for Margaret Woodbridge, and the development of some D.A.C.
stars of the future, and hopefully that season.99

If the D.A.C.'s 1921 swimming team was to be a weakened
version of its highly successful 1920 team, that was not evidenced at
the Detroit championship meet hosted at the Madison Avenue Club's
natatorium. The D.A.C. swimmers had clearly dominated the city's
championships by taking the first three places in many of the women's
and men's events. Margaret Woodbridge and Dave Nixon led the way for

98 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 7.
99 Scrapbook 10, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room,
International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida,
pp. 11-18. (Several Detroit newspaper articles described the D.A.C.'s
swimming team's fall training progress and Matt's predictions for the
1921 indoor season. Period covered was November 1920)
the host club, as each won two individual events, and each participated
on a winning relay team. The Olympic medalist had managed to set new
city records in her winning efforts in the 50-yard backstroke and
50-yard freestyle events. Nixon gave every indication of becoming the
heir apparent to Ted Cann's events, as he won the 100-yard and 220-yard
freestyle events. Matt was also pleased with Roberts winning effort
in the men's 100-yard breaststroke, and the "1-2 punch" of Handy and
Ehrlich in the men's 100-yard backstroke event. The D.A.C. lineup for
the city championships may have lacked the proven stars, but it gave
every indication of a group filled with the spirit and potential to
become an excellent team. 100

The Christmas holidays allowed little time for rest and merry
making for the D.A.C. swimmers, as Matt had wanted his chargers ready
for the Michigan state championships, which were scheduled for early
January. That meet was to be conducted in a different format than
previous seasons. The state meet committee had decided to increase the
number of championship events for men and women at the 1921 meet.
Matt had recommended that the schedule of events be divided, and
contested on separate days, so that the top swimmers would not have to
swim several events on the same day. Matt had contended that by
reducing the number of "all out" efforts on a single day for some of
the top competitors (coming here) not only would the best swimmers be
given a chance to win their respective events, but a higher level of
performance or better record for each event might be established.

100 "Former Marks Fall In City Meet," Detroit News,
December 5, 1920, Scrapbook 10, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room,
Matt's proposal was adopted by the state swimming committee, and the new meet format would be instituted on the consecutive Saturdays of January 8 and January 15, 1921 at the D.A.C.101

Amidst the training for the state championship meet, Matt had received word from Essie Harrison about her intended swimming plans for the 1921 season. On the basis of her last season time of 1:25 for the 100-yard breaststroke event, Miss Harrison was regarded as one of the foremost competitors in the world. Matt had encouraged his former D.A.C. "pupil" to continue her swimming while she attended the Posse School in Boston. Proving that she was not to be deterred from her competitive interest, by the fact that her school did not have a swimming team, she had received permission from her school's administration to organize a team from among her Posse School classmates. Miss Harrison had scheduled an exhibition meet with the women's team from the Cambridge Y.W.C.A. with the hope of creating competitive swimming interests among women at other area colleges. Matt would provide workout suggestions via the mail to Essie Harrison and her teammates throughout the season.102

On the first day of the "two Saturday" Michigan championship meet, the D.A.C. swimmers were clearly superior to their opponents as the former won five of the seven events contested. Margaret Woodbridge led a sweep of the top three places in the 100-yard freestyle with her state record breaking performance of 1:09 4/5 for the event.


Don Nixon, although attending the University of Michigan, was able to swim for the D.A.C., since the University did not have an official swimming team, and he became the new state champion for the 440-yard race. Another new champion for the D.A.C. was Ferdinand Ehrlich in the 150-yard backstroke event. The former champion for that event, Leo Handy, had decided to move from Detroit and return to his hometown of Brookline, Massachusetts. Handy's sudden departure from the D.A.C.'s senior team further depleted the male ranks of proven "stars" in Central A.A.U. and National A.A.U. competition. In two special 50-yard freestyle events which were added to the meet's program, the D.A.C.'s Don Nixon and Margaret Jeffrey were the winners.  

On the second Saturday of the state championship meet, the D.A.C. won the five major races of the program. In somewhat of a surprise performance, Paul Roberts led the D.A.C.'s sprint contingent to the top three places in the 50-yard freestyle championship race. His winning time of :25 4/5 had matched his former intercollegiate record which he had established while swimming for Yale in 1914. Don Nixon won a new event for the meet, the 500-yard freestyle, with a new state meet record of 6:47 1/5. Other new champions for the D.A.C. included Ferd Ehrlich in the men's 220-yard freestyle, Grace Briggs in the women's 100-yard breaststroke, and Edwardina Kranitch in the 50-yard freestyle race. The Michigan championship meet's new format was favorably received by participating contestants and coaches, and each session was well attended by the local "swimming" public. The fact that so many of the participating contestants and teams were from

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103 "Titles Change, Record Drops," loc. cit.
the Detroit area helped to eliminate travel inconveniences, which might have arisen with the consecutive weekend plan.  

While the D.A.C. maintained its superiority over local and state clubs in various dual and invitational meet competitions throughout the 1921 season, Margaret Woodbridge was the Club's big name in the major championship races. On February 26, Margaret defeated a fine field in the Central A.A.U. Senior 220-yard Championship race, hosted by the D.A.C., to become the champion. Early in March she tested her skills against a top flight field of competitors for the National A.A.U. 220-yard Championship. During the race, Margaret engaged Charlotte Boyle of the New York Women's Swimming Association in a stroke for stroke duel. The exciting race was won by Miss Woodbridge, as she was pushed to a new American record of 2:52 1/5. On March 30, the two girls were the major contestants for the National A.A.U. 100-yard Freestyle Championship. In that meeting Miss Boyle was victorious, with Margaret finishing a close second. In terms of the point standing for the top female swimmer in the country, as recognized by the National A.A.U. after the indoor season, both girls were tied. If there was to be a "showdown" meeting between the two girls for the national honor, it would have to take place in Detroit, for the D.A.C. was the site of the National A.A.U. 500-yard Freestyle Championship in mid-April.  

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105 Scrapbook 10, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 19-27. (Several newspaper articles include meet summaries and feature stories of D.A.C. swimming team achievements. Period covered the indoor season from January through March of 1921)
The D.A.C. had indeed landed the "dream" race of the 1921 indoor season as Miss Boyle had entered the National 500-yard event. While other female swimmers took to their marks at the start of the championship event, it was evident to the officials and spectators present, that the race was to be a two swimmer affair. For the real students of the swimming game, the race did not develop as the pre-race analysts had predicted. Miss Boyle employed a strategy which was a decided departure from her usual approach to successful 440-yard or 500-yard races, since she started out with a fast pace and led Margaret for the first 300-yards. During the last eight lengths of the race Miss Boyle stopped twice for apparent rest periods to recover from her fast pace. After the first rest Miss Boyle had lost her lead to Margaret, but the former quickened her pace to regain the lead. Miss Boyle's latest spurt necessitated her stopping again with about three lengths left in the race. Margaret had stuck to her race plan of a steady pace for most of the race, with a stepped up tempo in the last stage of the race. The D.A.C. swimmer's tactics prevailed, as Margaret won the National 500-yard championship by two yards, successfully holding off the furious sprint of Charlotte Boyle across the last 50 yards. The spectator section of the D.A.C. natatorium, filled to capacity, gave the competitors a loud and prolonged ovation following the thrilling race. Matt believed that Margaret's victory would entitle her to the "crown" as the outstanding female swimmer of the 1921 indoor season.106

After the D.A.C. swimming team had concluded its indoor season, the National A.A.U. Swimming Committee announced that Margaret Woodbridge and Charlotte Boyle had been named co-winners of the outstanding female swimmer award for the 1921 indoor season. That announcement greatly surprised Matt, for he believed that Margaret should have won the award outright. The National A.A.U. Swimming Awards Committee had based its co-winner decision on the fact that both girls had compiled the same number of points in national competition by the end of season. Matt was upset by that committee's decision to give Charlotte Boyle the same number of points for her participation on the New York Women's Swimming Association's National A.A.U. Senior 400-yard Freestyle Relay Championship team as it awarded for an individual national championship. Matt had expressed his displeasure with the National A.A.U.'s decision in the form of a written letter, in which he stated his reasons for supporting a single award to Margaret Woodbridge. One additional point he brought out in his swimmer's behalf was that Margaret was the second ranking backstroker in the United States during the 1921 indoor season, but she was unable to compete for that national title, since it was contested on a day when one of the national freestyle events was held, thus depriving her of the possible points towards the national individual award. The National A.A.U. acknowledged the receipt of Matt's letter, but the decision of the swimming awards committee was upheld, and the awards for the 1921 indoor season were to stand as announced. 107

Prior to his departure in May for Duluth, Matt had decided to inform the D.B.C. that the 1921 summer season would be his last under its employment. His partnership in Camp Chikopi would demand Matt to render his aquatic skills and services to the boys who would be attending the camp in the ensuing summers. Elmer Drulard, with the assistance of various members of the University of Michigan athletic staff, would again serve as the resident camp director of Camp Chikopi for the 1921 season.108

Matt arrived at the D.B.C. some three weeks after the natatorium's official May 1 opening. Matt had been working very hard in Chicago, in the D.B.C.'s behalf, to secure some of the big championship races on the summer schedule. Matt had hoped to make the D.B.C. a "showcase" for the summer season meets, as he had done with the D.A.C. for the indoor season. His persistence with the Central A.A.U. and National A.A.U. meet site selection committees was quite successful, as the D.B.C. was awarded five Central A.A.U. championship events and two national title races. Along with the news of the D.B.C.'s big meet schedule, Matt also conveyed the "orders" to his swimmers, especially the seniors, that if they hoped to look sharp in those upcoming feature races, hard pool work must begin immediately. Within a couple days after his arrival at the D.B.C., Matt held an intrasquad meet with several short distance events, to get the different age groups back in the "swing" of competitive activities.109

108 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 7.

Matt had succeeded in convincing Margaret Woodbridge to train at the D.B.C. for the summer season. He was a firm believer in the importance of year-round swimming training for the championship caliber swimmer. Margaret had made several outstanding swimming achievements in her short career, and she realized the important role her coach, Matt, had played in helping her to accomplish the many feats. To mark Margaret's arrival at the D.B.C. in June, Matt had scheduled a small scale invitational meet, with the featured event being a 150-yard freestyle race for women. Matt had announced that Margaret would attempt to break the world record held by her arch rival, Charlotte Boyle. The publicity for the meet and Margaret's record breaking attempt had helped to attract a good sized crowd to the D.B.C. Leading up to the featured race, most of the events on the meet's program were won in convincing fashion by the D.B.C. swimmers, including the 100-yard freestyle for men in which Jack Gow set a new Northwestern Association record for the event. Margaret Woodbridge easily won the "big" race on the program, but due in part to a lack of any real competition, she missed breaking Miss Boyle's record of 1:49 4/5 by less than two seconds. The crowd still responded enthusiastically to her fine swim, which served to provide a warm welcome to Margaret's home for the summer. 110

Matt's summer training program for Margaret seemed to be taking hold as evidenced by her record breaking performances in an invitational meet at the D.B.C. in July. In the outdoor race course Matt had

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110 "Gow and Woodbridge Win Events," Duluth Herald, June 18, 1921, Scrapbook 10, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 32.
set up in St. Louis Bay, Margaret easily defeated several fine local swimmers in the one mile race for women. Her winning effort enabled her to establish a new American record of 29:32 2/5 for the event, breaking the old record of Claire Galligan of the New York Women's Swimming Association by one second. On the way to her record swim, Margaret passed through the 1000-yard mark in the American record breaking time of 16:37 2/5, some 13 seconds faster than the former record. 111

The Illinois A.C. was the dominant team for most of the championship events hosted by the D.B.C. that 1921 summer season. The Chicago based club, led by Johnny Weissmuller and Sybil Bauer, had collected many of the top awards for the different Central A.A.U. championship events contested in Duluth. Weissmuller had thrilled the Duluth swimming fans on several occasions that summer, with his biggest victory at the D.B.C. coming on August 6 in the National A.A.U. Senior 50-yard championship. On August 8, the second of the dates for the national championship events hosted by the D.B.C., the local fans had something to cheer about as Mel Cooley and Leonard Draper, both swimming for the D.B.C., placed first and second, respectively, in the National A.A.U. Junior Long Distance Swimming Championship contested in St. Louis Bay. While the D.B.C.'s men and women had done well in various state meets, the season had been a lean one for D.B.C. women from the first place standpoint in Central A.A.U. competition. Margaret Woodbridge who had been "adopted" by the D.B.C.'s swimming

fans for the summer season, had been a bright spot for the local supporters. She officially represented the D.A.C. in competition, but in essence she was a D.B.C. swimmer, for she had trained each day at the D.B.C. with that club’s men and women senior swimmers. Her popularity among the D.B.C. team was especially evident in her winning efforts in the Central A.A.U. 220-yard and 440-yard championship events, as a large contingent of those swimmers cheered loudly for her throughout the races. With the completion of the championship event schedule at the D.B.C., Matt’s last summer in Duluth was rapidly drawing to a close.

As Matt prepared for what would be his last meet as coach of the D.B.C. swimming team, a group of D.B.C. members were also making preparations for an appreciation banquet for Matt. The D.B.C. banquet committee believed that such an affair would be a fitting occasion to present Matt with some gifts, "testimonials" from former non-swimmers, and other tokens of appreciation for all of Matt’s hard work in the areas of teaching and coaching swimming to so many citizens of Duluth. From the non-competitive standpoint, many children and adults, prior to Matt’s arrival in Duluth, had only engaged in swimming activities on rare occasions; they were now swimming regularly at Duluth’s indoor facilities and, when the weather permitted, the local lakes, due to Matt’s lesson programs. The D.B.C.’s swimming team, coached since its

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112 Scrapbook 10, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 32-42. (Several Duluth newspaper articles carried the results of several invitational and championship meets in which the D.B.C. had participated during the 1921 summer season)
inception by Matt, was then a recognized power in the Midwest, or Central A.A.U. swimming circles. The people of Duluth, with whom Matt had been closely associated, were sorry that he would not be returning to their city, but they were also thankful for the many hours Matt had spent at poolside in the teaching and coaching of swimming.113

The D.B.C.'s last meet, an intrasquad affair, was held at the outdoor facilities, due to the large crowd of almost 700 spectators who had wished to bid Matt farewell. He had wanted this last meet, under his direction, to be a memorable one for the D.B.C. swimming fans. Matt had set up the schedule of events in his true "gala" style with several regulation and handicap races, and a variety of novelty contests. The meet program, which provided opportunities for each of the D.B.C. swimmers to compete in more than one event, was a festive and fun occasion for competitors and spectators. The highlight of the swimming activities was the exhibition by Matt and one of his senior swimmers, Alex Gov. Both men demonstrated several strokes and performed a variety of stunts which seemed to thrill the crowd. The outdoor banquet, which followed the "gala," seemed a fitting climax to the evening's activities. Matt was most appreciative of the plaudits and gifts he received from many of those in attendance. He also remarked that he expected to hear big things about many of the D.B.C.'s

113"Banquet, Mann About To Leave," Duluth Herald, August 24, 1921, Scrapbook 10, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 42.
swimmers in the years to come, especially if they continued to train
with the dedication they had demonstrated for him.\(^{114}\)

About the time Matt arrived in Detroit to assume his duties at
the D.A.C. for the fall season, Margaret Woodbridge had traveled from
Duluth to New York City to compete in a major race. After a summer of
competing in several pools and lakes in the Midwest, Margaret had
elected to conclude her outdoor racing season in an open water race
from Point Breeze, Long Island, to the Brighton Beach Baths (adjacent
to Coney Island), Brooklyn, New York. The race of almost two miles was
conducted in rather choppy water conditions. The field of 20
competitors included some of the top female swimmers in the United
States in addition to a large group of entrants from the New York
Women's Swimming Association and Philadelphia's Eleanor Uhl. After a
summer of training in the D.B.C.'s natatorium and the fresh water of
St. Louis Bay, Margaret Woodbridge had to challenge the likes of
Ethelda Bleibtrey and Charlotte Boyle in a salt water course familiar
to them. Margaret made an excellent showing in the race as she placed
third behind the winner, Miss Bleibtrey, and her rival from the indoor
season, Charlotte Boyle. The D.A.C. swimmer finished with a time of
58:34, well under the former record for the event, but two minutes and
seven seconds or some 150 yards behind the winner. \(^{115}\)

\(^{114}\) "Farewell Meet For Mann," Duluth Herald, August 26, 1921,
Scrapbook 10, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International
Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 42.

\(^{115}\) "Distance Honors To Miss Bleibtrey," New York Times,
August 30, 1921, p. 12, col. 5.
Matt's official duties at the D.A.C. for the fall of 1921, again included a full schedule of swimming instructional sessions for various groups of the membership, and his practice sessions for the club's different junior and senior swimming team groups. Since his first arrival at the D.A.C. in December of 1918, the sport of competitive swimming for women and men in Detroit had grown tremendously in its popularity. Matt had played a major role in establishing a schedule of meets for the Detroit or city championships, which preceded the state and Central A.A.U. championship meet series. With the organization of the 1921 Detroit championship event series, it was no longer necessary for Matt to occupy his D.A.C. team members with intrasquad and exhibition meets throughout October, November and December.\(^\text{116}\) The Detroit Amateur Athletic Association had accepted the plan of conducting the Detroit swimming championships for the 1921-22 indoor season with several meets in December and the final meet of the series on January 7, 1922.\(^\text{117}\)

The Detroit swimming championship plan made provision for a different club or association within the city league to host a scheduled meet at its facility, if the pool and spectator space meet the league standards. The final meet, to be hosted by the Women's Aquatic Club at the new Balch School's facility, was to include two feature races, the 150-yard medley for senior women and the 220-yard freestyle for senior men. Throughout the series each host club was

\(^{116}\) Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 7.

\(^{117}\) "January Is Big Month For Swimming Activities," \(\text{Detroit Sunday News, January 1, 1922, Sect. 4, p. 3, col. 7.}\)
guaranteed at least two feature championship races at its facility to help attract a good crowd. The last meet schedule also included two fancy diving events, one for girls and the other for women.\(^{118}\)

That last meet of the Detroit championship series had an entry list of 60 competitors, of which 40 were women. In addition to a completed entry form, each contestant was required to present a health certificate from a physician which indicated the competitor to be in "perfect health" to participate in the meet. Anyone entered in the meet without such a certificate was prohibited from racing.\(^{119}\) The most interesting race for the spectators was a new one for city championship competition, that being the 150-yard medley for women. The event had been added to the championship slate by the meet committee upon the recommendation of Matt. Since the event was contested in Central A.A.U. and National A.A.U. competitions, its addition helped the Detroit meet series conform to guidelines of the major meets. The D.A.C.'s Margaret Jeffrey and Edwardina Kranitch finished first and second in the race. In the other senior championship event on the program, the 220-yard freestyle for men, the D.A.C. swimmers swept the first three places.\(^{120}\)

With the conclusion of the Detroit championship meets, the city's swimmers seemed well prepared for the rigors of state and

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\(^{118}\)Ibid.

\(^{119}\)"Aquatic Club To Stage Meet," Detroit News, January 6, 1922, p. 34, col. 3.

\(^{120}\)"Medley Swim Meet Feature," Detroit Sunday News, January 8, 1922, Sect. 4, p. 1, col. 5.
Central A.A.U. competition and, in some cases, National meets. The first of a series of Michigan championship meets was to be hosted by the D.A.C. on January 14. The meet schedule of events included five races for men: 50-yard freestyle, 440-yard freestyle, 100-yard breaststroke, 200-yard freestyle relay and fancy diving; two events for women: 50-yard freestyle and 50-yard backstroke; and two events for boys under age 16: 100-yard freestyle and 50-yard breaststroke. Matt had announced in the meet promotional release that Margaret Woodbridge would be aiming for a new national record in the 50-yard backstroke race. Some interesting confrontations would also take place in the meet, with Paul Roberts assuming the favorite's role in the 50-yard freestyle race, to be challenged by Matt's sprint star from Duluth, Jack Gow. The D.B.C. swimmer was a student at the University of Michigan, but since competitive swimming had not achieved official intercollegiate status at the Ann Arbor institution, Gow had stayed in training by working out with Matt a few days each week at the D.A.C. Another University of Michigan student, Don Nixon, was a D.A.C. member who made the trips to Detroit with Gow, and he, too, had entered the 50-yard race. Probably the most surprising news in Matt's release was his entry of Roberts in the 440-yard event. Not since his college days at Yale, ten years ago, had Roberts competed in the quarter-mile race. Matt believed that Roberts, the "elder statesman" of his senior group, had a real chance, based on his hard training regimen of several weeks, to win the longer race over his youthful teammates, Ferd Ehrlich and George Miklen. While the 1922 D.A.C. team lacked individuals with
national acclaim, aside from Margaret Woodbridge, the season's forecast appeared bright for the Madison Avenue club.\(^{121}\)

It was not ascertained if Matt's announcement of Roberts entry in the state 440-yard race was a surprise to the latter's D.A.C. teammates, but soon after the article in the Detroit News, George Miklen, the defending 440-yard champion, announced that he would curtail his avid pursuit of competitive handball for the remainder of the swimming season. Matt had warned Miklen that the frequent participation in handball would sap the latter's energy for swimming competition. It had been pointed out that Miklen's third place finish in the Detroit 220-yard championship race was a reflection of his weakened condition.\(^{122}\)

Matt's promotional efforts for the season's first state meet brought excellent results for the senior men's events. The entry lists of at least nine swimmers for the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard breaststroke and 440-yard freestyle races would necessitate afternoon trials on the day of the meet for that evening's championship races. The news of the trial heats for the 440-yard race was accompanied by the announcement that Paul Roberts would withdraw from the quarter mile event. Roberts did not believe that he was capable of swimming two

\(^{121}\)"First Michigan Title Swim Next Saturday," Detroit Sunday News, January 8, 1922, Sect. 4, p. 3, col. 6.

good 440-yard races on the same day, and he would therefore concentrate his efforts on the 50-yard event.123

The first of the Michigan championship meets drew a capacity crowd to the D.A.C.'s natatorium. While many of the pre-meet favorites won their races, there were several surprises in the men's events. The D.A.C.'s female trio of Woodbridge, Kranitch and J. Nixon swept the first three places in the 50-yard freestyle, as the winner established a new state record of :30 4/5. In the men's 50-yard race, Jack Gow, swimming unattached, won the event followed by two swimmers from Grand Rapids. A poor turn in a trial heat of the men's 50-yard race had helped lead to the elimination of Paul Roberts. The D.A.C. with Roberts swimming the anchor leg did win the 200-yard freestyle relay for men in the state record time of 1:45 4/5. In the much publicized 440-yard event, Ferd Ehrlich won the race for the D.A.C. with his teammate, Miklen, a disappointing third place finisher. The 100-yard breaststroke title was won by Donald McClellan a Northern High School student. In spite of the surprise outcomes in certain races, Matt praised his swimmers for a fine team effort in the first of the three state meets to be held in January.124

In the second of the Michigan swimming championship meets, hosted by the Detroit Women's Swimming Association, the D.A.C. swimmers won five of the eight titles contested that evening. Ferd Ehrlich of

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123"Must Run Heats In Title Swim Events," Detroit News, January 13, 1922, p. 33, col. 5.

the D.A.C. continued to demonstrate his versatility to swim several events well, as he captured the 100-yard freestyle event. Impressive victories were also recorded by D.A.C. women, Edwardina Kranitch in the 100-yard freestyle and Margaret Jeffrey in the 150-yard medley. There had been no prior announcement that Margaret Woodbridge would not participate in that meet, but her absence certainly gave some other girls a chance to stand atop the awards platform. 125

The city of Detroit with its many competitive swimming clubs had drawn a considerable amount of attention from swimming officials, competitors and fans from across the country during the past few seasons. The D.A.C.'s swimming program under Matt's auspices had certainly done its share of bringing Detroit into the limelight by hosting several national meets and producing national champions in men's and women's events. Then, amidst the weekly competitions of the 1922 season, came an announcement that the University of Detroit was planning to build the largest indoor swimming facility in the United States. The Detroit school's plans called for the pool to be 350 feet in length by 80 feet in width. Such an immense facility was to be located in the basement of the school's new gymnasium building. Matt had remarked to the local press that "such a pool with a few modifications would be ideal for national and international competitions." He envisioned the proposed aquatic facility as being one of almost ideal dimensions with limitless program opportunities, and he suggested, "... every University of Detroit student be compelled to take up swimming. When

the pool was not being used by the school it be turned to a commercial purpose, or sued for meets to help defray costs for its upkeep." If such a pool moved from the realm of planning to actual construction, Detroit indeed would receive recognition as a major center of competitive swimming in the United States.126

As Matt prepared his D.A.C. swimmers for the final Michigan championship meet, he had also assumed some regular coaching responsibilities with certain University of Michigan students, who were members of the school's unofficial swimming team. Elmer Drulard, with some workout suggestions from Matt, had conducted several training sessions in January at the Ann Arbor Y.M.C.A. for the University's swimmers. A schedule of four meets had been arranged for the competitors who were striving for official team status. The schedule included away meets with the Michigan Aggies in East Lansing on February 18, the Erie Y.M.C.A. in Erie, Pennsylvania on February 24, and the Cleveland Y.M.C.A. on February 25. A lone home meet, the first in the University of Michigan's history, had been scheduled for March 4, with the University of Cincinnati at the Ann Arbor Y.M.C.A. The off campus site for the first home meet was necessitated because the University did not have its own pool. Such participation in a schedule of meets would be helpful in gaining official team status in the Western Conference for the University of Michigan swimmers.127


While Drulard did provide several swimming workout opportunities for the University of Michigan's unofficial team, certain members, such as Jack Gow and Don Nixon, felt the need to travel, at least twice each meet, to the D.A.C. to work with Matt. Dick Papenguth, a freshman diver and swimmer on the Michigan team, was also invited to workout at the D.A.C. that season. Papenguth, upon Gow's suggestion, had written to Matt requesting the latter's permission to swim and dive at the D.A.C. Matt spent several hours on Saturday afternoons working on the finer points of swimming and diving with the young and inexperienced Papenguth to ready him for the upcoming meets. The sessions with Matt were so stimulating and informative for the freshman diver, that the latter often skipped meals to save money for his trips on the train to Detroit.  

Prior to the final Michigan championship meet, there had been some speculation about the number of records which might be broken. The "experts" had expected a return to action by Margaret Woodbridge in record setting fashion in the 220-yard freestyle race. Ferd Ehrlich had been given a good chance to rewrite his own state mark for the 100-yard backstroke event. That meet had been billed as the final tuneup before the Central A.A.U. championship meets in February. The meet prognosticators proved correct about the array of new records which might be set, but missed in their early predictions were the performances by Dorothy Andrea, a student at Northern High School in

128 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 22.

Detroit. Miss Andrea set new world records in the 50-yard breaststroke event with her time of :37 4/5, and the 100-yard breaststroke race with her winning effort of 1:28 4/5. Ehrlich did win the backstroke event in the record setting time of 1:14 followed by his teammate, George Miklin. Jessica Nixon of the D.A.C. won the senior women's 220-yard freestyle and junior women's 100-yard freestyle titles. Probably the biggest surprise of the meet was the absence of the D.A.C.'s top female swimmer, Margaret Woodbridge, for the second consecutive meet. 130

The day following that third Michigan championship meet, January 30, 1922, Margaret Woodbridge ended the mystery of her absences from the last two meets by announcing her retirement from competitive swimming. The D.A.C.'s and Detroit's only female national swimming champion had decided to give up competitive swimming so that she might devote full time to her studies at Detroit Teacher's College. Margaret had hoped to complete her degree work so that she might assume a swimming coach's position at Detroit's Northwestern High School or at the new Balch High School. Matt had been surprised and disappointed by his star swimmer's announcement. He felt that Margaret had not reached her peak as a champion swimmer. In less than four full seasons of competition, Margaret had become one of the top female swimmers in the United States. Matt had started Margaret in competitive swimming soon after his arrival at the D.A.C., and her news was hard for him to accept gracefully, since he could foresee for her a brilliant 1922 season of

accomplishments. But Margaret's decision was final; the D.A.C. would complete the remainder of the indoor season without a competitor of proven national caliber.\textsuperscript{131}

Soon after the Woodbridge announcement the "swimming world" received the word that another star, this one a male, would be leaving the national swimming scene. Duke Kahanamoku, Hawaii's Olympic medalist and several times the world record holder in various freestyle events, was declared a professional by the Hawaiian division of the National A.A.U. The "Duke" had signed a contract with a movie company to make films based on his work in the water of Hawaii. The Hawaiian A.A.U. had ruled that the money he would be receiving was due in part to the fame he had gained through his accomplishments in amateur swimming. In contrast with Margaret Woodbridge, the "Duke" had passed his prime, with the heir apparent, Johnny Weismuller, surpassing most of the Hawaiian's records. In the span of two weeks, amateur swimming in the United States had lost two outstanding swimmers from its ranks.\textsuperscript{132}

To the competitive swimmers in the Midwest, the month of February meant the start of the "big" meet schedule. Certain clubs within Detroit would host several Central A.A.U. and National A.A.U. championship meets. At the first of those meets, the D.A.C. pool would serve as the site for the five Central A.A.U. titles to be contested.


\textsuperscript{132}"Kahanamoku Enters Professional Ranks," \textit{Detroit News}, February 13, 1922, p. 20, co. 7.
In order to make for a more complete meet program, Matt had scheduled four handicap races (two 50-yard freestyle events, one for men and one for boys, and two 25-yard freestyle events, one for women and the other for girls). The handicap events had proved to be popular races, when they had been scheduled by Matt in previous meets. The good swimmers, in such races, were required to extend themselves to offset the handicap, while the mediocre swimmers relished the opportunities to match their skills against the "stars" under more competitive conditions than normally would be the case. The pre-meet entry lists for that first Central A.A.U. championship meet indicated that the handicap races would be a popular attraction among the competitors.133

The retirement of Margaret Woodbridge did not appear to have had a negative impact upon her former teammates in that first Central A.A.U. meet, as D.A.C. swimmers garnered victories in several of the championship races. Winning titles were Edwardina Kranitch in the 50-yard freestyle, Jessica Nixon in the junior 100-yard freestyle, Ferd Ehrlich in the junior 220-yard freestyle, and Stanley Bryda in the senior fancy diving event. Bryda, only 13 years old, was the diving sensation of the meet as he led a D.A.C. sweep of the first three places. Sybil Bauer of the Illinois A.C. was the outstanding swimmer of the meet as she won the 100-yard backstroke title with a new world record of 1:17; the next two places went to the D.A.C.'s Marion Bland and Margaret Nixon.134

The second of the 1922 Central A.A.U. championship meets, to
be hosted by the Detroit Amateur Athletic Association at the Detroit
Y.M.C.A., would bring together one of the greatest arrays of swimming
stars in the history of Detroit competitive swimming, second only to
Matt's major extravaganza of the 1921 season. In addition to the three
Central A.A.U. titles of the senior 50-yard freestyle for men, the
junior 100-yard freestyle for men, and the senior 50-yard backstroke
for women, the meet program included the National A.A.U. Junior
400-yard Freestyle Relay. The meet program would be completed with
four open events: the 100-yard breaststroke for women, the plunge for
women, the 220-yard freestyle for men, and the 440-yard breaststroke
for men. The current world record holders who had entered the meet
were Johnny Weismuller, Sybil Bauer and Edna O'Connell all from the
Illinois A.C., and Dorothy Andrea from Detroit's Northern High School.
The variety of events had only attracted the usual large number of
entries of the region's best individuals and teams.135

Detroit's second Central A.A.U. championship meet turned out to
be every bit as fast as had been predicted. The meet program brought
out top performances from several competitors as four world records
were broken and one was tied. In a non-record effort, Johnny Weismuller
got the meet off to a fast start by winning the 50-yard freestyle race
in :23 1/5, just missing the world record of :23 held by
Duke Kahanamoku. The new world records were set by Sybil Bauer in the
Central A.A.U. 50-yard backstroke race with a time of :35 1/5; the

135H. H. Barcus, "Great Array of Stars For D.A.A. Swim Meet,"
second record went to Miss Andrea, as she was pushed by Miss O'Connell, in the Central A.A.U. 100-yard breaststroke with her winning time of 1:27 2/5; the third record was set by Robert Skelton of the Illinois A.C. as he won the 440-yard breaststroke in 6:28 1/5. The final new record of the meet was recorded by the D.A.C.'s Dave Nixon, Ferd Ehrlich, Norman Buck and Otis Trowbridge as they won the National A.A.U. Junior 440-yard Freestyle Relay with a time of 3:59 2/5. The crowd was treated to one other exceptional swim as Weismuller won the 220-yard freestyle race with a time of 2:19 4/5, which tied Ted Cann's world record. 136

The D.A.C. swimmers gathered their share of Central A.A.U. junior and senior titles in the remaining championship meets of the 1922 season. But after the major meet hosted at the Detroit Y.M.C.A., it was obvious that the Madison Avenue Club was without a male or female swimmer capable of scoring high in the national title events. 137

Earlier in the season when Matt had received the bid to host the women's National A.A.U. 500-yard Freestyle championship at the D.A.C., Margaret Woodbridge was still an active competitor. But early in March, Matt had decided to decline the opportunity to conduct the national title event at the D.A.C. His reason for returning the bid to the National A.A.U. Swimming Committee was "... that without the


137 Scrapbook 11, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 8-14. (Several Detroit newspaper articles carried the results of the Central A.A.U. championship meets in which the D.A.C. swimmers participated during February 1922)
defending national champion (Woodbridge) there is no reason to host the event (500-yard freestyle). . . ." Matt's bids for major title events were predicated on the belief that unless he had a swimmer capable of scoring near the top, there was no reason to seek the host's role for a particular championship. The New York Women's Swimming Association, laden with several talented freestyle swimmers, was awarded the right to host the 500-yard event in April.138

During March, with the D.A.C.'s participation in championship swimming events completed for the 1922 indoor season, Matt "turned an eye" towards some dual meet competition for his senior swimmers. He was able to schedule a meet between the D.A.C., the Michigan champion, and the Toronto Y.M.C.A., the team regard by many experts as Canada's finest, for mid-April.139 Matt had also been working on a meet with the University of Michigan's "informal" or unofficial swimming team. The university swimmers, who had met with defeat in three earlier meets that season, had lost the services of its part time coach, Elmer Drulard, in January. Matt had traveled to Ann Arbor to conduct a few workouts at the local Y.M.C.A. to help the boys complete their season. If the meet between the D.A.C. and the University of Michigan team could be arranged, Matt had indicated that he would serve as coach for both squads.140

139 Ibid.
Matt had managed to schedule the informal meet with the University of Michigan swimmers at the D.A.C., a few days prior to his club's big meet with the Toronto Y. He had wanted his men's senior team to use the meet against the collegiate swimmers as a tuneup, for the sterner test it would face against the Canadian swimmers. With the exception of the performances of Jack Gow, Don Nixon and Richard Papenguth, in various events, the Ann Arbor swimmers were greatly outclassed by the D.A.C. men in the abbreviated meet program. Matt then took his D.A.C. swimmers to Toronto, primed and definitely ready, for their last big meet of the season. Although a number of races on the full program of events were closely contested, the D.A.C. men won the first two places in many of the races, as they came away with a convincing team victory.\footnote{141}

After the completion of the 1922 indoor season, Matt had almost two months to prepare himself for his first summer season at Camp Chikopi. He had hoped that 50 to 60 boys would attend the camp for its six week session, which started in early July. Matt would be accompanied at the rustic camp by his wife, Lea, and their daughter, of less than one year, Rose Mary. The program Matt envisioned for the campers would still be based upon active participation by all the boys in several sports, but the main participant sport at Camp Chikopi would be swimming. When the camp was first started, Matt had convinced his partner, Elmer Drulard, that the camp's program should eventually take on an aquatics emphasis.\footnote{142}


\footnote{142}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 8.
With the campers' cabins constructed on the shore line of Ahmic Lake, Matt designed a daily activity program which included at least three supervised swimming sessions. Matt had used early morning swimming sessions with considerable success during his swimming camp at the Duluth Boat Club in previous summers; so his plan for Camp Chikopi called for the campers to rise at 6:00 a.m. for a pre-breakfast swim. The campers personal concerns of face washing and brushing of teeth were performed in the "pure" lake waters. The boys, who would range from elementary school to high school level, would be ability grouped for the supervised sessions, with each group reporting to a specially marked off section of the waterfront swimming area. Following the first of the daily swimming sessions the boys would report to breakfast, and then back to their cabins for a thorough clean-up session. The boys then would report to different areas for instruction and participation in a "dry-land" sport, which might include wrestling, football, boxing, archery and track, just to mention some of the several sports which the camp would offer. Prior to lunch and dinner the boys would report for the other two supervised swimming sessions. The third swimming session each day would provide opportunities for the boys to test their skills in various forms of competitive situations. While Matt had plans for many standard forms of competition in the regulation events, the competitions would provide for novelty races and "handicapped" events between the age groups.\textsuperscript{143}

\textsuperscript{143}Based on statements by Matt Mann III, son of the late Matt Mann II, and Camp Chikopi Director since 1962, in a personal interview, East Lansing, Michigan, May 24, 1974.
Matt and Drulard were again able to secure the services of several members of the University of Michigan's athletic staff to serve as sports instructors and counselors at Camp Chikopi that summer. During the camp season of 1922 Matt was beginning to experience the fulfillment of a long-time dream. His camp program, centered around swimming activities, had been received enthusiastically by the campers. While it would still be a couple more seasons before all debts were paid, Matt could see that he had indeed made a successful investment for his family's future following that successful season at Camp Chikopi.\textsuperscript{144}

During the fall of 1922, as Matt prepared his D.A.C. swimmers for the start of the 1923 indoor swimming campaign, he felt extremely good about the prospects for success. He believed that his men's team would be the finest he had coached at the D.A.C. While none of the Madison Avenue Club's "mermen" possessed the speed and range of a Ted Cann, the presence of Ferd Ehrlich, Otis Trowbridge, Norman Buck, and Jack Gow would give the D.A.C. the excellent talent and versatility to swim several events in championship meets. Due to the uncertainty of the coaching position for the University of Michigan swimming team, Gow had announced his plans to swim for Matt at the D.A.C., while retaining his student status at the Ann Arbor institution. Matt also had high hopes for his rapidly improving women's team, which would be led by the talented Edwardina Kranitch. Miss Kranitch, a Detroit native, had started her competitive swimming under Matt's careful tutelage in 1920, and she appeared ready to take her place in the championship events of the upcoming season. The Detroit championships,

\textsuperscript{144}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 20.
to be held at the D.A.C. in early December, would provide a preview of
the host club's talent under familiar, but challenging, competitive
conditions.  

As Matt prepared his D.A.C. team for another full season of
club meet competitions, the college swimming scene for men was
continuing to grow and improve in various sections of the United States.
Since his early days of coaching in upstate New York, Matt had been
affiliated with the college swimming game. After Matt had turned down
the opportunity to coach the Yale University swimming team in 1918, he
witnessed the masterful job his former unstudy, Bob Kiphuth, had done
with the swimmers from New Haven.

. . . Bob had revolutionized the sport of swimming at Yale by
his positive characteristics, his flair for showmanship, and his
ability to create enthusiasm.
More importantly, by his consistent ability to grab headlines
for swimming, he had advanced the cause of collegiate swimming.
His quick, critical, and analytical mind moved swiftly from the
provincial domain of the Yale scene to the universal concept of
international competition.
Yale swimming like Yale education, was about to become an
international household word. . . .  

So rapidly had Kiphuth ascended the ladder to a top place in
the collegiate swimming coaches ranks, that he was accorded quite an
honor by his professional peers when:

On November 22, 1922 it was announced that Kiphuth had been
elected secretary and treasurer of the recently formed College
Swimming Coaches Association of America. This organization of
professional collegiate coaches was formed with the purpose of
fostering a mutual understanding among coaches, as a forum for

November 22, 1922, Scrapbook 11, p. 24.

146 Peter E. Kennedy, "The Life and Professional Contributions
of Robert Herman Kiphuth to Yale and Competitive Swimming" (Doctoral
airing differences of opinion and for acting in an advisory capacity when called upon to do so. 147

Matt sensed that "the colleges" were making inroads in the control of the amateur competitive swimming "game," and in the near future the college coaches would play a major role in influencing the direction the sport would take in years to come. With his previous college coaching jobs, Matt had assumed those positions for very modest remuneration. But with a wife and daughter to support, Matt was not about to leave the relative financial security which the D.A.C. afforded, unless a college made an attractive financial offer. 148

The D.A.C. swimming team started its indoor campaign on a highly successful note in the Detroit championships, as its swimmers won eight of the nine events on the program. Leading the way for the host club was Edwardina Kranitch as she won two individual crowns. Ehrlich, Trowbridge and Gow also swam impressively for the D.A.C., as each posted individual wins. Matt had attracted a large gate for the meet by "sweetening" the schedule of events with the inclusion of several exhibition swims, which featured recognized national stars Johnny Weismuller in the 50-yard freestyle, Norman Ross in the 100-yard freestyle, and Hawaiian "Stubby" Kreuger in the 50-yard backstroke. 149

Just prior to the start of the 1923 Western Conference swimming season, George Little, director of minor sports at the University of Michigan, announced that intercollegiate swimming had been elevated to

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147 Ibid., p. 59.
148 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 8.
the official conference status by the Ann Arbor institution. Although a coach for the Wolverine natators had not been selected, Little was busy organizing an extensive schedule, which would include conference opponents and club teams. Anticipating the word of the official recognition of swimming as a conference sport, several highly competent male swimmers, from the Michigan student body, had been working out at the Ann Arbor Y.M.C.A. pool. The naming of the coach and the start of formal training sessions were slated for early January.150

When Matt had organized the competitive schedule for his club, early in the fall, the month of January had been slated for several meets and the state championship meet. February had been designated as the period for conducting several of the Central A.A.U. meets. But in December the Central A.A.U., under the direction of its president, Charles Lynch, had decided to change its program of conducting championships. Instead of the former system of dividing the championship events among several clubs within the association's region, the new plan called for awarding blocks of several events to a few clubs. A great many of the Central A.A.U.'s member clubs, including the D.A.C., protested immediately, against the new plan. The major point of opposition to the proposed plan was that such a meet would probably cost six hundred dollars, a figure regarded as too high to be offset by spectator revenues. The new plan would also greatly limit the number of clubs which would be able to bring quality swimmers to their facilities in the course of a season. Speaking for the D.A.C., Matt

informed the Central A.A.U. that his club would withdraw its membership from that association if the new plan was not rescinded. He also mentioned to the local press that he had spoken to the representatives of several Detroit area clubs about the possibility of starting "their own Michigan A.A.U.," instead of retaining an affiliation with the Central A.A.U.151

As of early January 1923, the University of Michigan still had not secured the services of a full-time swimming coach for its newly recognized varsity team. Since George Little had scheduled three meets with conference opponents, in addition to some exhibition contests with certain clubs, it was necessary for the Wolverine swimmers to begin regular workouts of rigorous training. Jack Gow, recognized as the best and most experienced swimmer on the Michigan team, had been placed in charge of the initial training sessions by Little. Matt had agreed to assist Gow with organizing and supervising the workouts, when the former's schedule permitted. Matt enjoyed those opportunities to work with the Michigan swimmers, especially since that group contained two former Duluth Boat Club "students," Jack Gow and Russell Dunlap. There had been a report that the University of Michigan had approached Matt about assuming the available coaching position, but Matt had not confirmed that word since he was under contract, until May, with the D.A.C.152

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During the first three weeks of January the D.A.C. swimmers excelled by winning some dual meet competitions with local clubs, and an intersectional meet with the men's team from the Cleveland Y.M.C.A. Several handicap-novice meets had also provided excellent "proving grounds" for the development of many younger swimmers, and the challenging of the area's top swimmers. Matt had geared the early training and meet participation of his swimmers for the first big meet of the 1923 season for area swimmers, the Michigan championships at the D.A.C. on January 27.\(^{153}\)

During the second week of January it had been announced that W. Sperry Brown of St. Louis, Missouri, had been appointed as the swimming coach at the University of Michigan. Brown had actually started working with the Wolverine swimmers, earlier in January, prior to the official announcement. But in a little more than a week's time, after his employment became official, a press release from the University of Michigan's athletic department stated that Brown would be returning to St. Louis University, immediately. Brown was still under contractual obligation to the St. Louis school, from which that institution would not release him. It was hoped that Brown might return to Michigan in September. In that same press release, George Little, assistant to Fielding Yost, the Michigan school's athletic director, announced that Matt had been appointed coach of the varsity mermen.

\(^{153}\) Scrapbook 11, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 31-33. (Several Detroit newspaper articles carried the results of D.A.C. dual meets, and other meets in which the D.A.C. swimmers participated during January 1923)
Little stipulated that Matt had been employed on a part-time basis "to tutor" the team members twice weekly throughout the season.\textsuperscript{154}

On January 24, 1923, the day after the article, in which Matt was named the University of Michigan's swimming coach, had appeared in the \textit{Detroit News}, he issued a denial about his signing of a contract for that position. In his explanation of his relationship with the Wolverine swimming team, Matt stated:

I offered to help the University out when it could not get the coach it sought. . . . However, I did not intimate that I would become associated with the institution in any way. My motive must have been misunderstood for I have no intention of leaving my present position (as coach of the D.A.C.). I want to help the University of Michigan in every way that I can, until its regular swimming coach gets on the job.\textsuperscript{155}

Amidst the confusion surrounding the coaching position at the University of Michigan, Matt had been most busy preparing his D.A.C. swimmers and the D.A.C. natatorium for the state championship meet. Matt had made a determined effort to make this meet a "real" state wide affair, as he personally wrote to each of the clubs and organizations within the state, which had swimming teams, and urged them to send entries to the meet. In addition to a larger than expected number of entrants from Detroit area teams, several entries were received from teams in Grand Rapids, Upsilanti, and Ann Arbor (University of Michigan). The new format of hosting the state championship meet on one day, which had been Matt's proposal, plus his personal invitations for entries, had helped set the stage for what promised to be a first class


championship affair. Matt had organized the schedule of events so that the women's diving event and the men's diving event would be conducted first and fifth, respectively, in the 20 event program, so that the scores could be compiled and announced before the end of the meet. Judging by the list of entries several state records were in jeopardy of being broken.156

The D.A.C. swimmers swam according to form as they captured the first or second place position in most of events on the championship program. The host club's top male performer was Otis Trowbridge as he won the 440-yard freestyle in the new state record time of 5:42. Edwardina Kranitch easily won the 220-yard freestyle race over her teammate Margaret Jeffrey. Miss Kranitch had assumed the position as the top female swimmer in the state for the 1923 season, based on her performances in January. Titles and records also went to non-D.A.C. swimmers, as two Northern High School (Detroit) students, Don McClellan and Frank Walaitis, won the 100-yard breaststroke and 50-yard junior freestyle races, respectively, each with a new record time. Howard Rose of the Grand Rapids Y.M.C.A. defeated the strong D.A.C. entrants of Ehrlich and Trowbridge, as he won the 50-yard freestyle and tied the record of :24 4/5, which was held by former D.A.C. swimmer, Paul Roberts.157

The Central A.A.U. swimming committee, which had changed its chairmanship to Norman Ross, the former Illinois A.C. champion swimmer,


had modified its stance regarding the awarding of championship events for the 1923 season. Individual clubs in the association still bid for blocks of events, but there were fewer events in each block than the original Central A.A.U. proposal. The D.A.C. had the block of events which included the men's senior low board diving, women's senior high diving, and three women's junior events: 500-yard freestyle, 100-yard breaststroke, and 200-yard freestyle relay.\(^{158}\)

Throughout February the D.A.C. and Illinois A.C. clearly dominated the Central A.A.U. championship meets. The D.A.C. women led by Edwardina Kranitch won many of the individual and relay championship events. Whereas the Illinois A.C. men garnered most of the association's senior championship events, as Johnny Weismuller was virtually unbeatable in the freestyle races. The presence of Weismuller at a championship meet was a meet director's delight, for he drew many extra spectators in hopes of witnessing a new national or world record swim. The great Illinois A.C. swimmer responded well to the large galleries, as he rarely swam in official competition, that 1923 season, without breaking some kind of record. The D.A.C.'s Ferd Ehrlich and Otis Trowbridge had several good Central A.A.U. meets, especially when Matt was able to place them in events in which Weismuller was not swimming.\(^ {159}\) Matt was very fond of the talented Weismuller, as the physically big Illinois swimmer was never to busy or "big-headed" to


\(^{159}\) Scrapbook 11, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 36-44. (Several Detroit newspaper articles carried the results of the Central A.A.U. championship meets during February 1923)
talk with the D.A.C. coach, before or after a championship swim. Matt was also tremendously impressed with Johnny's "raw" swimming talent, which enabled the latter to rewrite the freestyle record book, in most Central A.A.U. events and many national events, from 50-yards through 500-yards. 160

During March, several of the indoor championship events were conducted at various sites across the country. Although the D.A.C. was still without a legitimate contender for any of the senior national swimming crowns, Matt believed some of his swimmers had a good chance to score well in some of the junior events. The National A.A.U. had awarded three championships, two junior events and one senior title, to the D.A.C. for March 31. The two junior events were the 220-yard freestyle for women and the same race for men. Matt believed that the D.A.C.'s Edwardina Kranitch and Otis Trowbridge, each had an excellent chance to win their respective races and the national titles. While Miss Kranitch had achieved the ranking as the top female freestyler in the Midwest, her quest for the 220-yard title would be challenged by Virginia Whitemack of the New York Women's Swimming Association, the club renowned for its excellent freestyle swimmers. 161

The lone senior National A.A.U. championship event, which Matt had bid for and been awarded the opportunity to host, was the swimming pentathlon. The event provided great spectator interest and was a real test of a swimmer's versatility. Each contestant for the title would

160 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 18.

be required to race in the five races of the 100-yard breaststroke, 100-yard backstroke, 100-yard freestyle, 100-yard life saving stroke, and the 500-yard freestyle, which composed the event. The contestant scoring the highest number of points based on his place finish in each race would be declared the national champion. Matt would be ensured of a probable full spectator gallery for the meet since Johnny Weismuller, the 1922 outdoor national pentathlon champion, had sent in his entry for the March 31 meet. Going to the starting mark against Weismuller would be Harold "Stubby" Krueger, also of the Illinois A.C., Reinhold Thomas of the D.A.C., and the unexpected entry of Norman Ross the Central A.A.U. swimming committee chairman. In addition to the three championship events, Matt had also scheduled several events for junior and senior swimmers to fill out the meet program and provide a full evening of competition for the spectators.162

Detroit's final major championship meet of the 1923 indoor season drew a full house of spectators to the D.A.C.'s natatorium. In an exciting race for the National A.A.U. Junior 220-yard title for women, the New York Women's Swimming Association's Virginia Whitemack won the stroke for stroke duel with the D.A.C.'s Edwardina Kranitch. In the men's version of the same race, the D.A.C.'s Otis Trowbridge managed to win his first individual national title. Like the women's 220, Trowbridge also had a hard fought race, his with the second place finisher, Dennis Mackensie of Buffalo, New York. In the featured event of the meet, the National A.A.U. Senior Indoor Pentathlon

162 "Weismuller, Ross Are Expected Here," Detroit Sunday News, March 11, 1923, Sport Section, p. 4, col. 3.
Championship, the Illinois A.C.'s Weismuller and Krueger tied for the title with eight points each. Reinhold Thomas of the D.A.C. finished in third place. Many experts had expected the event to go to the Illinois A.C. star Weismuller with Norman Ross a possible threat, but the latter's duties as Central A.A.U. swimming chairman had prevented him from training properly for the national event. Ross attended the meet, but scratched from the event prior to the start of the competition. The D.A.C. had made an excellent showing in the meet as it was the only team to place a swimmer in the top three places of the national title races.163

Although Matt had not accepted the official designation as swimming coach of the University of Michigan team, he had, in fact, supervised the training of the Wolverine swimmers for most of the 1923 season. When the team members academic schedules, and the weather, permitted, they would travel from Ann Arbor to the D.A.C., twice weekly, for workouts with Matt. Matt had received permission from the D.A.C. for the Wolverine swimmers to workout in the natatorium on one weekday evening and Saturday afternoon of each week. On the other days of the week, during the indoor season, the University of Michigan swimmers followed a workout plan, which had been "mapped out" by Matt, at the Y.M.C.A. pool in Ann Arbor.164 The Wolverine tankers scored a lone victory over Michigan Agricultural College (M.A.C.) by the score of 50-18, while losing twice to other conference opponents,

163 "Two Swimmers Tie For National Title," New York Sunday Times, April 1, 1923, Sect. 1, Part 2, p. 4, col. 2.
164 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 8.
Indiana University (43-25) and Northwestern University (56-12). The Michigan swimmers were certainly outclassed in their two losses, especially without the services of its top swimmer, Jack Gow, who had been declared scholastically ineligible to compete that season.

By the end of April, Matt had concluded another successful season at the D.A.C., but without the emergence of a female or male swimmer of national senior competition caliber. During the past two indoor campaigns, Matt had missed the excitement produced by the likes of a Cann or Woodbridge in national championship events, by not having such a D.A.C. swimmer on either the 1922 or 1923 teams. As Matt thought of the future, or by the time the 1924 indoor season arrived and with the motivation of the Olympic Games in Paris, possibly Kranitch, Trowbridge or Thomas would become the new national star at the D.A.C.

But Matt would have to put his thoughts for next season to rest, as he prepared for his second consecutive summer season at Camp Chikopi. Prospects looked good for the return of several campers from the preceding season. Matt's athletic camp concept would be retained, with swimming as the primary sport and some additional sports added to the previous extensive list. Matt made the philosophical basis for Camp Chikopi very clear as he stated:

"... I feel strongly that the only kind of camp that I could run would be one that is 100% athletics. ... I don't go into the backwoods idea of a camp and we (the camp's staff and campers) don't, as I say, sew beads on"

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167 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 8.
belts, but we do everything in athletics, and it (the camp's program) is predicated on competition. . . .

Matt exhibited a genuine air of enthusiasm for all of the camp's athletic activities, but his displayed excitement during his teaching and supervision of various swimming activities seemed almost "infectious" to the campers. Since swimming had been the primary sport of many of the campers, before they attended Camp Chikopi, the blending of those interests with Matt's aquatic dynamism seemed to make swimming the principal topic of conversation for the campers at each of their meals. The camp's main house, the dining hall, served as the site where Matt had placed the swimming record boards for an extensive array of events arranged separately for boys and girls by age groups. The record boards were prominently displayed at each meal, while the campers were charged with the responsibility of maintaining the current status of records. When a swimmer broke a camp record, he was given the opportunity to "chalk in" his new record, while the rest of the campers witnessed and cheered the newly listed achievement. The daily competitions in various sports seemed to make the summer pass quickly for Matt and the campers. The season at Chikopi had been most pleasurable for Matt and his family, and by late August his camp work had left him with a totally refreshed feeling, ready for the rigors of the upcoming 1924 indoor season. 169

During the fall of 1923 Matt worked his D.A.C. swimmers, especially his seniors, quite intensively, as he sought to bring one or

168 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 20.
169 Ibid.
more of those competitors to a level of performance suitable for national championship events. While maintaining his coaching, and swimming teaching program, at the D.A.C., Matt had agreed to maintain his unofficial coaching role with the University of Michigan, until a full-time coach could be secured for that institution. Matt's coaching duties with the Wolverine swimmers were started late in the fall, and most of the sessions were conducted at the D.A.C., although on a few occasions Matt did travel to Ann Arbor to organize some workouts for the Michigan swimmers at the local Y.M.C.A. Serving in the dual role as D.A.C. coach and coaching advisor for the Wolverine team, Matt had suggested to Michigan's George Little that a dual meet be scheduled between the teams, probably in January of the 1924 season. While Matt awaited word from Little on the proposed meet, another aspect of the D.A.C.'s meet schedule, for the upcoming season, was still rather indefinite by the late fall. Matt and several other swimming coaches from Detroit and certain cities in Michigan had participated in the establishment of the Michigan Amateur Athletic Union to replace their membership and participation in the Central A.A.U.'s programs. Since the Central A.A.U.'s championship meets had been conducted throughout much of February in previous years, Matt and his coaching colleagues from the state would have to work out meet schedules with a new look for the 1924 indoor season.  

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170 Scrapbook 11, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 51-60. (Several Detroit newspaper articles carried stories about the D.A.C.'s fall training regimen and the plans for the Michigan A.A.U. Period covered was September through December of 1923)
The D.A.C. swimming team opened the new indoor season by clearly dominating the Detroit championships, held in December, and retaining its crown as city champion. Following that meet, Matt set his team's training goals for a rather unique meet he had scheduled at the D.A.C. for January 26, 1924. Matt's meet took on rather large proportions in that he had scheduled a dual contest and an open meet for the same evening. The most unique features of the combined affair were that the dual meet would match the University of Michigan swimming team against its first club team in official competition, and secondly, the other portion of the evening's of its kind ever tried in Detroit. Matt had been recognized by one sportswriter at the Detroit Free Press as being somewhat of a "pioneer" for staging a complete program of handicap events for the open meet. Due to the nature of the evening's meet program, Matt would be guaranteed a full house of competitors and spectators for the D.A.C. natatorium. 171

Matt had his D.A.C. senior men's team looking especially sharp as he concluded workouts for the opening dual meet with the Wolverine swimmers. Although he had been involved with the coaching of both teams, Matt's allegiance was to the Madison Avenue Club. While the University of Michigan swimmers had prepared for their opening meet without the services of a full time coach and the lack of a "suitable training tank" on campus, the D.A.C. team was primed and ready for the meet. Although Wolverines, Jack Kearns, captain, and Jack Gow were

highly regarded by the D.A.C. swimmers, the latter team was rated as the overwhelming favorite and exuded obvious confidence during the warm-up period.\textsuperscript{172}

Before a capacity crowd at the D.A.C., the host club swimmers soundly thrashed the visiting team from Ann Arbor on that night of January 26. The Michigan team had received winning efforts from Jack Gow in the 50-yard freestyle and Jack Kearns in the plunge; but the team strength and depth of the D.A.C., led by Trowbridge's double victories in the 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle events, plus his anchor leg on the winning freestyle relay, proved too much for the Wolverine team. The lopsided victory of 46-22 by the D.A.C. was a bit deceiving in that the Michigan swimmers challenged for the second and third place points in many of the races. Following the dual meet competition, the open handicap event meet was started. Several of the competitors from the dual meet competed in certain handicap races, with many of those men going off from the scratch position. Judging from the crowd's reactions, the handicap races, especially those whose finishes went "right down to the wire," were the highlight of the D.A.C.'s special meet.\textsuperscript{173}

With the Central A.A.U. championship meets gone from the D.A.C.'s schedule, Matt had his team engage in several dual meets during February. Since none of the other club teams from the Detroit area were a match for the D.A.C. in dual competition, Matt used the

\textsuperscript{172}"University of Michigan Meets Aquatic Stars," Detroit News, January 25, 1924, p. 36, col. 4.

competitions as tuneups for the 1924 season's next major meet, the Michigan A.A.U. championships on February 24. Matt had played an instrumental role in the formation of the new Michigan A.A.U., and he wanted the D.A.C. to have the honor of hosting the association's first championship meet. The evening's program would include eight championship events and several open events, the latter selected by Matt to bring additional competitors and spectators to the natatorium for the Michigan A.A.U.'s inaugural swimming event. The championship events included four contests for men: fancy diving, 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard freestyle and 200-yard freestyle relay; and four competitions for women: fancy diving, 50-yard backstroke, 50-yard freestyle, and 200-yard freestyle relay. The D.A.C.'s Trowbridge and Kranitch carried the favorite roles for the championship events in their respective divisions. The University of Michigan's team members were expected to provide stern competition for the men's titles, with the Wolverine relay team being the favorite based on its victory over the D.A.C. in that event at their dual meet.174

The first Michigan A.A.U. championship swimming meet proved to be a huge success as a large crowd witnessed several thrilling races. Although the D.A.C.'s men and women "took home" the gold medals for most of the championship events, the University of Michigan men definitely made their presence known. The Wolverine's Paul Samson, a freshman, and Jack Gow took the top two places in the 50-yard freestyle, respectively. The D.A.C.'s Trowbridge rebounded from his third place

finish in the 50 to win the 100-yard freestyle over the Michigan duo. In the 200-yard freestyle relay, Gow swam a great anchor leg time of :24 2/5 and narrowly missed catching Trowbridge for the first place.

In the men's fancy diving, Walter Grandy won the title followed closely by his D.A.C. teammate Stan Bryda. The D.A.C. Edwardina Kranitch won the 50-yard backstroke and 50-yard freestyle races and swam the anchor leg on the team's winning freestyle relay. Completing the sweep of the women's championship events for the D.A.C. was Mrs. Vonnie Malcomson who took the fancy diving crown. Mrs. Malcomson had been working very hard that winter with her goal in mind of making the 1924 Olympic Team. 175

In the second of the Michigan A.A.U. championship meets, that one hosted by the Detroit Y.M.C.A., Otis Trowbridge won his second individual title of the season by placing first in the 220-yard freestyle event. His D.A.C. teammate Reinhold Thomas won the state's 100-yard backstroke race with relative ease over an inexperienced field. Miss Kranitch added the 100-yard freestyle event to her growing list of titles, as she maintained her ranking as the top female swimmer in the state, and possibly in the Midwest. At that point in the season, Matt and his coaching colleagues from around the state seemed well pleased with the new championship system administered by the Michigan A.A.U. 176

While Matt had retained his "unofficial" affiliation with the University of Michigan swimmers throughout the 1924 season, he had


also established a coaching role with the swimmers at Princeton University. The latter situation had been established by correspondence between Matt and his former Duluth Boat Club star, Leonard Draper. Matt had been informed by Draper, the Princeton swimming team captain, that the team was in need of some training advice due to a deterioration in the former coaching situation. As early as January, Matt had started to send, via the mail, weekly workouts for the Princeton team to follow under Draper's direction. Matt continued the correspondence training program for the entire season. By the season's end, the Princeton boys had done an excellent job in dual meet competition, highlighted by the surprising and virtually unheard of double victories over Yale University.\(^{177}\) To defeat the perennially strong Yale team once in season was quite an accomplishment for a league opponent, but Princeton's victories on March 1 (38-24) and March 7 (37-25) were recognized as an outstanding feat.\(^{178}\)

The University of Michigan's swimming team had also made impressive strides during the season. While the Wolverines' record of 1-2-1 did not reflect an impressive season, a closer examination of the dual meet performances, and the achievements made by individual team members in A.A.U. competition, reflected that significant improvements had occurred.\(^{179}\) The team had also made a dramatic impact at the

\(^{177}\)Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 5.


\(^{179}\)Scrapbook 11, Matt Mann Collection, op. cit., pp. 63-72. (Several articles from Detroit newspapers and The Michigan Daily carried summaries of A.A.U. meets and dual meets the University of Michigan swimmers engaged in. Period covered was January through March of 1924)
Western Conference's Fourteenth Annual Swimming Championships by placing second with 14 points to the champion Northwestern University's winning 32 points. The Wolverine team's second place finish in 1924 had climbed from the sixth place finish it had registered in the 1923 championship meet, its first in conference championship competition.  

By the season's end when the University of Michigan's athletic department had awarded seven members of the swimming team, each with a prestigious Varsity "M," Gerald Barnes, a doctoral student in sociology at the Ann Arbor campus had been designated as the team's coach, with Matt listed as the assistant coach. The mid-season naming of Barnes had been necessitated because of Matt's unofficial status with the university, and the latter's contractual obligation with the D.A.C. Matt had agreed with Michigan's Athletic Director, Fielding Yost, to supervise the training of the Wolverine swimmers and to accompany the team on certain away meet trips, when the former's schedule permitted. Since there was often a conflict between the times and dates at which the D.A.C. and University of Michigan swimmers trained and engaged in their respective competitions, Matt had provided Barnes with the necessary routines for the Wolverine swimmers to follow in practice sessions and meets, during the season.

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Although there was still at least a full month before the conclusion of the indoor season, there had been some speculation in the Detroit News about some 1924 Olympic swimming team hopefuls from the Detroit area. Based on performances during the ongoing indoor season, Matt had felt that four of his D.A.C. team members, Vonnie Malcomson, Walter Grandy, Otis Trowbridge, and Reinhold Thomas, would have a chance at gaining a berth on the team for the Paris Games. Since the Detroit area had been represented at the last Olympic Games in the swimming competition by the D.A.C.'s Margaret Woodbridge, it was hoped that at least one of Detroit's fine aquatic stars would make the 1924 team.  

Following the indoor season Matt occupied his days by planning his Camp Chikopi activity program and maintaining workouts for his D.A.C. divers and swimmers who had "set their sights" on making the Olympic Team. The Olympic Trials for swimming and diving produced some excellent competitions for the places on the team which would compete in Paris. But the top place winners in the men's and women's events did not include any D.A.C. competitors. When the 1924 Olympic Swimming and Diving Teams were announced, the fate of Detroit, one of the strongholds of swimming and diving in the Midwest, became official, that not only would the D.A.C. be without a team member, but also the entire city league.

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184 "Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 8.

After another successful and refreshing summer season at Camp Chikopi, Matt resumed his normally busy schedule at the D.A.C.

But as his fall duties progressed and the 1925 indoor swimming season drew closer, Matt had decided that he was going to try to get into the college swimming coaching profession. He had surmised that the colleges were really taking over in men's swimming in the United States, and that swimming was really going places as a college sport. While the time seemed right, Matt decided to make a formal bid for the still vacant official swimming coach's position at the University of Michigan. On November 8, 1924, while still under contract to the D.A.C., Matt wrote on a piece of Camp Chikopi stationery, his letter of application:

"Mr. Fielding Yost
"Director of Athletics
"University of Michigan

"Dear Sir:

"I understand that the pool of the (Michigan) Union building (on the campus) will soon be opened to the members and also the student body.
"I should like to apply for the position as Instructor and manager of same.
"As you know I have been with the Detroit A.C. for the last six years in charge of the swimming dept., doing all the teaching, and also arranging the meets and also taking care of all the details that go with such a position.
"Last year I had the pleasure of helping with the U. of M. Varsity team, which as you already know was second in the Conference swimming championships, so that I already know all of the boys on the team, and you are also familiar with my work.
"I can refer you to Mr. James A. Ballard, who is one of the Directors and also the chairman of the swimming dept. at the D.A.C., Also Mr. H. Nimmo another Director who has charge of the Athletic dept. at the D.A.C. regarding my work there.

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186 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 8.
"I should be glad to have a personal interview with you, at your convenience regarding this position.

"Sincerely yours,

"Matt Mann" 187

Matt resumed his regular teaching and coaching duties at the D.A.C., while he awaited some word from Mr. Yost regarding the "Michigan" aquatics position. Matt had also retained his working relationship with Coach Barnes and the Wolverine swimmers; and with the Christmas holidays soon to be upon the university mermen, Matt had Barnes putting "the boys" through several workouts designed to improve their racing starts, stroke mechanics, and sprint speed. The Western Conference dual meet season would begin shortly after those holidays. The December pre-holiday workout sessions were designed to iron out some of the rough spots which existed on the team, before the boys got into the official competitive schedule. There was some hope that the Wolverine swimmers would have the opportunity to compete at home, during the 1925 season, in the new pool which was nearing completion at the Michigan Union. 188

During the week after Christmas, Matt received his first official word from Fielding Yost regarding the status of the aquatics

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187 Personal correspondence between Matt Mann II and Fielding Yost, November 8, 1924, (letter on file in Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Library, University of Michigan, Michigan University Dept. of Athletics, Box 3, Folder January 1923-June 1925).

position. In the long awaited reply to Matt's letter, Mr. Yost stated the following:

"Dear Mr. Mann:

"Today (December 26, 1924) I had a talk with Homer Health (General Manager - University of Michigan Union) in reference to the swimming program at the University of Michigan. During our conversation it developed that we were not familiar enough with the problem to arrive at any definite conclusion as to any kind of a program. Mr. Heath suggested that I write you to come out here (University of Michigan campus) sometime after the 6th of January, say about the 8th, 9th, or 10th, and the three of us could meet together.

"There is quite a practical problem; by whom and when shall the pool be used. During the training season by competitive men, beginners and those wishing to swim for recreation must all be considered. My opinion is that the pool will be very much crowded from two to six in the afternoon. At any rate, we would like to have you come out and talk this over with us and further discuss the proposition of your being with us.

"Wishing you the compliments of the season, I am

"Sincerely,

"Fielding Yost
"Director"

With less than a week to go before the Wolverines' opening conference swimming meet on January 17, 1925 with Michigan Agricultural College (M.A.C.), Fielding Yost still had not appointed a full-time swimming coach. Coach Barnes was still handling most of the direct coaching responsibilities at the "inadequate" training facilities of the Ann Arbor Y.M.C.A. In the limited pool time that had been made available to the university team members, the workouts following the Christmas holidays had been confusing with the cramped conditions for

Personal correspondence between Fielding Yost and Matt Mann, December 26, 1924, (letter on file in Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Library, University of Michigan, Michigan University Dept. of Athletics, Box 3, Folder January 1923-June 1925).
the swimmers and the presence of the divers. Until that time most of the divers' workouts had been conducted in the athletic department's field house, with its diving board and sawdust landing box set up. The field house training routine had been suggested by Matt to permit the divers to concentrate on their dives without the distractions of the swimmers at the small Y.M.C.A. pool. The nearness of the first meet necessitated the "real" diving experience for the divers though, if they were to be ready for their four conference dual meets.¹⁹⁰

Before the end of the second week of January, Fielding Yost had made his decision about his department's aquatics coaching position, following his meeting with Homer Heath and Matt. On January 12, 1925, an article in the Detroit Free Press announced that Matt had been employed by the University of Michigan's athletic department as its full-time "tank mentor;" and that he would also assume the directorship of the Michigan Union's new pool, that was nearing completion, with the primary responsibility of swimming instructor to the membership.¹⁹¹


¹⁹¹“Mann To Coach Michigan Team,” Detroit Free Press, January 12, 1925, Scrapbook 11, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 82.
Chapter 8

A DYNASTY WAS BORN - THE COMPETITIVE YEARS 1925-1934

Amidst the excitement of his hiring as full-time swimming coach at the University of Michigan that January of 1925, Matt took time to reflect upon his rather inauspicious "greeting" in the United States, some 19 years earlier. America was acknowledged as a land of opportunity by people across the world, but Matt's present status at a major American university, plus his principal ownership in a summer camp were dreams come true for the "pub keeper's" son. Matt was honored by the confidence Fielding Yost had exhibited, when he named the former to the aquatics position, but at the same time Matt believed his previous coaching record at several American universities and clubs had qualified him for the Michigan position.¹

The hiring of a full-time swimming coach by the University of Michigan's athletic department was looked upon most favorably by various segments of the school's campus and alumni population. For a certain group of alumni interested in the total athletic program of the Ann Arbor institution, the swimming hiring would signal to other Western Conference schools that Michigan would be making a bid for the top spot in the league. To a group of almost 500 students on the University of Michigan's campus, the hiring of the full-time coach would

¹Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 8.

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probably provide the final impetus needed for the new Union pool fund raising campaign. The students' group had been informed by a representative of the University of Michigan's Detroit Alumni Association Chapter, that if the former group could raise $5,000 the alumni group would provide an additional $10,000 to provide the $15,000 needed to complete the new pool. The students' group was most enthusiastic about the prospect of raising the needed funds for the new natatorium, for they realized that such a pool would not only provide a fine training facility for the intercollegiate team, but would also provide a site for many student-oriented instructional and recreational sessions in the years to come. It was hoped by the fund raising groups that the necessary money might be made available to the university very soon so that the new pool would be ready for competition during the 1925 season.\(^2\)

Soon after George Little, director of minor sports at the University of Michigan, had released the news of Matt's hiring, the former provided a copy of his institution's intercollegiate swimming schedule to the press. The schedule included away dual meets with the University of Chicago, University of Wisconsin and Michigan Agricultural College (M.A.C.), and a home contest with Indiana University. The Wolverine swimmers would complete the season at the Conference Championships in Iowa City, Iowa, on March 13-14. The date of the meet before the University of Michigan and M.A.C. had been changed to a date later in the season, rather than the opening date of the season which

\(^2\)"Mann To Coach Michigan Team," Detroit Free Press, January 12, 1925, Scrapbook 11, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 82.
had been previously announced, so that Matt might have ample time to prepare his swimmers due to his hiring so close to the start of the season.3

Matt assumed his official duties as the varsity swimming coach for men at the University of Michigan on the afternoon of Monday, January 14, 1925. His first official practice, conducted that afternoon at the Ann Arbor Y.M.C.A. pool, was the most demanding the Wolverine swimmers had ever gone through in preparation for the 1925 season. Matt had declared that his men would be ready for their opening meet with the University of Chicago, which was less than two weeks away from that initial practice day. His coaching success at previous colleges and clubs had been achieved because his swimmers on those teams had taken pride in their performances and the teams they represented, and Matt hoped his Wolverine swimmers would assume a similar pride. Matt's training programs at those former colleges and clubs were very demanding physically, and he wanted his new team to recognize right from the start that the workouts would be most strenuous. A final point Matt made to his group of almost 20 team hopefuls, that first practice session, was that he expected them "to live clean lives," without indulgence in habits of smoking tobacco and drinking alcoholic beverages. From the beginning of his appointment as full-time swimming coach at the University of Michigan, Matt informed his swimmers of what he believed were the necessary ingredients of a successful swimming program. Matt

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hoped the Wolverines would be the nation's top collegiate team in the not too distant future.\textsuperscript{4}

Due to the rapidity with which Matt's hiring process had taken place, he had not had an opportunity to locate suitable housing for his family in Ann Arbor, which thus necessitated his commuting from Detroit for at least the first week of his coaching assignment. After getting settled in Ann Arbor, he explained that his coaching schedule would be greatly expanded on a daily basis. The main workout for the team would be conducted each weekday afternoon between the hours of three and six o'clock. Each weekday Matt would also be available at the Ann Arbor Y.M.C.A., during certain hours of the morning, afternoon and evening; team members received individual pool work, as their class schedules permitted. The individual work with the swimmers and divers would permit Matt to work on the finer points of certain stroke or dive technique problems which the team member might be encountering. Matt also envisioned the individual sessions as opportunities to provide supplemental training to main afternoon workout sessions.\textsuperscript{5}

When Fielding H. Yost employed Matt as a full-time swimming coach with shared responsibilities at the Michigan Union's soon to be completed pool, the hiring and the obvious elevation of swimming to a higher level in Michigan's intercollegiate athletic program were not looked upon as unusual moves. Since Yost's appointment as director of athletics in 1921, he had worked to expand the six sport varsity program


\textsuperscript{5}Ibid.
of football, baseball, basketball, tennis, track and cross country which he had inherited. The sports of wrestling, ice hockey, and golf had preceded swimming as official varsity sports on the Ann Arbor campus.  

Men who assumed coaching appointments under Yost soon learned that winning records in their respective sports were essential for job security. 

As a speaker Yost admonished those who placed great pressure on coaches to win. As director of athletics, Yost could not endure a Michigan coach who suffered many losses. It may have been that those replacements were made necessary by inferior performance of coaching duties, or because team morale was at a dangerously low ebb. In his public speeches, Yost never suggested those kinds of realities must be faced (by his coaches).  

Matt had known of Fielding Yost's reputation for demanding excellent coaching and winning teams before the former resigned his position at the D.A.C.; Matt gladly accepted the challenge, for he felt quite confident of his ability to develop a champion swimming team at Michigan.  

During the first week of training for the Wolverine "mermen," Matt had included several "stiff speed drills" designed to develop additional team speed as the group was readied for the opening meet in Chicago. Although his coaching assignment was only a mere four days old, Matt had already instituted a day in which morning and afternoon

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7 Ibid., p. 204.
8 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 8.
workouts were scheduled for the team. In addition to the speed drills, Matt had also worked extensively on his swimmers starts and turns.\(^9\)

In less than a week's time following the announcement of Matt's hiring as swimming coach, the students' group, which had taken on the responsibility of raising $5,000 needed for the completion of the Union pool, declared the campaign a success. The money had been raised by selling books of swimming tickets at a price of five dollars per book. The tickets in the books would be used by the students to gain admission to the new pool after its official opening. More than 1,000 books were sold to students during the drive, which was organized by Jack Gow, a member of the Wolverine varsity swimming team, and another student, Gordon Rice. With the student money collected, plus the additional money guaranteed by the Detroit alumni group, the final work on the Union pool could be completed.\(^10\)

Matt's first dual meet competition as the official full-time swimming coach for the University of Michigan (U. of M.) proved to be a resounding success, as the Wolverine natators defeated the University of Chicago team by the score of 43 to 25. Matt had taken nine team members by train to Chicago for meet. The U. of M. swimmers, led by sophomore Paul Samson's victories in the 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle races, won five of the eight events contested. Jack Gow touched the finish wall first in the 40-yard freestyle, and team captain William Kerr won the 150-yard backstroke race. Dick Papenguth joined

\(^9\)"Tankmen Prepare For Chicago Meet," The Michigan Daily, January 17, 1925, p. 6, col. 2.

Samson, Gow and Kerr to form the U. of M.'s winning 160-yard freestyle relay team. Papenguth actually filled a dual role for the winning team as he competed as diver and swimmer, recording third place finishes in the fancy diving and 100-yard freestyle events. The other events contested in the meet were the 200-yard breaststroke and the plunge. Matt reported expenses for the ten man contingent's winning effort, including train fair, were $91.93.  

With the U. of M.'s second meet against the University of Wisconsin a full three weeks after the Chicago meet, Matt was able to establish his preferred workout program of team and individual sessions for each weekday. Matt was around the Ann Arbor Y.M.C.A. pool full time, or at least whenever any team member stopped by for an individual session, and he was ready and eager to work with the Wolverine "merman." Although the individual sessions were not required for each team member, Matt strongly urged that each swimmer and diver make a real effort to attend at least a couple of those sessions on a weekly basis. The afternoon team practices were usually a combination of distance swimming and short sprints for each team member. The distance swim was usually a mile to a mile and one half in duration. Matt liked his swimmers to work on stroke technique improvements during the long swim which were performed at a pace considered easy by each swimmer. Following an afternoon's distance swim, Matt then had the swimmers engage in a series of shorter swims at distances of 200-yards, 100-yards

or 50-yards, or combinations of those distances, at a rather fast pace. As the day of a meet approached the long easy swim was shortened considerably, with the practice sessions involving more work on short sprints, and starting and turning techniques.\(^{12}\)

Matt recognized that his team’s second meet, also away, with the University of Wisconsin would offer a much sterner test for his swimmers, than did the opening meet with Chicago. On the day prior to the U. of M.’s departure for Madison, Matt held two mandatory workouts for his team. The first of the double workouts was held in the morning and consisted of some light work with practice at the distances the swimmers would be competing at in the meet. The afternoon session was devoted to several speed swims and some full speed efforts by the relay team at the regulation distance. Matt was very pleased with the results of the double workouts, but he did not release any of the times from the relay team’s practice trials.\(^{13}\)

Matt had planned his team’s travel itinerary by train to Madison, Wisconsin, in such a way, that during a short lay over in Chicago, the team would be able to engage in a brief workout. The team’s schedule called for a Friday morning departure at 9:40 with an arrival in Chicago that afternoon at 3:30. Matt had arranged to take the team to the Chicago Athletic Association pool for a short workout and to be back at the railroad station in less than two hours so that

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\(^{12}\) Based on statements by Eugene B. Power, a member of the 1925 University of Michigan swimming team and former University of Michigan Board of Regents member, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, July 19, 1973.

\(^{13}\) "Mann Doubles Up Work of Swimmers," The Michigan Daily, February 12, 1925, p. 6, col. 1.
the team could make its 5:30 p.m. departure for Madison. On Saturday morning, Matt had also arranged for his team to have a light workout a few hours before the afternoon meet with Wisconsin. Matt had carefully planned the team's travel, because he wanted to do everything possible to prevent a loss in the sharpness the swimmers had developed, due to the lengthy trip.14

On the basis of performances recorded by swimmers on the Michigan and Wisconsin teams prior to their February 14 meet, the home team was clearly the favorite. But by the end of the dual competition, the Wolverine swimmers had "pulled off" an upset by winning the meet 33 to 31. The visitors from Ann Arbor managed only three first place finishes, as Kerr won the backstroke, Whittingham the breaststroke, while Dunakin and Johnson won the first and second places, respectively, in the 220-yard freestyle. A number of second place finishes by U. of M. swimmers were also important to the team victory, but a very decisive factor in the outcome of the meet was the disqualification of Wisconsin's two sprinters in the 40-yard freestyle, enabling Michigan's Jack Gow and Paul Samson to garner the points for first and second places uncontested.15

Following the return of the Wolverine swimmers to Ann Arbor, Matt resumed the team's hard training sessions. Matt's primary concern for his team was the conference championship meet the second week of


March. While he would "keep an eye on" the upcoming dual contests with Indiana University and M.A.C., he believed that his hard training sessions would produce excellent team results at the championship meet. With less than four weeks remaining until the big meet, there was no time to soften the practice sessions. According to team member Eugene Power, "Matt was a driver. . ., he would put the pressure on pretty heavy. . . ."

The U. of M.'s apparent upgrading of its swimming program had not gone unnoticed by rival Western Conference institutions. In a correspondence between F. W. Luehring, Director of Athletics, University of Minnesota, and Fielding Yost, the former commended Yost for improving the status of intercollegiate swimming at the Ann Arbor institution and for the hiring of Matt. Luehring, also a long time N.C.A.A. Swimming Rules Committee member and editor of several N.C.A.A. swimming guides, was very familiar with Matt's achievements in the East, and the former stated, "... He (Matt) is a crackerjack and should help you a great deal. . . ." Luehring was concerned that Yost had possibly hired Matt on only a part-time basis, and that the University of Michigan could improve its physical education swimming program, in addition to the intercollegiate swimming program, by hiring a person of Matt's caliber.

16 "Tankmen Hold Speed Trials," The Michigan Daily, February 18, 1925, p. 6, col. 3.

17 Eugene B. Power, personal interview, op. cit.

18 Based on a personal correspondence between F. W. Luehring and Fielding Yost, dated February 9, 1925. Letter on file in Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Michigan University Dept. of Athletics, Box 3, January 1923-June 1925, February 1925 Folder.
In a reply to Luehring, Yost confirmed the fact that Matt had been employed on a full time basis by the University of Michigan as its swimming coach and swimming instructor for the Michigan Union. Yost further stated:

"... I am very much interested in general swimming. In fact I am urging the erection of a building that will have at least three swimming pools in it, and that the ability to swim will be required before graduation.

The letter from Luehring had pleased Yost, since the latter respected his Minnesota counterpart's expertise in swimming matters, and the Luehring endorsement of Matt reinforced Yost's hiring decision.19

By mid swimming season, Yost must have felt even better about his selection of Matt, for the Wolverine team victory over Wisconsin, even by a slight margin, had improved the former team's image in the race for the conference crown. Matt's squad seemed to be responding well to his plan of strenuous workouts, laced with frequent time trials for his swimmers at their competitive distances. In the U. of M.'s third dual meet and only home contest, the host team scored an easy 49 to 19 victory over Indiana University. The Wolverine swimmers won five of the eight events and also took the second place honors in most of the races.20 The U. of M. swimming team closed out its dual meet competition for the 1925 season with another overwhelming victory, that one over non-conference opponent M.A.C., by the score of

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19 Based on a personal correspondence between Fielding Yost and F. W. Luehring, dated February 11, 1925. Letter on file in Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Michigan University Dept. of Athletics, Box 3, January 1923-June 1925, February 1925 Folder.

Matt had completed his first dual meet season as full time coach on a very positive note with a 4-0 record.21

Earlier in the season the Western Conference administrative staff announced that the championship meet would be held at the University of Chicago. The site of conference meet pleased Matt, since his boys had competed and swam well at the Chicago pool in the U. of M.'s opening meet of the season. Matt had announced that he would take his full team to the championships. He felt that several of his swimmers were capable of scoring in the meet; although without an outstanding individual competitor capable of scoring high in more than one event, Matt believed his team's best possible finish would be second to Northwestern University, the reigning champion of the 1923 and 1924 meets.22

The Fifteenth Annual Western Conference Swimming Championship Meet was won, as expected, by Northwestern University. The Evanston team's winning total of 34 points was almost double the score of the runner-up team, Wisconsin, who finished with 19 points. Michigan's third place finish with 17 points was somewhat of a disappointment to Matt and the team's loyal supporters; but based on the very good times recorded by various Wolverine competitors in the championship events, Matt and his mermen were commended for the significant improvements made by the 1925 team over previous U. of M. teams. Paul Samson was

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the Wolverine's top competitor in the meet with his third place effort in the 220-yard freestyle, and an excellent second place showing in the 440-yard freestyle to the meet's top individual performer, Howell of Northwestern. The inability of Matt's "boys" to score in the diving and plunge events, plus the strong efforts by the Wisconsin sprinters, and the two victories by Minnesota swimmers in the backstroke and breaststroke events provided the necessary point distribution to place Michigan third.23

Almost two weeks after the conference championships, Matt took a group of his Wolverine swimmers to the Detroit Athletic Club for a Michigan A.A.U. championship meet. Matt's swimmers figured in two record setting efforts at the evening meet. His 400-yard freestyle relay of Samson, Dunakin, Kerr and Gow established a new state record for the event with their time of 4:01. The other new record was established in the 100-yard freestyle as Robert Darnall, a Wolverine freshman, captured first place with a :57.0 effort.24

Matt's final affair for the fine 1925 U. of M. swimming team was a banquet, held on the campus. At the banquet Matt praised the team for its excellent dual meet season and recognized several team members for outstanding performances during the season. The affair was attended by the freshmen team members, as well as the varsity "mermen," since the former would be moving into varsity status the next

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season. Matt presented prestigious "M" awards to his top eight varsity performers, and then announced that Jack Gov had been chosen as the team's captain for the 1926 season.25

On Saturday, March 28, 1925, Homer Heath, General Manager of the Michigan Union, declared the 75 feet by 30 feet facility's new $50,000 pool ready for use by campus groups. Activities related to swimming instruction and intercollegiate swimming competition were under Matt's direction. The pool's filtration system, regarded by some experts to be the most complete in the country, would treat the pool's 100,000 gallons of water through its four large sand filters, every five hours. The water treatment system would provide excellent water conditions for the instructional and intercollegiate swimming programs.26

Although Matt served as the Union pool's immediate supervisor, the boys on the swimming team were not granted any special privileges regarding their use of the pool at a rate cheaper than the twenty five cents per session required of all students, during the off season. With the opening of the new pool, Matt had requested each of his team members who would be returning for the 1926 season, "... report at least three times a week in order that they might improve both stroke and speed." Matt had hoped that Fielding Yost and the Athletic Association might purchase several of the swimming ticket books, and then make them available to the team members at half price. Under the


Union pool policies, the swimming team members would not be required to pay the pool fees when they were in training for the official season.27

"Coach" Yost, after carefully considering Matt's proposal for the purchase of off-season swimming tickets, made his own proposal to Homer Health as part of a total financial package related to Matt's employment and the swimming team's use of the new pool. In the plan, Yost and Heath had agreed to pay Matt a salary of $2,700 for the next fiscal year's nine month period of employment, from September 1925 through May 1926. Matt would receive three hundred dollars each month, with the Athletic Association paying one hundred dollars, and the Union paying the other two hundred dollars. Health had also agreed to accept a sum of five dollars for each twenty five swims by team members during the nine months of the regular school year. Health did specify that in the four month period of December through March, up to 20 swimmers would be covered under the reduced rate plan. Outside of that period, only 10 swimming would be permitted the reduced rate privileges to be paid by the Athletic Association. On one final point, Health had agreed to accept a flat fee of twenty five dollars from the Athletic Association for the use of the pool for intercollegiate dual meets in 1926, with the Athletic Association receiving all income derived from those same contests.28

27 Based on a personal correspondence between Matt Mann II and Fielding Yost, dated April 29, 1925. Letter on file in Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Michigan University Dept. of Athletics, Box 3, January 1923-June 1925, April 1925 Folder.

28 Based on a personal correspondence between Homer Heath and Fielding Yost, dated May 23, 1925. Letter on file in Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Michigan University Dept. of Athletics, Box 3, January 1923-June 1925, May 1925 Folder.
Within a month's time following the close of the 1925 intercollegiate swimming season, the N.C.A.A. Swimming Rules Committee approved several changes for the 1926 competitive season. The changes, announced by the committee's chairman, F. W. Luehring, had been made in an attempt to standardize and improve certain aspects of the sport. The major changes included the addition of the 440-yard freestyle race to the dual meet schedule of events, to replace the 220-yard freestyle event. Another new event for dual and championship meets would be the 300-yard medley relay, to involve three swimmers per relay team, with the first member swimming backstroke, the second man swimming breaststroke, and the anchor man swimming crawlstroke. The plunge was dropped from competitive events schedule. The final major change involved the scoring of the diving event. In diving competition, three judges must score each dive using scorecards with numerical values ranging from one to ten points. The rule change also specified that as soon as a competitor completed a dive, the judges must show their scores, and the final results of the event must be announced to the competitors and spectators within five minutes after the last competitor's dive. The rule changes approved by the N.C.A.A.'s committee had been strongly supported by a consensus of collegiate swimming coaches.29

Within a week after the N.C.A.A. Swimming Rules Committee had announced the rule changes to be initiated with the start of competition in the 1926 season, the Western Conference swimming coaches met in

Chicago for their annual meeting. At the Chicago meeting, the rules for the conference meets, dual and championship, were officially changed to conform to the N.C.A.A.'s new rules for swimming competition. Matt was very pleased with the decision to eliminate the plunge as an official event, since he had contended the event favored individuals with certain anatomical attributes rather than skill based on training and conditioning. He also was very much in favor of the new swimming events which had been added. The 440-yard freestyle event would add a new dimension to dual meets, by giving competitors an opportunity to engage in an event which placed a higher degree of emphasis on endurance instead of raw sprint speed. By including the 440-yard race in the dual meet program, the competitors would be better prepared for the conference championship race at that distance, since the 440-yard swim had been a scheduled event in the Western Conference meet for several seasons. Matt thought the new 300-yard medley relay race would add new excitement to the meet, and also encourage coaches to devote more practice time to specialty stroke work. Spectators would now get opportunities to see the backstroke and breaststroke in competition more than once during a dual meet. The diving scoring and reporting changes would enable competitors and spectators to stay better informed during the meet. Matt viewed the rule changes as improvements for both competitors and the spectators, and he could hardly wait for new meet programs of the 1926 season.30

30"Coaches Make Many Changes In Swim Rules," The Michigan Daily, April 22, 1925, p. 6, col. 2.
During his first season as the official coach of varsity swimming at the University of Michigan, Matt had joined the College Swimming Coaches' Association of America. With the payment of his two dollar initiation fee, Matt was then a full fledged member of the organization, which served as the major vehicle for collegiate swimming coaches to express their collective opinions on swimming issues to rule-making bodies, such as the N.C.A.A. and the National A.A.U.31

As the U. of M. school year of 1924-1925 drew to a close and the students were making plans for the summer break, Matt invited the members of his swimming team to join him at Camp Chikopi as counselors. Matt had hoped that several of the "boys" would come to the camp for the summer, since he believed that they would be good leaders for the campers. Matt also looked upon the camp experience as being good for his Wolverine swimmers by involving them in physical activities, including swimming, in a wholesome and "refreshing" environment for almost two months.32

Several of the U. of M. swimmers "took Matt up" on his offer and went off to Camp Chikopi. He wanted and expected his counselors to get involved in the full slate of activities, including certain competitions when the opportunities arose. Matt competed quite vigorously in the boxing, tennis and swimming events when those activities were structured for open competition. If the U. of M. swimmers were unsure of what Matt's position would be regarding their


32Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 20.
camp social life, they were informed soon after their arrival that smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, and dating girls, who lived or vacationed in the camp's vicinity, were prohibited. Any counselor breaking any of those rules was to be sent home immediately. In spite of the rather strict social rules, most of the Wolverine swimmers thoroughly enjoyed their summer at camp.\textsuperscript{33}

As Matt readied himself for the 1926 swimming season, he was also aware that certain facets of his campus instructional program should be improved. In October of 1925, Matt established a swimming and water calisthenics class for the U. of M.'s male faculty members. Until Matt could determine what the level of interest might be among the faculty for his class, he had scheduled it from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday of each week that classes were in session. If there was a high level of participation by several faculty members, then Matt would increase the number of days that he would offer the noon hour swimming session.\textsuperscript{34}

With Matt's preseason training program for his Wolverine swimming team well underway in November, he announced that he had scheduled a trip for his team the week immediately preceding Christmas. Matt had arranged a road trip which would place his team in competition with four Y.M.C.A.'s, one club, and one collegiate dual meet. On each of the six days the team would be on the road, it would face a new team in a different city. The schedule called for an opening meet with the

\textsuperscript{33}Eugene B. Power, personal interview, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{34}"Hold Noon Swimming Classes For Faculty," The Michigan Daily, October 17, 1925, p. 6, col. 4.
D.A.C., followed by meets with the Toronto Y., Erie Y., then the lone collegiate meet of the trip with the University of Pittsburgh; as the team started its return trip to Ann Arbor, meets with the Cleveland Y. and the Toledo Y. were scheduled. Matt regarded the trip as a rather innovative approach to conclude the preseason training, as he stated:

... It (the trip) will serve to keep the men in condition over the holiday period, and it will also serve to relieve the strain of public performance when the conference teams are met. ... 

The preseason swimming trip was regarded as highly successful, but thoroughly exhausting, as the Wolverine swimmers won five of the six meets, losing only to the very talented Erie Y.M.C.A. team. In the collegiate meet with Pittsburgh, Matt's swimmers easily dominated the meet by winning each of the swimming events and recording a winning margin of 50 to 19. Matt's boys returned from their holiday break well rested and very sharp for their opening conference meet with Indiana University. Matt seemed to be a prophet about one of the values of the preseason trip as the U. of M. swimmers appeared quite relaxed at their opponent's pool and won every event on the meet schedule, with a 55 to 13 triumph. Matt's team completed their domination of the Indiana group by also winning the post meet water polo match 15 to 0.

At the N.C.A.A. and Western Conference rule change meetings in the Spring of 1925, international water polo had replaced water basketball as an intercollegiate sport, which might be engaged in by collegiate

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35"Pre-Holiday Trip For Swim Team," The Michigan Daily, November 6, 1925, p. 6, col. 5.
teams. Western conference schools had agreed to compete in the polo matches following the swimming meets.36

At the first official swimming meet conducted at the Union pool, between the University of Michigan and the University of Wisconsin, Professor Alfred Lee, speaking in behalf of the Board in Control of Athletics, delivered a dedication address prior to the start of the meet. Although the pool area had very limited spectator capacity, it was apparent that Wolverine fans had "squeezed" into every available "nook and cranny" surrounding the pool so that they might be part of that historic event. Paul Samson, truly an imposing physical specimen as he stood six feet eight inches in height, was clearly the outstanding competitor in the meet. Samson was involved in three of Michigan's six first place finishes, as he won the 440-yard freestyle and swam the anchor leg on both winning relay teams. The final score of 49-20 also reflected the depth of the victorious Michigan team.37

In its next meet, the U. of M. easily defeated conference opponent, University of Chicago, 55-14, as Matt's men swept the first two places in every event, except the dive, in which they placed second and third. Against Michigan State College (M.S.C.), formerly M.A.C., the Wolverines won every event and recorded their highest winning total of the season 58-11. The U. of M. swimmers closed out their dual meet season with their most impressive dual meet victory ever, a 49-20 win over perennial conference powerhouse, Northwestern University. Michigan


had traveled to the Evanston campus for the meet with the reigning conference champion of the past three seasons, who also had not lost a dual meet in four seasons. The Wolverines won all of the swimming events, losing only the fancy diving, and while the winners were impressive, the margin of victory was somewhat deceiving. Prior to the meet, Northwestern's Dick Howell, regarded by many experts as the top swimmer in the Western Conference, was declared ineligible by virtue of his academic standing. But the absence of Howell failed to dampen the victory celebration of Matt and his team members following the meet.38

The opening of the Union pool, even with its limited spectator capacity, enabled Matt to secure the right to host the Sixteenth Annual Western Conference Swimming Championships on March 12-13. The meet was the first conference swimming championship to be hosted by the Ann Arbor school. Going into the meet, the U. of M., with its undefeated collegiate dual meet season record of 6-0, appeared to have a solid chance to win the conference title. But the University of Minnesota, with the help of two boys, Miles Carter and Richard Bennett, who started their aquatics competitive careers under Matt at the Duluth Boat Club, won the Western Conference title. Minnesota won three individual titles, including Carter's diving victory, and both relay events, with Bennett anchoring the medley event to lead the way to its winning total of 41 points. Michigan finished a strong second with 33 points, but the Wolverine swimmers were only able to win two events,

those being Paul Samson's victories in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events. Matt's young sprinter, Bob Darnall, swam quite well in the meet as he places second in the 50-yard freestyle and third in the meet as he placed second in the 50-yard freestyle and third in the 100-yard freestyle. Wisconsin, relying mainly on the strength of its sprinters, placed a distant third in the meet with 17 points. The Western Conference Honor Team list contained seven different U. of M. swimmers in nine different events, a significant improvement from the previous season when only three of Matt's swimmers were listed in four events.

While the excitement of the hosting the conference swimming championship was still "in the air" of the Union pool, there came an announcement that the facility would soon be opened for use by women on the campus. Since the male undergraduates and membership of the Union were not using the pool in sufficient numbers to permit the meeting of pool expenses, it would be necessary to allow female students and staff to use the facility. Matt had spoken with Dr. Margaret Bell, professor of physical education for women, and together a plan had been worked out which would permit the women use of the pool three mornings each week, with hours from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and one evening each week, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. In support of the plan Matt stated:

... Almost every other university in the country allows women the use

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of its pool, if there is only one available; and on this campus the women's facilities are very inadequate. . . .

The summer's camping experience seemed to totally rejuvenate Matt for his work on the U. of M. campus. Prepared to embark on his third season as varsity swimming coach of the Wolverines, Matt was able to sense the growing interest in competitive swimming on the campus when 50 young men reported to the Union pool for freshman team "tryouts." Matt put the youthful candidates through several intensive practice sessions the first few days after they reported. In less than a week's time, he cut the freshman squad to 30, and promptly informed the remaining group that he would trim that group to a final 12 to 15 candidates. Starting the second week of October, Matt would begin working the varsity and freshman teams out together. While the freshman swimmers were utilizing the pool for their sessions, Matt had the varsity swimmers and divers training at the Yost field house with a preliminary program of running a mile each day and weight pulling.

Prior to announcing the full swimming schedule for the 1927 season, Matt was most excited to make a single meet announcement to the campus and to members of the "swimming community" in the United States who might have been listening. Through the efforts of Paul Roberts, former Yale swimming captain and most recently a member of Matt's senior team at the D.A.C., a dual meet had been tentatively arranged between the University of Michigan and Yale University. In recent

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40 "Union Directors To Open Pool To Women Students," The Michigan Daily, March 18, 1926, p. 6, col. 4.

41 "Coach Mann Makes First Cut In Freshman Squad," The Michigan Daily, October 7, 1926, p. 6, col. 3.
years, Yale had been recognized as the top swimming team in the country, based on its impressive dual meet record and consecutive Intercollegiate Swimming Association championships. Matt did not feel a team aspiring for top national ranking should limit itself to competition merely within its geographic area. He believed that his Wolverine squad of 1927 would be an excellent one, capable of meeting, on successful terms, a team of the prestigious Yale’s caliber. Matt had hoped that the U. of M. and Yale might swim each other in Detroit as Yale traveled to Iowa City for the National Intercollegiate Championships. Yale officials had suggested that the meet be held at the site of the national meet, a day or two following the championship events. The final dual meet details would have to be worked out at a later date by the respective administrators.  

As the final stages of the U. of M.’s preseason swimming training sessions were building to the team’s preseason competitive trip in late December, news was released about the Wolverine swimmers who had been named to the 1926 All-American Intercollegiate Swimming Team. The swimmers who had been selected were Paul Samson in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events, Robert Darnall in the 50-yard and 100-yard events, J. Halstead and R. Halstead in the 150-yard backstroke event. This was quite an honor for the U. of M. swimmers, and it also pointed out the quality individuals Matt would have to build his 1927 team around.

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Before sending his swimmers home for the Christmas holiday break, Matt's Michigan team completed a successful preholiday trip which included four exhibition dual meets. The Wolverines won their meets with the Toledo Y.M.C.A., Cleveland A.C. and Fort Wayne Y.M.C.A., and experienced a hard fought defeat to the Cincinnati Y.M.C.A., the 1926 national Y.M.C.A. swimming champions, by the score of 32-27. Paul "Buck" Samson, the team's captain, swam very well on the entire trip and appeared to be well on his way towards another great season. The team's lone defeat in Cincinnati was partially attributed to the absence of the Wolverines' top sprinter, Bob Darnall, who had been unable to make the trip.44

In the U. of M.'s final "tune-up" before the start of official 1927 dual meet season, Matt's swimmers, led by several outstanding performances from Paul Samson, overwhelmed their opposition at the first of the 1927 Michigan A.A.U. championship meets. Samson set a new state A.A.U. mark of 2:22.0 for the 220-yard freestyle race, then won the penthalon event, anchored the Wolverines' winning 400-yard freestyle relay, and then placed third in the open diving event. The U. of M. team seemed destined for a great season.45

By late January of 1927, a variety of incidents, involving the recruiting and proselytizing of high school athletes by universities across the United States, provided the impetus for the Western Conference to convene for a meeting; the conference schools

representatives, the Committee of Sixty, discussed the topic in Chicago. From the meeting came the formulation of a code, to which each of the conference's member institutions were expected to abide. The two main points of the code were:

... (1) Scholarships, loans and permissions of tuition should not be awarded by universities on the basis of athletic skill, and the unofficial granting of financial aid to athletes by individuals and organizations, by alumni, whose primary object in granting the aid in a particular case is subsidy of an athlete, should be considered unethical.

(2) Athletic directors and coaches should not, by initiation of correspondence, by distribution of literature, or by personal interview of their own seeking, endeavor to recruit athletes. It is legitimate for them to make speeches or in response to inquiry, or in casual conversation to describe the advantages of the institution which they represent. The athletic directors and coaches should discourage questionable recruiting by alumni and students. ... 46

When Matt had been asked about the preseason competitive trips against certain Y.M.C.A.'s and clubs, he pointed out that the meets were usually with teams he had formerly established a relationship while he coached at the D.A.C. He pointed out that the meets were exhibition contests in many cases, but he could not deny the fact that many high school swimmers and their parents had an opportunity to meet and be impressed by the quality young men who swam for the U. of M. In many cases he received written inquiries from some high school athletes following the preseason meets. 47

The Wolverine swimmers opened their dual meet season at the Union pool in a most impressive fashion with a 60-9 victory over


47 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 10.
Indiana University. The home team men who won every event and took
the top two places in every individual event, also established four
new records that evening. Paul Samson established a national
intercollegiate record for the 440-yard freestyle event with his winning
time of 5:12.4, almost five seconds better than the previous mark. The
other individual record went to Bob Darnall as he won the 100-yard
freestyle in :54 3/5 to establish a new conference mark for the event.
Following the regular schedule of events, Matt had a six-man team
establish a new intercollegiate record for the 600-yard backstroke
relay event, with a time of 7:32 1/5, and then after a rest period, the
same team, with each man swimming 25 yards, established another
intercollegiate record for the 750-yard backstroke relay with a time of
9:37 3/5. Both events, along with many others, were not a part of any
regular dual or championship meet format, but were recognized in the
collegiate record book. The new U. of M. relay records had broken
those formally held by Yale University swimmers.48

In the weeks following its opening victory, the Wolverine team
proceeded to record convincing victories over the University of Chicago
45-24, the University of Iowa 50-19, and Northwestern University 52-17.
The victory over the former conference power, Northwestern, was
heralded on the Ann Arbor campus as a great step forward for the minor
sports at the U. of M., since on many occasions the Fielding Yost's

48 "Three Swimming Records Broken," The Michigan Alumnus,
athletic administration had been accused of channeling its greatest energies and resources into the major sports programs. With only one dual meet remaining on the 1927 schedule, the U. of M. swimmers established four wins and no losses, with certain meets being marked by record-setting performances. In addition to the records of the opening meet, Samson had established new national intercollegiate marks for the 220-yard freestyle race in a 60 foot pool with a time of 2:19.3, and for the same event in a 75 foot pool with a time of 2:17.4. The Wolverines' top backstroker, Robert Spindle had also established a new intercollegiate record of 1:45.4 for the 150-yard event in a 60 foot pool.

The Wolverines' final dual meet with the University of Minnesota brought together the top two teams for 1927 in the Western Conference. For that first ever meeting between the two schools in swimming competition, both schools entered the meet with undefeated dual meet records. Minnesota, the defending conference champion, had many of its top performers from its 1926 team back, as did the U. of M. from its 1926 conference runner up team. Matt had predicted that several records might be set during the meet, which he expected to be one of the "keenest competitions ever held in Michigan."

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50 Ibid., p. 437.

The Wolverine swimmers were certainly ready for the historic meeting as they won convincingly by the score of 47-22. Samson and Darnall again proved to be key figures for the winners as both placed first in an individual event and joined as members of the winning freestyle relay. On the way to his winning effort in the 50-yard freestyle, Samson was timed at :18.3 for the 40-yard freestyle, a new national intercollegiate mark, while his :23.9 for the 50-yard event set a new conference record. Darnall's winning effort of :54.2 for the 100-yard freestyle race produced another conference record.52

The apparent ease with which the Wolverine swimming team had handled its opponents during the dual meet season, enabled them to be labeled as favorites for the Seventeenth Annual Western Conference Swimming Championships. Matt had been around the coaching game long enough, though, not to let himself or his team members get lulled to a sense of complacency by the favorite's role into which they had been cast. Matt devoted a considerable amount of practice time in the days immediately preceding the championship meet to speed swimming in the swimmers' specific races, and to the fine details of relay takeoffs and turns in all strokes. The Wolverines displayed their readiness and sharpness for the competition throughout both days of the meet. Matt's swimmers won six of the nine events on the championship program, and had several other scoring places on their way to winning the conference crown. Michigan's 49 points were the highest number ever scored in the championship meet, well ahead of Minnesota's second place 33 points.

while Northwestern finished in a very distant third place with 13 points. Paul Samson and teammates Darnall and Spindle lead the point scorers, as they had for most of the season. Samson won the 220-yard freestyle event, with a new conference record of 2:18.4, and the 440-yard freestyle race with a new national intercollegiate record of 5:09.8. He also swam the third leg on the winning 200-yard freestyle relay team which also set a new conference record of 1:39.2. Darnall, the anchor man on the 200-yard relay, established a new conference record of 53.8 with his winning effort in the 100-yard freestyle. Wolverine backstroke star Robert Spindle had a part in two new conference marks, as he won the 150-yard backstroke in 1:46.2 and swam the lead-off leg of the winning 300-yard medley which raced to the new record of 3:18.6. The University of Michigan's first conference title was won with so many team members who would be returning for the 1928 season, that many conference coaches seemed ready to concede the next season's title to the Wolverines.53

As great as the University of Michigan's swimming season had been, the brightest moment for the 1927 team occurred in Iowa City at the National Intercollegiate Swimming Championships in mid-April. U. of M. swimmers won the national crowns in the 100-yard freestyle, 220-yard freestyle and 440-yard freestyle events, and its four man 200-yard freestyle relay team bested the field for that crown. Samson was the meet's individual star as he won the 220-yard and 440-yard races, while Darnall scored an impressive victory in the 100-yard freestyle.

freestyle event, both men joined Seager and Watson to form the winning relay contingent. Michigan swimmers also placed second in the 440-yard freestyle, third and fourth in the 150-yard backstroke, and fourth in the 50-yard and 100-yard races. Since an official team champion was not recognized at the National Intercollegiate Championship meet, point totals were not recorded, but according to an official tabulation recorded by members of the press, the Wolverines had scored 28 points to the 13 point total achieved by University of Minnesota swimmers. Upon the Wolverine team's return home, several state newspapers acclaimed the University of Michigan, the National Intercollegiate Champions for 1927. Additional honors went to four U. of M. swimmers being recognized as Intercollegiate All-Americans. Samson and Darnall achieved the All-American designation in the 50-yard, 100-yard, 220-yard, and 440-yard freestyle events. R. Wagner also received the All-American award in the 440-yard event, and M. Shorr his award in the 200-yard breaststroke event.

The dual meet between the U. of M. and Yale University, which had been proposed the preceding fall season failed to materialize since the team from the East failed to show up at Iowa City for the National Intercollegiate Championships. Matt was not about to let the absence of the Yale meet from his schedule detract from the Wolverines' great season. He concluded the season with an exhibition meet of "gala"

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proportions at the Union pool in late April. The featured attraction of the "gala" meet was the appearance of the world's top swimmer and Matt's good friend, Johnny Weismuller. The great swimmer from the Illinois A.C. had come to Ann Arbor to attempt some world record performances in two exhibition races. Weismuller's presence drew a large crowd to Union pool, and he did not disappoint them as he registered four new world records in his two races. In his first race, the 100-yard freestyle, he recorded a new world mark of :51.0. Later in the program, in the 220-yard freestyle event, Matt had arranged for timers to record Weismuller's times as he passed the 200-yard mark, the 200-meter mark and finally the 220-yard finish. The I.A.C. swimmer recorded three new world records in the swim as he passed the first timed point in 1:56.8, the second point in 2:08, and the 220-yard finish in 2:09. Matt took the opportunity to congratulate Weismuller for his outstanding efforts, and then to present his 1927 Wolverine champions to the home crowd, so that the latter might be recognized for their conference and "national" championships.\(^\text{56}\)

As if the victories recorded by the Wolverine swimmers were not enough to make for a "perfect" 1927 season, Matt received some additional good news before the close of the school year. He had known for sometime that a massive new structure, to be called the Intramural Sports Building, had been planned for construction on the Michigan campus. The building committee, under the direction of Fielding H. Yost, had helped design a facility which would provide facilities for

recreational sports for all students and faculty on campus. The new field house would accommodate indoor intramural sports, indoor minor sports, and general recreational activities. The outside dimensions of the multi-purpose facility were to be 420 feet in length and 110 feet in width. A natatorium with proposed dimensions of 75 feet by 60 feet was to be included in the facility. Such a facility would permit a meet schedule of races normally conducted in 60 foot pools, or the opportunity to conduct a meet using the meet program for pools of 75 feet in length. The swimming pool was to be the only part of the building to be used for intercollegiate competition; therefore, it was also to be the only room in which space was to be provided for spectators. The plans called for the spectator section to be composed of a space in which temporary seating for 1000 to 1500 persons could be quickly assembled. A locker room with showers would also be located adjacent to the pool for the convenience of the swimming team and recreational swimmers. The construction work on the building was to be initiated during the summer of 1927.57

The summer season at Camp Chikopi would provide a welcome relief from the hectic competitive swimming schedule of the 1927 season, with opportunities to reflect on the victories of the past season, and to look ahead to the challenges of the 1928 season. Matt knew he would have a good team for the next year, but he was confronted

with the problem of making up for the loss of Paul Samson who had graduated and would be attending medical school in Chicago. 58

The 1928 Wolverine swimming team was captained by Bob Darnall, an All-American selectee in 1926 and 1927, and the team's top returning freestyle specialist. Matt had retained several candidates from the previous season's freshman team, which gave the U. of M. its largest varsity swimming squad in the history of the sport. 59 Following the fall preseason training program, Matt scheduled his preseason competitive trip during the Christmas holidays, instead of before as he had in previous years; his swimmers could begin regular training upon their return to Ann Arbor, instead of having a break so close to the start of the regular season. The team traveled as far as New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., with meets along the way. The team returned to Ann Arbor with a 5-1 record, losing only to a fine N.Y.A.C. team by the score of 38-31. The team victories included wins over N.Y.U., the Washington A.C., the Penn A.C., Erie Y.M.C.A., and the Detroit Yacht Club. 60

In their last non-collegiate dual meet of the 1928 season, the Wolverines pushed the national powerhouse, Illinois A.C., to the limit in a losing cause when the teams met at the Union pool. The visitors from Chicago, lead by the great Johnny Weismuller and the new team addition Paul Samson, a medical student in Chicago, were hard

58 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 10.

59 Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 11.

pressed to come away with the 4-28 victory over the collegians. The meet was actually much closer than the score reflected, since many races were decided by close finishes. One of the closest of those finishes was in the opening relay event. Weismuller, I.A.C. and the Wolverines' Darnall, both anchormen, came to the finish wall almost simultaneously. The judges had such a time picking the winning team that first the I.A.C. was announced the winner, then the results was announced with Michigan the winner. Matt had watched the finish from the side of the pool, and he insisted that the I.A.C. had won the race. Matt's insistence prevailed, with the I.A.C. receiving the six points for the victory. If that decision had gone to Michigan and all the other finishes had stayed the same, the I.A.C. would have won the meet 35-34. In spite of the Wolverine loss, Matt seemed well satisfied with the team's showing, as the "boys" seemed prepared to defend their conference championship.61

In case there was any doubt about how good the 1928 Wolverines were, Matt's swimmers quickly pronounced their team's depth and quality by registering easy victories over conference opponents Indiana (60-9), Minnesota (47-22) and Iowa (55-14). The meet against Iowa had drawn special attention since Matt had announced that he would have some of his swimmers make attempts at world records in a selected group of events approved internationally by the National A.A.U. Matt's swimmers were successful in their record attempts as they registered four new world marks. In the lone individual event record attempt, D. Spindle

set a new world record in the 220-yard backstroke with a time of 2:41.8. The other three records were set in 400-yard, 500-yard, and 600-yard freestyle relays, with respective times of 3:39.9, 4:36.2, and 5.35.6. The record attempt in the relay events was conducted as one race against the clock with six Wolverine swimmers each swimming 100-yards. The relay team was organized so that the four fastest swimmers made up the 400-yard relay team, then the fifth and sixth swimmers went in their order, the records in the longer relays being made possible by the world record start of the first four swimmers. The record attempts had helped to bring out a very good crowd for a meet the fans knew would not have been closely contested. 62

In the U. of M.'s last dual meet before the conference championships, Matt's swimmers turned in some record setting performances to turn back a much improved Northwestern team at the Evanston pool. Sophomore Garnet Ault, a Canadian attending the U. of M., was the meet's standout performer as he won the 440-yard freestyle in a new national intercollegiate record time of 5:04.9. The Wolverines' 300-yard medley relay team of Hubbell, Thompson, and Walker closed out the meet scoring with its winning effort and new conference record for the event of 3:18.8. So impressive had the Wolverines been in their five conference dual meets, and a total dual record of 11-2, that some experts were not only picking Matt's mermen to repeat as conference champions but also as "national" titlists. 63


At the Eighteenth Annual Big Ten Swimming Championships, held at the University of Minnesota, the Wolverines repeated as conference champions and amassed a new record total of 53 points. In the close race for second place Northwestern edged Minnesota 29 to 24, with the next two teams scoring only four points. Michigan swimmers won six of the nine championship events, and established four new conference records. The new records were set by the winning 160-yard freestyle relay and the 300-yard medley relay teams, Hubbell's winning effort in the 150-yard backstroke, and the top performance of the meet by team captain Bob Darnall in the 100-yard freestyle with a time of 53.1, which also broke the national intercollegiate mark. Bob Walker and Garnet Ault were also crowned conference champions for their victories in their respective events of the 40-yard freestyle and the 440-yard freestyle. Eleven different U. of M. swimmers were named to the Big Ten Honor Team in one or more individual events.

One week after the Big Ten Championship meet, Matt took his "boys" to the University of Pennsylvania's natatorium, in Philadelphia, for the National Intercollegiate Championship meet. Winning national championship events and setting new national records for the Wolverines were the 200-yard freestyle relay team of Walker, Walaitis, Seager and Darnall with a time of 1:39.8, and the 300-yard medley relay team of Hubbell, Thompson, and Walker with its new record of 3:18.2. Three second place finishes by Walker in the 50-yard race, Darnall in the

65 Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
100-yard event, and Ault in the 440-yard freestyle, plus several other top sixth place finishes by other Wolverine swimmers enabled them to accumulate an unofficial total of 37 points. The next highest unofficial point totals were Northwestern University's 22 and Dartmouth's 11. While the N.C.A.A. did not recognize a team champion at its meet, certain members of the press acclaimed the University of Michigan the National Champion and Matt happily accepted the media's plaudits.

Following the N.C.A.A. championship meet, Matt took his swimmers to New Haven, Connecticut, for a first-ever dual meet with Yale University. Earlier in the season, Matt had agreed to swim against the great Yale team at the Carnegie pool. The Wolverine swimmers had only one day's rest following the championship meet when they met Yale in that historic meet. Yale had elected to skip the national intercollegiate meet, so that its swimmers would be fresh for the major confrontation between the powerhouse teams from the East and the "West." The meet on paper and in the pool was a classic battle between Yale, which had for several years been recognized as the top collegiate team in the nation, the perennial Intercollegiate Swimming Association champion and possessor of a great dual meet record, and the new star on the horizon in the Midwest, Michigan, the winner of two consecutive Big Ten Swimming titles and a very fine dual meet record. In each of the three preceding seasons, Yale had recorded perfect 15-0

67 Ibid.
records in dual meet competition, and going into the Michigan meet, the former's record for the 1928 season stood at 14-0. 68

Although the Wolverines were able to win only one event, the 440-yard freestyle by Ault in a new intercollegiate record of 5:01.8, they were able to take the meet right down to the last event, due to the several 2-3 finishes they registered in the events won by Yale swimmers. It seemed as if each event had a "blanket finish" for the top two or three places that evening. When the final event did come up, the score stood at 31 to 23 in Yale's favor, but since the last event was the 300-yard medley relay the rule book stated if a meet ends in a tie, the team winning the last relay was to be declared the winner. The relay event was worth eight points, so whichever team won the relay, would also win the meet. Yale won the last event by inches and thus the meet by the score of 39-23. Kiphuth's men had won the first confrontation between the two major swimming powers, but Matt vowed that Michigan would have its day in the future. 69

During the summer of 1928, Matt and Lea decided to make a purchase of some additional land on Ahmic Lake, so that they might start a camp for girls, which would accommodate their daughter, Rose Mary, who was now seven years of age. The land for the new camp was about a mile and a quarter across the lake from Camp Chikopi. Based on its proximity to Chikopi, the new camp was given the Indian name, AK-O-MAK (meaning: across the water). The 1928 season was quite busy

for Matt as he had his normal duties of running Camp Chikopi, and the added task for getting Camp AK-O-MAK ready for the 1929 season.\textsuperscript{70}

In addition to normal level of interest which might be expected from most amateur sports coaches in the Olympic Games, during an Olympic year, Matt was especially interested in the swimming competition of the 1928 Olympic Games. Although Matt was deeply engaged in his camp work, he made a special effort to keep informed about the results of certain swimming events at the Amsterdam Games; Paul Samson, the former Wolverine great and most recently a member of the Illinois Athletic Club, and Garnet Ault, the sophomore sensation of the 1928 Wolverine team, were both competing in the Games. Samson swam for the United States on the 400-meter freestyle relay team which placed first and earned the former Michigan star a gold medal. Ault, who represented Canada at the Games, placed sixth in the 1500-meter event. Samson was particularly grateful for his earlier affiliation with the Michigan swimming program, for at an interview, conducted at the end of his senior year in 1927, he had acknowledged that Matt had taught him the real fundamentals of swimming. Before Paul's association with Matt, the former had been a very "average" college freshman swimmer, not being able to break one minute for the 100-yard freestyle event.\textsuperscript{71}


Early in the fall of 1928, Matt's swimming program received another great boost with the addition to the U. of M. campus of another fine swimming pool. In October, the new Intramural Sports Building was completed and opened for physical education classes and recreational sessions. The new facility, which included a natatorium with a beautiful 75 feet by 35 feet pool, had been constructed to relieve the overcrowded conditions of the old gym, where classes had, in previous semesters, been taught from eight in the morning until ten at night. The new pool was not as wide as Matt had originally recommended, for the width of 35 feet would not permit the competitive versatility of his 60 foot design. The one design feature of the new natatorium that Matt was particularly pleased with was the movable wall between the Faculty gym and the swimming area. At the time of a swimming meet the wall could be raised and temporary seating for 2500 spectators could be erected. A natatorium with that spectator potential would enable Matt to showcase his fine Wolverine swimming team in the upcoming season and future years.\(^2\)

Upon the recommendation of Matt, Fielding Yost had also seen to it that the pool contractor include several unique features in the natatorium. The pool contained seven lanes for competition, each five feet wide. Each lane was numbered on the shallow end wall, and the yards of the pool's length were marked on the side walls and across the bottom of the pool with narrow lines. Five feet from each end wall, a broad dark line was set in the tile across the bottom of the pool so

that swimmers would be able to anticipate when they would reach a wall. Such a feature should assist the swimmers when they were preparing to make turns in races, and to help prevent swimmers from crashing into a wall. The interior wall of the natatorium, except for the movable wall, was covered with cork to prevent "sweating" and to reduce the echo of the human voice, and enable a person to talk with a normal voice and still be heard at the furthest points of the pool. Large windows in one wall would provide the pool area with considerable lighting in the daytime, while large flood lights would provide an even distribution of lighting for night swimming. The deep end (10.5') of the pool had also been equipped with four diving boards, two of which were set up at deck level, while the other two boards were of the standard (one meter) type. The deeper pool design would also provide a faster facility for Matt's mermen, who were anxious to test their skills in their first meet of the 1929 season.

The U. of M. budget for athletics had been trimmed for most sports for the 1929 season in response to the depressed economic conditions which existed across the United States at that time. Matt had to eliminate the team's extensive preseason trip which had proved so valuable as a "testing ground" for the team's newcomers the preceding two seasons. In spite of the absence of the Christmas holiday trip, the Wolverines "christened" the new pool in the Intramural Sports Building with an impressive opening season dual meet victory over Indiana University (49-22) before 1500 spectators. The temporary

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bleachers being filled to capacity was a bit of surprise to some members of the media, since the U. of M. students were in the middle of exams; but Matt had done an excellent job of promoting the historic nature of the meet in the new facility, and the fans had come out to witness the occasion. The Wolverines captured first places in seven of the eight events, but the Indiana swimmers showed surprising depth by taking a number of the second and third place positions. Matt had "sweetened" the evening affair for the spectators, by promoting the water polo match, which the Wolverines won 7-0, and by adding a special mile relay of 18 Wolverine swimmers, with 17 of them swimming 100-yards each, and the last one swimming 60-yards. The event was listed in the intercollegiate record book, with the Yale team of 1926 holding the record of 16:53.4 until that evening when the Wolverines swam to a new mark of 16:52. Following the meet the U. of M. fans felt that Matt's team, which blended several veterans and a crop of newcomers, was headed for another great season.\textsuperscript{74}

The Wolverines, although lacking a star of the magnitude of a Paul Samson, or Bob Darnall, appeared headed for the 1929 conference crown virtually unchallenged as they won their next seven dual meets, following the I.U. win, over collegiate (3) and club teams (4). But in their final dual meet of the season, conference foe Northwestern, surprised the U. of M. team by handing Matt's group their only loss of the season by a score of 37-32. Northwestern, under its long time and highly respected Coach Tom Robinson, although winning six of the eight

events, was aided to its victory by a disqualification of the U. of M.'s relay team in the opening event. After an apparent victory in the first event the Wolverines were disqualified because one of its swimmers had failed to touch his teammate who was next in the water. The defeat was a shock to the U. of M. swimmers, since their last loss to a conference team in a dual meet was to Northwestern in the 1924 season.75

The Northwestern victory over the Wolverines enabled the former to go into the Nineteenth Annual Big Ten Championship meet, along with conference rival Illinois, with an undefeated conference dual meet record. The experts had disagreed about the team who would carry the favorite's role at the meet hosted by the University of Chicago, but when the points for the last event had been awarded and totaled, the Wolverines had won their third consecutive title by scoring 44 points, to runner-up Northwestern's 34 points, and third place Illinois 15 points. Garnet Ault was the U. of M.'s lone winner in the championships, as he captured the 440-yard freestyle, and placed second in the 220-yard race. Second place finishes in both relay events, plus several point scoring efforts by at least nine other swimmers in various events enabled the Wolverines to win the title. The U. of M.'s Bob Walker did turn in an outstanding performance in the trial heat of the 40-yard freestyle, when he tied the national intercollegiate record with his time of :18.4; however, he placed second in the finals for the conference title.76


At the N.C.A.A. Championship meet, hosted by the University of St. Louis, the unofficial team championship, recognized by various members of the media, and especially those covering Big Ten swimming, went to Northwestern University. When the final results were tabulated, the unofficial winners had accumulated 31 points to the 21 points of runner up Michigan, with Rutgers in third place with 14 points. The outcome of the meet, from the U. of M.'s viewpoint, had resulted from the absence of a "star" from the Wolverine ranks capable of winning a national individual title or spurring a relay team to a victory, and to the emergence of more high place winners from different schools, especially from Rutgers, Princeton and Dartmouth. Notably absent from the eastern contingent at the national meet was the I.S.A. champion, Yale, who had completed its fifth consecutive undefeated dual meet season at 13-0 and 73-0 for the five years. Yale seemed content with the national status it received from certain eastern sportswriters, based on its complete domination of eastern swimming without entering the N.C.A.A. meet.

In late spring, Matt turned his attentions towards preparing his staff and programs for his two camps, Chikopi and AK-O-MAK. His camp for girls would be run along the guidelines which had proved so successful for Chikopi. Matt "laid down the law" to his male counselors at Chikopi that they would not be permitted to date or


78Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 315.

79"Swimming And Wrestling Teams Fail To Win National Titles," loc. cit.
socialize with the female counselors at AK-O-MAK. Any male counselor who chose to break Matt's stringent rule could expect to be sent home immediately from the idyllic environment. Matt's camps were such a pleasure for the campers and staff, that many individuals from each group returned summer after summer.80 Matt still managed to work into the counselors' list any boys from his team, even when the staff roster looked to be complete. The boys did some work, some training and generally had a good time while earning eighty to one hundred dollars for the summer. That summer Matt and Lea had an added chore of keeping up with their second child Matt III, who was approaching his first birthday.81

Matt would embark upon the 1930 competitive campaign with another fine group of swimmers, led by a nucleus of eight returning lettermen. Three of those returnees, Garnet Ault, Bob Walker and Frank Walaitis had been named to the 1929 All-American team, along with three other Wolverine swimmers who had graduated or were completing their requirements for graduation in 1930. Ault, the former Canadian Olympian who had been selected for the All-American team in the 220-yard and 440-yard events, had been selected as captain of the 1930 Wolverine team and would be counted on heavily if the team was to have a successful season.82

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80 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 20.
81 Based on statements by Matt Mann III, Matt's son and former University of Michigan swimming team captain, in a personal interview, East Lansing, Michigan, May 24, 1974.
82 Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., pp. 15 and 17.
Matt's title of employment for the 1929-1930 school year would continue as Instructor in the Theory and Practice of Athletic Coaching in the School of Education. Six other members of the Wolverine coaching staff had similar assignments, while four coaches were appointed as Assistant Professors of the Theory and Practice of Athletic Coaching.\(^\text{83}\)

The Wolverines opened their 1930 season with an easy victory over the Fort Wayne Y.M.C.A. (56-8), prior to the Christmas holidays, and then proceeded to have a seemingly easy time with its next six opponents, which included the Detroit Yacht Club (42-32), Indiana University (57-14), Toronto Y.M.C.A. (49-26, even though the Canadian team had a veteran team led by three Olympians), Grand Rapids Y.M.C.A. (54-21), University of Minnesota (52-23), Michigan State College (57-18) and Northwestern University (40-35).\(^\text{84}\) In the meet with Northwestern, the U. of M.'s first event relay team of Walker, Walaitis, Smith and Hosmer shocked the home team as the former opened the meet with a victory and a new world record of 1:13.4 for the 160-yard event.\(^\text{85}\)

The Northwestern meet had been a big one for Matt and his "boys," for the former were the defenders of the "unofficial" national collegiate crown, and the pre-season's pick to win the 1930 conference

\(^{83}\)Proceedings of the Board of Regents, October 1929-June 1932, University of Michigan (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan), November meeting, 1929, p. 121.

\(^{84}\)"M Swimming Record Glitters Over The Years," Michigan's All-Time Athletic Record Book, op. cit., p. 131.

championship. Charles McCaffree, one of the seniors on the 1930 Wolverine team, stressed how hard Matt had worked the team, concentrating on pace work in the events the swimmers would compete at in the meet. According to McCaffree, a 440-yard freestyle man, Matt did several things to prepare his team for a big meet.

... There were very few team pep talks for the Northwestern meet, Matt did things on an individualistic basis, preparing each swimmer on a one to one basis for his events. Many times our top swimmers could not be certain of their events until the day of the meet though. But Matt constantly emphasized to each of his boys that the swimmer was competing for Michigan, Michigan, Michigan, that above anything else. Matt "bred" that belief into his swimmers throughout their careers. ... Matt made his "average" swimmers like Charlie and Eddie Warner feel just as important as his stars, especially when the team was preparing for a big meet, because he believed in developing a warmth and friendship among his swimmers. Matt believed that a close knit team would be capable of pulling together and producing efforts not believed possible for the group. ... One special training routine that Matt had Charlie go through a few days before the Northwestern meet, was for the latter to swim three consecutive 440's with a minute rest between each and the third of the set being the fastest. In the meet Charlie placed third in 440, and swam his best time ever. ... 86

Following the highly emotional victory over Northwestern, Matt took his team to Chicago for the final dual meet, before the conference championships, against the very powerful Chicago Athletic Association (C.A.A.). The Wolverines took the meet down to the last relay against the powerful C.A.A., which had of the nation's top A.A.U. swimmers in its lineup, but lost that race and the meet 39-36. 87

86 Based on statements by Charles McCaffree, former U. of M. swimmer, Michigan State University swimming coach and "disciple" of Matt Mann II, in a personal interview, Cleveland, Ohio, March 28, 1975.

Matt believed his Wolverines were as balanced a team as the 1929 group, and he termed his team fit for the defense of the conference crown at the Twentieth Annual Big Ten Championship meet held at Northwestern. But Coach Robinson's natators were not to be denied the 1930 Big Ten Championship as they swam brilliantly in their home pool. The Wildcat swimmers took the first place honors in six of the nine events, while the Wolverine's only victories went to Garnet Ault in the 440-yard freestyle and the 160-yard relay team. Northwestern's winning total was 45 points, as second place Michigan scored 41 points, followed by Minnesota a distant third with 12 points. The Wolverines had managed to stay close due to the number of second and third place finishes, which included Bob Walker's second places in the 40-yard and 100-yard freestyle events, and Ault's second in the 220-yard freestyle. A decisive factor in the outcome of the meet was the Wolverine's failure to qualify its medley relay for the final of the event. Ten different Wolverine swimmers made the Big Ten Honor Team in a variety of events.88

In a dual meet with Wisconsin that Matt had sandwiched between the conference championships and the national intercollegiates, the Wolverines crushed the Badgers 62-13. The U. of M. swimmers took the first two places in each of the individual swimming events and won both relays. Matt had hoped that the overwhelming dual victory would provide a good lift for his swimmers going into the national meet. But Northwestern University, featuring three event winner Al Schwartz,

managed to "win" a second consecutive "unofficial" N.C.A.A. title by recording 30 points in the media's count, to 24 points for the Wolverines. Matt's highest place winners were the winning 200-yard freestyle relay and Ault's third place in the 440. Five of the U. of M. swimmers, G. Ault, B. Walker, I. Valentine, B. Goldsmith and F. Walaitis were named to the 1930 All-American Swimming Team based on their performances at the N.C.A.A. meet.89

As further evidence of Matt's desire to elevate his Wolverine team to the "top of the ladder" in collegiate swimming by meeting the best possible competition, when the opportunity arose; Matt took his squad to New Haven to again face the Yale in the Carnegie pool. The Yale team was well rested for the invasion by the midwesterners, since they had completed their dual meet season and I.S.A. championships a few weeks before the Michigan meet. Yale had finished the season 14-0 and won the I.S.A., but had not competed in the N.C.A.A. meet. The Wolverines appeared tried from their series of big meets at the end of the season, and they managed victories in only two of the individual events, G. Ault in the 440, and Clarence Boldt in the 150-yard backstroke. Yale's margin of victory was great as they outscored the U. of M. 42-18. As easily as Yale won the meet, the times for most of the event winners were comparatively slow.90

Following the 1930 swimming season, Matt began immediately to promote his summer camps. Both camps were advertised in


The Michigan Alumnus, since Matt figured the families of U. of M. alumni would be a good source for campers. The boys camp, Chikopi, was now capable of taking 70 campers, aged 7-15, for the eight week session at a cost of $350.00, which Camp AK-O-MAK, still in its developing stages, would take 25 girls in the 7-16 age bracket at a cost of $300.00 for the eight weeks. Matt had arranged the girls' camp so that there was one counselor for every two girls, for a program of several sports, with the feature of swimming and boating activities.91 In addition to the employment of many of his Wolverine swimmers, Matt had retained several excellent head counselors, primarily from the U. of M. minor sports coaching staff, and he was most fortunate to have secured the services of Dr. Frank Lyman, the U. of M.'s Health Service Surgeon, as his camps' physician for several summers.92

Matt took the opportunity in an early December pre-1931 season dual meet against the Grand Rapids Y.M.C.A., to unveil two Wolverine "stars" of the future. The first of the newcomers to the U. of M. team was John Schmieler, a sophomore, who demonstrated fine versatility in winning the 100-yard freestyle and 100-yard breaststroke events. In the latter of the two events, Schmieler continued swimming after the 100-yard mark and completed a 200-yard breaststroke swim, according to Matt's instructions. The young Wolverine's time of 2:36 set a new Big Ten record for the event in a 25-yard pool. The second potential


star for the Wolverines was a freshman diver, Richard Degener, a former national interscholastic champion. Degener gave a sensational diving exhibition with his grace of performing the dives and his smooth entries. The big crowd at the Intramural Building pool was impressed by the entire Wolverine team's showing in the easy 62-13 victory. The 1931 U. of M. swimming team appeared headed for a great season.  

In addition to the self imposed demands of his coaching responsibilities, Matt still had time to work with a group of the U. of M.'s male faculty on their swimming skills. The one day a week class Matt had initiated for the faculty members when the Union pool first opened, had become a Monday, Wednesday and Friday noon hour program in the Intramural Building pool. Since many of the men who had first started in the program were true beginners, Matt's early sessions were devoted to teaching the fundamentals of the crawlstroke to the participants. But with steady practice and improved skills, the men had been moved into some one length races and swims of longer duration in their sessions with Matt. The most popular activity of the noon hour group had become a shallow water version of water polo which Matt had introduced. The water polo games were actually very rough, and lasted about 20 minutes. For visitors to the pool who were not familiar with the group or the game, the session was often mistaken as a "water combatives" activity among college boys. The popularity of the faculty sessions had increased each year with the group's members becoming loyal supporters of the Wolverine swimming.

team and the sport of swimming in general, and good friends of Matt. Several of the faculty members received additional instruction in some of the finer points of competitive swimming so that they were able to officiate at Wolverine collegiate and area A.A.U. meets.94

The 1931 U. of M. swimming team was indeed the powerhouse some experts had predicted it would be at the start of the season. The Wolverines, following their successful preseason exhibition meet trip which took them to Cleveland and Pittsburgh, swept through their dual meet season with a 9-0 record. The U. of M.'s victories in collegiate dual meet competition included wins over M.S.C. (62-13), Wisconsin (50-25), Minnesota (54-21), Illinois (50-25), Northwestern (53-22) and Pittsburgh (43-32); the non-collegiate wins were over the Detroit Yacht Club, twice (39-26 and 35-29) and the preseason meet with the Grand Rapids Y.M.C.A. (62-13).95 Four of the victories in the win streak by the Wolverines were garnered from February 18-23, over M.S.C., Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois.96

The Twenty-First Annual Big Ten Swimming Championship Meet was hosted by the U. of M. at its very fine Intramural Building natatorium. The Wolverines did not disappoint the highly partisan capacity crowds for the two-day affair, as they regained the conference crown by registering 57 points, the highest total ever scored in the Big Ten Championship meet. Northwestern and Iowa tied for second place with

95Michigan's All-Time Athletic Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
20 points, followed closely by Minnesota with 16 points. The Wolverines displayed quality and scoring balance as they won six of the nine events, then recorded four seconds, three thirds and two fourth place finishes. Schmieler was the meet's individual star as he won the 200-yard breaststroke in the N.C.A.A. and world record time of 2:31.4, and won the 220-yard freestyle with a new conference record of 2:17.4. The other Wolverine winners were Frank Fenske in the 50-yard freestyle, Frank Kennedy in the 440-yard freestyle with a new conference record of 5:06.4, the 400-yard freestyle relay of D. Marcus, I. Smith, R. Klintworth and R. Ladd with a new conference and intercollegiate record of 3:44.2, and the 300-yard medley relay of R. Meigs, R. Miller and F. Kennedy with a new conference record of 3:12.6. The smoothness with which the meet was conducted, plus the spirit displayed by the competitors and coaches from the different teams, reflected the highest standards of collegiate competition. Ten different Wolverine swimmers were selected for the Big Ten Honor Team.\(^7\)

The highly successful 1931 season was capped off by the successful showing of the U. of M. swimmers at the N.C.A.A. meet in Chicago. The Wolverines, led by John Schmieler's win in the 200-yard breaststroke, placed in seven of the nine events. The point tabulation for the unofficial N.C.A.A. championship had Michigan the winner with 28, followed by Rutgers with 22, and Princeton with 19 points.\(^8\) F. W. Leuhring had made a commentary about 1931 championship meet for

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the Official 1932 Intercollegiate Swimming Guide, in which he stated, "While the meet is not a team championship, Michigan had the largest number of individual place winners. . . ." Five different Wolverines were selected for the All-American team, being led by John Schmieler's selection in the 200-yard breaststroke, 150-yard backstroke, and the 100-yard, 220-yard, and 440-yard freestyle events, the other team members were R. Ladd, F. Kennedy, R. Miller and S. Raike (a diver).

Matt had the All-American group except for Raike back for his 1932 team, but his diving situation would be improved by the elevation of Degener to varsity status. On paper the 1932 Wolverines looked to be every bit as strong as the 1931 contingent, with the possible exception of not having as many swimmers. Matt got a chance to test his 1932 team "under fire" with an extensive pre-Christmas holiday competitive trip to the East. Matt had scheduled meets along the route on an almost daily basis from Ann Arbor to New York City. During the trip the Wolverine swimmers won meets with the Toledo Y.M.C.A. (50-20), the Cleveland Y.M.C.A. (54-21. in that meet Schmieler set a new world record of 1:07.4 for the 100-yard breaststroke event), a Pittsburgh area amateur all-star team (64-20), and New York University (44-19). The lone loss for the U. of M. swimmers was to a very talented N.Y.A.C. team.

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100 Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 21.
that was primed and rested for Matt's highly touted, but somewhat weary "boys."  

Matt talented swimmers put together a string of six consecutive dual meet victories over the regular season, and left their dual meet record at 10-1 for 1932 season. Only three collegiate teams were included in that Wolverine victory string, which included meets with M.S.C. (57-17), Minnesota (53-22) and Northwestern (44-31); the other three victories were against the Grand Rapids Y.M.C.A. (49-25) and the Detroit Yacht Club twice (45-30, and 50-25). In the Minnesota meet, sophomore Taylor Drysdale set a new conference record of 1:42 in the 150-yard backstroke, and then he came back to team with L. Lemak and J. Schmieler in the 300-yard medley relay to establish a new intercollegiate record of 3:06.2. In the Northwestern meet Schmieler set a new national intercollegiate record for the 220-yard freestyle with his time of 2:15.1. Degener won the diving, as he had in most of meets that season, with great style. Although the Wolverines had only two conference dual meets for the season, their talent placed them as the favorite for the conference title.

Matt took only 12 of his "boys" to the Twenty-Second Annual Big Ten Swimming Championships at the Ohio State University natatorium; but

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102 Michigan's All-Time Athletic Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.


what they lacked in number, they made up for in quality efforts. The U. of M. swimmers won five of the nine events, and each team member scored in at least one event. The balanced effort in scoring was good enough to provide a conference winning total of 42 points, a comfortable margin over second place Northwestern's 29 points, with Iowa a distant third. Ohio State, hosting the championship meet for the first time, finished in a tie for fifth place with five points. John Schmieler was the individual star for the winning Wolverines, as he won the 220-yard freestyle with a new conference meet record of 2:17.3, and then scored an impressive citory in his speciality, the 200-yard breaststroke. Taylor Drysdale was also involved in two winning efforts, the 150-yard backstroke in 1:42.3, a new meet record, and as the lead off man for the 300-yard medley relay which also established a meet record of 3:10.4. Jim Cristy was the other individual event winner as he swam away from the opposition early in the 440-yard freestyle. Matt was very happy to win the conference title, the Wolverines fifth crown in six years, but he was surprised and disappointed that no national intercollegiate marks had been set during the meet. He attributed the absence of the national marks to the fact that the Ohio State pool was very slow.\textsuperscript{105}

The 1932 Wolverines did not travel to the Ninth Annual N.C.A.A. Swimming Championships, but that was because the U. of M. had been awarded the meet at its Intramural pool on March 25-26, 1932. It was probably just as well that Matt's mermen did not have a long journey

prior to meet, for they needed every ounce of energy to win the unofficial title with 34 points, a slim three point margin of victory over Stanford University with 31 points, followed by Northwestern with 21 points. Schmieler and Drysdale were the key figures in the victory, as the former won the 220-yard freestyle in 2:15.4, the 200-yard breaststroke in 2:32.4, and swam the anchor leg of the winning 300-yard medley relay (3:08.6). Drysdale won the 150-yard backstroke and swam the lead-off leg of the winning medley relay. Each of Schmieler's first place swims were good enough to establish new N.C.A.A. meet records. The meet had attracted 21 colleges and 73 competitors. The large number of participants was attributed to the fact that several collegiate swimmers would be picked to swim in the Olympic Trials in July, based on their performances at the N.C.A.A. meet.\footnote{Swimmers Win National Title," The Michigan Alumnus, April 2, 1932, Vol. 38, No. 24, p. 471.} In addition to Schmieler and Drysdale, four other team members, L. Lemak, F. Kennedy, R. Degener and J. Cristy were selected for the 1932 All-American team.\footnote{Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 25.}

Following the N.C.A.A. meet, Matt was elected by his college coaching peers to be the President of the College Swimming Coaches Association of America for the 1932-1933 year. Matt felt honored by the recognition from his fellow coaches, and he vowed to uphold the

\[^{106}\text{Swimmers Win National Title," The Michigan Alumnus, April 2, 1932, Vol. 38, No. 24, p. 471.}\]
\[^{107}\text{Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 25.}\]
responsibilities of the position to the best of his ability and for the benefit of the association. 108

During the summer of 1932, Matt again shared certain phases of his camp directorship duties with Dick Papenguth, a former U. of M. diver-swimmer with the 1924-1925 teams, who soon after graduation had been appointed to an aquatics coaching position at the Indianapolis A.C., Indiana. The previous year Matt had selected Dick to run Camp AK-O-MAK. Papenguth had performed his duties in a manner that pleased Matt and the campers, so Matt retained Papenguth’s services for another summer. 109

Matt had been retained by the U. of M. for 1931-1932 under the same position title he had held the preceding year, that being Instructor in the Theory and Practice of Athletic Coaching with a salary of $3,500. Some 14 members of the U. of M.’s athletic staff had their salaries budgeted under guidelines from the Board in Control of Athletics, which functioned under Professor Ralph W. Aigler, Chairman. Seven athletic staff members had salaries which were higher than Matt’s, ranging from base amounts of $3,750 to $7,000. 110

Although Matt’s summer was spent in the camps, July was a good month for Wolverine swimming and diving. At the 1932 Olympic Trials for men’s swimming and diving held in Cincinnati, Ohio, the U. of M.’s

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109 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 22.

Jim Cristy placed third in the 1500 meter freestyle and was selected as a member of the Olympic swimming team. Wolverine diver Dick Degener also made the Olympic squad as a member of the diving squad. The selected U.S. Olympic swimming and diving team members had about one month to complete their final preparations for the Los Angeles Olympic Games.\textsuperscript{111}

In the men's swimming events at the 1932 Games, the Japanese swimmers had clearly been the dominant team throughout the competition. The Wolverines' Jim Cristy won a bronze medal in the 1500-meter freestyle event as he was the first American to touch the finish wall, a full 27 seconds behind Kitamura, the 14 year old Japanese sensation, who was followed closely by his countryman, Makiro. Degener placed third in the Olympic fancy diving event, behind two other Americans, to give the fans one of a few bright moments at the men's competition in the aquatic sports.\textsuperscript{112}

During the fall of 1932, the University of Michigan's Board of Regents decided that it must take some action to reduce the institution's indebtedness, as well as being responsive to the hard economic times which existed in the United States. One decision was to reduce the salaries of U. of M. employees and to trim the budgets of various departments. Matt's salary for 1932-33 was reduced to


$3220, and his dual meet swimming schedule for 1933 was reduced to four contests, as the Board's policies were implemented.\(^{113}\)

The 1933 Wolverine swimming team was one of the smallest that Matt had assembled in recent years, seemingly related to the reduced enrollments brought on by the country's depressed economic conditions. While lacking in a quantity of swimmers, the Wolverines squad of 15 would look to the quality nucleus provided by the team's five returning All-Americans, Schmieler, Cristy, Degener, Kennedy, and Lemak.\(^{114}\)

Matt's squad would be without the services of one of its All-Americans from the preceding season, Taylor Drysdale, who was normally an excellent student had decided to stop attending a class, due to a personal conflict with the professor. At the end of the first semester of 1932-1933 he was declared academically ineligible to compete during the second semester, a severe blow to the Wolverines.\(^{115}\)

The U. of M. swimmers won each of its dual meets in the 1933 season by a comfortable margin, with the exception of its second meet against Northwestern. The Wolverine victories were over Northwestern (49-26), Chicago (48-27), Michigan State (54-10), and Northwestern (43-32).\(^{116}\) In the Michigan State meet, Jim Cristy became the first Big Ten swimmer to break five minutes in the 440-yard freestyle event,

\(^{113}\) Proceedings of the Board of Regents, September 1932-June 1936, University of Michigan (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan), November 25, 1932, p. 74.


\(^{115}\) Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 11.

\(^{116}\) Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
with a winning and new conference record of 4:57.6. The 300-yard medley relay team of Schmieler, Lemak and Renner established a new conference mark, as they bettered the old standard of 3:06.2, in their winning effort.117

By virtue of their two victories over Northwestern, the Wolverines entered the Twenty-Third Annual Big Ten Swimming Championships in Chicago as the favorites. The U. of M. swimmers recorded only four victories in the nine events, but a number of second and third place finishes enabled the Wolverines to score a winning total of 40 points for their third consecutive conference championship. Runner-up Northwestern had made a strong showing with its 27 points, but Coach Robinson's team lacked the depth to really challenge the winners. Michigan's victories were recorded by Degener in the diving, Cristy in the 440-yard freestyle, with a new conference meet record (20-yard pool) of 5:01.4, Kennedy in the 220-yard freestyle, and the 300-yard medley relay team of Schmieler, Lemak and Renner swam to first place with a new conference record and national intercollegiate record typing performance of 3:03.4. The absence of Drysdale from the 1933 team had necessitated the use of Schmieler as the lead-off backstroke swimmer for the medley relay, while the smaller team had also lead Matt to use the versatile Schmieler in events other than his specialities of the 220-yard freestyle and the 200-yard breaststroke for the sake of the team.118

Going into the Tenth Annual N.C.A.A. Swimming Championships, hosted for the first time by Yale University, the experts could not agree upon which team to designate as the favorite for the unofficial team title. The Wolverines were seeking their third consecutive unofficial title and had several of their point scorers from the 1932 meet back, whereas Yale had lost only one dual meet, in nine consecutive seasons, that loss coming "at the hands of" a Yale alumni team during the 1933 season. Both the Wolverines and Yale appeared as legitimate contenders for the mythical crown, Northwestern surprised both of the pre-meet favorites, and the experts, as its swimmers scored in enough places to amass a total of 21 points, just three ahead of runner up Michigan, and seven in front of third place Princeton. Yale finished a disappointing fourth, as some experts contended Matt and Kiphuth had placed their swimmers in events only looking at each other's team, without considering the field of swimmers from other teams entered in the meet. The graceful and precision-like diving of Richard Degener produced the lone first place for the U. of M. in the meet.\(^ {119} \) Seven different Wolverines were selected for the 1933 All-American Swimming Team, based on their performances at the N.C.A.A. meet and during the season. Schmieler had been selected for All-American team in the 200-yard breaststroke, 100-yard freestyle, and 220-yard freestyle events, plus being a member of the 300-yard medley team which had set the new N.C.A.A. record of 3:03.4.\(^ {120} \)


\(^{120}\) Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 28.
Matt acknowledged to the media that Drysdale absence from the team had probably been the most decisive factor attributing to Michigan's unsuccessful bid for a third consecutive "unofficial" title. But privately Matt believed there was another major reason for the Wolverines inability to retain its unofficial place at the top of the N.C.A.A. meet; Matt felt that John Schmieler was not in his best possible condition for the meet, and for that matter, throughout the season. Matt had claimed that Schmieler was the best all-around swimmer that he had ever had to work with, and that if John had been in top form, he could have won two individual titles at the N.C.A.A. meet. According to Matt, "... He (Schmieler) fell desperately in love with a girl on campus and that he spent a lot of time with her, that should have been devoted to swimming, as he had in previous years..." 121

John Schmieler's version of why the Wolverines lost the unofficial crown was somewhat different from Matt's story though. There was common agreement between Matt and Schmieler on the impact Drysdale's absence had on the team's chances for victory. In Schmieler's discussion of the meet's outcome he stated:

... Matt was pretty good at using his talent to the best advantage of the team, especially in important meets but... his strategy backfired... when we were going for our third successive National Championship at Yale... if he had used me in my strongest events (200-yard breaststroke and 220-yard freestyle) we could have been the champions again..." 122

The results had not brought about a falling out between Matt and Schmieler, for as the latter pointed out: "Matt was sort of a father

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121 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 11.

122 Based on personal correspondence between John A. Schmieler, former U. of M. All-American swimmer, and the writer, February 20, 1977.
image to me at Michigan and... I did everything that I was asked to do on the basis that what he asked of me I was doing for Michigan..."123

The week following the N.C.A.A. meet, the Wolverines stayed in New York City so that they could participate in the National A.A.U. Swimming Championships to be hosted at the N.Y.A.C. Although the Wolverine team was able to win only one individual title, in the person of Degener's victory in the fancy diving event, it did manage to score 22 points in a variety of events. The U. of M.'s point total was good enough to place the team second to the powerful N.Y.A.C.'s winning total of 47 points. Matt was very pleased with his "boys'" performances, as he felt they closed the season on a positive note.124

Prior to the start of the 1933-1934 season, Matt was selected for membership on the N.C.A.A. Rules Committee for Swimming and Water Sports.125 Although Matt had, through the years, been active in instituting various rule changes for the betterment of swimming in the associations in which his teams competed, he was not comfortable with the N.C.A.A. position. The intercollegiate rules committee work had various types of political overtones between various sections of the country, namely the Eastern group headed by Yale's Kiphuth trying to "dictate" rule changes to other parts of country, because they believed the changes were in the best interests of "Eastern swimming." Matt

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123 Ibid.
125 Ted Webster letter, op. cit.
enjoyed his role of participating in rule changes as an active coach and not as a part of the official committee.\textsuperscript{126}

Matt was given the opportunity to schedule a full complement of meets for the 1934 season; and he took full advantage of that opportunity, as he scheduled 11 dual meet competitions, along with the Big Ten Championships and N.C.A.A. Championships.\textsuperscript{125} Matt was forced to open the season against M.S.C. with the Wolverine team missing six star performers due to scholastic ineligibility. The best Matt could hope for was to have the boys make their grades at the semester examinations. In spite of the small team, the U. of M. opened its season with a 60 1/2 to 23 1/2 victory over M.S.C.\textsuperscript{127}

The U. of M. swimmers followed their opening victory with successive wins over Ohio State (58-26), the first ever dual meet between the schools, the Cleveland A.C. (44-22), Iowa (61-23), Northwestern (49-35), and Illinois (50-34).\textsuperscript{128} The first U. of M. and Ohio State meet was significant because of the intense rivalry which existed between the institutions. The rivalry, which had emanated from the fierce "grid iron" competition, had permeated the rest of the intercollegiate sports in which the Wolverines and Buckeyes competed. While Ohio State had started its swimming competition in 1932, Matt and Mike Peppe, the Ohio State coach, had agreed to wait until the Buckeyes

\textsuperscript{126} Based on statements by Mike Peppe and Dr. Robert Bartels, former Ohio State University swimming coaches, during a personal interview, Columbus, Ohio, October 4, 1974.


\textsuperscript{128} Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
had a few good swimmers before the first meet was held. The Wolverines won eight of the nine events on the program in that first meeting.129

The Wolverines had been aided in their string of victories by the academic reinstatement of Drysdale, Dalrymple and Robertson, as each played major roles in winning individual events and as members of various relay team wins. In the Iowa meet, Dalrymple and Robertson teamed with Kamienski and Renner to set a new conference record for the 400-yard freestyle relay with a time of 3:37.6. While Drysdale broke the national intercollegiate record for the 150-yard backstroke in the Northwestern meet with his winning time of 1:38.4.130

Michigan, with its undefeated dual meet record of 6-0, continued its winning ways at the Twenty-Fourth Annual Big Ten Swimming Championships in Iowa City, by capturing its fourth consecutive conference title with a total of 41 points. Host school Iowa was second with 20 points, followed closely by Northwestern with 19 points. The Wolverine team members won five of the nine events, and scored in each of the events except the breaststroke. Drysdale was the winner of the 150-yard backstroke with a new conference meet record of 1:41.6, while the 400-yard freestyle relay of Renner, Kamienski, Dalrymple and Robertson set a new conference meet record of 3:43.8 as they won the title. The other Wolverine winners included Cristy in the 440-yard

129 Mike Peppe, personal interview, op. cit.

freestyle, Degener in the diving, and the 300-yard medley relay

The U. of M. swimmers went to the N.C.A.A. Swimming
Championships, hosted by Ohio State University, intent on returning to
Ann Arbor with the "unofficial" crown as national intercollegiate
champions for 1934. The Wolverine competitors won three of the nine
titles and scored in several races to achieve a total of 30 "unofficial"
team points, which was by far good enough to win the title over second
place Southern California with 19 points. Degener repeated as the
diving champion, Drysdale won the 150-yard backstroke, and the same
Wolverine swimmers who swam on the conference winning 400-yard freestyle
relay team, combined efforts to win the national race. Ten different
Wolverine swimmers were selected for the 1934 All-American team.132

The week after the N.C.A.A. meet, Matt returned to the
Ohio State natatorium for the National A.A.U. Swimming and Diving
Championships. As in the 1933 championship meet, the Wolverines
finished second to the N.Y.A.C. team which was made up of several proven
national level swimming stars. The N.Y.A.C.'s team had scored
34 points to the U. of M.'s 20 points. The Wolverines' Degener was the
outstanding diver in meet and the top point scorer for his team as he
won both diving events.133


133 Ibid.
Following the demanding three championship meets in which the Wolverines had completed, in late March and the beginning of April, Matt took the team on a post season competitive trip. The Wolverines' trip took place during the spring vacation week. Matt's "boys" swam very well in the five meets, which included wins over the Newark (N.J.) A.C. (50-25), the Columbia University All Star Team (50-28), and the Brookline A.A.U. team (47-37). The U. of M. did sustain two losses on the trip, both to national champion teams. The first loss was to the recently crowned National A.A.U. Champion, N.Y.A.C. (43-41), and the second defeat was inflicted at the end of the trip by the Canadian national champion, Toronto Y.M.C.A. (41-40). The entire season had been a most successful one for Matt and the boys who would welcome a well deserved rest.134

In the ten years, 1925-1934, that Matt had been the official coach of the University of Michigan swimming team, he had taken a program in its infant stages and carefully nurtured it during its formative years. The Wolverines had won the Big Ten Championship meet seven times during Matt's ten year span. The U. of M. had also won the "unofficial" N.C.A.A. team championship five times since participating in its first national meet in 1927. The Wolverines' dual meet record over the first ten years of Matt's coaching reign was an outstanding 77-10.135


Chapter 9

THE APEX WAS REACHED - THE COMPETITIVE YEARS 1935-1944

The University of Michigan’s swimming team, based on its excellent record in recent years, was recognized as one of the top two teams in the nation, the other being Yale University, as Matt prepared for his eleventh season at the Big Ten institution. Some Wolverine supporters contended that their team should not have to share the "top rung of the intercollegiate swimming ladder," that Matt's "boys" had proven themselves in conference and intersectional dual meet competition, conference championship meets, and also in N.C.A.A. championship meets.¹ But backers of Yale pointed out that during the last ten years Kiphuth’s teams had compiled an amazing dual meet record of 144-1, with the one loss to a Yale alumni team. The Elis had also won their conference title for each of those ten years.² Comparing Yale’s record in the N.C.A.A. meets with Michigan’s was not just grounds for figuring the rating of the top collegiate team, since the Yale Athletic Association did not approve the participation of its swimming team in the N.C.A.A. meet until 1933.³

¹Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 12.
³Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 81.
As plans for the 1935 Wolverine swimming were announced, it was quite apparent that Matt had set his sights on the spot atop the proverbial ladder of collegiate swimming. He had hoped that a highly successful 1935 season would enable his team to occupy that position, unshared. In order to achieve the team goal, the Wolverines would have to win the Big Ten title, the national intercollegiate meet and a dual meet with Yale, which had been tentatively scheduled for February. Matt had good reason to believe the goal he had set for the team was attainable because of the talent-laden squad that reported for the fall training schedule. In addition to several returning lettermen, the team roster featured six members of the 1934 N.C.A.A. All-American team, Taylor Drysdale, Robert Renner, J. "Tex" Robertson, O. Dalrymple, D. Johnston and F. Fehsenfeld. Drysdale and Renner would captain the largest squad in the past few years. The addition of several highly skilled sophomores to the varsity team promised to make the Wolverines a very formidable foe for their opponents that season.

In addition to the extensive use of the Intramural Building pool for intercollegiate purposes and instructional sessions by the U. of M.'s students and faculty, Matt also promoted the use of the facility by non-campus organizations. He had designed a schedule for some week day evenings and Saturday mornings when persons affiliated with the Boys Scouts, American Red Cross, and the Ann Arbor Public Schools could use the pool for instructional or competitive sessions.

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5Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., pp. 31 and 33.
The Boy Scouts and Red Cross members were going to use their pool sessions to conduct life saving classes, while the public school people planned to hold separate competitive meets for elementary and secondary school students. Matt had also made a provision for children not affiliated with organized groups to utilize the Intramural Building pool. He had secured permission from the Board in Control of Physical Education to open the U. of M. swimming facility for specified periods on Saturday mornings to school-aged children at a cost of ten cents per child for each session.

During that fall of 1935, Matt was surprised by an on campus meeting with a new U. of M. faculty member, Clark Hopkins, an anthropology professor and former member of Matt's 1916 and 1917 Yale swimming teams. After a brief exchange of pleasantries, Matt promptly invited Hopkins to join the noon hour faculty swimming sessions. The new professor had envisioned that the faculty swims would be leisurely sessions that would bring together faculty members from various disciplines in a non-academic environment. After a few moments at his first session, Hopkins realized how wrong he was, as he witnessed Matt putting the noon session participants through a variety of vigorous swimming drills. When the water polo game started, Hopkins could hardly believe the "roughhouse" nature of the contest. After the

6 "Use of Athletic Facilities at the University of Michigan by Non-University Organizations," University Board in Control of Athletics, Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Minutes of meetings, 1935-1936.

7 Based on statements by Dr. Clark Hopkins, Professor Emeritus Anthropology, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, July 20, 1973.
game in which Matt participated, Hopkins asked Matt if the game had any rules, and the latter stated, "Yes, you can not hold a married man under water more than five minutes." The next session, Hopkins joined the group and became a regular participant. He soon found out that Matt was quite friendly with most of the professors, and that the coach often spent quite a bit of time discussing the academic progress of various swimmers who were in some of the professors' classes.8

When the Wolverines' swimming schedule for 1935 was released by the U. of M. athletic department, a dual meet with Yale was noticeably missing from the list of meets. Due to the travel that would be necessary for one of the schools, and the resulting number of the days that would have to be spent away from campus by the traveling institution, a mid-season dual meet could not be arranged. The approved U. of M. swimming schedule did include ten meets, however; five meets against collegiate opponents and five against teams with various amateur affiliations were scheduled.9

The Wolverines opened the 1935 season at home in a most impressive manner before a capacity crowd of more than one thousand fans, as they defeated Indiana University by a score of 57 to 27. On the way to the victory, Matt's swimmers broke conference records in four events. Fred Cody set a new conference record in the backstroke (1:40.8) and Frank Barnard established a new conference standard in the 220-yard freestyle event (2:17.2). The 400-yard freestyle relay team

8Ibid.

of Bob Mowerson, Dick Blake, Ed Drew and Bob Lawrence swam slightly under the conference mark with a time of 3:43.6. The top performance of the meet, though, was turned in by "Tex" Robertson as he won the 440-yard event in the new conference record time of 4:15, the second fastest time ever in collegiate competition. ¹⁰

Following an impressive string of dual meet victories, which included Michigan State College (62-22), Buffalo (N.Y.) A.C. (55-29), Ontario A.A.U. team (43-35), Toronto Y.M.C.A. (41-37) and the British Empire Champions (an all-star team of Canadian British Empire Champions) (53-31),¹¹ Matt took his team on the road for three successive evenings of swimming. The Wolverines' opening night of the trip was spent in South Bend, Indiana, at the Y.M.C.A., where the team gave an exhibition for U. of M. alumni, townspeople and high school students. On the second night, the Wolverines swam against a talented Chicago Lakeshore A.C. team, in a meet which included a special schedule of events, with the contest ending in a 24-24 tie. On the third night, the U. of M. faced its first collegiate competition in several weeks, the University of Iowa in Iowa City. The Wolverines swam an inspired meet, as they rewrote the record book for the Iowa pool, winning every event, and the meet by a score of 55-29. The top performances of the night were turned in by Jack Kasley, swimming the 200-yard breaststroke (2:26.6), which established a new world record; Taylor Drysdale, 150-yard backstroke (1:38.1), setting a new intercollegiate record; and the


¹¹Michigan All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
final outstanding effort by Orville Dalrymple in the 60-yard freestyle (29.4), with his time also establishing a new intercollegiate record.\textsuperscript{12}

The Wolverines closed out their dual meet season with successive victories over Ohio State (52-32) and Northwestern (58-26) to finish with a record of 9-0-1. The only blemish on the near perfect record was the tie to the Lakeshore A.C. In the Northwestern meet, the U. of M.'s 300-yard medley relay team of Drysdale, Kasley and Dalrymple established a new world record for the event with their time of 3:00.8.\textsuperscript{13}

The 1935 Wolverine swimming team had been so impressive during the dual meet season that there seemed little doubt about the first place team in the conference with the "big fight" at the conference meet being for second place. Matt's swimmers won five events at the Twenty-Fifth Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet, as the team scored a record total of 59 points to win its fifth consecutive conference title. Only four points separated the next three teams in the standings, as Illinois, the host institution, placed second with 25 points, followed by Iowa's 24, and Ohio State's 21 points. The Buckeyes had climbed from sixth, or last place, in the 1934 meet, to its strong fourth place finish in 1935. The U. of M.'s event winners included F. Barnard in the 220-yard freestyle, T. Drysdale in the 150-yard backstroke, J. Kasley in the 200-yard breaststroke, the 400-yard freestyle relay (Drysdale, Renner, Robertson, Dalrymple) and the 300-yard medley relay (Drysdale,


Kasley, Dalrymple). Eleven different Wolverines, including four divers, made the Big Ten Swimming and Diving Honor Team.\(^{14}\)

Based on the numerous records the swimmers of the 1935 U. of M. team had established throughout the season, the Wolverines were rated an overwhelming favorite, by certain members of the media, to win a second consecutive "unofficial" N.C.A.A. swimming title. Matt took a team of 11 men to the Harvard University natatorium in quest of the "unofficial" crown. The Wolverines dominated the N.C.A.A. meet as they won six events on the ten event program and had other high scoring places in a number of the events. This was the first N.C.A.A. meet to include low board and high board diving, and both events were won by the U. of M.'s Frank Fehsenfeld. The other Wolverine winners were Jack Kasley in the 200-yard breaststroke (2:28.7), a new conference meet record; the 300-yard medley relay team (3:01.8) of Drysdale, Kasley and Dalrymple, also set a new meet record. Drysdale raced to a new 200-yard backstroke record; the final winner was the 400-yard freestyle relay team of Drysdale, Robertson, Renner, and Dalrymple. According to the point tabulators from some members of the media, the Wolverines had amassed the highest winning total of 59 points for the "unofficial" team championship. The high total had been especially helped by the addition of the new diving event, since the Wolverines scored heavily in both diving events. Yale and the University of

Washington had tied for second in the "unofficial" team championship with 15 points each.  

The 1935 Wolverine swimming team had the great season Matt believed it was capable of achieving. But without the dual meet with, and the hoped for victory over Yale, Matt felt that these was a missing ingredient to the U. of M.'s claim of being the top collegiate swimming team of 1935. After witnessing the meet, some Eastern sportswriters had acknowledged the individual brilliance and team balance displayed by the Wolverines, which should be sufficient evidence that they were the top 1935 college swimming team.  

During the aftermath of the great season, there were certain "experts" of competitive swimming who tried to pinpoint the "secret" to Matt's ability to produce such a team. Some opinions made mention of the great talent that Matt had each year moving up from his freshman teams; another reason offered for the Michigan success was that Matt's workouts were vastly different and more difficult than those used by his coaching peers. But John Schmieler, the former Wolverine great, had his own opinion for the U. of M.'s swimming success, which he stated:

... I don't believe Matt's coaching techniques were basically any different than other successful coaches of his era. He was able however to instill a certain drive in enough of us who wanted to be driven so as to mold a winning team. I believe that a lot of the success can be attributed to the Michigan tradition. Matt certainly had it, and fortunately there were enough of us who swam for Michigan who also had it. Those of us who were inspired did great things, while others fell by the wayside or performed in mediocrity. Matt more than got his share

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15 Ibid.
16 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 12.
of great high school performers, many of whom did not make the grade for lack of inspiration. There were others however who were as unheralded as I who went on to achieve success under Matt. He reached some of us, but not others. Matt didn't spend any more time with me than he did on others. We all had a routine to go through during practice, and most of us who took our practice sessions seriously did ok.

As Matt sent his 1936 Wolverine team through some of their early fall practice sessions, he was well aware of the fact that the loss of swimmers like Drysdale, Renner, Dalrymple and Robertson, through graduation, would certainly make it more difficult for his team to retain its place at the top of collegiate swimming in 1936. The U. of M. swimming schedule for that season contained seven dual meets, including home and home meets with Ohio State, and two championships, the conference and N.C.A.A. meets.

Prior to the start of the Christmas holidays, Matt held a "Gala Meet," set up along the lines of the galas he had used many times at the Duluth Boat Club and Detroit Athletic Club. Matt's special meet was designed to promote campus interest for the upcoming season, and to introduce his 1936 squad to the faithful Wolverine swimming fans. Matt was also able to inform the crowd that the U. of M. swimmers would be spending their Christmas holidays in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, training at the Casino pool. The trip to Florida had been arranged after Matt had been contacted by Sam Ingram, the swimming coach at

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17 Based on personal correspondence between John A. Schmieler and the writer, February 20, 1977.

18 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 12.

19 Michigan's All Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.

Colgate University, about the U. of M.'s participation in a clinic or forum for college swimmers. The clinic Ingram had written to Matt about had in former years been conducted in the northeastern part of the United States, but the organizers felt that shift to a warmer climate might increase the participation from other schools across the Midwest. Ingram believed that Michigan's presence at the forum would add significantly to the stature of the annual event and attract other teams in future years.21

Matt welcomed the opportunity to take his "boys," plus his wife, Lea, and their children Rose Mary, then fourteen, and Matt III, who was seven, for a trip to the warm sunshine. The team drove to Ft. Lauderdale, then, after arrival, the swimmers and divers were assigned to rooms in an old naval vessel which had been remodeled as a hotel. The ship was docked a short distance from the pool and the one dollar cost for each "boy" per night was ideal. About 12 teams, mostly from the East, with the exception of Michigan, reported for that first forum in 1935. After several days of training in the beautiful outdoor conditions, the boys were given an opportunity to test themselves under meet conditions, before starting home to the North. The meet, called "The East-West Meet," had Michigan as the lone "West" representative against the schools from the "East." Matt's swimmers did a fine job as the meet ended in a tie.22

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22Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 19.
Soon after their return from Florida to Ann Arbor, the Wolverines opened their dual meet season with a 59-25 victory over Indiana. The U. of M. swimmers then disposed of their next three opponents in a similarly impressive fashion; the opponents in those meets were Michigan State (58-26), Indiana (second meeting, 53-31), and Ohio State (50-34). Still a bit weary from the road trip to Indiana and Ohio State, the Wolverines returned to Ann Arbor to meet a rested Iowa team. Matt's boys swam in what many long-time fans considered the Wolverines toughest dual meet in the Intramural Building pool. Iowa had started the meet very strong and was leading the Wolverines going into the closing events. An unexpected victory by U. of M. swimmer, Howard Reike in the backstroke event, allowed the Wolverines to go into the last event, the 300-yard medley relay, trailing Iowa 41 to 35. The U. of M. relay team, anchored by Bob Mowerson, won the event and the meet, with the final score 43-41. In the U. of M. final collegiate dual meet of the season, the Wolverines recorded their second victory of the season over Ohio State (48-36).

The Twenty-Sixth Annual Big Ten Swimming Championship, held at the University of Minnesota, was the most evenly contested conference meet in many years. Iowa turned the tables on the U. of M., after its two point loss to the Wolverines at Ann Arbor; the Hawkeyes came away with the title by a two point margin, 39 to 37. Only six points separated the next four teams as Northwestern scored 21 and sixth place Ohio State recorded 15 points. The Wolverines were able to win only

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three events, those being the 440-yard freestyle by Frank Barnard with a new meet record time of 4:47.5; the 200-yard breaststroke by Jack Kasley with a meet record performance of 2:23.9; and the third winner, the 300-yard medley relay team of Rieke, Kasley and Mowerson, with a meet record of 2:59.8. The obviously disappointed Wolverines vowed that things would be different at the national meet at Yale.

The U. of M. swimming team swam very well at Yale's beautiful Payne Whitney natatorium. The Wolverine competitors won three title events and placed high in the standings in several other events. According to the unofficial team scores that were figured by various members of the media, the U. of M. had won its third consecutive "unofficial" N.C.A.A. crown by scoring 37 points, almost double the score of its conference rival Iowa (20 points) and its arch rival Yale (19 points). Frank Fehsenfeld, the Wolverines' team captain, was at his best as he won the high diving, while his senior teammate Derland Johnston won the low board title. Jack Kasley managed to record an N.C.A.A. record and three world records with one swim in the breaststroke event. Prior to the start of Kasley's event, Matt had gotten permission from the meet officials to have timers placed at the 200-yard, 200-meter and 220-yard marks because he believed that Kasley was going to be on record pace that night. Matt was right about his swimmer, as Kasley won the N.C.A.A. event in the world record time of 2:22.5 and then passed the other two marks in new world record times. His records had been the product of Kasley using the butterfly

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breaststroke for the entire race for the first time in his career. The U. of M.'s 300-yard medley relay team of Rieke, Kasley and Mowerson also turned in a record setting performance as they won their event with a time of 2:58.2. The Wolverines had placed five different swimmers and four divers on the 1936 N.C.A.A. All-American Swimming and Diving Team. The only blemish on the Wolverines dual meet record was a 43-41 defeat to the N.Y.A.C. two days after the N.C.A.A. meet.

During the Wolverines' stay in New Haven for the N.C.A.A. meet, a reporter for the school newspaper had sought Matt out for an interview about the swimming rivalry which existed between Yale and Michigan, and Matt's opinion about Bob Kiphuth. In the article which appeared in the Yale Daily News, Matt was quoted:

Bob stands for nothing but what is right in athletics. He demands clean living and good sportsmanship, and I think we are very fortunate that we have a man of his calibre who can take the time off that is necessary to be the coach of an American team. (Kiphuth had been selected as the 1936 U.S. Olympic swimming coach). He has without a doubt, raised the standards of swimming in this country.

While Matt and Bob were very intense rivals, there was a mutual respect between the coaches. As Kiphuth's associate Phil Moriarity remarked, "Bob Kiphuth never showed anything but great respect for Mann's ability to put a team together and get his kids ready for competition."

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25 Ibid.
26 Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 36.
27 Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 298.
28 Based on statements by Phil Moriarity, former Yale University swimming coach, in a personal interview, Cleveland, Ohio, March 28, 1975.
Late in the spring of 1936, with the Olympic Games in Berlin only a few months away, various groups were still contributing money to support the U.S. Olympic Team movement. Matt had recommended to Fielding Yost that the money, in the amount of $217.15, which was raised at the Wolverines' "Gala Swim Meet" in December of 1935, be donated to the United States Olympic Committee's Fund. The Board in Control of Physical Education at the U. of M. approved the official motion made by Fielding Yost. At that same meeting in May of 1936, the Board in Control of Physical Education also approved a sum of money, not to exceed one thousand dollars, to aid in the cost of sending qualified U. of M. swimmers and track men to their respective Olympic Trials.29

The 1936 Olympic Trials for the men's swimming and diving events took place at Warwick, Rhode Island, in July. Included in the list of competitors making the 1936 Olympic swimming and diving team for men were three former Wolverine team members and two of Matt's current mermen. Jim Cristy representing the Chicago A.A., was a former Olympic medal winner and a 1934 U. of M. graduate who made the 1936 Olympic team as the third qualifier in the 1500-Meter Freestyle. Taylor Drysdale, representing the Detroit A.C., had been the Wolverines' 1935 team captain, and had qualified as the third 100-Meter Backstroke swimmer. Dick Degener, also a former Olympic medalist and all-time great U. of M. diver, was the top qualifier in the Low Board Diving event. The two current Wolverine team members to make the Olympic Team

29"Minutes of the meeting of the Board in Control of Physical Education," Michigan University Board in Control of Athletics, Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Minutes of meetings, 1935-1936, May 8, 1936.
were Jack Kasley as the second qualifier in the 200-Meter Breaststroke and Tom Haynie, who had been a member of the U. of M.'s 1936 freshman swimming squad, as the sixth, and last qualifier for the 800-Meter Freestyle Relay. Haynie and the other 800-meter team members were selected on the basis of their place finishes in a 200-meter freestyle qualifying race.30

Some criticism was raised regarding the selection of Bob Kiphuth as the 1936 U.S. Olympic Games swimming coach for the men's team, since he had served as the 1928 Games swimming coach for women, and the swimming coach of the 1932 Games men's and women's teams.31 But as Kiphuth's associate Phil Moriarity remarked:

The person who was the most prominent in swimming almost automatically received the Olympic coach's position. There was no rotation system, the person with the biggest fist or the man who could call upon the most people for votes, got the Olympic post.32

In terms of connections with the amateur swimming hierarchy in the United States, Kiphuth certainly had himself well-entrenched to know all of the "right" people. The Yale coach had been a member of the United States Olympic Committee since 1929, a member of the National A.A.U. Swimming Committee since 1926, a member of the N.C.A.A. Swimming Rules Committee since 1930, and he had served as the Chairman of the National A.A.U. Swimming Committee from 1933-1936. Therefore, Kiphuth's memberships, plus the outstanding dual meet records of his Yale teams,

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31Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 250.

32Phil Moriarity, personal interview, op. cit.
enabled him to wield the kind of pressure necessary to be selected as the Olympic Team swimming coach.33

At the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, the only one of Matt's "boys," past or present, to win a medal was Dick Degener, who won the gold medal for the Springboard Diving event. Degener led an American sweep of the first three places in his event.34 Drysdale placed fourth in the finals of the 100-Meter Backstroke Event, while Kasley and Cristy were eliminated in the semi-final heats of their respective races. Haynie was not selected as a member of the 800-Meter Freestyle Relay Team, which finished second behind the Japanese team.35

As Matt put his Wolverine mermen through their fall training sessions, he was assisted in his duties by one of his former swimmers, Charlie McCaffree. When Charlie had graduated from Michigan in 1930, Matt played an instrumental role in getting his former "pupil" the swimming coach's position at Battle Creek High School, Michigan. Charlie did not disappoint his former mentor as Battle Creek won six consecutive state high school swimming championships. McCaffree, then married and with three children, had returned to Michigan to complete work on a master's degree in educational administration. Matt had liked Charlie as a swimmer and respected the excellent job he had done as a high school coach, and when the latter had expressed an interest in returning to Michigan full-time, Matt seized the opportunity to get his program

an assistant coach. Since Charlie was an acknowledged disciple of Matt's coaching philosophy and techniques, the latter gave the new assistant many important responsibilities dealing with the training of the 1937 squad members.36

The 1937 Wolverine swimming schedule included seven dual meets, the conference championships and the N.C.A.A. meet.37 The 1937 N.C.A.A. meet would mark the first time than an official team champion would be recognized. Following the 1936 N.C.A.A. meet, the Swimming Rules Committee had adopted the new rule which stated, "That hereafter the National Collegiate Swimming Championship meet be conducted as a team championship, and that a trophy be awarded to the winning team."38 To the rivals of Michigan and detractors of Matt's coaching record in national meets, the new rule about the team championship was significant, for it clearly pointed out that any team claiming to have won an N.C.A.A. team championship in the preceding years had indeed been making a false claim.39 Since 1927, the year of the Wolverines' first unofficial victory, the official press releases from the U. of M.'s athletic department had recognized its swimming team seven times as the national champions. Each time the tabulations of point totals from championship events indicated that the Wolverines were the high point

36 Charles McCaffree, Jr., personal interview, op. cit.


39 Mike Peppe, personal interview, op. cit.
team, the newspapers in several cities acknowledged the U. of M. as N.C.A.A. swimming champion.40

As further evidence of the open acceptance by the U. of M. athletic administration, that the swimming team had in fact won the national championship in 1936, the U. of M.'s Board in Control of Physical Education voted to give an additional special award to each member of the varsity swimming team in recognition of winning the 1936 National Collegiate Swimming Championship.41

The Wolverine swimmers returned from their participation in the second College Swimming Forum in Ft. Lauderdale, during the Christmas holidays, well tanned and in excellent condition. Matt's "boys" were ready to assert themselves against their dual meet opponents with their "sights" set on regaining the 1937 Big Ten title. Michigan's returning All-American team members, Kasley, Barnard, Grady and Mowerson, would be counted on heavily throughout the season. Additional support was expected from two sophomore team members, Ed Kirar and Baker Bryant, both transfer students from rival Big Ten institutions. Kirar had attended Wisconsin and Bryant, Ohio State, and their eligibility had been approved for the 1937 season. Tom Haynie, also a sophomore, up from last season's freshman team, was expected to aid team captain Frank Barnard in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle races. The

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41 "Minutes of the meeting of the Board in Control of Physical Education," May 8, 1936, op. cit.
Wolverines presented a well balanced team in their first meet, as they defeated Indians (64-20). 42

The U. of M. swimmers had a relatively easy time with their next three opponents as they won by scores of: Michigan State (58-22), N.Y.A.C. (47-28) and Colgate University (67-20). The Wolverines of 1937 had shown signs of being as powerful as Matt's great team of 1935. But against Ohio State in Columbus, the apparently over-confident Wolverines almost met with defeat, as the Buckeyes were leading 39-37 going into the last event. It took a very fast performance by the U. of M.'s 400-yard freestyle relay team to win the event and the meet, 45-39. 43

The closeness of the Ohio State meet helped the Wolverine swimmers realize that each meet should be taken seriously. Matt's "boys" completed the dual meet season with consecutive victories over Iowa (55-29), Minnesota (49-35), and Ohio State (53-31). The score of the second Ohio State meet did not reflect the closeness of the meet, as several of the races were not decided until the last few yards of each race. 44 As the ability level of the Ohio State swimmers had moved closer to the skills of Michigan mermen during the last few meetings between the teams, the Buckeyes' coach, Mike Peppe, had gotten rather upset about some of the things Matt did at the meets. Mike made

42 "Swimmers Overwhelm Rival in First Big Ten Meet," op. cit.

43 "Swimmers Have Close Call Against Ohio State," The Michigan Alumnus, February 27, 1937, Vol. 43, p. 278.

himself understood on the points of what he felt were Matt's tainted practices by stating:

... Matt ran the meets at his place in his role as announcer. He would ask me for my list of entries for the schedule of events on the meet program before the start of the meet. But he would not submit a premeet lineup, that way he could move his swimmers around as the meet progressed. Another thing he would do from his announcer's role was to vary the length of time between the swimming of different events. If he had a man in one event and Matt was going to bring him back in another event that was close to the one just completed, then he would take his time by talking to the fans about a variety of swimming topics until he felt his swimmer had received sufficient rest. Opposing coaches, such as myself, were at his mercy. ...

... Another thing that Matt did at Ann Arbor or in Columbus was to try and influence the finish judges' decisions in close races, by rushing over to his swimmer immediately after the race and congratulating him on a great win, even if it was rather obvious an Ohio State swimmer had won.45

The 1937 Wolverines had completed their seventh consecutive season without a loss in collegiate dual meet competition. Matt's team was clearly the favorite going into the Twenty-Seventh Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet at Indiana University. The U. of M. team captured seven of the ten championship events on their way to scoring the highest point total, 65, in the history of the meet, and winning its ninth Big Ten crown. The Michigan winners included Kirar in the 50-yard freestyle (:23.4), a new meet record; Haynie in the 220-yard freestyle (2:13.8) and the 440-yard freestyle (4:52.1), both meet records; Kasley in the 200-yard breaststroke, Grady in the low board diving, and the 300-yard medley relay team (Cody, Kasley, Mowerson) and the 400-yard freestyle relay team (Tomski, Bryant, Mowerson, Kasley). Ohio State had moved to second place with 39 points, while Iowa slipped to third with 23.46

45 Mike Peppe, personal interview, op. cit.
Two weeks after the conference meet, Matt took his "giants" of the collegiate swimming world to the University of Minnesota for the National Collegiate Swimming Championship meet. The Wolverines seemed to be their sharpest for that 1937 N.C.A.A. meet in which the first official team championship would be awarded. Matt's boys were simply outstanding as they recorded victories in eight of the eleven events on the program. Tom Haynie scored double victories in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle races, and Ed Kirar swam to victory in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events. Kasley repeated as the 200-yard breaststroke champion, Grady won the low board diving crown, while the 300-yard medley relay team and 400-yard freestyle relay team were also victorious. Ohio State placed second in the meet with 39 points, followed by Yale's 38 points. Seven different U. of M. swimmers were selected for the 1937 All-American team.47

The trophy that Matt received for his 1937 U. of M.'s team victory in the N.C.A.A. meet was the first official award for the Wolverines' success in the national meet. But Matt had several plaques adorning the walls of the Intramural Building natatorium which recognized each of the preceding "unofficial" N.C.A.A. swimming titles his teams had won.48

So impressive was the overall team performance of the 1937 U. of M. team in the National Collegiate Swimming Championships that Bob Kiphuth was moved to praise Matt and the Wolverine team members


48Mike Peppe, personal interview, op. cit.
for their excellent performances in his write up of the meet for official publication.\footnote{Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 95.}

Two weeks after the N.C.A.A. meet, Matt attempted to get his sensational 1937 Wolverines up for one more meet, the National A.A.U. Championships at Yale University. The demanding nature of the successive championship meets seemed to take its toll on Matt's boys at Yale though, for they were obviously off their best form which had enabled them to score such convincing victories at the Big Ten and N.C.A.A. meets. The U. of M. swimmers went down to the very last event on the program before the meet was decided in favor of Chicago's Lake Shore Athletic Club by a score of 27-26. The outcome of the meet was decided in a "storm of controversy" following the final event, the 300-yard medley relay. Immediately following the race, it appeared that Michigan's fourth place finish was good enough to give them a 24 to 23 victory over Lake Shore. But a late disqualification of the Princeton relay team allowed Lake Shore to gain additional points and to move ahead of Michigan 27 to 26. Matt was irate over the decision, as were other coaches and spectators, calling the work of the officials totally incompetent. Kiphuth drew the officials off the deck for a closed door meeting about the disqualification; the officials refused to reconsider their decision, and the meet score with Lake Shore in first place was upheld. Michigan had come so close to becoming the first collegiate team to win the National A.A.U. title.\footnote{"Lake Shore Keeps U.S. Swim Honors On Relay Ruling," New York Times, April 11, 1937, Sect. 5, p. 1, col. 5.} Actually Michigan's mediocre
swimming on the first day of the meet, in which they failed to score, was its major undoing in winning the meet. Several of the swimmers lacked the sharpness and brilliance they had displayed in the N.C.A.A. title meet.51

During the fall training sessions for the 1938 team, Matt realized his team would have a difficult time with teams which had a balanced lineup. Unless some of the new "boys" from last year's freshman squad were capable of quality performances in the breaststroke and backstroke events, the Wolverines' freestyle strength, which focused around the returning All-Americans, Haynie, Kirar and Tomski, might be easily offset in dual meet competition. Even the status of Kirar, the 1938 team captain, had been uncertain until late in the fall, since he had been severely burned in a late summer accident, and his lengthy recovery period had postponed his participation in vigorous swimming workouts. By late November Kirar was swimming excellent workouts and he appeared ready to provide team leadership for the upcoming season.52

Just before the U. of M. campus "closed down" for the Christmas holidays, the Wolverines swimmers put on their annual "Gala Meet" of exhibition and novelty events, plus the introduction of the 1938 team. The "Gala Meet" always drew a good crowd, and it seemed to "wet the appetites" of the loyal swimming fans who were hungry for the dual meet


season to begin. Soon after that meet, Matt took most of his 1938 team members on the long car trip south to Ft. Lauderdale for the Aquatic Forum. The 1938 holiday forum had almost 200 college and high school swimmers and their coaches present for the two weeks of training sessions, exhibitions, demonstration, instructional sessions and lectures. Matt and his Wolverine swimmers were the "center of attraction" in many of the Forum's featured sessions. In addition to the adulation displayed by many of the high school swimmers for the U. of M. swimmers, many of the other college swimmers were anxious to meet, and swim with, the much-heralded mermen from Ann Arbor.53

The first two Wolverine dual meets of the 1938 season did not reflect any weaknesses in Matt's team; instead, the victories over Indiana (69-16) and Michigan State (67-17) gave every indication of another awesome squad.54 The U. of M.'s first real test came in New Haven against arch rival Yale. The Wolverines won that "big" dual meet, its first ever over Yale in dual meet competition, by the score of 42-35, in a meet which featured several close finishes.55

With the exception of an easy rout of the Milwaukee A.C. (68-7), the Wolverines had four hard dual meets to complete their schedule. The U. of M. swimmers swam against Ohio State, in Columbus, before 2,000 wildly enthusiastic fans and met with their first dual meet loss,

54 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
since the last meet of the 1930 season to Yale. The Buckeyes won six of the nine events to score a 47-37 triumph.56

The next two Wolverine dual meets were also hard fought contests, with the U. of M. gaining victories over Minnesota (49-35) and Iowa (47-37).57 The remaining dual meet of the season matched the Wolverines and Buckeyes in Ann Arbor before a full house. In the first half of the meet, it appeared that Matt's "boys" would redeem themselves for their earlier loss to Ohio State, as they led 27-18, but the Buckeyes came storming back through the remaining events, including a victory in the last event, to win the meet 46-38.58

The U. of M. swimmers were unable to control the winning momentum gathered by the Buckeyes during the dual meet season, as Mike Peppe's crew won the Twenty-Eighth Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet. The conference championship meet was held at the very New Trier High School natatorium in Winnetka, Illinois. The Buckeyes' winning total of 62 points was eight more than the Wolverines (54) second place total. Iowa and Northwestern finished a distant third and fourth place, with 20 and 12 points, respectively. The Wolverine swimmers did win four individual titles in the meet, as Kirar captured the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events, both in the meet record times of :23.3 and :52.8, respectively. Tom Haynie won the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle


57 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.

58 William P. Hotchkiss, op. cit., p. 92.
events to complete the U. of M. first place efforts. The Wolverines were unable to generate enough points in many of the other events to overtake Ohio State.59

Matt did manage to regroup his team for the biggest collegiate meet of the 1938 season, the Fifteenth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships at Rutgers University. In what turned out to be one of the closest unofficial or official championship meets in years, the Wolverines managed to win their second consecutive official N.C.A.A. title by a one point margin, 46 to 45, over their conference rival Ohio State. Harvard, instrumental to the U. of M.'s victory, was a close third with 36 points. The Wolverines' captain, Ed Kirar, was outstanding as he won championships in the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard freestyle, and swam the anchor leg for the winners of the 400-yard freestyle relay. Matt had employed a bit of strategy to pull off the close victory. Before the 440-yard freestyle event, Matt realized that his swimmers would have to win the last relay, as well as get at least third place in the quarter-mile event, if they were going to pass the leading Buckeyes. Since Tom Haynie was a finalist in the 440 and a member of the relay team, Matt instructed him to swim for third place in the individual event, so that he would not be tired for the relay. Haynie placed third in the 440-yard event and then swam a great relay leg as the Wolverines won the final event with Harvard finishing

second, just ahead of Ohio State, sufficient to provide the U. of M. with the one point margin of victory.\textsuperscript{60}

In the 1938 National A.A.U. Championships, the Buckeyes came back from the N.C.A.A. meet with a decided freshness, whereas the Wolverines appeared lackluster after reaching inner reserves for the N.C.A.A. crown. Ohio State won the National A.A.U. title with 41 points, becoming the first collegiate team to accomplish that feat. The U. of M. swimmers who had sought to achieve the milestone accomplished by Ohio State, finished a distant second with 19 1/2 points.\textsuperscript{61}

"The big meets with Ohio State, both dual and championship, were intense competitions from Matt's standpoint; they were a real challenge for him and 'tests' for the Wolverine swimmers, but not to be engaged in with animosity," stated Rose Mary Mann, Matt's daughter; she had grown up listening and conversing with her father about the various meets, teams and coaches. Lea Mann had made "swimming" the lives of her children, so that at each dinner the family would await Matt's arrival and discuss swimming throughout the meal. Lea, Rose Mary and Matt III were all acquainted with swimming times so that they were able to carry on intelligent swimming conversations with Matt. Rose Mary, continuing her remarks about the big meets, stated:

Dad (Matt) hated to lose, but he could always throw it off. He never was depressed by a defeat, even in a big meet. He felt that if the "boys" did their best and lost, they would come back (to the workout sessions) and work harder. Each morning, whether

\textsuperscript{60} "Varsity Wins National Swimming Title," \textit{The Michigan Alumnus}, April 9, 1938, Vol. 44, p. 344.

\textsuperscript{61} William P. Hotchkiss, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 94.
he had been involved in a winning or losing meet the night before, he would get up laughing, whistling and full of pep.\(^{62}\)

As the U. of M. and Ohio State continued to dominate the swimming competition in the Big Ten, it was becoming increasingly difficult to schedule other conference teams to dual meets. That was one of the reasons Matt and Mike had entered into the home and home meet agreement each season. The 1939 Wolverine swimming schedule had a slate of nine dual meets, including four with non-conference opponents. The schedule again featured the two dual meets with Ohio State and a home meet with Yale University. The schedule closed with the three championships, the Big Ten meet, the N.C.A.A. meet, and the National A.A.U.\(^{63}\)

Instead of opening the 1939 season with long-time conference opponent Indiana, the Wolverines' first meet was with Ohio State. A capacity crowd witnessed the two conference swimming "giants" engage in a thrilling meet, which ended in a 42-42 tie with the U. of M. just pulling out a victory in the last event to ensure the tie. So close was the finish of that relay event that the officials took several minutes to discuss the finish before awarding the race to the Wolverines.\(^{64}\)

The Wolverines scored impressive victories over an All-Star swimming team from Buffalo, New York (62-25), and Michigan State

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\(^{62}\) Based on statements by Rose Mary Dawson, Matt's daughter and coach of several women's swimming championship teams, in a personal interview, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, March 5, 1974.

\(^{63}\) Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 46.

(67-17), as Matt prepared his mermen for the first U. of M. versus Yale dual meet to take place in Ann Arbor. Before the Yale team traveled to Ann Arbor for that meet, Bob Kiphuth had secured a written agreement from Matt which proscribed any of the latter's meet-announcing "shenanigans." The Yale coach had been forewarned about some of the "special" circumstances which often arose during a U. of M. home meet, and he wanted to make every effort to ensure a well run meet. Matt abided by the agreement, and the meet was conducted without any unusual or unsportsmanlike incidents. The Wolverines, led by the freestyle efforts of Tomski in the sprints, and Haynie in the longer 220-440 races, scored an easy 53-22 victory.

At the second meeting between the U. of M. and Ohio State swimming teams, another capacity crowd of almost two thousand fans, greeted the teams at the Ohio State natatorium. The meet was a virtual carbon copy of the first meet between the two teams, with Michigan winning the final relay on the basis of the judges' decision. For the second time that season, the two Big Ten swimming powers had ended their dual meet with a 42-42 tie. The "rubber match" between the rivals would take place at the Big Ten Championships.

Following the Ohio State meet, the Wolverines put together a string of four victories over Minnesota (57-27), Iowa State (60-24),

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65 Ibid.

66 Phil Moriarity, personal interview, op. cit.


68 William P. Hotchkiss, op. cit., p. 97.
Iowa (61-23) and Northwestern (53-31). The meet with Iowa State
college marked the first time on the schedule for that team which was
coached by Matt's former assistant, Charlie McCaffree. In 1937,
George Veenker, the Iowa State athletic director and formerly a U. of M.
basketball coach, had wanted a "Michigan man" to coach the Iowa State
swimming team. Matt had immediately recommended Charlie for the post,
and that was all Veenker needed to offer McCaffree the position, which
the latter assumed in the fall of 1937. The meet between the U. of M.
and Iowa State had been arranged to coincide with the Wolverines' trip
to the state to swim the University of Iowa.

At the Twenty-Ninth Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet, hosted by
Purdue University, the Wolverines quickly established themselves as the
team that was going to win the championship. The U. of M. swimmers won
six events on their way to winning the title, their tenth, with a new
record total of 73 points. Ohio State could muster only 49 points in
its second place finish, and Minnesota, with a few scoring places, was
third with 11 points. Leading the way for the Wolverines was Tomski,
who won the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events, and anchored the
winning 400-yard freestyle relay; the winning times of :23.1, :52.6 and
3:33.8, respectively, were all new Big Ten records. The other Wolverine
winners were the 300-yard medley relay team (Beebe, Haigh, Holmes),
Welsh in the 220-yard freestyle, and Haynie in the 440-yard freestyle.

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69 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
70 Charles McCaffree, personal interview, op. cit.
The Wolverines' depth in the freestyle events had proved to be the decisive factor in scoring the new record total.\footnote{Based on personal correspondence between William F. Beebe, former U. of M. swimming team captain 1941, and the writer, March 14, 1977.}

At the start of that Big Ten meet, when most of the U. of M. swimmers were still tense, a rather amusing incident occurred within the Michigan group which seemed to loosen up the "boys." The incident occurred when Matt was called upon to introduce his team captain, Tom Haynie, to the crowd. Matt had this problem of being very forgetful of persons' names, including his own team members, especially when he was under some stress. When Matt arose before the crowd, he cited the Wolverines record for 1939 and then turned to Tom, but the former could not remember the latter's name; softly he asked Haynie his name, but the captain refused to tell his coach, saying that they had known each other for ten years. Finally, amidst laughter on the Michigan bench, William Beebe, a sophomore, told Matt his captain's name.\footnote{"Swimmers Regain Title In Conference Meet," The Michigan Alumnus, March 18, 1939, Vol. 45, p. 289.}

The Sixteenth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships were hosted at the U. of M.'s Intramural Building pool. Matt organized a beautifully run meet, and his coaching efforts were equally superb, as the Wolverines won their third consecutive N.C.A.A. swimming title with a winning total of 65 points. The meet was a very exciting affair throughout the competition, right down to the final event, as an inspired Ohio State team finished in second place with 58 points. Yale finished in fourth place with 14 points behind Princeton's 22. The
Wolverines' dominance in the freestyle events was a most decisive factor in offsetting the balance displayed by the Ohio State team. The U. of M. winners included Charlie Barker's double victories in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events, Tom Haynie's two first place finishes in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle races, and the 400-yard freestyle relay's winning effort, in which both Barker and Haynie teamed with Holmes and Tomski. Seven different Wolverine team members were named to the 1939 All-American Swimming and Diving team.73

During the latter part of August and the beginning of September, in 1939, Matt was to take seven of his Wolverine swimmers to England for a series of clinics and exhibitions in a number of English towns and cities. The Wolverines had been invited by Carl Wooten, a representative of the Amateur Swimming Association, England's governing body of the sport of swimming. The U. of M.'s Board in Control of Physical Education approved one thousand dollars to help the group defray certain expenses of their trip. Matt and the "boys" had agreed to pay their steamship fares, while Mr. Wooten had arranged with various people in England to provide meals and lodging for Wolverine swimmers during the tour. The group did not get to take the trip, though, due to the troubled conditions which existed in Europe.74

Matt's 1940 U. of M. swimming team would provide a balanced team built around returning All-American performers, Barker (freestyle


74"Minutes of the meetings of the Board in Control of Physical Education," University of Michigan, Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan, April and October, 1939.
sprints), Welsh (middle distance freestyle), Beebe (backstroke) and Benham, the team captain (diving). Matt already missed his team captain of 1939, Tom Haynie, who had graduated, not only as a swimmer, but as a someone he had become quite close to. During part of Haynie's undergraduate career he lived in Matt's basement, where some modest living quarters had been set up for boys who had limited financial means. Haynie performed certain chores around the house, and often ate certain weekend meals with Matt's family. Two new members of the 1940 team, John and Gus Sharement, brothers from Detroit, were living in Matt's basement living quarters that fall of 1939.\textsuperscript{75}

The 1940 U. of M. opened its nine meet dual schedule with its conference arch rival Ohio State with a solid 47 to 37 victory. The Wolverines won seven of the nine events, and Matt unveiled the powerful Sharement brothers for the first time in Big Ten competition.\textsuperscript{76}

Matt was so pleased with his team's performance against the Buckeyes, that he stated: "... the 1940 team appeared to be the best balanced and probably the strongest of all his Michigan teams." As evidence to the truth of his statement the Wolverines traveled to the East and scored convincing victories over Yale (46-29) and the N.Y.A.C. (48-27). The meet with Yale marked the fifth time the teams had faced each in dual meet competition, with the U. of M. leading in the series 3-2; all but one of the meets had taken place in New Haven. The U. of M. won seven of the nine events, with eleven of Matt's fourteen

\textsuperscript{75}Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 13.

member travel squad involved in the scoring. A larger group of Michigan alumni were in attendance for both of the eastern meets. 77

The Wolverines then proceeded to "annihilate" the remaining six teams on their dual meet schedule to post an unblemished 9-0 record. The string of victories, after the N.Y.A.C. meet, were over the University of Pittsburgh (54-21), Iowa (63-21), Michigan State (70-14), Minnesota (61-23), Northwestern (62-21), and Wayne (54-30). 78 The meet with Pittsburgh was the occasion for a most unusual occurrence in Wolverine swimming history, that being, for the first time in his 16 years as swimming coach of the U. of M., Matt was too ill to accompany the team to Pittsburgh. Assistant Coach Harvey Muller successfully directed the Wolverines to victory. 79

Upon the arrival of the U. of M. swimming team in Columbus for the Thirtieth Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet, Matt was forced to place his star middle distance freestyler, suffering from a severe respiratory infection, in a Columbus hospital. But the Wolverines were not deterred from their mission, as they won six events and went on to score 71 points, the second highest total in the meet's history. Ohio finished second with 47 points, followed by Iowa with 17. In most of the events, it was a matter of the Wolverines and Buckeyes contesting for the top three or four places, and then the other six schools


78 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.

fighting for some share of the points. Gus Sharemet swam on the U. of M.'s two winning relay teams, and also won the 100-yard freestyle with a new conference meet record of :52.1. Frank Heydt established a new meet record of 1:36.8 in the 150-yard backstroke. The Wolverines' 400-yard freestyle relay team also set a new meet record of 3:32.4.80

The Wolverines' victory at the conference meet provided them with a good psychological lift going off to the Eighteenth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships in New Haven. According to the experts the battle for the title was to be among the U. of M., Yale and Ohio State. But the efforts of both Michigan and Yale had been impaired by the loss of a key swimmer. The Wolverines' Welsh was still too ill to compete, and Yale had lost the services of its top backstroker, Joe Burns, due to a broken ankle.81 The U. of M. swimmers, inspired by the individual and great relay performances of Gus Sharemet, won their fourth consecutive N.C.A.A. team championship with a total of 45 points. The host team Yale had made its best bid for the national crown since the team award was initiated in 1937, by scoring 42 points. In third place, also very close on the Wolverines' "heels" for the title, was Ohio State with 39 points. The U. of M.'s star, Gus Sharemet had won the 100-yard freestyle title, and also anchored the winning 300-yard medley relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay. Sharemet had

81Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 96.
held off the Yale anchorman in the freestyle relay event, in the thrilling conclusion to the meet.\textsuperscript{82}

The U. of M. completed that great 1940 season by winning the National A.A.U. Swimming Championships at the N.Y.A.C. by outscoring the Chicago Powers Club 28 to 24. Ohio State finished in fourth place with 19 points behind the Princeton A.A. The Wolverine victory had enabled them to become the first collegiate team to win the N.C.A.A. meet and the National A.A.U. meet in the same season.\textsuperscript{83}

After the close of the 1940 season, several of Matt's former swimmers rejoined their coach on the Ann Arbor campus to participate in a celebration of the wonderful record achieved by 1940 team. Included in the returning group were several men who had become successful swimming coaches in their own rights, but by using many techniques learned from their former mentor, Matt. The swimming coaches' group included Charlie McCaffree, Iowa State College, winner of the Big Six title; Dick Papenguth, Purdue University; Charles "Tex" Robertson, University of Texas, Southwest Conference Champions; Ben Grady, University of Pittsburgh, Eastern Collegiate Conference Champions; Bob Mowerson, Battle Creek High School, Michigan 5A League Champions; and Harvey Muller, Matt's assistant coach and the University High School, Michigan Class B State Champions. Matt was proud of this very impressive group of coaches who were continuing to spread some of his

\textsuperscript{82}"Two National Titles Won By Swimmers," \textit{The Michigan Alumnus}, April 13, 1940, Vol. 46, p. 375.

\textsuperscript{83}Ibid.
coaching philosophy and techniques to various parts of the United States.  

With the University of Michigan at the top of the competitive swimming world in 1940, it seemed to be perfect timing that a book entitled *Swimming*, and co-authored by Matt and Professor Charles C. Fries (English Department, U. of M.) should be released by its publishers that spring of 1940. Fries, a regular participant in the U. of M. faculty swimming group, had helped Matt put down in writing many of the latter's thoughts about the skills needed to learn various strokes, and a variety of methods which can be used for teaching a wide range of aquatic skills including the crawl, the backstroke, the conventional breaststroke, the butterfly, and basic diving skills. In the book's Forward, Edward T. Kennedy, Columbia University's coach, had stated:

... There is a distinct mark of originality in this book. It represents one man's (Matt) pattern, tried and proven through successful teaching of thousands of beginners. The book is simple, direct, and omits all non-essentials. The illustrations are from actual situations and bring out clearly the essential body movements in the swimming strokes that are explained...  

Matt's 1941 "boys" would certainly be hard pressed to approach the record achieved by the 1940 Wolverines. The swimming schedule for 1941 included ten dual meets, but missing from the list of opponents were Ohio State and Yale. With the U. of M.'s two arch rivals off the schedule, Matt would have to delve into his "bag" of motivational

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sayings to keep his mermen sufficiently "charged up" to prevent any upsets by teams looking to "dunk" the top collegiate team in the country. 86

The Wolverines opened their season with an eastern trip and three victories over Pittsburgh (52-23), University of Pennsylvania (51-23) and the N.Y.A.C. (48-36). 87 The U. of M. then soundly defeated Purdue University, in the first ever meeting between the institutions in dual competition, by a score of 63 to 21. The meet also marked the first meeting between Matt and his former "pupil," Dick Papenguth, at opposite sides of the competitive fence. Matt was impressed with the spirit of the Purdue swimmers and with the skills displayed by many of the Boilermakers in the various events. 88

Matt's "boys" then scored successive victories over Wayne (51-33), Iowa (5-33), Iowa State (55-28), and Northwestern (54 1/2 - 29 1/2). That run of victories left the Wolverines at 8-0 going into the 1941 conference championship meet. 89

The Wolverines' 87 points in the Thirty-First Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet was a new conference record for total points scored. The U. of M. mermen won eight of the nine championship events on their way to winning their Twelfth Big Ten Swimming Championship. Charles Barker won the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle titles, and James Welsh was a

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86 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 13.
87 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
89 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
double winner in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events. The University of Iowa pool was certainly to the Wolverines liking as five conference and four national marks were set during the meet. Iowa finished second in the meet with 24 points, while Ohio State finished in fourth behind Minnesota. 90

The week following the conference swimming championships, the U. of M. completed its dual meet season with successive wins over Michigan State (50-34) and Wayne (45-39). The Wayne meet was close because Matt had left many of his top swimmers at home to rest them for the N.C.A.A. meet. The Wolverines finished the dual season at 10-0. 91

The U. of M. team went to the Nineteenth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships at East Lansing, the heavy favorite, based on its impressive dual meet record and total domination of its conference championship. The Wolverine swimmers won five championship races, but they needed every point they could muster throughout the meet program to hold off Yale's determined bid for the title. Matt's "boys" had scored a winning total of 61 points, to runner up Yale's 58 points. The Wolverines' winners included Barker (50-yard freestyle), Welsh (440-yard freestyle), the 300-yard medley relay team, Skinner (200-yard breaststroke) and Heydt (150-yard backstroke). While every point scoring effort was deemed as crucial in Michigan's narrow margin of victory, the backstroke race which had Wolverines in first, third


91Ibid.
(Beebe) and fourth (Riedl) places really provided the crushing blow to Yale's chance of winning the title.⁹²

Matt had hoped to finish the 1941 season on a winning note in Ann Arbor. The U. of M.'s Intramural Building pool was the site of the National A.A.U. Swimming Championships. While the Wolverines' Welsh, Barker, G. Sharemet, Skinner and Heydt swam quite well, some of the sharpness the team displayed at the N.C.A.A. meet was obviously lacking in the A.A.U. meet. The Chicago Towers Club, with 44 points, won the meet, as Michigan's 36 points were good for second place.⁹³ Matt had hoped to win both national titles for the second consecutive year, since that was the last year the U. of M. would be allowed to enter a team as an official entry of the University. The Big Ten had passed a ruling during the 1941 season, which prohibited its members schools from entering official teams in the National A.A.U. or other major meets during March, April or May, after the N.C.A.A. meet had concluded for a particular season, starting in 1942.⁹⁴

On June 30, 1941, the man who gave Matt an opportunity to prove himself as the U. of M.'s official swimming coach, Fielding H. Yost, Director of Athletics, retired. The U. of M.'s Board of Regents approved Herbert O. Crisler as the new Director of Athletics and

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⁹²"Varsity Wins One Title, Loses Another," The Michigan Alumnus, April 12, 1941, Vol. 47, p. 368.
⁹³Ibid.
Professor of the Theory and Practice of Athletics at the total compensation of $10,000 from the U. of M. and from the Board in Control of Physical Education.95

Due to the impact of World War II on the status of affairs in the United States, as well as the world, the normal administration of the U. of M.'s intercollegiate swimming program was expected to be affected in a variety of ways during the 1942 season. Matt had set up a dual meet schedule with eleven meets, but with the opening meets to take place in November instead of the usual January opening dates. The Wolverines traveled to the East during the Thanksgiving holidays, to swim meets with Amherst College, a regular Yale opponent, and the Olneyville Boys' Club team of Providence, Rhode Island. The Wolverines won both meets easily, taking on Amherst the first evening (55-20) and the next night over the all-star team competing as the Olneyville Boys' Club (55-21).96 Before Matt took most his eastern trips, he would arrange with various U. of M. alumni, or officials at the places of the meets, to house and feed his boys at little or no cost to the swimming team. The alumni were usually anxious to help out the renowned swimming team of their alma mater.97

The Wolverines' Florida trip was marked by their significant contributions to the "West" team's victory over the "East" team at the

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95 "Annual June Meeting, 1941," Proceedings of the Board of Regents, August 1939-May 1942, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, June 20, 1941, p. 645.


97 Rose Mary Dawson, personal interview, op. cit.
International Aquatic Forum. Soon after their return from Florida, the U. of M. opened its season by defeating the Grand Rapids Y.M.C.A. (38-19) in a limited schedule of events. Matt's squad then won back-to-back victories over conference arch rival Ohio State by the scores of 50-34, and 48-36. While the 1942 Wolverine team seemed to lack depth, it more than made up for that deficiency by several quality performances, which led to the two big early season wins over the Buckeyes.

The Wolverines were going "great guns," with two more wins, those over Northwestern (52-32) and Purdue (55-29), as they readied themselves for Bob Kiphuth and his Yale team. The visitors from New Haven were every bit as fast and balanced a team as their eastern press clippings had noted. The Yale swimmers won all nine events, set three Intramural pool records, and handed the Wolverines their worst defeat ever, with a 59-16 dunking. After the defeat Matt remarked: "... Yale was hot and they were high for this meet, and I have a little hunch that we were getting to be a little fat with so much victory parading...."

While the intense rivalry between the Wolverines and Yale had been maintained through the years, the mutual respect between Matt and Bob was not impaired by the outcomes of the teams' confrontations. The preceding year, 1941, when Michigan led 3-2 in the dual meet series

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100 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 13.
with Yale, Matt was honored by several of his colleagues from the swimming coaching profession, Bob Kiphuth had written a very complimentary letter to Matt in which the former stated:

... You (Matt) have been a great and dynamic force in American swimming, generally, and in American college swimming, in particular. This, I am sure, has been told you over and over again, but I would like to add my personal appreciation for what you have done and I know that the Yale men join me in this sentiment. We all appreciate that not only have you been a great coach, but that you have been a great force in the all-around education of your college boys. The great success that has come to you has been highly deserved, and I am tremendously happy that I can add my word of appreciation to you for your kindness and help to me personally, and your contribution to swimming particularly.\textsuperscript{101}

Matt was not about to let the crushing defeat to Yale humble him or his "boys," as the Wolverines quickly got back to their usual winning ways by defeating Iowa (50-34), Michigan State (59-25) and Minnesota (54-30). The U. of M. had completed the dual meet season with a 10-1 record, and then began final preparations for the conference championship meet, which would be hosted on their campus.\textsuperscript{102}

At the Thirty-Second Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet, the Wolverines lacked both the quality and the depth of their great 1941 team. While the U. of M. swimmers were able to win only four of the championship events, they did receive enough help from the swimmers on the Minnesota (24 points), Northwestern (22 points) and Iowa (16 points) teams to divide the scoring more evenly, and thus prevent Ohio State from picking up any easy points. The Wolverines had won their fourth

\textsuperscript{101}Based on personal correspondence between Bob Kiphuth and Matt Mann II, February 28, 1941. Letter contained in the Matt Mann II Memento Book, op. cit., p. 78.

\textsuperscript{102}Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
consecutive Big Ten title with a total of 54 points, followed by Ohio State's 50 points. The U. of M. title winners included John Pattern in the 100-yard freestyle, Jim Skinner in the 200-yard breaststroke, the 300-medley relay team and the 400-freestyle relay team. Team captain Dobson Burton's second place finishes in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events, plus his leg on the winning freestyle, which decided the meet for Michigan, were the key points for the victorious Wolverines.103

In the Nineteenth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships, at Harvard University, the favored team Yale, coming off a 13-0 dual meet record, and the I.S.A. swimming title, "flexed its muscles" and swamped its opponents with a winning total of 71 points. The Yale swimmers won five titles and scored heavily in several events. The second place Wolverines, with 39 points, were greatly outmanned in the meet, but their swimmers did win three titles, which included Patter in the 100-yard freestyle, Skinner in the 200-yard breaststroke, and the big upset winner of the meet, the 400-yard freestyle relay. The Wolverines' relay team had defeated the highly favored Eli quartet which had broken the N.C.A.A. record for the event several times that season.104

Late in the spring of 1942, Matt received his first promotion in rank since being employed at the U. of M. His new title for the


MATT MANN II AND JIM SKINNER, BIG TEN AND N.C.A.A.

200-YARD BREASTSTROKE CHAMPION IN 1942
1942-1943 academic year would be Supervisor in Physical Education, in the Department of Physical Education and Athletics, with his salary at $4750.00 for the nine months. 105

Although Matt had a good sized squad for the 1943 U. of M. team, it contained a number of new boys who were untried in varsity competition. With the nation still at war, there were many changes in the normal operation of the U. of M.'s athletic program, including the reduction in the number of athletic contests each team could participate in during the 1942-1943 seasons. The Wolverine swimmers would participate in only four dual meets in the 1943 season, their fewest number since the 1933 season when that Wolverine team also swam in four meets. Matt would count heavily upon his team captain, John Pattern, for leadership by example in his events, the 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle. Matt was also looking for added quality from three of his former Camp Chikopi swimmers, Jim Skinner, the 1942 conference breaststroke champion, Harry Holiday, a sophomore backstroker with great ability, and sophomore freestyler, Charlie Fries, whose father had co-authored the book, Swimming, with Matt. Those former Chikopi campers had started their competitive swimming at camp with Matt when they were youngsters. 106

The Wolverines won their opening three dual meets with relative ease as they defeated Ohio State (52-32), Michigan State (63-21), and


106 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 13.
Iowa (62-22). The second meet with Ohio State proved to be a
down-to-the wire thriller as the Wolverines trailed the Buckeyes going
into the last event, the 400-yard freestyle relay. But Captain Pattern
and his relay teammates saved the day for the Wolverines, as they won
the event and the U. of M. the meet by the score of 43 1/2 to 40 1/2. 107

As the Thirty-Third Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet was ready to
commence, Matt had prepared his Wolverines physically and mentally for
the task of retaining the conference title. Sophomore John McCarthy,
a 440-yard freestyle man, recalled that Matt's final practices were
demanding, and he filled the natatorium air and chalkboard with his
coaching sayings. Some of Matt's favorite motivational sayings were:

"Win for Michigan!"
"Get out in front and stay there!"
"Champions are made not born!"
"Champions can win at anytime!"
"Only Work, makes a Michigan team!"
"You are your own worst enemy!"

As the big meets got closer, Matt used the sayings more frequently. 108

On the basis of their two dual meet victories over Ohio State,
the Wolverines had come into the 1943 Big Ten Championships as the
favored team. Several of the U. of M. mermen swam very well as the
Wolverines won six of the nine events, but the Buckeyes were not to be
denied that conference title as they had several swimmers score high in
a number of the events. The deciding factor in the meet, though, was
the sweep of the first four places in each diving event by the

107 "Swimmers Continue Their Winning Habits," The Michigan
Alumnus, March 6, 1943, Vol. 49, p. 268.

108 Based on personal correspondence between John F. McCarthy,
a former Wolverine swimmer 1943-44 teams and assistant coach to Matt,
and the writer, March 18, 1977.
Ohio State entrants. The Buckeyes' diving point advantage was too much for the Wolverine swimmers to overcome. Ohio State's winning total was 66 points to the U. of M.'s 61 points. The Wolverine first places were achieved by Menton Church in the 50-yard freestyle, John Pattern in the 100-yard freestyle, Harry Holiday in the 150-yard backstroke, Jim Skinner in the 200-yard breaststroke, and both relay teams.109

The Twentieth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship at the Ohio State natatorium, in March of 1943, proved to be a rather one-sided affair for the host institution when all the points were tabulated. The Buckeyes, with their virtual invincibility in the diving events and several excellent swimming performances, scored 81 points to win the championship. Michigan finished second with 47 points, followed by Minnesota and Iowa. Those same four teams had finished in that order at their recently completed Big Ten Championship meet. The Wolverines won both of the national relay events, and had individual event winners in John Pattern, 100-yard freestyle, and Harry Holiday, 150-yard backstroke. Holiday was the lead-off man on the 300-yard medley relay, which set a new N.C.A.A. record of 2:53.4, and his winning backstroke time of 1:35.5 was also good for a new N.C.A.A. record.110

Due to the decreasing numbers of qualified male athletes available for intercollegiate athletic competition because of the war effort in 1943, the Western Conference faculty representatives and


directors rendered a couple of decisions which would have a direct
bearing on the conference swimming meets, at least during the 1944
season. The first decision permitted freshmen eligibility on varsity
teams beginning in March of 1943. The second decision had to do with
maintaining a full slate of intercollegiate sports for men, and that
if those men were called into service in a branch of the armed forces,
they would be better fit for duty. Also the second decision also would
encourage all athletically qualified men on campuses of conference
schools, who were enrolled in military training programs, to
participate as completely as possible in the sport in which they were
qualified.  

Matt's 1944 Wolverine squad of 14 men included eight men with
civilian status and six Navy trainees. As the fall training program
progressed, Matt added several new freshmen to the squad, since he
realized that some of his boys would be called out of school for
military duty. The dual meet schedule called for six contests before
the Big Ten title meet. The Wolverines opened the season with a close
victory over Northwestern (46-38). The U. of M. then took on the
Great Lakes Naval Training Station team, which included several very
good former collegiate swimmers, one of those being, Dobson Burton,
Matt's captain of the 1942 team. The Wolverines lost consecutive
meets to the Great Lakes team by scores of 60-24 and 46-38. Matt's
"youngsters" were obviously not ready for the Navy's collection of

111Michael Peppe, "Western Conference Review," The Official
pp. 45-46.
swimming veterans.\textsuperscript{112} The Wolverines had matured somewhat in the second Great Lakes meet, for they then went on to win their three remaining meets. The U. of M. victories came against conference foes, Purdue (63-21), Ohio State (57-26) and Northwestern (54-30).\textsuperscript{113}

The Thirty-Fourth Annual Big Ten Swimming Championships, at Northwestern, saw the return of the U. of M. as champions in 1944. The Wolverines amassed the third highest total, 72 points, in the history of the meet. The U. of M. swimmers won five of the nine events, including Church in the 50-yard freestyle, Fries in the 100-yard freestyle, Heini in the 200-yard breaststroke, and both relay teams. Northwestern had finished second in the meet with 42 points, while Ohio State had slipped to fifth with 15 points behind Minnesota and Purdue.\textsuperscript{114}

The Payne Whitney natatorium on the Yale campus served as the site for the Twenty-First Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship meet. Matt was forced to leave a couple of his regular team members in Ann Arbor, due to wartime travel regulations for men in campus Naval training programs. The Wolverines were able to win only one event, the final one on the program, the 400-yard freestyle relay. The U. of M. had stayed in the close battle with Yale for the N.C.A.A. meet title by virtue of the several second and third place finishes.

\textsuperscript{112}"Swimmers Win As Other Teams Fumble," \textit{The Michigan Alumnus}, January 22, 1944, Vol. 50, p. 238.

\textsuperscript{113}Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.

which its swimmers had garnered throughout the meet. Yale had built up a sufficient point lead going into the final event, so that even with its third place finish in the relay, it was able to score a 39 to 38 victory over the Wolverines for the national title. The Wolverines had now gone three consecutive years without winning the title they had held a lock on for so many years, both officially and unofficially.\textsuperscript{115}

Matt closed out the 1944 season by hosting the National A.A.U. Swimming and Diving Championships at the Intramural Building pool. As had been the case in so many of the National A.A.U. meets in the preceding years, the Wolverine swimmers lacked the sharpness which they had displayed in their preceding championship meets that season. The Great Lakes Naval Station team, aided by former Wolverines Burton and S. Martin, a diver, scored a winning total of 54 points to second place Michigan's 20 points.\textsuperscript{116}

During that second decade, 1935-1944, of Matt's reign as the University of Michigan's swimming coach, he had carefully monitored the "appetite" of the fully developed and refined Wolverine swimming program. Matt had sought out the best teams in the country with which to test his U. of M. swimmers and divers. Matt's "boys" had dispelled the purported belief that the best collegiate swimmers and the champion of collegiate teams were to be found in the East, or namely New Haven, Connecticut. The Wolverine swimmers were able to point to their competitive record of that decade of 1935-1944 as proof, that

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{116}Ibid.
\end{footnotesize}
they had indeed reached the apex of America's collegiate swimming scene. In dual meet competition, the Wolverines had achieved a record of 73 wins, 6 losses and 3 ties; included in those meets were three victories and one loss to Yale, and eleven wins, two losses, and two ties with Ohio State. The U. of M. swimmers had also won seven out of ten Big Ten Swimming Championships. In N.C.A.A. championship meet competition the Wolverines had won two "unofficial" team titles in 1935 and 1936, and then proceeded to win the first five official team titles 1937-1941, closing out the decade with three consecutive second place finishes. In 1940, the U. of M. became the first collegiate team to win both the N.C.A.A. and National A.A.U. championships in the same season.117

Matt's philosophy for guiding the continued growth of the U. of M. swimming program had been, "... that if you want to be recognized as the best, then you must meet and beat the best teams..." Matt had substantiated his claim to be recognized as the number one collegiate team in the country by his teams' records, and challengers to that claim would have to prove themselves in competition against the mighty Wolverines.118

117 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.
118 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 13.
Chapter 10

A NOTCH FROM THE TOP - THE COMPETITIVE YEARS 1945-1954

During the last few years of Matt's second decade of coaching successes at the U. of M., at least two coaches, Mike Peppe of Ohio State and Bob Kiphuth of Yale, had accepted the Wolverine mentor's challenge. Instead of dual meets, the arena for the major confrontations between the U. of M. and its arch rivals, Ohio State and Yale, had moved to championship meet competitions. The Wolverines and Yale had not met in a dual meet since 1942, and the Elis were not on the 1945 schedule either. The U. of M. and Ohio State had agreed, when the 1944 schedule was arranged, to meet only once each season, and that practice was to be retained for the 1945 season. While the war years had impaired the growth to desired dimensions of each of the three swimming powers, the impact on the U. of M.'s program seemed to be that the number of quality swimmers who were on the team's roster each season was reduced. The Wolverine team advantage of success through quality and depth had been diminished. Ohio State, with a diving dynasty started, and Yale had attracted their share of quality athletes who were competitive with the Wolverines' best men, and with the latter's depth advantage gone, the national crowns for the U. of M. had been harder to come by.¹

¹Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 13.
The U. of M. swimming schedule for 1945 had a slate of six dual meets, the conference championships and the N.C.A.A. meet. Through the war years, Matt had continued his annual practice of opening the season in December with the Gala Meet. During that meet, Matt also conducted several Michigan A.A.U. swimming championship events, which the Wolverine swimmers dominated with regularity, year after year.2

After an opening meet loss by the U. of M. to the Great Lakes Naval Station by the score of 44 to 40, Matt's boys promptly "righted" themselves to record a string of four victories. The Wolverines' wins were against Northwestern (54-29), Purdue (51-33), a second meet with the Great Lakes Naval Station (50-34), and Minnesota (50-34).3

During the run of victories, the old timer on the Wolverine squad, Bob Mowerson a former letterman of the '35, '36 and '37 teams, had played a key role on both relay teams in most of the meets. Mowerson had returned to the U. of M., following a "stint" in the service, to work on a master's degree. He had started out as an assistant coach for Matt, that 1945 season, but after the opening dual meet loss Matt realized he needed another sprinter. Matt had checked on the Big Ten's post war eligibility guidelines and discovered that Mowerson could have another season of dual meet and conference championship meet competition. After Matt's finding was revealed to Mowerson, the latter's role with the 1945 team changed from coach to relay performer. Mowerson's times for his 100-yard freestyle legs on


3*Michigan's All-Time Record Book*, op. cit., p. 132.
the 300-yard medley relay and the 400-yard freestyle relay teams that season were better than he had recorded when he was a three-year letterman, including the great 1937 team.4

The U. of M. entered the Thirty-Fifth Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet favored to win a second consecutive title. The Wolverines, sparked by team captain Merton Church's efforts in three winning races, won five of the nine events contested, and compiled a winning total of 55 points. Church, who had won the championships for the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyles, also swam the anchor leg of the winning 400-yard freestyle relay. An obvious disappointment for the team, in spite of winning its fifteenth Big Ten conference title, was its inability to place a finalist in the 440-yard freestyle event, and both diving events. Ohio State, in placing second in the meet with 43 points, had relied heavily upon the strength of its diving corps, which swept the first three places in both diving events.5

The week following the 1945 conference championship meet, the Wolverines defeated Ohio State in the scheduled dual meet between the schools by the score of 43-41. Although Matt's boys had won five of the meet's nine events, the Buckeyes had been able to hold a lead going into the last event, due to its sweep of the diving events coupled with its swimming points. Merton Church was the Wolverine star as he

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4Based on statements by Bob Mowerson, a former Wolverine swimmer and later the University of Minnesota swimming coach, in a personal interview, March 27, 1975.

duplicated his winning efforts from the conference meet, again anchoring the winning 400-yard freestyle relay, giving the Wolverines a come-from-behind victory.  

The U. of M. was the host for the Twenty-Second Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships in late March of 1945. The Wolverines relied on Merton Church for their major scoring "punch" in the meet; he delivered by winning the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard freestyle titles, and turning in a superb anchor leg on the winning 400-yard freestyle relay. The U. of M., which also won the 300-yard medley relay, had scoring places in several events, and on the basis of swimming event points, led Ohio State by the score of 45 to 31. But the diving events proved to be the Wolverines' undoing in their bid for the national title, as Ohio State outscored the U. of M., 25 to 3 in those two events, thus giving the Buckeyes the 1945 N.C.A.A. title.  

During the later stages of World War II, the Yale swimming team and the Eastern Intercollegiate Swimming League (E.I.S.L.) dropped from national prominence. The E.I.S.L. did not hold its championship meet in 1944 and 1945 because a number of its member schools had temporarily suspended intercollegiate swimming. While Yale still had several quality competitors on its 1945 team roster, the number of dual


meets in which they participated that season had dropped under ten, a major departure from its usual thirteen to fifteen meet schedules.8

During the fall of 1945, H. O. "Fritz" Crisler, the U. of M. Director of Athletics, had initiated a study to determine the athletic facility needs for the competitive programs under his administration. Crisler would utilize those data gathered from the study to make his recommendations for a proposed expansion to the Intramural Sports building. One area which had already been recommended for inclusion in the new facilities was a "Varsity" swimming pool with a spectator section for 2,000 fans. That recommendation had come forth, since a portion of the incomplete report stated: "The present pool (Intramural Building) is used almost beyond capacity, and the coaching of the Varsity swimmers takes place under severe handicaps. . . . The study was not expected to be completed until sometime in the fall of 1946.9

In true U. of M. swimming team tradition, the 1946 season was officially opened with Matt's "Gala Meet" at the Intramural Building pool in mid-December of 1945. Many of the fans in attendance for the evening's program of novelty, exhibition and state A.A.U. championship events had been coming for years. Matt presented the 1946 Varsity team which included several freshmen, since the N.C.A.A. rules for the war years were still in effect. One freshman team member whose face was certainly not new to the fans, who had been attending Wolverine home


meets over the years, was Matt Mann III. Matt III made a rather auspicious start for himself as a Wolverine Varsity swimmer when he won the Michigan A.A.U. 220-yard freestyle championship that evening. The U. of M. swimmers won four of the five state A.A.U. title races that were decided at the meet.  

The occasion of Matt III swimming for his father at the U. of M. did not mark the first time the former had been trained by the latter. For many summers Matt III had trained under his father's "watchful eye" at Camp Chikopi, during Matt III's high school years his father served as the high school coach. During Matt III's high school swimming seasons he would often work out with several of Wolverine mentors, while the regular high school workout sessions were conducted in the early evenings after the Varsity swimmers had finished practice. Matt had volunteered his services to the University High School program since qualified coaches were hard to come by for many of the schools.  

For the third consecutive swimming season, the Great Lakes Naval Station swimming team inflicted an early season dual meet loss on the Wolverines by the score of 43-41. The rather young U. of M. team was able to win only three events from the Great Lakes team, whose team roster contained several highly competent swimmers from the college ranks. Matt III won two of the Wolverines' firsts in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events, and established himself as a team member who

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11 Based on statements by Matt Mann III, the son of Matt II, in a personal interview, East Lansing, Michigan, May 24, 1974.
could be counted on in stiff competition. The coach of the Great Lakes team was Dobson Burton, Matt's captain from the 1941 Wolverine team.\(^{12}\)

The week after the opening dual meet, the U. of M. posted two victories over Northwestern (47-34) and with a reversal of that opening loss, Great Lakes Naval Station (46-38). Matt III won the 220 and 440 events in both meet wins.\(^{13}\) The Wolverines then continued their winning ways for much of the dual meet season, as they won five of their next six meets. The victories were recorded over Purdue (49-32), Michigan State (48-36), Wayne University, twice, (58-26) and (52-32), and Minnesota (56-28).\(^{14}\) In two of those victories, Purdue and Michigan State, Matt had gone up against two of his former "pupils" with Dick Papenguth, the Boilermaker mentor, and Charlie McCaffree, the head man for the Michigan State mermen. Both of those men had been with those programs for several years and the quality of the teams had been getting progressively better. Papenguth and McCaffree both openly admitted that the improvements in their programs could be attributed to their use of many of Matt's tried and proven coaching methods.\(^{15}\)

The only other Wolverine loss of that dual meet season was to Ohio State by the score of 57-27. The Buckeyes had put together a very strong team of several quality swimmers, to go along with its outstanding


\(^{13}\)Ibid.

\(^{14}\)Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 132.

\(^{15}\)Based on statements by Dick Papenguth and Charlie McCaffree, in Tape 22, and a personal interview, respectively, op. cit.
group of divers. The Buckeyes' margin of victory over the U. of M. was the greatest since the two teams started the series in 1934.\(^1\)

Matt's young Wolverine team had finished the 1946 dual meet season with a fine 7-2 record, but any hopes for winning the Thirty-Sixth Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet appeared very remote. Missing from that U. of M. team were the big stars who might be involved in two or three first place finishes. The highest hope for the Wolverines going into the championship meet was Matt III, who had won the 440-yard freestyle event in each meet and had lost the 220-yard event only twice; in addition to his individual event exploits, he had anchored a very good freestyle relay contingent to wins in most of the meets that season.\(^2\)

The experts had accurately predicted Ohio State's easy victory in that 1946 Big Ten Championship Meet, as the Buckeyes recorded 75 points, the second highest winning total in the history of the meet. While Ohio State's swimmers and divers won seven title events, the Wolverines came up "empty handed," not winning a single event for the first time since the early 1920's. The U. of M. swimmers did manage to score 38 points, enabling them to place second. Matt III placed second in his speciality events, the 220-yard freestyle and 440-yard freestyle, to complete an excellent first year of conference dual meet and championship meet competition.\(^3\)


\(^3\)"Swimmers Lose Title To Buckeyes," loc. cit.
The Twenty-Third National Collegiate Swimming Championship Meet was held at the United States Naval Academy, at the end of March, 1946. The emerging giant of collegiate swimming, Ohio State, won the title, its second consecutive victory and the third in four years, with 61 points. The Wolverines finished second for the fifth consecutive time, with 37 points, followed by the surprise team of meet, Michigan State at 18 points. While the U. of M. swimmers and divers were unable to capture any championship events, several of the team members, including three freshmen, performed very well. Matt III placed second in the 1500-meter freestyle event, his first time in that event as a collegian, recorded a fourth place finish in the 440-yard freestyle, and swam as a member of the second place 400-yard freestyle relay team. Wolverine divers Alex Canja and Gil Evans made a very good showing in the diving events. The U. of M. also received good performances from upperclassmen C. Fries (Relay) and H. Kessler (Breaststroke), and freshmen R. Sohl (Breaststroke) and D. Weinberg (Freestyle sprinter). The young Wolverines had gained valuable experience during the 1946 season, and they would provide a very solid nucleus for the 1947 squad. 19

Soon after that 1946 N.C.A.A. meet, Matt went to Stuttgart, Germany, on a special assignment for the United States Army. The Special Services Division of the Army had asked Matt earlier in the year if he would go to Germany to conduct a six week swimming clinic for officers and enlisted personnel. Matt accepted the Army's offer, since

he recognized the need to get the large numbers of American servicemen, still overseas after the war, involved in enjoyable and purposeful recreational activities. Matt's clinic for nearly 500 men involved teaching the men certain basic swimming skills to improve their existing skill levels, so that those men might effectively demonstrate those skills to the groups of men they would be teaching. Since the intent of the clinic was to prepare the participating men to be swimming teachers, and in some cases coaches, Matt devoted a considerable portion of the clinic to explaining various techniques for teaching swimming classes and coaching competitive groups. During the first five weeks of the clinic Matt worked with groups of men, while the last week of the program was devoted to a group of the Women's Army Corps and a group of female American nurses, covering much the same material to which the men had been exposed. Matt would return to the United States in June so that he would have time to prepare for Camps Chikopi and AK-O-Mak.20

The 1947 Wolverine swimming team swam impressively in the season opening Gala Meet, by capturing several firsts in the slate of state titles offered by the Michigan A.A.U. Soon after the U. of M. swimmers returned from the Swimming Forum in Ft. Lauderdale, Matt prepared them for what he knew would be a very tough dual meet with intrastate rival, Michigan State. The Wolverines displayed superb quality against non-conference foe, Michigan State, as the former won seven of the nine events. But the inspired swimmers from East Lansing

took the second and third places in most of the races they did not win; that factor, coupled with their two first place finishes, enabled Michigan State to lead the meet going into the last event. Matt's swimmers were the "underdogs" in that last relay, but they responded to the challenge and won the event, which enabled the Wolverines to win the meet 45 to 39.  

To observers from outside the U. of M. swimming program, the dual meets with Yale and Ohio State were probably looked upon as those which brought out the most intense emotions from the Wolverine swimmers. There can be no denying that the Yale-U. of M. meets were always very special contests, and the same feeling had existed, and would continue to do so for each Ohio State-Wolverine meet; but the Michigan State-U. of M. meets were the real "battle royals," especially as the former had improved. The Michigan State coach, McCaffree, an avowed disciple of Matt's, used many of his former coach's psychological ploys to get his mermen ready for the big meet with the Wolverines. The meets between those intrastate rivals were often characterized by heated disputes and the shouting of derogatory comments between the teams.

The 1947 U. of M. swimming team reflected a higher level of balance and maturity as it proceeded through its next five dual meets without a loss. Victories were recorded over Toronto University (65-19), Purdue (59-25), Minnesota (48-36), Iowa (58-26) and

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22 Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.
Northwestern (53-31). The Wolverines were competing that season without the services of Matt III, the young distance freestyle star of the previous season. He had elected to stay out of school that year until he could decide on what academic field in which to pursue a major.

Some of the void felt by Matt III's absence from the team had been filled by freshman freestyler, Gus Stager. In several of the 1947 dual meet victories, Stager had won the 220-yard freestyle event and swam on numerous winning 400-yard freestyle relay teams. Stager had been a successful high school swimmer at Newark Academy (N.J.), and he had continued his swimming while serving in the United States Army. As he had approached his discharge date from the service, Stager took the opportunity to discuss with several fellow military swimmers, many of whom had been college competitors, what colleges had top flight swimming programs. The school which had been mentioned most frequently to Stager was the University of Michigan. He had heard positive comments about Michigan State, Ohio State and Stanford, but he decided to enroll at the U. of M. While workouts for the 1947 Wolverine team were initiated in September, it was almost a month before Stager felt that Matt knew he existed. That was Matt's way of letting new team members, especially those with impressive high school credentials or

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23 *Michigan's All-Time Record Book*, op. cit., p. 133.  
24 "Swimmers Display Strength," loc. cit.  
potential "hot shots," know that they had to prove themselves in workouts and competition before he would start passing out warm greetings and plaudits.  

The final dual meet of the Wolverines' season was against the powerful Ohio State team. Aside from the winning efforts of Harry Holiday in the backstroke event, Bobby Sohl in the breaststroke event, and the medley relay team, the U. of M. team had little to cheer about, as the Buckeyes won 56 to 28.  

The Ohio State team had defeated a young, but talented, group of Wolverine swimmers, and that overwhelming victory could be traced to more than the Buckeyes outstanding diving corps. Bob Bartels, one of Mike Peppe's mainstays on that 1949-1950 Ohio State team, attributed the team's success to the system of training employed by Peppe. The major innovation in the training system was the inclusion of a set of "wind sprints" towards the end of a distance work. Peppe used sets of a particular distance, such as 100's, where he would ask the swimmers to achieve a certain time for each swim as he controlled the rest intervals. Peppe also tried different patterns in which he would ask the swimmers to increase the speed of work, or cut down on the rest period between each repeat, or vary the distance of the repeats to be

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26 Based on statements by Gus Stager, former Michigan swimmer and former U. of M. swimming coach, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 23, 1974.

swum. As far as the Ohio State swimmers were concerned, Mike Peppe was far ahead of coaches such as Matt and Bob Kiphuth in terms of training techniques.  

During the 1940's, swimming coaches, especially the successful ones, did not share many of their training techniques and ideas with persons outside their respective "team family." Therefore swimmers on a particular college team rarely knew what kinds of things their opponents from rival teams were doing in workouts. Matt's workout patterns for his swimmers had many contemporary ideas, but certain workouts contained several elements which could be traced back to his teams of many years earlier. Gus Stager recalled that on certain days Matt would have the boys swim a particular longer distance, such as a 440, and have them swim one length hard and the next length easy, continuing that pattern for the distance. He would then have the "boys" follow that swim with another of the same distance, but that time the boys swam two lengths easy and two lengths hard for the entire distance. He also included sets of 100-yard or 50-yard swims, towards the close of certain workouts, with a particular emphasis on all out efforts. In other workouts Matt often had the swimmers who were present line up at the end of the pool, and he would tell them to swim a mile, or kick 100 lengths. The point Matt tried to stress in those distance drills was to try and defeat as many of his teammates as possible. Matt liked to introduce different forms of competition in many of his workouts.  

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29 Gus Stager, personal interview, op. cit.
One training technique which Matt and his arch rival Kiphuth had used for many years, actually dating to some of their workouts of the 1920's, was the utilization of "wind sprints," very similar in concept to Peppe's "innovation" of the 1940's. Towards the conclusion of a particular workout, Matt and Kiphuth had their swimmers complete a set of ten to fifteen 50-yard repeats at a fast pace.30

Matt had a preference for designing individual workouts for his swimmers in the late 1940's. Since most of the Wolverine swimmers had different class schedules, they would come to the pool for their afternoon workouts following their last classes. According to Matt III:

He (Matt) would never write out a full workout on the blackboard, on the pool deck, for the entire team. He tried to adjust his workouts to each individual, when a particular swimmer arrived at the pool. He would also change workouts during a practice if he thought a swimmer was not getting the most from the workout the former had designed. Matt was flexible about his workouts and if a swimmer wanted to change a portion of the former's plan for the afternoon, Matt often agreed to the change.31

The Thirty-Seventh Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet was won for the second consecutive year by Ohio State, who scored the second highest total ever recorded in the meet, 83 points. Although the U. of M. was a distant second with 51 points, Matt was elated with the team's overall showing for he believed that "better days" were indeed ahead for the Wolverines. Matt's swimmers won the 300-yard medley relay (Holiday, Sohl, Weinberg), the 150-yard backstroke (Holiday), and the 200-yard breaststroke (Sohl). In addition to those championship titles,


31Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.
Weinberg swam very well in the 50-yard freestyle (second place) and the 100-yard freestyle (third place), as well as swimming on the second place 400-yard freestyle relay. Stager, the freshman, had an excellent meet as he recorded a second place in the 220-yard freestyle, a third place in the 440-yard freestyle, and also swam on the freestyle relay team. Sohl's winning time of 2:21.4 in the breaststroke event had established a new Big Ten record and N.C.A.A. record for the 200-yard event. The fact that the major portion of the Wolverines' point total had been scored by underclassmen was part of the reason for Matt's enthusiasm about his team's showing in the meet.  

Matt was anxious to test his young "stars" in the Twenty-Fourth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship Meet in Seattle. The favorite for the team title, Ohio State, did little to disappoint the meet prognosticators, as its swimmers and divers won several titles and scored a winning total of 66 points. The Wolverines, who placed second in the meet, actually did better, in terms of the number of first places they achieved, than they had in the Big Ten Championships. Winning N.C.A.A. titles for the U. of M. was its 300-yard medley relay team (Harry Holiday, Bob Sohl and Dick Weinberg), Sohl in the 200-yard breaststroke, Holiday in the 150-yard backstroke, and Weinberg with two titles, the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard freestyle. Gus Stager had placed third in the 440-yard freestyle to complete the major scoring for the Wolverines.  

Yale, hoping to make a strong showing in that  

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32"Swimmers Are Second In Big Ten," loc. cit.  
1947 N.C.A.A. meet after its undefeated dual meet season and victory in the E.I.S.L. championships, finished a disappointing fifth. Soon after the Elis had arrived in Seattle, the entire team was hit by a sudden illness, which left them weak for the meet.34

The fall training sessions for the 1948 U. of M. swimming team were most enjoyable for Matt, for he could sense that team had the potential to be a real powerhouse, with quality and depth in each event. In addition to the nucleus of 1947 N.C.A.A. All-Americans, which included Sohl, Holiday, Weinberg, Stager and diver Gil Evans, the return of Matt III to the team, with his proven ability in the distance freestyle events, would present a formidable line-up for most of the Wolverines' opponents.35

The "kick-off" for the 1948 Wolverine swimming season was the Annual Gala Meet in December. In addition to state A.A.U. events which were conducted in conjunction with the meet, Matt had organized an unique program with several special features in order to attract a large crowd. Matt had wanted a capacity gallery to "meet" his potential championship team, and for his "boys" to feel the excitement of enthusiastic fan support before the start of the official season. Several of the U. of M. swimmers recorded excellent times for the various events in which they won A.A.U. championships, as the several hundred fans showed their appreciation with standing ovations on many occasions that night. The special feature events for the program included an exhibition of several strokes by the 1936 Olympic backstroke

34Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 116.

35Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 14.
champion, Adolph Kiefer; a water ballet performance by a team of highly skilled "mermaids," and a diving act which featured a male diver coming from an opening in the natatorium's ceiling and going into the pool. The meet's program provided something for everyone in attendance, and the meet was viewed as a tremendous success.36

The 1948 Wolverines proved to be the type of team Matt had hoped for, at the start of those preseason training sessions. The U. of M. swimmers had completed the dual meet season with an 8-0 record, the first undefeated season for the Wolverines since the 1943 team's 4-0 record. The eight victories had been achieved over La Salle College (55-20), N.Y.A.C. (47-28), Purdue (64-20), Iowa (56-28), Minnesota (52-32), Ohio State (46-38), Michigan State (53-31), and Northwestern (50-34).37 Throughout that dual meet season, it had been the ingredients of quality and depth, the keys to the success of Matt's teams of the late 1930's and the early 1940's, which permitted the Wolverines to go through the dual meet campaign "unscathed." U. of M. team members such as Sohl, Holiday, Weinberg, Matt III, Stager and Evans had performed beautifully in their respective events throughout the season.38

Matt took his inspired team to Iowa City for the Thirty-Eighth Annual Western Conference Swimming Meet. The 1948 Wolverine swimmers were able to win only three title events, the 300-yard medley relay (Holiday, Sohl, Weinberg), the 150-yard backstroke (Holiday), and the

37Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 133.
38Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 14.
1500-meters (Matt III). Weinberg placed second in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events, while Evans placed third in both diving events, preventing an Ohio State sweep of the top four places in those events. Matt III had also placed second in the 440-yard freestyle and third in the 220-yard freestyle, to lead the team in individual scoring with 13 points. The Wolverines' balanced scoring attack enabled them to win the Western Conference Championship with 62 points, over second place Ohio State with 59, and Iowa in third with 38 points. That conference title marked the sixteenth time the U. of M. had won the championship meet under Matt's direction.39

The 1948 Wolverines completed a sweep of the three major collegiate season swimming goals available to them by completing the dual meet season undefeated, winning their conference championship, and by winning the Twenty-Fifth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship Meet. The U. of M.'s victory in the N.C.A.A. meet was particularly satisfying since the Wolverines were the host institution for the meet. The U. of M. swimmers won only the 300-yard medley relay, with its great trio of Holiday, Sohl and Weinberg, and established a new N.C.A.A. record of 2:51.9 for the event. Matt's "boys" made up for the lack of first place finishes with several second and third place finishes, and by scoring some points in each of the ten events, to amass the meet winning total of 44 points. The meet's outcome went down to the last event, the 400-yard freestyle relay, with the Wolverines needing only to finish ahead of the Buckeyes, who at that point trailed

the U. of M. by two points, in order to win the meet. Michigan utilized "safe" relay takeoffs to finish in third place, while Ohio State placed fifth, and second in the meet. Second place efforts by Sohl in the breaststroke event and Holiday in the backstroke were, of course, important factors in the Wolverines' victory, but one of the great performers for the winners had to be Gil Evans. The Michigan diver had prevented a sweep of the top four diving places by Ohio State, in the two diving events. Evans placed fourth in the three meter event, and had a "great" third place performance in the one meter event. In winning the team championship, Matt had coached his team to six official N.C.A.A. team titles, plus the seven "unofficial" or pre-1937 N.C.A.A. titles. But, as far as Matt and the official press releases of the U. of M.'s athletic department were concerned, the 1948 victory would go down as Michigan's thirteenth National Collegiate Swimming Championship. The teams of two of Matt's former pupils, McCaffree (Michigan State) and Haynie (Stanford), had also done well in the meet as they finished fourth and fifth, respectively.40

Matt hoped that the great record of his 1948 Wolverines, plus the outstanding record of the U. of M.'s swimming team over the years, especially since 1936, would enable him to be selected as the United States Olympic Team men's swimming coach for the 1948 Games. He felt that the Olympic swimming coach's position was a great honor in and of itself, but to return to his native land of England for the Olympic Games, which were to be held in London, would have made the

honor doubly thrilling. His hopes were dashed when it was announced by the United States Olympic Committee that Bob Kiphuth had been selected for his fourth consecutive Olympic Games to serve as the men's swimming coach for the United States team.\footnote{Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 14.}

Matt was greatly disappointed at not being selected for the Olympic Team coaching position. He realized that such a selection was not based on proven achievements, but on the politics which went on inside the various big committees of the National A.A.U. and the United States Olympic Committee. Kiphuth had maintained leadership roles in several of the major national swimming committees, and with the formation of various cliques within the committees, much of what happened in amateur swimming within the United States was controlled by Kiphuth and other members of the "eastern establishment." Matt had challenged the National A.A.U. Swimming Committee, on several occasions, about its selection process of coaches and managers for various U.S. swimming teams, which traveled and competed internationally. Matt and Kiphuth had also confronted each other several times at the N.C.A.A. meets over the process of seeding swimmers for the championship events. The confrontations on several fronts between the two strong willed and dynamic coaches certainly did not endear one to the other. Kiphuth was not about to relinquish his carefully created position as top man in American swimming to the "Mann from Michigan" by letting the latter be selected as the 1948 U.S. Olympic swimming coach.\footnote{Charles McCaffree, personal interview, op. cit.}
Matt had not been alone in his battle to dislodge Kiphuth from his powerful role in the National A.A.U. and on the Olympic Swimming Committee. In unpublicized fashion, Mike Peppe had worked with Matt to challenge Kiphuth's powerful position. Peppe referred to Kiphuth as a "free-loader," regarding the several international swimming trips to which the latter had himself appointed as coach. Kiphuth had opposed Peppe as the most likely candidate for the 1948 U.S. Olympic diving coach's post, even though Peppe had clearly dominated the diving events at the various national championship meets over the past several years. Kiphuth was unsuccessful in his bid to place one of his "cronies" in the diving post which rightfully belonged to Mike Peppe.43

Phil Moriarity, Kiphuth's long time assistant coach at Yale, made some interesting observations of the 1948 Olympic swimming coach's selection process, when he stated:

Bob Kiphuth was a dynamic personality, smart, a good politician and a good diplomat. Those qualities, plus his location at the prestigious Yale, with its well known open-door policy for its Payne Whitney Gymnasium indoor fifty meter pool, enabled him to become the leader of American swimming, and probably the foremost figure on the international swimming scene.

Whereas Matt was a good coach, who commanded a respect for his coaching achievements. He was ahead of his time in terms of training swimmers, and the records they achieved reflected that. He was gentle and kind to his swimmers, and he referred to them as his boys. Matt tried to create a father image for those boys which he tried very hard to live up to. But he was not a politician on the amateur swimming scene; and he did not like to go through committee channels in terms of amateur swimming business or international swimming trips. Since there was no rotation system for Olympic swimming coaching positions, the selection was based on the man who could garner the most votes. Matt's denial of the political role, which was so necessary in the selection process, virtually eliminated him from any consideration. Thus, Kiphuth

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43Mike Peppe, personal interview, op. cit.
had no real challengers for the coaching position, with the possible exception of Mike Peppe, and the latter received the diving coach's position for the 1948 Games. ¹⁴

In spite of the personal disappointment Matt felt about not receiving the Olympic swimming coach's position, he made a commitment to continue the training programs of any of his qualified 1948 Wolverine team members who wanted to try for a place on the Olympic Team. The 1948 Olympic Swimming Trials were held in Detroit in July, under the sponsorship of the "Beavers Club" from the Detroit Athletic Club. The Beavers had functioned in the sponsoring of several major amateur swimming meets in the Detroit area, dating back to when their group was organized by Matt back in the early 1920's. The U. of M. swimming team was represented at the 1948 Trials by a six man contingent. Gil Evans tried for a place on the diving team, but he did not fare well as he finished sixth the three meter diving event. Matt had high hopes for his swimmers based on their indoor performances. Matt III made it into the finals of the 1500-meter freestyle and the 200-meter freestyle; the latter event was used to select qualifiers for the 800-meter freestyle relay team. Unfortunately, he finished fourth and seventh, respectively, in those events, and just missed the qualifying berth in each event. Dick Weinberg had taken an early lead in the 100-meter freestyle final, but the cold water and weather conditions seemed to work against the Wolverine's star sprinter as he faded to fourth place, missing the top three qualifying places. Stager had qualified for the finals of the 400-meter freestyle, and Holiday had made the final group for the 100-meter backstroke, but both swimmers lacked the necessary

¹⁴Phil Moriarity, personal interview, op. cit.
sharpness and failed to qualify for the Olympic Team in their respective events. The Wolverines' lone qualifier for the 1948 Olympic Team was Bobby Sohl in the 200-meter breaststroke who had placed third in the qualifying race. Sohl continued his training with other members of the Olympic swimming team, as Matt returned to his summer work at Camps Chikopi and AK-O-MAK.45

During the fall of 1948, Matt had good reason to feel optimistic about the 1949 Wolverines' swimming season. He had the solid nucleus of All-Americans, which featured Bobby Sohl, the winner of the bronze medal in the breaststroke at the 1948 Olympic Games. The other N.C.A.A. All-Americans included Stager, Matt III, and Weinberg. But the 1949 team would definitely miss the solid diving of Gil Evans and the great backstroke performances of Harry Holiday, especially in the big meets.46

The 1949 U. of M. swimming team recorded five dual meet wins over Purdue (57-36), La Salle College (49-26), Michigan State (51-33), Northwestern (64-29), Minnesota (65-18), and appeared headed for a second consecutive undefeated dual meet season. But the Wolverines still had Ohio State and a strong Iowa team to contend with before the conference championship meet.47 The Wolverines' meet with Ohio State was a classic battle between the Big Ten swimming giants. The number of first place finishes were about evenly split, and the meet stayed extremely close. One event that proved to be quite decisive in the U. of M.'s eventual victory of 45-39, was the 100-yard freestyle. The

45Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 14.
46Ibid.
47Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 133.
finish between the U. of M.'s Weinberg and the Buckeyes' Hirosi was very close, but it appeared that the Ohio State swimmer had reached the wall first. That observation was further corroborated by a statement made by Weinberg while the swimmers were still in the water. According to Bob Bartels, one of the Ohio State swimmers, Weinberg reached over to his Ohio State opponent, Hirosi, and said, "Well, you took me that time." Matt, who was close enough to hear Weinberg, came rushing over and put his hand on Dick's head; and while pushing Dick's head underwater, Bartels claimed that Matt was heard to say, "Atta boy son, you beat him!" Soon after Matt's actions and words, the finish judges at the Intramural Building pool awarded first place in the event to Weinberg. The judges' decision severely hampered the Buckeyes' chance for victory.

The Iowa meet turned out to be every bit as tough as the Ohio State contest. Going into the Iowa meet the Wolverines had put together a string of 14 consecutive dual meet victories over the 1948 and 1949 seasons. But as the competitors went to their marks for the start of the last event, the 400-yard freestyle relay, the U. of M. needed a victory in order to win the meet. The Wolverines had apparently won the event, but a judge ruled that Michigan's third swimmer, Matt III, had "jumped" on his takeoff, and therefore the relay team was disqualified, with the meet score Iowa 46 and the U. of M.

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48 Based on statements by Dr. Robert Bartels, former Ohio State swimmer and former Ohio State swimming coach, in a personal interview, Columbus, Ohio, October 4, 1974.
After the decision was announced and the final score of the meet was posted, neither Matt nor any Wolverine team member said anything to Matt III about the disqualification and its impact upon the meet's results.

Although the U. of M. had completed its dual meet season with a 6-1 record, the Thirty-Ninth Annual Western Conference Swimming Meet did not have the Wolverines in the favorite's role. A glaring weakness of the 1949 U. of M. team had been the lack of any divers capable of scoring in the championship meets. Ohio State returned to the champion's "throne" by scoring 68 points, but the real surprise in the meet came in the fight for second place. The Iowa swimmers had done very well in the meet, and with the help of four diving points, they managed to edge by the Wolverines by a score of 51-49. Michigan did not score in the diving events, while Ohio State had 24 points, so that on the basis of swimming scores, Michigan had 49, Iowa had 47 and Ohio State, 44. Dick Weinberg had been the U. of M.'s top point man in the meet, as he had recorded the only victory for the Wolverines, a first in the 50-yard freestyle, placed second in the 100-yard freestyle, and anchored the freestyle relay to a second place finish. Matt III had a good meet by placing second in the 1500-meter freestyle, and then finished third in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events. The Wolverines' lack of qualified divers and their concentration of scoring in the freestyle events, had been factors in the U. of M. lowest finish

50 Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.
in the conference championships since its third place finish in 1925, Matt’s first year as official swimming coach.\footnote{51}

In the Twenty-Sixth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships, Ohio State ruled supreme by scoring 49 points, with a major share of those points again coming from the diving events. The Wolverines, who received a total of 32 points, primarily from the scoring efforts of Matt III in the 220-yard, 440-yard and 1500-meter freestyle events, Stager in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events, Weinberg in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events and Sohl in the breaststroke event, finished third in the team standings, their lowest finish in the N.C.A.A. meet since the start of the official team championships in 1937.\footnote{52}

The 1949 Wolverine team had not lived up to Matt’s expectations for it. That U. of M. team did not lack the potential to be very good, but its downfall could be attributed to the fact that several of the team members, especially a number of the older ones who had been in the service before coming to college, broke Matt’s training rules. The Wolverine swimmers were aware of Matt’s rules against the use of cigarettes and alcoholic beverages by team members, but they also knew that Matt did not have absolute or inflexible rules against offenders of those rules. Matt considered each case of rule infractions separately, so many of the swimmers breaking training rules felt like they could take their chances for a "lenient judgment" by Matt if they

\footnote{51}"Swimmers Lose Conference Title And Dual Meet String," loc. cit.

were caught breaking the rules. Several of the swimmers abused the rules excessively and the U. of M.'s 1949 results reflected Matt's inability to effectively discipline the team.  

In the fall of 1949, the U. of M.'s Board of Regents authorized Fritz Crisler to secure preliminary plans for an additional sports building on the U. of M.'s Ferry Field. The new building would contain additional swimming facilities, accommodations for basketball, physical education activity areas and office space for the athletic administration. The Board of Regents had acted in response to the extensive report prepared by Crisler on improving campus facilities for physical education, recreation and athletics. In that report Crisler had cited:

. . . Swimming pool facilities, both for men and women, (on the campus) are entirely inadequate for general swimming, instruction and competition. Only a fraction of those who wish to attend swimming meets can be accommodated in the inadequate space provided in the Sports Building. The women have no pool worthy of the name, and the load on the Sports Building pool has been so heavy that at times it must be closed in the interest of health. . . .

Crisler would work diligently to try and get the new pool constructed as soon as possible, for he wanted Matt to have the opportunity to "christen" the third new swimming facility on the U. of M. campus since the latter's arrival in 1925. Crisler regarded

53Gus Stager, personal interview, op. cit.


Matt with the highest esteem, as the former looked upon his swimming coach as a very dedicated person who sought perfection and excellence in his teams. Crisler believed that Matt's work transcended the competitive endeavors in the pools, for the latter hoped to develop a desire for seeking excellence that would not only enable them to become better competitors, but more importantly, better Americans.56

Matt had hopes that his 1950 U. of M. swimming team, led by seniors Matt III and Gus Stager, would recoup some of Wolverine glory of years gone by. But if Matt's "boys" were going to make any significant inroads against the mighty Ohio State, then a scoring capability would have to be developed which could offset the Buckeyes' diving strength, especially in the big meets.57

The 1950 Wolverine swimming team started out in excellent fashion with convincing victories over Purdue (60-33), Minnesota (58-35), and Northwestern (57-27). The U. of M.'s next meet was against Michigan State, and it proved to be a history making event, but not a positive one for Matt's team. In that meet Charlie McCaffree's swimmers recorded the first dual meet victory ever for Michigan State (46-38) over the U. of M. since the series had started in 1922.58

Following the meet, Matt was not highly congratulatory to Charlie, and

56 Based on statements by Herbert O. "Fritz" Crisler, former U. of M. Athletic Director 1941-1968, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 23, 1974.

57 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 14.

58 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 133.
Matt left the natatorium immediately after the meet. The Wolverines closed out the dual meet season with a victory over Iowa (52-32) and a lopsided loss to Ohio State (56-28). The U. of M.'s dual meet record stood at 4-2 going into the conference championship meet.

Soon after the Fortieth Annual Western Conference Swimming Meet, hosted by the U. of M., was underway, Mike Peppe's Buckeye swimming team let their opposition know that it was prepared to win its second consecutive conference title. Ohio State, bolstered by its dominance of the diving events, scored well throughout the meet to record a winning total of 93 points. The Wolverines, while being well back of the winners, swam very well to place second in the meet with 65 points; they finished 19 points ahead of third place Iowa. Matt's swimmers won four championship event titles, with seniors Matt III, Stager and Moss leading the way in the point scoring for the second place team. Matt III, the 1950 U. of M. team captain, won the 220-yard freestyle title, placed second in the 1500-meter freestyle and finished third in the 440-yard freestyle. Stager had placed second in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events, and third in the 1500-meter freestyle. Charlie Moss was the star of the U. of M.'s second place team as he won the 100-yard backstroke, the 150-yard individual medley, and swam a "leg" on the winning 400-yard freestyle relay. Two of the Wolverines' breaststrokers, John Davies, the 1948 Australian Olympian, and Stewart Elliott, had both placed in the top six of 200-yard breaststroke

59 Charles McCaffree, personal interview, op. cit.
60 Michigan's All-Time Record Book, loc. cit.
event. The showing of the 1950 U. of M. team at that conference meet was a great improvement over the previous year's lackluster performance at the championships. 61

For the second time in that 1950 season, Matt took his "boys" to Columbus, Ohio. He hoped his Wolverines would make a better showing than they did on the first trip for the dual meet between Buckeyes and the U. of M. The occasion for the second trip was the Twenty-Seventh Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships, hosted by Ohio State. Based on the number of very good performances turned in by Wolverine swimmers at the recently completed conference meet, there was some hope that Matt's "boys" might put on a challenge for the top place in the meet. A number of excellent performances by swimmers from several teams, plus a series of "flat" races by the Wolverine mainstays, led to a fourth place finish, the lowest finish for the U. of M. since the N.C.A.A. team title was initiated in 1937. Ohio State, with 64 points, won their second consecutive N.C.A.A. swimming title, making a total of six wins for Mike Peppe's teams, since the Buckeye's first title in 1943. The U. of M. with 24 points had finished behind second place Yale (43 points) and Iowa (25 points). Matt's swimmers were unable to win a single N.C.A.A. title event in the meet, but a few second place finishes helped to lighten the spirit of the U. of M. mermen. Moss placed second in the 100-yard backstroke and 150-yard individual medley race and the 400-yard freestyle relay team of Matt III, Stager, Tittle and Neisch, had the only other Wolverine second place in the meet.

Gus Stager, competing in his last collegiate meet, placed third in the 440-yard freestyle and fourth in the 220-yard freestyle. The trio of Matt III, Stager and Moss had competed in their last collegiate swimming meet. They had been excellent competitors and had exhibited leadership qualities in team matters, both in and out of the pool. Matt would miss them dearly. While the U. of M. had slipped in the final team standings, the 1950 N.C.A.A. meet reflected a definite Wolverine atmosphere since the fifth place (Michigan State), sixth place (Stanford), eighth place (Texas) and eleventh place (Purdue) teams were each coached by one of Matt's former Wolverine mermen.62

For the 1951 U. of M. swimming season, Matt would be assisted in his coaching duties by Matt III, while the latter pursued course work for a master's degree in education. Matt classified the Wolverines' chances for a successful 1951 season as only "fair." The June graduation in 1950 had taken its toll of quality big meet performers, especially in the middle distance and distance freestyle events. The sprint freestyle events would be entrusted to team captain, Dave Neisch, who had proven himself as a very competent freestyle relay performer the previous season. The breaststroke event with John Davies and Stewart Elliott appeared to be one of the U. of M.'s strongest for the upcoming season. The 1951 dual meet schedule included six collegiate meets and three exhibition meets.63

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The 1950-51 school year marked the first year for Michigan State as a member of the Western Conference or Big Ten. Charlie McCaffree's Michigan State swimmers made their first appearance against conference competition a most auspicious occasion, as they opened the season at home with a thorough "dunking" of the once "unsinkable" Wolverines by a score of 55 to 29. The U. of M. rebounded from that disappointing opening meet loss by winning a close meet over Purdue (50-43). The sprinting of Neisch proved to be a decisive factor for Michigan in the Purdue victory, as he won the 100-yard freestyle, placed second in the 50-yard freestyle, and anchored the winning 400-yard freestyle relay.\(^64\)

The U. of M. swimmers opened February of that season with a ten-day trip to the East, which included exhibition meets at the Erie Y.M.C.A., York Y.M.C.A., and the N.Y.A.C., and one official collegiate meet against La Salle College. The Wolverines won the meet against La Salle (52-23), while no scores were reported in the other meets, since such meets were no longer counted in the U. of M.'s official dual meet record for a season. In the remaining four meets of the dual meet season, the Wolverines won the first two over Minnesota (47-37) and Bowling Green (48-32), but closed the season with a loss to Ohio State (55-29) and a loss to Iowa (48-43). The Wolverines dual meet record of 4-3 marked the first time the U. of M. swimming team had suffered three losses to conference opponents in the same season.\(^65\)


\(^{65}\)Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., pp. 131-133.
At the Forty-First Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet, held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Wolverines scored 52 points to place third behind the all-powerful Ohio State's winning total of 129 points, and second place Michigan State's 68 points. When Purdue clinched fourth place with 28 points, there was some consolation in the team standings for Matt and the U. of M.; his former "pupils," McCaffree and Papengath (Purdue), had both been a credit to their former coach based on the fine performances of their teams. The Wolverine swimmers were able to win only two championship events in that 1951 Big Ten meet. Stewart Elliott won one title, the 100-yard breaststroke for the U. of M., while his teammate, John Davies, won the 200-yard breaststroke; Davies had placed second in the former race, while Elliott finished second in the 200-yard race. Aside from a couple of third place finishes in the relay events, the Wolverines had a very difficult time mounting a threat for second place in the meet.66

The Twenty-Eighth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship Meet, hosted by the University of Texas, marked a fitting climax to a great collegiate season for Yale and Bob Kiphuth. The Yale swimming mentor had returned to the coaching helm after a year off (1949-50) to rest and recover from two coronary occlusions he had suffered in 1949. Kiphuth's return to coaching for the 1951 season had seen his Yale team post a dual meet record of 13-0, win the E.I.S.L. title, and then win the 1951 N.C.A.A. Swimming Championship Meet by

66 The University of Michigan's 1951 Swimming Prospectus, op. cit., p. 3.
scoring 81 points. Matt's disciple McCaffree had moved Michigan State to second place in the meet with 60 points, two point ahead of third place Ohio State. Two other Wolverine swimming alumni in the coaching ranks had also done an excellent job at that meet, as Tom Haynie's Stanford team placed fourth, and "Tex" Robertson's Texas mermen moved to fifth place. The U. of M. swimmers had experienced a dismal meet with its lowest finish ever, eighth place with 12 points. The Wolverines' Davies and Elliott had secured some of the points in the breaststroke events, the only traces of brightness in the meet.

The demise of the U. of M.'s swimming team during the last couple of years, according to assistant coach Matt III, could be attributed to Matt's being "tired." Matt III stated: "Dad (Matt) had had enough, he was done, he was putting in the time (with his coaching responsibilities), but not the effort." Missing from those teams of 1950 and 1951 had been the blossoming of some "unknown" Wolverines from the underclass ranks to stardom as juniors and seniors. Also missing had been the heralded U. of M. team readiness at the big meets, which had always been the trademark of the teams coached by Matt.

At the end of the 1951 summer season, Matt, his wife and Matt III, plus ten of the Wolverine swimmers went to England for a 23 day exhibition tour. Several years before, Matt had been prepared to take a similar group to England for a series of swimming exhibitions

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67 Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 130.
68 The University of Michigan 1951 Swimming Prospectus, op. cit., p. 2.
69 Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.
by his champion swimmers, but because of the pre-World War II conditions in Europe, the trip had been cancelled. On the 1951 trip in early September, Matt and his boys gave a series of 35 exhibitions in various towns and cities in 23 days. The University of Michigan's Athletic Association had given the group two thousand dollars to help defray the travel costs, while each boy contributed two hundred dollars to the team's expenses. While the group was in England, various families took the boys into the homes and provided meals and overnight lodging. More than 500 children received swimming instructions at the different clinics put on by Matt and his "boys," while close to 35,000 people witnessed the different competitive and novelty stroke exhibitions put on by the team. The trip to England had been a wonderful experience for Matt and the entire group.70

Upon the resumption of his coaching duties at the U. of M., that fall of 1951, Matt was full of excitement for the 1952 collegiate season and more importantly, the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, Finland in August. During the National A.A.U.'s annual convention, held in Daytona Beach, Florida, in the spring of 1951, Matt had been elected as the United States Olympic Team's swimming coach for men. By being named for the Olympic coach's position, Matt had fulfilled a lifelong dream.71 But getting elected to that coach's position had not been accomplished without a struggle with Bob Kiphuth and the power of the "eastern establishment" lodged in the important National A.A.U. and


71Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 15.
Olympic Games committees. Mike Peppe had wanted to be the men's swimming coach for the 1952 Olympic Team, but he also realized that Matt might not have another opportunity for such a post, especially since the latter was nearing his retirement from the University of Michigan. Therefore, Peppe made a decision in Matt's behalf; since the former had already received a nomination for the men's coaching position at the 1951 A.A.U. convention, he stood before the membership and refused to accept the nomination. Peppe stated to the membership that Matt, because of seniority, should be elected as the 1952 coach, for Peppe would be in line for the 1956 coach's position. Mike also realized that without his open support of Matt in front of the membership, Kiphuth and his friends on the committees could swing the votes for a nominee of their choice. Peppe's actions proved successful for Matt, and Peppe was chosen as the 1952 Olympic Team's diving coach for men.

Matt put the candidates for the 1952 Wolverine team through their fall pre-season workouts with a great deal of zeal. According to Matt III, "Dad (Matt) had been rejuvenated by his selection as the Olympic swimming coach for the 1952 Games." But an outstanding "crop" of freshman and sophomore swimmers on the 1952 U. of M. team also provided Matt with the opportunity to work with a squad which had more balance and all-around team strength than any of his teams in

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72 Mike Peppe, personal interview, op. cit.
73 William P. Hotchkiss, op. cit., p. 158.
74 Mike Peppe, personal interview, op. cit.
75 Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.
recent years. Matt was particularly excited about the addition to the team of Burwell "Bumpy" Jones, a freshman sensation from Detroit.76

Jones, whom Matt had worked with since the former was 12 years old, held seven different high school records in Detroit, and also proved to be the top high school swimmer in Michigan. Matt was especially close to Bumpy, since the new U. of M. merman had been a Camp Chikopi camper for the past six summers. Bumpy had developed his excellent swimming skills under Matt's tutelage at the camp and at the Intramural Building pool on Saturday mornings and holidays. During Jones' senior year in high school, when he virtually rewrote the Detroit high school swimming record book, most of his workouts were in Ann Arbor with the U. of M. swimmers. Bumpy performed each of the competitive strokes very well. Matt had indicated that he planned to utilize his frosh sensation in the individual medley event and the freestyle events, where he believed his new pupil would someday be a national champion.77

Three other freshmen whom Matt planned to utilize extensively that 1952 season were Ron Gora and Jim McKeivitt in the freestyle sprints, and John Sampson, a promising backstroker. Returning Wolverines, who would be counted on heavily included freestylers Don Hill and Tom Benner, both sophomores, and the 1952 team's


77 Based on statements by Burwell "Bumpy" Jones, a former U. of M. All-American swimmer, in a personal interview, Sarasota, Florida, August 16, 1974.
co-captains, John Davies and Stewart Elliott, the top breaststroke tandem in the Big Ten conference. The N.C.A.A.'s ruling to make freshmen eligible for varsity competition in the 1952 season, due to great number of men who had been drafted for military service in the Korean conflict, was certainly an asset to the U. of M. swimming team.

The 1952 U. of M. swimming team had given some pre-season hints, in its annual "Gala Meet" and at the Swimming Forum in Fort Lauderdale, that it was indeed a vastly improved team over the past two seasons. A much better indication of the Wolverines' quality and explosiveness was gained from the impressive manner with which Matt's "boys" defeated their opening dual meet opponent, Northwestern, by the score of 65-27. The U. of M., led by underclassmen Jones, Gora, Hill and Benner, won eight of the ten events, set four new pool records, set one new collegiate record and tied another. The quartet of underclassmen swam to a new intercollegiate record of 3:25.4, as they won the 400-yard freestyle relay. Jones tied the intercollegiate record for the 150-yard IM with his time of 1:30.8. The Big Ten championships were still a long way off, but if the meet with Northwestern could be used as an indicator of things to come, then other conference members had best beware of the resurgent Wolverines.

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78The University of Michigan's 1952 Swimming Prospectus, op. cit., p. 4.

79William P. Hotchkiss, op. cit., p. 159.

The successful debut of the 1952 Wolverines was followed by seven consecutive victories over Bowling Green (74-19), Purdue (52-37), Minnesota (69-24), Wisconsin (62-20), Michigan State (52-41), Bainbridge Naval Training Center (55-38), and Iowa (55-38); one loss, to Ohio State (52-37), closed the season. The Wolverines had completed the dual meet season with a record of 8-1, and appeared headed for an excellent conference championship meet. In the Michigan State meet Jones, Hill and Davies each figured in double victories as the Wolverines won the meet. Jones had won the 150-yard I.M. and the 220-yard freestyle; in winning the latter race, Matt's freshman star had defeated the 1951 Big Ten champion in that event, Bert McLachlan. Co-captain John Davies had swum an excellent breaststroke leg on the winning medley relay, and won the 200-yard breaststroke race. Hill pulled off two major upsets by defeating Michigan State's 1951 Big Ten and 1951 N.C.A.A. champion, Clark Scholes, in his specialty events, the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle races. The Wolverines' victory over Michigan State was the first since the 1949 season.

At the Forty-Second Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet at East Lansing, the Ohio State swimmers and divers put on a marvelous display of quality and depth as they won ten of the meet's fourteen events and the conference crown with 125 points. It was the fourth consecutive, and sixth of the last seven, titles for the Buckeyes. Michigan State's mermen, swimming several inspired races before a

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81Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 133.
large gallery of their own fans, placed second in the meet with 66 points, thus spoiling the determined effort of the youthful Wolverines, who scored 60 points. The U. of M.'s three first place finishes were recorded by John Davies' double victories in the breaststroke events, and Bumpy Jones' winning effort in the 150-yard I.M. Although disheartened by the U. of M.'s failure to capture second place in the meet, Matt did find some consolation in the results of the individual events, since he expected many of Ohio State's record setters would be swimming for him and the United States in the 1952 summer Olympic Games.  

In between the conference meet and the N.C.A.A. meet, the Wolverines swam one more dual meet, against Wayne, and scored a 75-18 victory, to finish the season 9-1. Matt was anxious to test his young Wolverines in the big meet of the collegiate season, the Twenty-Ninth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships, hosted by Princeton University. Ohio State regained the team title with 94 points, followed by Yale in second place, and the U. of M. in third place. Matt's "boys" did make their presence known, however, by winning four events with new N.C.A.A. records in each of the victories. The Wolverines' 400-yard freestyle relay team, comprised of Bumpy Jones, Tom Benner, Walter Jeffries and Don Hill, had done well during the season and took the N.C.A.A. title; Jones won the 150-yard I.M.; and John Davies won both the 100-yard and 200-yard breaststroke championships, and established a new N.C.A.A. and world record of

2:12.9 for the latter event. The 1952 U. of M. swimming team had rebounded very well from its disastrous 1951 season and could begin to look for brighter seasons ahead with many of its record-setting team members scheduled to return for at least two more seasons.®

With the collegiate season completed, Matt focused his attention on the Olympic Games' preparations and upcoming men's swimming team selections. He was excited about the other men who had been selected to work with the men's team. The Olympic swimming team managers were Ed Kennedy and Charlie Reiser, and Mike Peppe was the diving coach. The four men had known each other for many years and formed a very compatible coaching team. The Olympic Trials for the men's eight events, the 100-meter freestyle, 400-meter freestyle, 1500-meter freestyle, 100-meter backstroke, 200-meter breaststroke, 800-meter freestyle relay, and the diving events, three meter and platform, were held in early July at Flushing Meadows, New York. Two of Matt's Wolverine underclassmen, Bumpy Jones and Ron Gora, had made the United States Olympic Team; Gora was the third man in the 100-meter freestyle, and Jones was one of six team members selected from the Trials' 200-meter freestyle event for the places on the 800-meter freestyle relay. The Big Ten Conference was well represented on that 1952 men's Olympic swimming team, for in addition to the two coaches and two U. of M. swimmers, there were seven Ohio State men, one from Iowa, and one from Michigan State.® After the Trials, the team


®Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 15.
MATT MANN II, 1952 UNITED STATES OLYMPIC SWIMMING COACH FOR THE MEN'S TEAM
stayed in the New York area for about a week, but the training facilities were poor, and by the time the swimmers were ready to leave for Finland, most of the men felt that their level of conditioning had fallen off from what it had been when they arrived for the qualifying process.86

When the 1952 Olympic Games swimming events were ready to begin in Helsinki, the weather turned quite cold and windy. Most of the finals for the swimming events were scheduled for the evenings, so that only was the water cold, but the air temperature was rather uncomfortable for the competitors. With only one fifty meter pool for all the men and women swimmers at the Games to work out in, any kind of meaningful preparation was virtually impossible. But Matt did some checking on his own and learned that the pool was vacant between 5:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., when the workers were there cleaning the pool decks. After gaining permission, Matt and Mike Peppe had the men from the U.S. team in the water each morning at 5:00 a.m., leading up to the day of their events. Matt had invited Mike to work with the swimmers, especially since five of the swimmers on the team had been on the 1952 Buckeye team. The other two Ohio State men on the team were divers Bob Clotworthy and Miller Anderson. The two U.S. coaches had hoped to have the swimmers and divers in the pool at least twice each day, before their events, but due to the crowded conditions, they had to settle for the early morning sessions, when the U.S. men had the pool to themselves. During some of those morning sessions the wind blew so

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86 Burwell "Bumpy" Jones, personal interview, op. cit.
hard that Mike had to discontinue his diving practice sessions, especially the sessions for the platform divers.  

When the swimming and diving competition began in the 1952 Olympic Games, Matt and Mike were both very concerned about the chances of the American men. The Japanese swimmers, who had spent several weeks in training in Stockholm, seemed especially fit and acclimatized to the harsh weather in Helsinki. The Japanese coaches had managed to let some of the excellent times recorded by their men "leak" from the practice pool training sessions. But Matt, who had been proclaimed by many of his rival coaches over the years as a "master psychologist," had his own techniques for getting the American "boys" ready, and not letting them be concerned with the Japanese tricks. 

Matt worked individually with most of the swimmers in preparing them for their races; he was using methods which had proved so successful for him during his long career at the U. of M. Matt even brought his famous "rubber watch" along to the Olympic Games. As he worked with a particular swimmer Matt would compliment him about how good the swimmer's stroke appeared. Matt then would have the swimmer go through a briskly paced swim. While he watched the stroke techniques, he would time the swimmer. Upon the completion of the paced swim, Matt would tell the swimmer that he looked great and his time was outstanding, but Matt would not show the swimmer the watch time. Matt had been well known for the fast times from his "rubber watch" throughout his career, and even though a swimmer might expect to hear

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87 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 15.
88 Ibid.
an outstanding time from Matt, his coach had a special way of making the swimmer believe that he was ready for the impending competition. Matt had also worked hard on instilling a deep sense of pride in the U.S. swimming team members, emphasizing the fact that they were swimming for America, the greatest country in the world. 89

When the 1952 Olympic Games swimming competition was completed, it was obvious that Matt and Mike had done an excellent job, as the American swimmers and divers won six of the eight events contested, and placed second in the two events they did not win. The first American victory had gone to Clark Scholes, one of Charlie McCaffree's Michigan State "boys," in the 100-meter freestyle with a new Olympic record of :57.1. The Wolverines' Ron Gora had placed eighth in that 100-meter freestyle final. In the next event, the 400-meter freestyle, Ford Konno of the United States, and Ohio State, placed second to the Frenchman Boiteux. Konno swam very well as his time of 4:31.3 was less than a second behind the winner. In the 100-meter backstroke final, Americans Yoshi Oyakawa and Jack Taylor placed first and third, respectively, with Oyakawa, another Ohio State merman, setting a new Olympic record of 1:05.4. The 200-meter breaststroke was won by one of Matt's Wolverines, John Davies, who was representing his home country of Australia. Davies set a new Olympic record of 2:34.4 as he was pushed right down to the last stroke by America's Bowen Stassforth; his time of 2:34.7 was also under the previous record for the event. In the 1500-meter Freestyle, America's Konno swam away from his competition in the last 100-meters to win the event and establish a new world

89 Burwell "Bumpy" Jones, personal interview, op. cit.
record of 18:30. In the final swimming event on the program, the 800-meter freestyle relay, the American team of Wayne Moore, Bill Woolsley, Ford Konno and Jimmy McLane engaged the Japanese in a stroke for stroke duel until the anchorman, McLane, was able to open the winning margin of about ten yards. In addition to the gold medals they received for their victory, the relay team also came away with the new Olympic record for the event of 8:31.1. The Americans Browning, Anderson and Clotworthy swept the first three places, respectively, in the three-meter diving, while teammate Sammy Lee won the platform diving. The American men's swimming and diving teams had done an excellent job at the 1952 Olympic Games, and their coaches, Matt and Mike Peppe, were praised, not only for the medal winning efforts of the team members, but more importantly for the fine sportsmanship each team member had displayed in victory or defeat.90

Matt conducted his pre-season workouts for the 1953 U. of M. swimming team with the enthusiasm of a coach still "wet behind the ears." The Olympic coaching experience had given him a new freshness for his duties with the Wolverine swimmers that fall of 1952. The return of swimmers like Jones, Gora, Hill, and Benner from the 1952 squad also made the outlook for the 1953 season a bright one.91

In the opening dual meet of the 1953 season, the Wolverines completely dominated the Northwestern team by winning nine of the ten events to record a 61-28 victory. Don Hill won the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle events, and swam the anchor leg on the 400-yard

90 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 16.
91 Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.
freestyle relay, while Bumpy Jones won the 150-yard I.M. and teamed with Peter Dow and Tom Benner to win the 300-yard medley relay. The ease with which the opening meet victory was accomplished seemed to support Matt's pre-season forecast, that his boys possessed the potential to return the U. of M. to some of its swimming glory of years gone by.92

The 1953 Wolverines proceeded through their other seven dual meets without a loss. The U. of M.'s seven victories, following the opening victory, were over Iowa (62-21), Purdue (54-39), Bowling Green (74-10), Michigan State (55-38), Iowa State (63-30), Minnesota (67-26) and the season finale against conference arch rival Ohio State (50-43). The victory over the Buckeyes was the U. of M.'s first win in dual meet competition since the 1949 season. Matt's boys had completed their dual meet season with an 8-0 record, their first undefeated season since the 1948 season, when the Wolverines had an identical 8-0 record.93

As powerful as the U. of M. swimming team had seemed during the 1953 dual meet season, it was unable to offer the Buckeyes a real challenge for the Forty-Third Annual Big Ten Swimming Meet team title. Ohio State won its fifth consecutive conference crown with 102 points, followed by the U. of M. with 68 points in second place, some 20 points ahead of third place Michigan State. The Wolverines' second place finish was a marked improvement over the consecutive third place finish the UW had achieved in each of the preceding 10 seasons.


93Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 133.
finishes by the 1951 and 1952 teams, but the current group of Michigan swimmers still lacked the overall quality and diving strength to be a serious threat to Ohio State in championship competition. Matt's "boys" did manage three firsts in the meet, as Bumpy Jones was two events, the 150-yard I.M. and the 220-yard freestyle, while the third championship went to the 400-yard freestyle relay team of Don Hill, Tom Benner, Ron Gora, and John Ries. Hill had also finished second in the 50-yard freestyle, and Gora had the identical place finish in the 100-yard freestyle. The lack of one or more specialty stroke men, in addition to Jones, and a distance freestyle star to challenge Ohio State's Konno, indicated the kind of new men Matt would need if the Wolverines were going to be a legitimate threat to unseat Ohio State from the conference "throne" in 1954.

Matt's 1953 U. of M. swimming team completed their collegiate competition for the season with a third place finish in the Thirtieth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship Meet. The host team, Ohio State, finished second in the meet with 73 1/2 points, as a powerful Yale squad swept to the victory with 96 1/2 points. Kiphuth had assembled a very talented group of individual stars, who had continued the Yale unbeaten dual meet string to 100, when the team entered the 1953 N.C.A.A. meet. That Yale team was so rich in talent,

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96 Peter E. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 143.
that some experts had regarded it as one of the most powerful teams in the history of the collegiate sport.\textsuperscript{97} The U. of M.'s third place total of 39 points had been the product of its talented quartet of Hill, Jones, Gora and Benner. Matt's "boys" had collected three championships, as the "quartet" won the 400-yard freestyle relay in a new N.C.A.A. meet record of 3:24, Hill streaked to the 50-yard freestyle title, and Jones successfully defended his 300-yard I.M. crown. Former Wolverine mermen, Tom Haynie and Charlie McCaffree, had coached their respective teams of Stanford and Michigan State to fourth and fifth places in the meet's final standings. If the U. of M. was again going to make a serious bid for the N.C.A.A. swimming title, which it had last won in 1948, several new "boys" with the capabilities of that 1953 "quartet" would have to be added to the 1954 team.\textsuperscript{98}

As Matt put his Wolverine squad of 20 "boys" through a typical routine of fall pre-season training sessions; he was very impressed with the talented group which had been drawn together for his last season as the University of Michigan's swimming coach. During the previous spring of 1953, Matt had been notified by the Board of Regents that in accordance with its mandatory retirement policy, he would have to retire at the end of the 1953-1954 academic year. It was very difficult, from an emotional standpoint, for Matt to accept such a policy. He believed that he was still very capable of carrying out his coaching duties in the high caliber manner for which he had been complimented throughout his career by the U. of M.'s athletic directors,

\textsuperscript{97}Ibid., p. 139.

\textsuperscript{98}"Michigan Swimmers Third At Nationals," loc. cit.
MICHIGAN SWIMMING TEAM 1953-54

(front row left to right)

James H. Walters, Charles C. Bates

(second row)

Edward J. Furdak, Peter A. Dow, Robert A. Knox,
John M. Chase, Jr.; Lawrason D. Thomas

(third row)

John P. O'Reilly, Donald P. Hill, Matt Mann II,
H. Thomas Benner, Robert Wardrop,
Glenwood I. Miller (standing)

(fourth row)

J. Michael Delaney, John C. Wardrop, Donald L. Ferguson,
Ronald F. Gora, Burwell O. Jones, Barrett S. Wayburn,
James M. Kruthers (Donald E. Potter missing)
Yost and Crisler. Matt stated openly, to many of his colleagues at the U. of M., that a person should not be forced to retire because of age, but rather, that person should be judged on his ability to perform the job in question. As Matt approached his sixty-ninth birthday, that fall of 1953, he realized that his last Wolverine team would be an exciting group to coach, with the potential to capture the two titles which had become so elusive in recent years, the Big Ten and N.C.A.A.

Matt was extremely pleased with his co-captains, Don Hill and Tom Benner, for the 1954 Wolverine team. They would provide the kind of inspirational leadership needed for the underclassmen, by their hard workout patterns and their "do it for Michigan" attitude. Three N.C.A.A. All-Americans, Bumpy Jones, Ron Gora and John Chase (back-stroker on the All-American medley relay), along with their All-American co-captains, would be called upon, throughout the season, to put the major share of the U. of M.'s first place points on the scoreboard each meet. The continued improvement of the divers, especially Jim Walters and Charlie Bates, would shore up one area of weakness from the 1953 team. The addition of a "pair of imports," Jack and Bert Wardrop, brother, from Motherwell, Scotland, had provided the Wolverines with the distance freestyler and the versatile all stroke man, respectively, the team had needed in 1953.

At Matt's last "Gala Meet" production, in his capacity as swimming coach, he carefully introduced his full "cast of players" for

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99 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 16.

the upcoming 1954 season. The state A.A.U. events, which were on the meet's program, provided the full house of spectators with a sneak preview of the "show" they might expect when the curtain went up for the final act of Matt's great performance at the University of Michigan, begun thirty years before. The Wolverine swimmers won each of the A.A.U. events, and then put on a thoroughly enjoyable exhibition of novelty strokes and special events for the fans. Matt was in his glory as he announced the program, and he entertained the crowd with several anecdotes about his swimming and collegiate swimming.\footnote{101}

The U. of M. swimmers opened the 1954 dual meet season with two easy victories over Northwestern (72-21) and Iowa State (57-26), before they encountered a very tough meet with the University of Oklahoma. The Wolverines barely escaped from Norman with a victory, as the meet's results hinged upon the outcome of the final event, the 400-yard freestyle relay. Matt's relay of Benner, Gora, Knox and Hill won the thrilling event, and with that victory came the meet win with a score of 44-40.\footnote{102}

Following the U. of M. swimming team's "close call" with Oklahoma, Matt's "boys" proceeded to reel off three more victories over Purdue (64-29), Michigan State (69-24), and Iowa (75-18). In the final dual meet of the season, and Matt's last as mentor of the Wolverines, the victory string of six consecutive meets was halted by the powerful Buckeyes, in Columbus, (52-41). In spite of the final


meet defeat, the Wolverines had posted a very successful 6-1 dual meet record for Matt's final season.103

In honor of Matt's retirement from the University of Michigan, the Forty-Fourth Annual Big Ten Swimming Championship Meet had been awarded to the Ann Arbor institution. The Wolverine swimmers had adopted the slogan, "Win one more big one for Matt!," which they constantly chanted at the meet. In a hard fought, almost dual meet like competition, the Ohio State swimmers and divers posted a 125-103 victory over the U. of M. for the former's sixth consecutive conference title. Only one of the 14 events on the championship program had escaped the talent laden Buckeye and Wolverine squads. The U. of M. swimmers won four events: Jones swam to victory in the 200-yard breaststroke (2:21.1), and the 150-yard I.M. (1:29.5), Hill tied for first in the 50-yard freestyle (22.1), a new conference record, and the 400-yard freestyle relay of Gora, Jones, Benner, and Hill (3:23.8) also set a new conference record. The Wolverines had been able to keep the meet close due to the eight second place finishes recorded by its swimmers. Leading the way in the number of runner up finishes were Jack Wardrop, with his second place efforts in the 220-yard, 440-yard and 1500-meter freestyle events, and Jim Walters with two outstanding diving performances in the one meter and three meter events. While Matt's "boys" did not win the conference title, he was especially pleased and proud of the effort they had put forth in pushing Ohio State to the absolute limit in most of the events contested. One of the best examples of the quality and closeness of the events was the 440-yard

103"Michigan's All-Time Record Book," op. cit., p. 133.
freestyle race, in which Jack Wardrop swam stroke for stroke with Ohio State's Ford Konno, with Wardrop losing the race in the last few strokes. Konno's time of 4:28.8 was a new N.C.A.A. record, while Wardrop's second place time of 4:29.9 was also under the previous N.C.A.A. record.\textsuperscript{104}

Matt closed out his marvelous coaching career with the U. of M. swimming team at the Thirty-First Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships. The site of that 1954 N.C.A.A. meet was Syracuse University, the institution at which Matt had his first aquatics teaching position in 1909. The Wolverine swimmers won three N.C.A.A. title races, far too few to pull off the upset they so desired of their conference rivals Ohio State. The Buckeyes were successful in regaining the title by scoring a winning total of 94 points. The 1954 N.C.A.A. crown was the eighth such championship for Mike Peppe. The U. of M.'s event titlists had included Jones in the 150-yard I.M., Jack Wardrop in the 220-yard freestyle, with a new N.C.A.A. record of 2:05, and the 400-yard freestyle relay with Benner, Gora, Hill and Jones. Four second place finishes by Jones in the 200-yard breaststroke, Hill in the 50-yard freestyle, J. Wardrop in the 440-yard freestyle, and the runner up finish by the 300-yard medley relay, were essential in providing the comfortable spread of 31 points between the U. of M. which had 67 points and third place Yale with 36.\textsuperscript{105}


MATT AND THE WOLVERINE'S FIRST PLACE 1954 N.C.A.A.

400-YARD FREESTYLE RELAY TEAM

(left to right)

Ron Gora, Tom Benner, Matt Mann II, Burwell Jones, Don Hill
By closing out the 1954 collegiate season with second place finishes in the Big Ten Championships and the N.C.A.A. Championships, Matt had completed his coaching career at the University of Michigan in a particularly successful manner. When the Wolverine swimming program appeared to be headed for very bleak times, following the 1950 and 1951 seasons, Matt fought off the impending disaster and restored the U. of M. program to a high level of national respectability in 1953 and 1954.\(^{106}\)

Matt's third decade of coaching, 1945-1954, had been characterized by the Wolverines inability to successfully achieve and retain the top rung in the Big Ten Conference and the N.C.A.A. team standing. The U. of M. swimming team had attained the lofty heights of conference champion twice during the decade, 1945 and 1948, and the N.C.A.A. title only once, that being in 1948. The Wolverine swimmers also placed second four times in the N.C.A.A. meet, while filling the runner up place in conference championship meet standings on five occasions. The U. of M.'s dual meet record for that decade of 1945-1954, stood at 62-12, with most of the victories recorded against conference opponents, while six of the losses were inflicted by conference arch rival Ohio State.\(^{107}\)

During his tenure as the University of Michigan's swimming coach, Matt's teams had compiled an outstanding record which included sixteen Western Conference Championships, seven "unofficial" (pre-1937) National Collegiate Swimming Team Championships, six official National

\(^{106}\)Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 16.

Collegiate Swimming Team Championships (1937-1941, 1948), and a dual meet record of 212 wins, 28 losses, and 3 ties. In his 30 years at the U. of M., Matt had taken a swimming program from its "infant" stages to full fledged maturity, as the top team in the collegiate swimming world; where the Wolverines retained a place among the top three teams through his retirement. While the program appeared to peak or reach its apex in the 1930's and early 1940's, aside from a few brief "illnesses," especially early in the 1950's, Matt had maintained a healthy and vibrant program throughout his career at the University of Michigan from 1925-1954. 108

In an April 1954 issue of The Michigan Alumnus, is an article which paid tribute to Matt for his fine record, the writer had written:

... His (Matt's) devotion to the University, born under the inspiration of Fielding Yost, is almost as much a part of his life as is swimming. While the University loses him as coach, Ann Arbor will travel with him wherever he goes, and he will always be Michigan's Mann. 109


Chapter 11

A REPRIEVE FROM RETIREMENT - THE OKLAHOMA YEARS

Following the completion of the Wolverines' 1954 swimming season, Matt was, as one might expect, "down in the dumps" emotionally. With the preparations for meets, the travel throughout the season, and the excitement of swimming competitions over, Matt had many opportunities to reflect on those wonderful Michigan years which had slipped by so quickly. While seemingly little incidents of the past "conjured" up so many pleasant memories for Matt, it was the days, months, and years, which would follow the 1954 camp season, that he had become most concerned about. Matt knew that he had a lot of life left in himself, and he felt that some group could still benefit from his talents. He was not ready to quit the "swimming game," but his problem at that time was to find someone who needed a sixty-nine year old coach.

One incident did occur during the spring of 1954 which would have allowed Matt to continue at the U. of M. for the 1954-1955 school year, in his official position as Supervisor in Physical Education and Swimming Coach. It seems that someone in the U. of M.'s Personnel Division had reviewed Matt's records, and placed the latter's name on a list of the University's staff who would have their seventieth birthday during the 1953-1954 academic year. When Matt had been

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1Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 17.

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informed that he would have to retire in the spring of 1954, he did not inquire about the mandatory retirement policy applying to age seventy. He had reacted to the notice from the Board of Regents as being official, and therefore did not inquire about the specifics of the policy. During a review of the Retirement Furlough list for 1953-1954, it was discovered that Matt would not reach his seventieth birthday until December, 1954. The Board of Regents made an official invitation to Matt in the spring of 1954, for him to return as swimming coach for the U. of M. team for the 1954-1955 academic year. Matt respectfully declined the Board of Regents' invitation for reasons which were not revealed to the Board or the public.2

While Matt was still on the U. of M. campus, in late spring of 1954, Athletic Director H. O. "Fritz" Crisler announced that his department had hired two men, Gus Stager and Bruce Harlan, to fill the position being vacated by the retiring Matt. Stager, a former "pupil" of Matt's and an N.C.A.A. All-American for three different years as a Wolverine swimmer, had been hired as the new swimming coach; Harlan, a former All-American diver from Ohio State, was employed in the newly-created post of Wolverine diving coach.3 There was some surprise among local supporters of the U. of M.'s swimming program that Matt III had not been selected to fill his father's former post. But Matt III had not applied for the position because he was not interested in


coaching on the college level. Out of courtesy to his father, Matt III did have a meeting with E. O. Crisler about the swimming coach's position, but only because Matt had set up the interview for his son, without discussing the matter with Matt III.

Crisler confirmed that Matt had not come to him with any specific recommendations about who should fill the U. of M. swimming coach's position. Stager had been selected as the new coach based on the outstanding high school record his teams had achieved in Michigan, his thorough understanding of the Wolverine swimming tradition and his knowledge about what it took to develop and maintain a winning swimming program.

Matt was happy with the selection of Stager as the new swimming coach. He had admired Stager when he was a Wolverine swimmer because the latter practiced hard and "produced" in the big meets. While Stager was establishing his successful record on the high school level, he often visited Matt to discuss a variety of swimming coaching ideas. Matt appreciated Stager's continued interest in his coaching ideas, for the latter openly admitted that the application of many of Matt's methods and techniques had helped him establish his successful high school record in Dearborn.

4Based on statements by Matt Mann III, in a personal interview, East Lansing, Michigan, May 24, 1974.

5Based on statements by H. O. "Fritz" Crisler, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 23, 1974.

6Based on statements by Gus Stager, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 23, 1974.
Before Matt's retirement became official, Fritz Crisler made public the plans of the U. of M.'s athletic department to initiate a seven million dollar building expansion program. The work on the project, which would involve the construction of several sports facilities in the vicinity of the University's athletic complex, would get underway in the summer of 1954. Matt was particularly interested in one facility in the project, that being the new men's swimming pool or natatorium complex. The natatorium would be built at a cost of $800,000, very close to the specifications and design that Matt had presented to Crisler when the planning project was in its early stages. The pool would be 25 yards long, by 50 feet in width, with a diving well built out from the middle of one of the outside lanes. Most of the seating spaces for 3,000 spectators would have unobstructed views of the area for swimming competition, as well as the diving area. Matt was pleased and proud that his design would be implemented, but he was disappointed that he would not have the opportunity to coach a Wolverine team in such a wonderful facility.

The summer of 1954 was a pleasant time for Matt as he worked with the children at Camp Chikopi and Camp AK-O-MAK. Matt had more freedom at the two camps the past few summers, than he had in earlier camp sessions, because his camp directors, Matt III at Chikopi, and his daughter, Rose Mary, at AK-O-MAK, carried out their administrative duties in a most competent manner. Matt devoted quite a bit of his time

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8Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 17.
to working with young children on basic swimming skills, and stroke improvement work with competitive swimmers at both camps. Matt stayed busy doing his aquatics work throughout the summer, and he seemed quite content. But upon his return to Ann Arbor following the 1954 summer season, Matt turned quite somber and just plain "hard to live with." For the first time in 30 years he was not doing what he so dearly loved, coaching swimming, and more specifically, coaching the U. of M. "boys."^9

During the fall of 1954, Matt established a regular pattern of going to the U. of M. campus a few days each week, with each visit lasting not more than two hours. He still made a point of not missing the Friday "noon hour" faculty water polo sessions, which he had first initiated back in 1925, for those sessions gave him an opportunity to spend some moments of enjoyment in his former "home" away from home. Matt had some favorite people on the campus that he enjoyed conversing with on a regular basis, which gave him something to look forward to each week. But Matt made a point of staying away from the Wolverine swimming practice sessions. He did not feel that he could stand on the deck or in the stands without getting involved in the actual practice sessions, which he would like to have done; he realized that it was now Gus' program. Matt did not want anyone thinking that the "old coach" had a hand in the coaching of the 1955 Wolverine team.^10

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^9Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.

^10Based on statements by Dr. Clark Hopkins, in a personal interview, Ann Arbor, Michigan, July 20, 1973.
When the 1954 Christmas holidays were approaching, Matt and his wife, Lea, made their plans to attend the Swimming Forum in Ft. Lauderdale, realizing that the trip would be different. For the first time since the mid-1930's, Matt would be at the Forum without a group of Wolverine swimmers to coach. Matt enjoyed the festivities of the Forum that winter, for many of his long time coaching colleagues made him feel very much a part of the program. He was called upon by different coaches to give talks to their swimmers, especially high school groups. Matt also felt comfortable at that Forum because of the presence of other retired coaches, who still made it a regular practice to attend the annual affair. He had also attracted a bit of special attention from the members of the coaching group because, following the close of the Forum, he and Lea would leave for Panama where he had been invited to conduct a two-week swimming coaches clinic.  

The trip to Panama in January, 1955, was a wonderful experience for Matt and his wife. They were treated royally during their stay, and Matt felt that his clinic for the physical education teachers and swimming coaches, from various sections of Panama, had gone very well. During the days of his stay in Panama, Matt visited several pools and worked with the competitive swimmers at those facilities. In the evenings Matt conducted his clinic for the teachers and coaches. He started each evening session with a lecture, through a translator, and then followed with a session in a beautiful 50-meter pool, giving the participants the opportunity to work on stroke techniques. Matt believed that such clinic programs, which bring people from different

11Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 17.
countries together around a sports theme, did a great deal for promoting better international understanding among peoples of the world.12

The 1955 winter season had been a difficult one for Matt to get through, for it was the first winter season since 1908 that he had not been involved in some form of regular swimming instruction and coaching program. Matt had, on a few occasions that winter, been involved with some coaching of the girls' team at the Ann Arbor Swim Club. Matt's daughter, Rose Mary, who had successfully coached the girls at Camp AK-O-MAK in the summers, had started the team at the local swim club. Matt's visits to the club were not on a scheduled basis, but as soon as he did appear at a practice session, he got right to work checking the stroke, turn and starting techniques of the girls. But such intermittent sessions were insufficient to bridle Matt's enthusiasm for a return to coaching on a full-time basis.13

Matt's Wolverine coaching replacements, Stager and Harlan, had completed their opening season in a first class fashion. After compiling an outstanding undefeated dual meet season of 9-0, highlighted by the 47-46 win over Ohio State, the Wolverines placed second to Ohio State in the Big Ten Championships, and tied for second with Yale, behind Ohio State, at the N.C.A.A. Swimming Championships. Based on those 1955 U. of M. swimming season statistics, the Wolverine swimming

12 Ibid.

13 Based on statements by Buck Dawson, Director of the International Swimming Hall of Fame, and son-in-law of Matt, in a personal interview, March 5, 1974.
program had indeed been entrusted to a pair of very capable and enthusiastic coaches.\textsuperscript{14}  

At the July, 1955, meeting of the U. of M.'s Board of Regents a special statement, called the "Matt Mann II Memoir," honoring Matt for his great achievements in intercollegiate swimming as the Wolverine coach, and his many contributions to the glory of the University of Michigan, was placed in the official proceedings of that meeting. An additional honor bestowed on Matt by the Board at that meeting was the action to confer upon him the title of Supervisor Emeritus in Physical Education and Swimming Coach Emeritus, and then the Board invited him to avail himself of the courtesies that are customarily extended to emeritus members of the faculty.\textsuperscript{15}  

Matt's family had hoped that his return to the refreshing atmosphere of Camps Chikopi and AK-O-MAK, that summer of 1955, would bring a return to his pre-retirement emotional state of being easy going, lighthearted and pleasant to be around, but that was not to be the case for a good part of the summer. Actually an appreciable change in Matt's rather "depressed" behavior was not detected until after a meeting between Matt and one of his second year campers, Jeff Farrell, had taken place.\textsuperscript{16}  

The meeting between Matt and Farrell occurred late in the summer, and the discussion centered around Farrell's displeasure with

\textsuperscript{14}Michigan's All-Time Record Book, op. cit., p. 133.  

\textsuperscript{15}Proceedings of the Board of Regents, August 1954–June 1957, loc. cit.  

\textsuperscript{16}Matt Mann III, personal interview, op. cit.
the swimming coaching situation at the University of Oklahoma. Farrell, who had first come to Camp Chikopi in the summer of 1954, was identified by Matt as a swimmer with great potential. Under the watchful eye of Matt, Farrell had improved dramatically in his competitive swimming skills during the short summer season of 1954. When Farrell enrolled that fall at the University of Oklahoma (U. of O.), he had hoped to continue his competitive swimming in a good collegiate program. While the U. of O. won the Big Seven Conference Championship in 1955, the Sooner swimmers had won the title "in spite of" the coach, rather than, "because of" the coach. The U. of O.'s swimming coach, Tom Rawlinson, for 1955, was also the head trainer for the athletic department, and he had little time for the swimming coach's responsibilities, which had been assigned to him; because of Rawlinson's limited time for the swimming coaching, there was some question as to whether he would hold that position the next season. Jeff Farrell liked the U. of O., but he had considered transferring to another institution so that he might receive better coaching during his intercollegiate swimming career. Matt had convinced Farrell that he should consider attending a university from the academic standpoint first, then look at the school's swimming program. Since Jeff was happy with the academic program at the U. of O., he had decided to return there for the 1955-1956 school year. The possibility of the coaching vacancy at the U. of O. had prompted Matt to suggest to Jeff that, if the U. of O.'s athletic department was interested in securing the services of an experienced swimming coach, Matt was ready and available to assume such a position.17

17Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 17.
When Farrell returned to the U. of O. campus, in the fall of 1955, he soon discovered that the Sooners' swimming coach's position had not been filled for the upcoming season. Jeff immediately went to the U. of O.'s athletic director, Charles "Bud" Wilkinson, to inform him of Matt's availability. Jeff assured Director Wilkinson that Matt was not "too old" for the Sooner job, and that the former Wolverine mentor would be a great asset to the U. of O.'s intercollegiate swimming program.18

Bud Wilkinson had known Matt personally for several years, and he was very familiar with the job Matt had done for the University of Michigan. Rather than waste any time with written correspondence, Wilkinson placed a call to Matt in Canada, while the latter was still in the process of closing his camps for the long Canadian winter. Wilkinson asked Matt directly if he would like to assume the "coaching reins" for the 1956 Sooner swimming team. Matt's response was an immediate yes, and that he would come to Norman as soon as possible to discuss the details of the coaching position.

When Matt arrived at the U. of O., his first question for Wilkinson was, "What kind of team do you want at Oklahoma?" Without a moment's hesitation, Wilkinson replied, "Matt, we want the finest swimming team that it is possible for us to have." When Matt heard that reply, he knew he had come to the right place. The two men worked out


19Based on personal correspondence between Charles "Bud" Wilkinson, former Director of Athletics at the U. of O., and the writer, August 26, 1976.
the details for Matt's employment, which would cover the period from December 1, 1955, and extend through the week after the N.C.A.A. Swimming Championships in late March of 1956.20

Before returning to Ann Arbor, Matt met with the returning lettermen and freshmen from the 1955 U. of O. swimming team, and the new candidates for the freshmen team. Matt informed the entire group that if they wanted to swim for him at the U. of O., then they should be prepared for a training season of hard work. He explained that he would not return until December 1, but their training was to begin that day in September and continue every day, if possible, until his first practice session in December. Matt had outlined a program for the swimmers to get started with under the direction of Graham Johnston, a former Sooner swimmer from South Africa; for the ensuing weeks he would mail the team's workouts to Johnston so that he would be able to conduct the training sessions. Matt put his 1956 U. of O. team through a couple of workouts before leaving for Ann Arbor, so that he could see what kind of talent was on the squad, and could expose the group to Matt's style of workouts. The Sooner swimmers seemed to take to Matt's workouts immediately, with Jeff Farrell leading the way. When Matt returned to Ann Arbor there was little doubt in his mind that his new team would be physically prepared for his December workouts.21

Matt was genuinely excited about his coaching opportunity with the U. of O., and he was determined to make the best of it. Matt had arranged for an apartment in the married students complex on the

20Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 17.
21Ibid.
Oklahoma campus, for Lea and himself, during their four months in
Norman. Before he set foot inside the U. of O. natatorium in December,
Matt had done his "homework" on the backgrounds of his 1956 swimmers.
He realized that he had several excellent swimmers with previous
successes in big meet competition. Matt knew that he would call on at
least four of those swimmers extensively that 1956 season. That group
included three South Africans, Peter Duncan, a distance freestyler,
Lin Meiring, a backstroker, and Julian Dyason, a breaststroker, and an
American, Jeff Farrell, a sprint freestyler. Matt was quite familiar
with Farrell's potential, and he had seen Duncan in action in the
440-yard freestyle at the 1954 N.C.A.A. meet, when the latter had won
a heat of the championship event. Another sprinter, Tom Kehoe, had
looked very sharp in those September workouts and was expected to add
strength in the short events and relays.22

Prior to the Sooners first official December workout, Matt
greeted several members of the press, in the U. of O.'s swimming pool
spectator area, by saying, "First of all, the name is Matt, not Mr. Mann,
I worked for 50 years to get the name Matt known, and I don't want it
forgotten here in Norman." When Matt was asked what kind of team he
would put in the tank for his initial season at the U. of O., he
predicted:

... 1) That Oklahoma should be able to defend its Big Seven
Championship without too much trouble.
2) That Oklahoma should finish fifth or sixth in the
N.C.A.A. championship meet.

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22Swimming, 1956, The Official Press Release, The University of
Oklahoma Athletic Department (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1955),
p. 1.
3) That sophomore sprinter Jeff Farrell will be in the first dozen sprinters in the country.

4) That senior freestyler Peter Duncan, of South Africa, should go great guns in the 220-yard, 440-yard and 1500-meter freestyle races.

The Sooners would open the 1956 season with a mid-December exhibition meet with the Indianapolis A.C., followed by the U. of O.'s first visit to the Collegiate Swimming Forum in Ft. Lauderdale. Matt was very excited about returning to the Forum in an active coaching role, instead of the capacity of honored retired coach, which he had experienced the preceding year.23

According to several long-time "regulars" at the College Swimming Forum, Matt was full of enthusiasm and vitality at the workouts and clinics of the 1955 affair. He seemed to be constantly in motion, in the pool with his swimmers or walking on the beach, throughout the duration of the Forum. Matt was proud of his new coaching position, and when he spoke with his coaching colleagues, he had some harsh words for the policy which had "sent him packing" after 30 years of faithful employment. He believed the U. of M.'s Board of Regents needed to rescind its "mandatory retirement for faculty and staff at age seventy policy," and institute a policy for considering the quality of work a person was capable of producing, regardless of the staff member's age.

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Matt stated: "I disagreed violently with the people who claimed I had to retire because of my age..."24

Before the start of the 1956 dual meet season, Matt announced the formation of several swimming classes at the U. of O. natatorium, which he would initiate for male U. of O. faculty members and the children of faculty and staff. Matt had reserved the noon hour on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for male faculty members to work on basic swimming skills, with the plan calling for a progression of instruction to the finer points of the "swimming game." Matt had also scheduled two classes for the children of faculty members, one class for boys under age 14 on Saturday afternoon from 2:00-4:00 p.m., while the other class was for girls, also under age 14, on Sunday afternoon from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Although Matt been hired as the swimming coach, with no direct duties outside of his work with the competitive swimmers, he simply loved swimming too much not to get more involved with helping other people swim more efficiently.25

The Sooner swimming team opened its 1956 season by participating in the Oklahoma A.A.U. Swimming Championships, January 13 and 14, at the U. of O. natatorium. Although Matt had only started his full-time coaching duties in early December, he was able to get the state A.A.U. to award the non-team Oklahoma Swimming and Diving Championships to the


25"Staff Swim Class At O.U. Planned By Mann," Oklahoma Daily, January 6, 1956, Scrapbook 1 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 3.
U. of O. The Sooners won most of the men's individual and relay titles, as Dick Thatcher and Jeff Farrell each recorded double victories. Thatcher received the meet's outstanding performer award as he won the 100-yard butterfly and 200-yard orthodox breaststroke races. Farrell's two victories came in the 100-yard freestyle, with a new state record time of :51.5, and the 220-yard freestyle events. Based on the performances turned in by the Sooners, Matt was quite optimistic about the team's chances in the dual meet season. His positive outlook would receive a very stern test in the U. of O.'s opening meet against Iowa State, since the latter institution's swimming teams had not lost a Big Seven dual meet in the past 15 years.26

Matt's first dual meet in the Big Seven Conference against Iowa State was a great test for the Sooners. Iowa State, coached by Jack McGuire, had its 15 year record of no losses in a conference dual meet on the line. Many people were interested in seeing if Matt, one of the greatest coaches in the history of intercollegiate swimming, could come into a "new territory" and duplicate his winning ways. Matt and McGuire had met before in "natatorial combat," that occasion being when Michigan defeated Iowa State in the 1953 season. McGuire had hoped his Cyclone team would provide a rather unpleasant introduction to the Big Seven Conference for Matt and his Sooner team. That was not the case, however, as the U. of O.'s swimmers overwhelmed the visitors from Iowa by winning seven of ten events. The Sooners won the meet by a score of 56-28, and clearly served notice that they wanted to be

26"Mann's First Meet At O.U.," The Oklahoma Daily, January 11, 1956, Scrapbook 1, Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 4.
recognized as the top team in the conference, even though the season was still very young. The Sooners' Farrell and Tom Kehoe had humbled Iowa State's Jim McKevitt in the 100-yard freestyle, as Matt's "boys" placed first and second in the event, with Farrell's winning time of :51.4 tying the pool record held by Matt's former Michigan sprinter, Don Hill. Going into the meet, McKevitt had been recognized as the Big Seven's top sprinter of all-time. Farrell had also anchored the winning 300-yard medley relay and 400-yard freestyle relay teams.

Sooner distance star Peter Duncan won the 440-yard freestyle, was second in the 220-yard freestyle, and swam a leg on the freestyle relay. The "fiery" Kehoe had won the 50-yard freestyle and gave the freestyle relay team a lead which it never relinquished after his lead off leg.

Matt was thoroughly pleased with his team's swimming efforts, but he also recognized that many of his freestylers needed work on their turns, as he remarked, "There will be no more grab turns at Oklahoma, by the next meet all the boys will be flipping."

Following the impressive opening dual meet victory by Matt's Sooners, several members of the media who normally covered the U. of O.'s athletic exploits, had been attracted to the Sooner swimming program with its 71 year old coach. In a little more than a month's time, Matt's outspoken qualities had helped move intercollegiate swimming and the sport of swimming in general to a prime position on the sports pages of many of Oklahoma's major newspapers. Vernon Snell,

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the Sports Editor of the Oklahoma Times, who had taken more than a token glance or fleeting interest in Matt's work, visited several of the Sooner workouts, as well as the Iowa State meet. Snell was so moved by what he had observed that he wrote:

One of the finest coaching jobs being done in this land of ours is currently being turned in at the University of Oklahoma by Matt Mann. One can't realize the remarkable piece of work Mann is doing unless he'd seen the O.U. aquatic stars last year and then seen them in the Iowa State meet. There is a vast difference, the attitudes of many of the swimmers have changed markedly. They were quite a rowdy and rebellious bunch last year. Each boy is swimming and diving better than he did last year.

... Having a man of Matt Mann's calibre coach at O.U. is like having Casey Stengel come down for the baseball team, or Ben Hogan for golf...28

The Sooners second dual meet opponent that 1956 season would be the University of Texas, the pre-season pick to win the Southwest Conference title. The U. of O.'s opening dual meet victory had convinced Matt that he had a very strong team, and, as he had done while coaching at the U. of M., he openly declared "... that the Sooners were now ready to swim anyone, at anytime..." When he was questioned about what special techniques he had for developing championship teams, Matt cited, "... hard by the swimmers and my close personal association with the boys..."29

During the remaining four meets on the U. of O.'s dual meet schedule, the Sooner swimmers demonstrated the benefits of their hard


training sessions, as they swam to convincing victories in each of the contests. The U. of O. team had defeated Texas (58-22), Kansas (59-25), Southern Methodist (60-24) and Colorado (62-22) to complete Matt's first dual meet season at Oklahoma with a 5-0 record. The Sooners, who had only a couple of days after their last dual meet to make final preparations for the Big Seven Swimming and Diving Championships, would enter the meet as the favorite to retain the title they won in 1955.\textsuperscript{30}

Matt's first Big Seven Swimming and Diving Championship Meet on March 8-9, 1956 turned out to be as successful and exciting as the recently completed dual meet season had been. The U. of O.'s swimmers won nine of the thirteen events on the two-day program, and they amassed a meet winning total of 130 points, to runner-up Iowa State's 102 points; Nebraska (32 points) and Colorado (31 points) placed third and fourth, respectively. On the first day of that conference meet, the Sooner event winners were Peter Duncan in the 1500-meter freestyle and 220-yard freestyle events, Kehoe in the 50-yard freestyle, Lin Meiring in the 200-yard backstroke, and Dick Thatcher in the 200-yard butterfly events. On the second day of the meet, the Sooners were able to build upon their ten point lead from the opening day's events, as Matt's boys won four championship events. Duncan completed a sweep of the major middle-distance and distance freestyle events by winning the 440-yard race. The Sooners also won the 300-yard medley relay title with a conference record of 2:54.9, Meiring captured the

100-yard backstroke event, and Farrell won the 100-yard freestyle with a new conference record of :51.2. Matt was definitely impressed by the Sooner performances, but from a personal standpoint, he felt exhilarated to be associated with a winning program and a conference championship swimming team again.\(^{31}\)

The final meet on the U. of O.'s 1956 swimming schedule was the Thirty-Third Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships held at Yale's Payne Whitney natatorium. Matt's Sooner contingent of seven swimmers was the surprise team of the championships, as the U. of O. finished in third place with 28 points. Ohio State won the 1956 N.C.A.A. championship meet by scoring 68 points to second place Yale's total of 54 points. The top point scorers for the Sooners were Peter Duncan with a second place in the 1500-meter freestyle and a third place in the 440-yard Freestyle, and Lin Meiring, who placed second and third in the 100-yard and 200-yard backstroke events, respectively. The U. of O.'s medley relay team of Meiring, Thatcher and Kehoe, and its freestyle relay team of Kehoe, Rick Rowland, Duncan and Farrell had also placed in the final group of each race. The Sooners' impressive showing at the N.C.A.A. meet, plus the publicity of Matt's presence at the Norman campus, had done a great deal for enhancing the image of swimming in the Big Seven Conference.\(^{32}\)

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\(^{31}\)"O.U. Tankmen Win Second Big Seven Title," Oklahoma Times, March 10, 1956, Scrapbook 1 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 16.

After returning to Ann Arbor, following the 1956 swimming season, Matt had an opportunity to discuss, with some members of the press, his feelings about financial aid for college athletes. During his years at Michigan, Matt had strongly favored the policy that college scholarships were for academic pursuits and were not to be awarded to students on the basis of athletic talents. But after one season at Oklahoma, where financial aid was awarded to certain athletes in all the intercollegiate sports, Matt had changed his "tune," and he openly supported the athletic scholarship program. He made his opinion clear as he stated, ". . . There is a feeling of freedom and pride for both athletes and coaches when the assistance (financial aid) given is open and above board. The suspicion of under-the-table playments is missing. . . ." Matt had also become an advocate of the athletic dormitory policy, or at least the one used at the U. of O. where close to 300 athletes were housed in the same dormitory. Matt liked the idea of housing the athletes together because it brought together students who worked hard in their respective programs for common team goals; the dorm atmosphere promoted an "esprit de corps" among the athletes from different sports.33

By late fall of 1956, Matt had already sent several workouts to the Sooner swimmers who had been training since September, preparing themselves for his early December arrival. While in Ann Arbor, Matt made it a part of his regular daily regimen to go to the U. of M. "new"

natatorium and swim 20 to 30 lengths. On several occasions, following his "distance" swim, Matt had Gus Stager time the former for a 100-yard freestyle sprint; Matt's best effort that fall had been 1:20 for the four lengths. Even as he approached his seventy-second birthday, Matt believed a coach should serve as a role model and should reflect a "high degree" of physical fitness to his swimmers.  

Matt would have a good team for the 1957 swimming season with seven lettermen returning from the Sooners' 1956 conference championship team. But due to the graduation of Duncan, Meiring and Kehoe, who were involved in winning a combined total of seven conference championship events in the 1956 meet, the 1957 team would be lacking in quality performers for the big meets. Matt would count heavily upon Jeff Farrell, in the sprints, Dick Thatcher, in the butterfly, and Rick Rowland, in the distance freestyle events, for leadership throughout the season. In Matt's outlook for the season he stated: "Our team won't be nearly so good as last year but we figure we're still the team to beat in the Big Seven. In the nationals. . . . We won't be as high as third again but we hope to stay in the top ten." Since graduation had taken Duncan and Meiring from the Sooner ranks, Matt did not foresee any of the 1957 Sooners as being capable of scoring as many points as the two South Africans had done in the 1956 N.C.A.A.; thus he was somewhat pessimistic in his outlook toward the national meet. 

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34"Mann At 72 Going Strong," Detroit Times, November 7, 1956, Scrapbook 2 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 22.

The U. of O.'s swimming team opened its 1957 season in grand style by winning all but one of the events in the Oklahoma A.A.U. Championships, hosted at their own natatorium. Jeff Farrell was the meet's only triple winner, as he gathered in the titles for the 50-yard, 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle events. Julian Dyason, one of the team's remaining South Africans, looked particularly impressive in winning both breaststroke events. The Sooners also unveiled a very promising freshman, Gene Adler, from Brooklyn, New York, who won the 200-yard butterfly and 200-yard I.M. events. If the 1957 U. of O. team possessed any major weaknesses in its lineup, they certainly were not obvious at that meet.36

Matt's powerful 1957 Sooner swimming team moved through its dual meet schedule with comparative ease, as it registered a perfect 5-0 record. The U. of O. scored triumphs over Kansas (63-23), Southern Methodist (51-34), Texas (64-21), Kansas State (69-17) and Iowa State (57-28).37 The talent pool of the Sooner squad was too great for the other teams to overcome, especially in dual competition. The Sooners' swimming team had considerably more financial aid available for its swimmers than did the other conference teams. In addition to the "healthy" scholarship fund which Matt had to work with, he also had several very good swimmers who came to the U. of O. upon the


recommendations of their coaches, many of whom had been former Wolverine swimmers. Several of Matt's "boys" from his former Michigan teams were scattered throughout the country but especially in the Midwest, coaching very good swimming teams. Those coaches felt an allegiance to Matt first, and then to their alma mater, the University of Michigan.\footnote{Based on statements by Jack McGuire, former Iowa State University swimming coach, in a personal interview, Cleveland, Ohio, March 28, 1975.}

The Big Seven Swimming and Diving Championship Meet for 1937 was hosted by the U. of O. During the early stages of the two-day affair, Matt had been running the meet as the announcer, as he had for so many years at the U. of M. In the Sooners' dual meets with conference schools, the opposing coaches had not been overly bothered by Matt's "announcing antics." But in that conference championship meet, Matt really upset some of the other coaches. On more than one occasion, when another coach had a verbal challenge or point of contention with Matt about some facet of the meet program, Matt's portion of the ensuing discussion was blasted out over the microphone, belittling the former's point in front of the capacity crowd. Matt's "boys" were rather embarrassed to have Matt carrying on over the loud speaker, and they made a plea to the Iowa State coach, Jack McGuire, to try and get Matt off the microphone. McGuire, who had known Matt for several years, knew the Sooner coach was "a sucker for flattery." During a pause in the meet, McGuire told Matt that the latter's boys thought it was a shame that their great, inspirational coach had to devote his time to announcing the meet instead of being with his swimmers. Matt promptly
MATT MANN II, SOONER COACH, WORKING AS MEET DIRECTOR OF
THE 1957 BIG SEVEN CHAMPIONSHIPS AT NORMAN
discharged the announcing responsibilities to another person and spent the rest of the meet with his swimmers.39

After the announcing situation had been worked out, the 1957 Big Seven Championship Meet went very smoothly. Oklahoma proceeded to record the most lopsided victory in the history of the conference meet by scoring 161 points to second place finisher Iowa State's 80 points, while Colorado was third with 52 points. The Sooners were virtually invincible as they won four events of the first day's program and all seven events on the second day. Thatcher and Farrell were the Sooners' individual stars as both were involved in three victories. Thatcher claimed the two butterfly races, 100-yard and 200-yard, and the 200-yard I.M., while Farrell's victories came in the 100-yard freestyle, 220-yard freestyle and the 400-yard freestyle relay, on which he swam the anchor leg for the team. The Sooners' two South Africans, Julian Dyason and Mel Van Helsdingen, each won two titles. Dyason won the 100-yard and 200-yard breaststroke events, while his countryman won the backstroke events at the same distances. Rick Rowland had been the team's distance star all season, and he finished in style in the Big Seven meet by winning the 440-yard freestyle and 1500-meter freestyle titles.40

The U. of O. swimming team closed out the 1957 season at the Thirty-Fourth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship Meet at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. As Matt had predicted before the start of the 1957 season, the Sooners lacked the outstanding swimmers who

39Ibid.

were capable of scoring high in the N.C.A.A. meet. Matt's "boys" scored 23 points, only five less than in the 1956 N.C.A.A. meet, but in the 1957 meet the Sooners placed seventh in the team standings. The University of Michigan had returned to the victors' throne with 69 points, followed by Yale with 61 points.\textsuperscript{11}

The most significant performance at the 1957 N.C.A.A. meet for the Sooners was Julian Dyason's victory in the 100-yard breaststroke with a record time of 1:03. Dyason had become the first U. of O. swimmer to win an N.C.A.A. title event. Going into the finals for that event, he was not that highly regarded; other swimmers were in the finals with better credentials. But as Bob Bartels, the former Ohio State breaststroke star recalled:

\begin{quote}
... Matt made Dyason believe he could be the champion even though there were people who had had faster times in the race. In the final warm up session before the championship races were begun that evening, Matt told Dyason he looked really great. Matt then asked his swimmer to do a 50-yard swim at about three-quarter speed. After the swim Matt told Dyason, "That was so beautiful I'm not even going to show you the time, you are ready and you are going to win."\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

Unfortunately for the Sooners, Matt was not able to work any special "magic" with his other mermen as far as championships were concerned, although Jeff Farrell did place third in the 100-yard freestyle and 220-yard freestyle events. Matt's record after two seasons at the U. of O. stood at 10-0 in dual meets, two Big Seven Conference Championships, and third and seventh place finishes in the N.C.A.A. Championships.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{42}Dr. Robert Bartels, personal interview, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{43}Swimming, 1958, loc. cit.
A distinct mark of the teams Matt had coached throughout his career had been the ability to win various championships. While Matt considered the winning of a conference or national championship as a worthy goal for a team of quality swimmers, such championships were not to be regarded as the end product by which a team and its coach should be evaluated. Matt had remarked:

Championships will never be more than a by-product of O.U.'s swimming program. They are always a by-product of the things I want to keep on teaching. Things like, the way and the will to win, as a champion should; things like conditioning, competitive heart, clean living, team spirit, and belief in God and self. Every true champion pays a price for these things or his coach and his sport have let him down. . .\(^4^4\)

When Matt arrived in the late fall of 1957, he was brimming with optimism and enthusiasm about the outlook for his 1958 U. of O. swimming team. In addition to the group of very solid returning lettermen, which included Jeff Farrell, Dick Thatcher, diver Jim Griffis, freestyle relay men John Janory and Alan Wilcox, the Sooners would expect immediate help that season from sophomores Chuck Lechner, a backstroker, and Larry Lermo, a middle distance freestyler. The 1958 squad would miss three 1957 graduates, Dyason, Rowland and Van Helsdingen, who had accounted for six individual championships in the 1957 Big Seven meet, as it set out in quest of the U. of O.'s fourth consecutive conference team title.\(^4^5\)


\(^4^5\)Swimming, 1958, loc. cit.
Following the Sooners' return from the Coaches' Swimming Forum in Ft. Lauderdale over the Christmas holidays, Matt's "boys" had a little more than a week to prepare for the opening of the 1958 dual meet season against the Air Force Academy and Colorado at the latter's pool. The U. of O. swimmers had literally no competition from either team as they won all ten events, and posted two team victories over the Air Force Academy (73-13) and Colorado (70-16). Those meets marked the first time in dual meet competition that the Sooner swimmers had competed in the 400-yard medley relay, which had replaced the 300-yard medley relay in collegiate competition, and the newly added 200-yard butterfly event. Newcomers to the 1958 Sooner varsity, Chuck Lechner and Carlyn Cruzan, had won the backstroke and breaststroke events, respectively, and both swam their specialties on the winning medley relay team.46

The U. of O.'s next three dual meets were also one sided affairs, in favor of Matt's "boys," as the scores indicated — Kansas (69-11), Southern Methodist University (55-31), and Kansas State (75-11). In addition to the dual meets that season, the State A.A.U. had been scheduled for late February at the U. of O. natatorium. Although the meet was annually conducted as a non-team affair, the Sooner freshmen and varsity swimmers cheered for each other in the various races, as if the meet was the conference championships. Matt's "boys" won ten of the eleven events, but he was unhappy that more

Sooner swimming fans could not get into the natatorium's small gallery. The capacity crowd was limited to two to three hundred persons. Matt favored the expansion of the natatorium building so that fifteen hundred to two thousand spectators might be accommodated for a home dual meet or championship meet.\textsuperscript{47}

The Sooners closed out the 1958 dual meet season with two victories over Southern Methodist (second meet, 60-26), and Iowa State (68-18). The U. of O. swimming team had completed the third consecutive undefeated dual meet season under teams coached by Matt, with the string of victories then at 17-0.\textsuperscript{48} The Sooners one sided victories, scores in most of its 1958 meets could easily have given an observer, not familiar with Matt's approach to dual meets, the opinion that Matt was rather "unmerciful," as he chose to have his team run up the score against its weaker opponents. But that was not the case, as Matt looked upon the dual meets as learning experiences for his swimmers; first, he wanted a team to learn to swim a race correctly so that the swimmers would be prepared for the big competitions, and second, he wanted to make winning a habit. Matt prepared his strong lineup before the meet, and in most cases he stuck with it.\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{47} Scrapbook 3 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, pp. 4-10. (Period covered February 8-20, 1958, with several articles containing meet results and Matt's natatorium renovation suggestions).


\textsuperscript{49}Jack McGuire, personal interview, op. cit.
The 1958 conference meet marked the first time the championships were referred to as the Big Eight Swimming and Diving Championships. The conference had admitted Oklahoma State as its eighth member, but the new member, along with Missouri, did not have a organized intercollegiate swimming team; therefore the conference swimming championships would remain a six team competition. Before the 1958 Annual Big Eight Swimming and Diving Championships Meet began, there was little doubt that the Sooners would win their fourth consecutive championship. But the questions seemed to center around how many points Matt's boys would score, and which of the Sooners would win individual conference titles. The U. of O. swimmers recorded a winning total of 179 points to second place Iowa State's 88 1/2 points. The Sooners had won 13 of the 16 events and also garnered the second place position in five of the wins. Seniors Farrell and Thatcher each had excellent performances, with the former winning the 100-yard freestyle, placing first in the 220-yard freestyle, with a new conference record of 2:07.6, and anchoring the 400-yard freestyle relay team to a victory and conference record of 3:31.9. Thatcher won both butterly races, 100-yard and 200-yard, and swam the butterfly leg on the winning 400-yard medley relay team. The Sooner sophomores, led by Lechner, Lermo and Cruzan, performed beautifully throughout the season; and they were particularly outstanding in the conference meet. Lechner posted wins in the 100-yard and 200-yard backstroke events, and swam the lead-off leg of the winning 400-yard medley relay. Lermo recorded two victories in the 440-yard freestyle and the 1500-meter freestyle races. Cruzan, from Bartlesville, Oklahoma, scored impressive wins in the
100-yard and 200-yard breaststroke events, and swam his specialty on the medley relay team.50

In spite of the U. of O.'s complete domination of the conference teams in dual and championship meet competition in 1958, there was a consensus of agreement, among conference swimming coaches and certain non-conference coaches, that the level of swimming had improved significantly in the conference during the past few years. The conference coaches cited the presence of Matt in the Big Eight and the high caliber program which the Sooners reflected, as being the principal stimuli for the improvement of swimming at the other Big Eight institutions.51

The Thirty-Fourth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships Meet was a "coming home" of sorts for Matt, since the meet was hosted by the University of Michigan in the natatorium which Matt had helped to design. Matt had hoped that the Sooners would move up in the team standings in the 1958 N.C.A.A. meet, from their seventh place finish in the 1957 meet, especially with the meet being in Ann Arbor, in front of so many of his former U. of M. colleagues and long-time Wolverine swimming fans. But the competition proved much too stern for Matt's boys, as they dropped to an eighth place tie with Northwestern by only scoring 12 points. Michigan won its second consecutive N.C.A.A. swimming title, under Gus Stager and Bruce Harlan, with a winning total of 72 points, with Yale just "nosing out" Michigan State, 63 to 62, for

50"O.U. Mermen Win Big 8 Title," Oklahoma Daily, March 9, 1958, Scrapbook 3 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 16.

51Jack McGuire, personal interview, op. cit.
the runner up place. The U. of O.'s points had come from Farrell's scoring in the 100-yard and 220-yard freestyle events, Lermo's top six finish in the 220-yard freestyle and Lechner's sixth place in the 200-yard backstroke event. Matt was pleased that his Sooners had retained a place in the top ten teams of that N.C.A.A. meet, especially since there had been a significant improvement in the overall level of competition from the swimmers of several teams.52

Matt enjoyed his coaching situation at the U. of O. very much, for it permitted him an opportunity to do the things he had enjoyed most in life. For close to eight months each year, Matt was in Ann Arbor and at the summer camps, where he could still be very close to his family. Rose Mary, then married, and her family still lived in Ann Arbor, while Matt III and his family lived in East Lansing, where he had become a successful swimming coach on the interscholastic level at Sexton High School. In addition to the active life Matt continued to have with his family and at Camps Chikopi and AK-O-MAK, he was very proud of his coaching achievements over the past three years at the U. of O., as he prepared to embark on the 1959 competitive campaign. Matt particularly enjoyed having the newspapers in the Ann Arbor area carry stories about his achievements in the Big Eight Conference, with mention of the fact that, "The folks in Norman were sure happy that the U. of M. had seen fit to turn Matt out to pasture at age seventy."53

With the start of the 1959 swimming schedule about six weeks away, Matt predicted that his team for that year would have a very good

52 Swimming, 1959, loc. cit.
53 Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 18.
season. Graduation had taken Farrell and Thatcher, two of the Big Eight Conference's all-time swimming greats. Matt would especially miss Farrell, the former Chikopi camper, who had played the important role in getting Matt his position at the U. of O. Farrell had taken a commission with the United States Navy, following his graduation from the U. of O.'s N.R.O.T.C. program. During the fall of 1958, Matt had received word that Farrell had resumed his swimming training under, Soichi Sakamoto, a very good coach in Hawaii, with the plan of trying to make the 1960 U.S. Olympic swimming team. Matt often took some time in a practice session to talk with his current group of mermen about the whereabouts of former Sooner swimmers, especially his favorites.

The ten returning lettermen from the 1958 team, lead by Larry Lermo, the "star" middle distance and distance freestyler, Chuck Lechner in the backstroke events, Carlyn Cruzan in the breaststroke events, sprinter Ernie Drowatzky, Jack Saari in the butterfly events, and back-up distance man, Bob Connor, would provide the nucleus for a very powerful 1959 Sooner team. To that group of stalwarts, Matt would add two top sophomores, Gordon Collet, a breaststroker, and Lorne Hale, a diver. With a team line-up which possessed the impressive credentials of that 1959 Sooner squad, it appeared very unlikely that

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54 Swimming, 1959, loc. cit.
55 Jean M. Henning, op. cit., p. 33.
56 Based on statements by Robert Connor, former U. of O. swimmer and later U. of O. swimming coach, in a telephone interview, August 24, 1976.
THE 1959 SOONER SWIMMING TEAM AT THE COLLEGE SWIMMING FORUM IN FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

(front row left to right)
Carlyn Cruzon, Don Johnson, Bob Connor,
Phil Cordon, Matt Mann II
(back row left to right)
Doug Brown, Mike Finley, Ron Hosner, Chuck Lechner,
Jack Saare, Alan Wilcox
any one from the conference, or for that matter, on the U. of O.'s dual
meet schedule, would be able to snap Matt's three season undefeated
string.57

As the Sooners prepared to open the 1959 dual meet season, Matt
tried to get his swimmers concentrating on their events for the opening
meet. While he tried to impress upon the swimmers the importance of
hard workout sessions, as preparation for the big meets at the end of
the season, Matt wanted his swimmers thinking about the upcoming meets.
He did not devote practice time to talking about the achievements of his
former swimmers or teams. Matt would tell the "boys" on his current
team that they looked very good, and they were going to have a great
season.58

The Sooners opened the 1959 dual meet season, by literally
"crushing" its four opponents by the scores of: Kansas (75-18),
Kansas State (70-16), Colorado (75-11), and Texas (65-21). Matt's
record in dual meets at the U. of O. was then at 21-0, as the team
travelled to Dallas for its meet with Southern Methodist University.59
The Mustangs, coached by Red Barr, were definitely ready for the
Sooners, as the latter were able to win only four individual events.
Southern Methodist University won the meet by a score 51-35, and
stopped Matt's dual meet winning streak. The U. of O.'s four wins had

57Swimming, 1959, loc. cit.
58Robert Connor, telephone interview, op. cit.
59Swimming, 1960, The Official Press Release, The University of
Oklahoma Athletic Department (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1958),
p. 1.
been recorded by Lermo in the 220-yard and 440-yard freestyle events, Lechner in the 200-yard backstroke, and Collet's outstanding swim in the 200-yard breaststroke. Collet's time of 2:22.9 was a new N.C.A.A. record for the event. The Sooners would point for the return meet between the two teams in Norman in two weeks, with the hope of reversing that loss.60

Following the Sooners' loss to Southern Methodist University, Matt's "boys" showed that defeat had not dampened their competitive spirits by winning consecutive dual meets over Kansas (81-15), Southern Methodist University (48-38), Iowa State (58-21), and Nebraska (75-11). The U. of O. swimming team completed its dual meet season with an 8-1 record, and appeared ready to win its fifth consecutive conference championship.61

The Sooner swimming team outscored the runner-up team Iowa State at a rate of slightly more than three to one in amassing its winning total of 198 points to 61 points. Kansas with 50 points had finished third in the six team field. Leading the way in Sooner first place titles was Larry Lermo as he won the 220-yard, 440-yard and 1500-meter freestyle races. Recording double wins for the U. of O. team were Collet in the breaststroke races, Lechner in the "dorsal" events, and Jack Saari in the butterfly races. The Sooners were also very impressive in two longer freestyle events as they swept the first four


places in the 440-yard freestyle, and the first three places in the 1500-meter freestyle. 62

Oklahoma's Bob Connor had placed second in both of those freestyle events, and he had certainly made great process since his arrival at the U. of O. campus in 1957. Bob had met Matt when the latter was in Panama in January, 1955. Bob's father worked for the Canal Zone Authority, while Bob did his competitive swimming for a small club team. Bob had done pretty well in Panamanian competition, but by American standards he was quite average. When Bob participated in one of Matt's clinic sessions, the former was very much impressed with the vitality and enthusiasm generated by the older coach. After Matt returned to the United States, Connor corresponded with him on several occasions. When Connor graduated from high school in Panama, he knew immediately that he wanted to continue his education and his swimming at the U. of O. 63

The Sooner swimming team completed the 1959 season with its second consecutive eighth place finish in the Thirty-Fifth Annual National Intercollegiate Swimming Championships held at Cornell University. Gus Stager's Wolverines won their third consecutive N.C.A.A. by running up a winning total of 137 1/2 points to second place Ohio State's total of 44 points. The U. of O. team total was 12 points, but the most significant achievement at the meet for Sooner swimming


63 Robert Connor, telephone interview, op. cit.
was Gordon Collet's victory in the 100-yard Breaststroke event. Collet's time of 1:03.2 set a new N.C.A.A. record, and it marked the second time since Matt had taken over the coaching at the U. of O., that he had an N.C.A.A. champion; his first N.C.A.A. champion had been Julian Dyason in 1957, also in the 100-yard breaststroke event.64

Gordon Collet, a sophomore at the 1959 N.C.A.A. meet, had come to the U. of O. from his home in California on his own, without any recruiting by Matt or scholarship help. By his own admission, Collet was just an average high school swimmer who had been pointed in Matt's direction by his father. The elder Collet had been a swimmer for Northwestern in the 1930's, and he remembered Matt and those Wolverine teams so well. Gordon had followed his father's advice, that if the former wanted to continue his swimming under an excellent coach, then the U. of O. should be his school. When Gordon first met Matt, his initial impression was, "Boy, this guy (Matt) is really old." But Gordon decided to work hard his freshman year to make the "old guy" feel good. Gordon's hard work seemed to pay off for him, not only in terms of improved performances, but in terms of personal recognition from Matt. During Collet's sophomore year, he worked out twice a day for most of the training period, and that attitude really pleased the Sooner coach. While most of the team members were participating only in Matt's afternoon session of 3,000 to 3,500 yards, Collet was also getting in a morning workout of 2,000 to 2,500 yards. Frequently during the 1959 season Matt would stop Collet in a practice session and mention to his swimmer, "Your workouts are very good, your swimming

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64 Swimming, 1960, loc. cit.
pleases me very much, I am very happy with what you are doing." Matt often used a single phrase or a combination of such complimentary statements to his boys, but on an individual basis. When asked to comment about the Sooner coach's approach to handling his swimmers, Collet stated:

... Matt had something with his psychological approach, which set him apart from his contemporary coaches. His positive approach to improvement, training and meets was tremendous. His swimmers responded beautifully to his contemporary approach to giving his swimmers, especially his hardest workers, a lift each day in practice. ... 65

If the Big Eight Conference swimming coaches had thought the first four seasons of Matt's reign at the U. of O. had been difficult ones for their teams, then they must have been quite depressed when they read his pre-season remarks about the 1960 Sooner team:

This is the best team we've ever had. It's stronger and "heavier," in other words, there's more of them. The competition among the boys is a lot keener (in workouts). I'm going to have to leave some boys at home this year, I've never had to do that before. ... we'll win the conference, place in the top ten nationally, and win at least two first places in the nationals (N.C.A.A. meet).

Matt had good reason to be so optimistic, what with 12 lettermen from the 1959 team returning. Heading the list of quality returnees was Gordon Collet, who Matt thought would have a crack at the 100-yard and 200-yard breaststroke titles at the 1960 N.C.A.A. meet. The other outstanding returnees included freestyler Larry Lermo, backstroker Chuck Lechner, butterfly Jack Saari, and diver Lorne Hale. An excellent corps of sophomores, which included Carl Zahn in the butterfly

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65 Based on statements by Gordon Collet, former U. of O. swimmer and later swimming coach at the College of the Pacific, in a personal interview, Cleveland, Ohio, March 27, 1975.
events, backstroker John Day and freestyle sprinter Steve Skold, were expected to push the incumbent Sooner champions in those respective events, for the conference titles that year.66

The Sooner swimming team opened the 1960 dual meet season with three easy victories over the Air Force Academy (71-23), Colorado (77-18) and Kansas State (86-9). The fourth meet of the season would pit the Sooners, the Big Eight Conference champion, against arch rival Southern Methodist University, the Southwest Conference champion, in the first of their two 1960 home and home meets. The Sooners won that meet in Norman over Southern Methodist University (51-44).67 The meet was very closely contested with the Sooners gaining six firsts in the ten events. The deciding factors in the meet were the two 1-2 finishes in the backstroke and breaststroke events by the Sooners. Lechner and Day placed first and second in the backstroke, respectively, while Cruzan and Collet swept the first two places, respectively, in the breaststroke. It was a certainty that the Mustangs would have "both barrels loaded" when the Sooners invaded Dallas for the return meet in two weeks.68

The Sooner swimming team proceeded through the remaining five contests on their 1960 dual meet schedule without a loss to finish the season with a 9-0 record, its best ever. In that string of five

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victories the U. of O. swimmers defeated Nebraska (84-11), Kansas (73-21), and Southern Methodist University (48-47), with John Day starring against the Mustangs as he captured the 200-yard I.M. and the 200-yard backstroke. While the U. of O. won only four events in the Southern Methodist University meet, three 1-2 finishes in the I.M., backstroke and breaststroke races were sufficient to offset the Mustangs first place advantage; the last two dual victories were against Texas (59-36), and Iowa State (80-15). While the Sooners prepared for the Big Eight title meet in Colorado, it appeared certain they would run away with the meet and their sixth consecutive team championship. The real team fight in the meet would be between Iowa State and Kansas for second place.69

In the 1960 Big Eight Conference Swimming and Diving Championships, the U. of O. swimmers were in a class by themselves, as they won 12 of the 15 events on the three-day program. The Sooners' winning total of 195 points more than tripled the score of second place Kansas' 58; Iowa State had slipped to third place with 55 1/2 points. The individual stars for the U. of O. were Larry Lerma with three wins in the 220-yard, 440-yard and 1500-meter freestyle events, and sophomore Carl Zahn's two first in the 100-yard and 200-yard butterfly events and a second place finish in the 200-yard I.M. Another of Matt's sophomores, Johnnie Day, also had an excellent meet as he dethroned his senior teammate, Chuck Lechner, in both backstroke events; Day also placed third in the 200-yard I.M. In addition to his two second place backstroke finishes, Lechner led off the Sooners winning 400-yard medley

Collet also swam on the medley relay team and won the 100-yard breaststroke, but his performances were not what Matt had expected at the beginning of the season, and those "sub-par" times for Collet were attributed to a mid-season bout of the flu from which he still had not fully recovered. Bob Connor, like Lermo and Lechner, was swimming in his last Big Eight meet and he closed out his collegiate career with three second place efforts behind Lermo in the 220-yard, 440-yard and 1500-meter freestyle races. The U. of O. team victory in that Big Eight Conference meet was Matt's fifth consecutive championship, and the sixth in a row for the University.

Matt took a contingent from his 1960 U. of O. team to the familiar confines of the Southern Methodist University natatorium for the Thirty-Sixth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships. The Sooners' main hope for an individual title had been Collet in one of the breaststroke races, but he was still obviously off form due to the illness earlier in the season. Collet did not make the finals in either breaststroke event, but he did manage to swim his specialty on a leg of the U. of O.'s 400-yard medley relay team which placed fifth in the finals of that event. Also swimming on that relay were Day, Zahn and anchorman Phil Brougher. Carl Zahn scored his team's only other points in the meet when he finished in fifth place in the 100-yard butterfly event. The U. of O. swimmers had scored only six points which dropped them into twelfth place in the team standings. The team

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*O.U. Swimmers Win Sixth Big 8 Title," Oklahoma Daily, March 6, 1960, Scrapbook 5 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 34."
champion for the 1960 N.C.A.A. meet was the University of Southern California with 87 points; that victory by the Trojans marked the first time, since the official team championships were started in 1937, a team other than Michigan, Ohio State or Yale had won the title.\textsuperscript{71}

Throughout Matt's career, sportswriters for various newspapers were continually seeking to uncover the "magic" ingredient in his formula for building champion swimmers and championship teams. In 1960 a staff writer for The Oklahoman, the U. of O.'s school newspaper, interviewed some of Sooner champions regarding Matt's coaching techniques. Distance freestyle champion Larry Lermo stated:

It's the way he (Matt) instills desire in you, the desire to really get in and work. Matt doesn't stand over you with a whip or anything. He just kind of subtly talks you into it. . . .

Team "spirit" leader, Gordon Collet commented:

. . . He (Matt) gets his results because he knows each boy so well individually. His analysis of each fellow swimming for him is right on the nose. Some he treats firmly, others he treats with more personal attention because he sees they need it. We all get different workouts and different psychological treatment. . . .

The third team member to share his views on his coach's success, was Johnnie Day, the Sooner sophomore backstroke sensation; the latter added:

. . . He's (Matt) even greater as a person than as a coach. He's your personal friend more than your coach. All the swimmers call him Matt or Coach; we really respect him. Boys come to swim under him because they want to succeed. His major interest in his swimmers is their education first, then their swimming achievements. . . .

The message which seemed to emanate from the article was that Matt recognized the importance of treating his "boys" as individuals with

\textsuperscript{71}Swimming, 1961, loc. cit.
emotional components in their beings, which needed regular workouts along with their physiological components.\textsuperscript{72}

During the proceedings of the 1960 National Collegiate Swimming Championships, Matt had received a great tribute from his peers in the collegiate and scholastic swimming coaching ranks, when it announced that he had won the balloting for the National Collegiate and Scholastic Swimming Trophy. The award, founded in 1957 and presented at the N.C.A.A. Swimming Championships each year, was to be presented on an annual basis to:

...an individual or organization for having contributed most outstanding to swimming as a competitive sport and healthful recreational activity at schools and colleges. It is the highest award of its kind in the United States.

Matt was the third collegiate coach to receive the award, the other two being Ed Kennedy, Swimming Coach Emeritus of Columbia University, the first winner of the award in 1958, followed by Bob Kiphuth of Yale in 1959, his year of retirement.\textsuperscript{73}

After Matt had returned home to Ann Arbor, following the 1960 swimming season, he noted with great pride that one of his former Sooner swimmers, Jeff Farrell, swimming for the New Haven Swim Club, had won two championships at the National A.A.U. Indoor Swimming Championships. Farrell had won the 100-yard freestyle event in :48.2 and the 220-yard freestyle race in 2:00.2, and both times were new

\textsuperscript{72}"Sooners' Swim Coach May Be World's Best," The Oklahoman, February 18, 1960, Scrapbook 5 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 30.

American records. Jeff, still in the Navy, was stationed in New Haven, and he had been training under Bob Kiphuth at the Yale pool for the past 15 months. Farrell had set his sights on making the 1960 Olympic swimming team, and the Yale indoor 50-meter pool with Kiphuth as his coach seemed to provide the best opportunity to qualify for that team.74

Before Matt left Ann Arbor in the fall of 1960 to begin his pre-season workouts with the Sooner swimmers, he received word that the U.S. Navy was going to grant the U. of O. its 50-meter pool which was located on the Norman campus. Matt was very excited about the prospect of having such a facility for training and competition. In addition to its "international length," the pool was the collegiate competitive distance of 25-yards in width. The Navy swimming facility also had a seating capacity for fifteen hundred spectators. The "new" natatorium would not be ready for use until sometime in the second semester, since certain renovations needed to be made in the entire facility before it would be a first class competitive facility.75

The 1961 "edition" of the U. of O. swimming team gave every indication that it would be a very good group, especially since 13 of the squad members were lettermen on the 1960 team. Three of those returnees, Gordon Collet, Johnnie Day and Carl Zahn, had won conference championships in the 1960 meet, and they would provide the quality nucleus for the 1961 team. A big difference in the 1961 team from the

74"Jeff Farrell Continues To Improve and Win," Oklahoma City News, April 14, 1960, Scrapbook 6 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 4.

75Matt Mann Cassette Collection, op. cit., Tape 18.
"great" 1960 team, besides the graduation losses of Lermo, Lechner and Connor, was the small number of quality sophomores who provide immediate help to the Sooners during the dual meet season. Matt summed up his predictions for the 1961 season by stating:

Prospects look excellent, although the Sooners probably won't be as strong as they were last season. . . . As for our dual meet schedule, Southern Methodist should be our toughest opponent. . . . As far as the Big Eight goes. . . . I like our chances of repeating as champs. . . . The way I see it now, we should finish in the top ten nationally (N.C.A.A. meet). . . .

When the 1961 dual meet season got underway for the Sooners, Matt had already celebrated his seventy-sixth birthday. The passing of years on the calendar seemed to have no appreciable effect on the vitality and enthusiasm Matt displayed throughout each Sooner swimming season. His response to those individuals who seemed amazed at his ability to carry out his duties with the dynamic attitude of a man many years his junior, was:

. . . I am the eternal freshman. When you work with college freshmen you get their viewpoint, you become one of them. After all you are no older than you think you are. We don't grow old if our environment is young.

The U. of O. swimming team opened the 1961 dual meet season with a thorough dunking of Kansas State (80-13), and followed that win with three more victories over Nebraska (70-35), Colorado (82-23) and the Air Force (65-30). The Sooners victory string of 17 consecutive dual meets, dating back to the middle of the 1959 season, was broken.

76Swimming, 1961, loc. cit.

by Southern Methodist University. The well balanced Mustang swimmers
won the meet in Norman by the score of 50-45. Matt's "boys" got back
to their winning ways with victories over Kansas (65-35), Texas (57-38)
and Iowa State (57-48), but they ended the dual meet season on a losing
note in Dallas, as Southern Methodist University scored a very
convincing victory over the Sooners by the score of 61-34. The second
loss to Southern Methodist University marked the first time, since
Matt's arrival at the U. of O. for the 1956 season, that his team had
lost more than one dual meet in a season. Another indication of the
lack of depth on the 1961 Sooner team, and the improvement of the other
conference teams, was the number of points opposing teams were recording
against Matt's "boys" in the dual meets.78

The Sooner swimming team entered the 1961 Big Eight Conference
Swimming Championships in its usual role as favorites. The U. of O.
swimmers failed to disappoint the pre-meet prognosticators, as they won
10 of the 16 events and the team championship with 143 points. Iowa
State finished second with 74 points, just ahead of Kansas' 71 points.
The Sooners' lack of depth in certain events enabled the other teams to
participate more equitably in the scoring column. The U. of O. had
three swimmers who each figured in three championship event victories.
Johnnie Day had won the 1500-meter freestyle title, and the 100-yard
and 200-yard backstroke events; Collet, competing in his last
conference meet, won both breaststroke events, and swam the breaststroke
leg of the winning 400-yard medley relay team; Carl Zahn recorded two

78 Swimmers, 1962. The Official Press Release, The University of
Oklahoma Athletic Department (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1961),
p. 1.
victories in the butterfly races, and swam his specialty on the medley relay. Collet's time of 1:02.9 in the 100-yard breaststroke set a new N.C.A.A. record for the event. The relay efforts of Collet and Zahn had helped their team to the new Big Eight record of 3:53.6 for the 400-yard medley relay event. Matt's use of Day in the 1500-meter event had been a surprise to many of the conference coaches, since the latter knew that the Sooners were without a top notch distance freestyler that season. Day, the most talented swimmer on the 1961 team, swam a beautiful race, and he maintained the Sooners domination of that event since Matt's arrival in the Conference. The Sooners' team victory was its seventh consecutive championship, and Matt's sixth title.79

The 1961 U. of O. swimming team ended its season at the Thirty-Seventh Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championships in Seattle with an eighth place finish in the final team standings. The Sooner swimmers, lead by Gordon Collet's fine performances in the breaststroke events, had scored 13 l/2 points. The University of Michigan had returned to the number one place in the N.C.A.A. meet with its winning total of 87 points.80 Gus Stager had established himself as a great coach in his own right, but he was also an exponent of many of Matt's coaching methods, especially in the area of mental preparation of his swimmers for big meet competition.81 In that 1961 N.C.A.A.


80 Swimming, 1962, loc. cit.

81 Gus Stager, personal interview, op. cit.
meet, the U. of O. point total had been the product of Collet's second place in the 100-yard breaststroke and a fifth place finish in the 200-yard breaststroke, Zahn's tie for sixth place in the 200-yard butterfly race, and the fourth place finish in the 400-yard medley relay by the team of Williams, Collet, Zahn, and Housel. Matt could look towards the 1962 season with optimism, since three of the four boys who scored in Seattle would be back the next year.82

During the pre-season training sessions for the 1962 U. of O. swimming team, Matt realized that the Big Eight Conference schools had been improving steadily, picking away at the foundation of the Sooners' "impregnable edifice." The U. of O.'s returning lettermen would be entrusted with the responsibility of holding off the charge of conference foes Iowa State and Kansas for the conference's number one place. John Day and Carl Zahn would be Matt's "big guns" for the upcoming season. Matt planned to build his dual meet lineups around the talented Zahn and Day. The Sooner coach could also expect considerable support from proven competitors, Phil Brougher, Mel Riggs, Phil Cordon and Bobby Reese. The sophomore group could again be counted on for immediate help in the 1962 season. Heading up the fine group of second year men were Charley Schuette, a distance freestyler, and John Bernard, a freestyle sprinter. In summing up his thoughts about the upcoming 1962 swimming season, Matt stated:

... We'll be good as usual. ... I don't think the Big Eight will be a runaway, but we'll have as good a chance as anybody. Iowa State is supposed to be loaded to the gills, but we're going to swim them. ... We'll be in the first ten in the N.C.A.A.83

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The Sooner swimming team opened the 1962 season with its participation in the College and Scholastic Swimming Forum in Ft. Lauderdale. For Matt and his wife Lea, their attendance at the aquatic forum had been unbroken since its inception in 1935. Matt celebrated his seventy-seventh birthday by engaging in a 500-yard swim with his swimmers in the Beach Casino Pool, the site of forum's aquatic activities. When he climbed out of the pool he exclaimed, "Don't call me 77 years old, I'm 77 years young." Most of the coaches present at the forum marveled at the spryness of Matt, as he "bounced" around the pool deck calling out instructions to his Sooner swimmers engaged in a training session. Matt was very satisfied with the competitive efforts of his boys in the East-West Meet, near the close of the forum's activities, and they appeared ready for the rigors of the 1962 dual meet campaign. 84

The U. of O. swimmers opened the 1962 dual meet with an easy win over Nebraska (78-27), but some three weeks later, the Sooners lost to Southern Methodist University in Dallas by the score of 62-33. The next day in Austin, Matt's boys "dunked" Texas (61-34). In the Sooners' next meet at Kansas, Schuette won the 440-yard freestyle in a new American record of 4:24.7, for a 20-yard pool, while Johnnie Day established a new American record of 2:05.9 for the 200-yard backstroke in a 20-yard pool. The U. of O. won that meet by the score of 62-33.

In the second Southern Methodist University meet of the season at

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84 "At 77, He Swims 20 Pool Lengths A Day," Miami Herald, December 28, 1961, Scrapbook 6 (Oklahoma), Matt Mann Collection, Rare Book Room, International Swimming Hall of Fame, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, p. 34.
Norman, Matt's "boys" put up a great fight, only to lose 50-45. Over the past two seasons the Mustangs had defeated the Sooners four consecutive times. The U. of O. swimmers did manage to shake off the effects of the two defeats to Red Barr's Southwest Conference Champions, as the former closed out the dual meet season with four consecutive victories and a 7-2 record. The four wins were recorded against Iowa State (58-37), Colorado (77-18), Air Force (61-34) and Texas Tech (79-16). Even though the Sooners had handled their conference opponents in dual competition with relative ease, Matt was well aware that the championship meet would be a different matter, and he would have his swimmers prepared.85

The 1962 Big Eight Swimming and Diving Championships at Ames, Iowa, were every bit as close as Matt had predicted before the start of the season. Although the Sooner swimmers managed to win only five of the championship events, they were still able to score in enough back up places to accumulate a winning total of 119 points. Kansas had come very close to becoming the first team in eight seasons to unseat the champion Sooners, but they fell short as their second place total was 110 points, followed by Iowa State with 87 points. Charley Schuette was the U. of O.'s "big star" as he won three of his team's five first places. Schuette won the 220-yard, 440-yard and 1500-meter freestyle events. John Day closed out his conference swimming career by winning both backstroke titles and placing second in the 200-yard I.M. Several second and third place finishes by the

Sooners enabled them to "squeeze out" the team championship, Matt's seventh consecutive conference crown. 86

Matt took a small group of his "boys" to the Thirty-Eighth Annual National Collegiate Swimming Championship at Ohio State. The Sooner swimmers were only able to break into the scoring column in two events, those being Day's fifth place finish in the 200-yard I.M. and Schuette's fifth place in the 220-yard freestyle event. The U. of O.'s team finished with five points and a tie for sixteenth place. Ohio State swam an inspired meet, in the familiar surroundings of its own pool, and won the championship with a winning total of 92 points. If the Sooners were going to move back into the top ten teams in the N.C.A.A. meet in future years, they would need considerable help from several quality swimmers. 87

Matt spent the summer of 1962 at his beloved Camps Chikopi and AK-O-MAK, doing the other things he loved most in life, being with his family and working around the camps' swimming areas with youngsters of varying abilities. On August 6, Matt spent a typical busy day working at both camps. At Camp AK-O-MAK he had checked most of the girls on their swimming strokes. Later in the day Matt helped with the big competitive meet for the campers, which marked the end of the camps' sessions. Following dinner that evening of August 6, Matt felt quite tired and went to bed rather early. Later in the evening he mentioned

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MATT EXPLAINING STROKE TECHNIQUE TO HIS GRANDDAUGHTERS
ON THE LAKEFRONT AT CAMP AK-O-MAK IN 1962

(left to right)

Connie and Marilyn Corson (Rose Mary's children)
to his wife, Lea, that he did not feel very good, and a short time after
that, around 10:00 p.m., Matt died in his sleep. Matt had lived his
life to the fullest, and it seemed only fitting that his death should
occur in the tranquility of Camp Chikopi, his summer home for the past
40 years.  

Matt's death had also brought to a close that amazing "chapter"
of his coaching career in Oklahoma. In his seven seasons at the
University of Oklahoma (1956-1962), Matt's teams had a dual meet record
of 48-5; those five losses were to non-conference arch rival Southern
Methodist University. The Sooners did not lose a conference dual meet
during Matt's reign as coach. The U. of O.'s swimming teams coached
by Matt also won the Big Seven Conference title in 1956 and 1957, and
then five consecutive Big Eight Championships from 1958-1962. In the
N.C.A.A. meet competitions, the Sooner swimming teams finished in the
top ten teams five times during the 1956-1962 period, with its highest
finish, a third place, coming in 1956. Matt had also coached two
individual event N.C.A.A. champions, Julian Dyason, in 1957, and
Gordon Collet, in 1959, both in the 100-yard breaststroke event. Matt's
marvelous record at the University of Oklahoma was achieved after his
mandatory retirement from the University of Michigan.

The news of Matt's death spread rapidly across the wire services
and was reported across the United States and in certain foreign

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88 Dave Tefft, "Swim World Mourns Death of Matt Mann," Ann Arbor

89 Compiled from Swimming, Official Press Releases, The
University of Oklahoma Department of Athletics (Norman: University of
countries within the next two days. The University of Michigan's Athletic Director H. O. "Fritz" Crisler best expressed the feelings of many individuals about Matt in his official statement:

The loss of Matt Mann is a severe blow to athletics, both nationally and internationally. He was the greatest swim coach in the world, but he was even greater as a developer of youth. His coaching record was unsurpassed in college circles, but more important is the fact he inspired thousands of young men with his philosophy of optimism, sportsmanship and clean living. His life stands as his monument. We at Michigan join the entire sports world in mourning his loss.90

In less than months after Matt's death, two of his closest friends in Ann Arbor, Paul G. Goebel and Eugene B. Power, both active members of the University of Michigan's Board of Regents, proposed a motion which would name the institution's newest men's natatorium the "Matt Mann Pool." The motion was passed and from October, 1962, the natatorium received its new title. At the Board's Proceedings that October, Power had added, for the official record, "When Michigan lost Matt Mann by retirement it lost a great coach. When he died, the entire country shared that loss."91

The University of Michigan's Board of Regents made one additional gesture to honor Matt, its former great coach, when it entered the following resolution into the official proceedings of its December, 1962 meeting:

90Dave Tefft, loc. cit.
MATT'S FAMILY

(Left to right)
Lea, Matt III and Rose Mary Pose With Plague At The Ceremony
Which Named The University of Michigan's Swimming Pool
The Matt Mann Natatorium, October, 1962
Matthew Mann II: Resolution

Inasmuch as the late Matthew Mann II devoted thirty years of his life to the young men of the Michigan student body;
Inasmuch as he cultivated among them a skill in swimming such that the University became internationally renowned for its prowess in that sport;
Inasmuch as he inculcated in his teams a strict discipline and a willingness to labor without remission toward desired goals;
Inasmuch as he made all burdens light by his personal affection and unfailing good cheer;
Inasmuch as he further believed and proved that the generality of persons capable of swimming at all could master those swift and efficient strokes used by specialized athletes, and thereby universally advanced the cause of water sports;
Inasmuch, finally, as his optimism and spirit of enterprise were a tonic to the University community, and his loyalty and kindness a noble example;
We, therefore, the Regents of the University of Michigan, now formally express our gratitude for his life, and grief for his death, and extend to the surviving members of his family our deepest sympathy.92

While Matt's death had brought an end to the colorful, exciting and tireless career of one of America's most successful and prolific swimming teacher-coaches, his legacy to the continued development of swimming, in general, in the United States would last well into the Twenty-First Century. Matt's influence on, and inspiration of, the many club, interscholastic, and intercollegiate coaches he "spawned" was so great throughout his fifty-four year career, that a continuance of his aquatic teaching and coaching philosophies could be assured for generations to come.

Chapter 12

A STROKE OF GENIUS

During a teaching-coaching career in the area of aquatics which spanned some 54 years, Matt Mann II had established a unique and outstanding record of achievements that would enable him to be forever recognized in American competitive swimming annals as one of the great "pioneer" coaches. Despite the fact that Matt possessed no formal training or apprenticeship background in the teaching or coaching of swimming, he assumed an "immediate" affinity for the profession which provided an employment opportunity by circumstance, rather than by his personal design.

Matt's early success in the American swimming "game" as a teacher-coach seemed to exemplify the motto, "America, the land of opportunity," which attracted so many immigrants to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The attainment of success throughout Matt's career could be linked in part to the work ethic displayed by the numerous foreigners who had come to the United States, intent on making a "place" for themselves in the "new" land. Matt's work habits, especially during his years in Buffalo, Brookline, and New York City, were not governed by "clocks-on-the-walls," but rather by the availability of students, their willingness
to work in various swimming situations, and the accomplishment of certain goals.

From his earliest swimming teaching experiences, Matt was quick to seize upon the opportunity of relating the learn-to-swim program with the competitive swimming program. Matt created a wide variety of competitive aquatic opportunities for youngsters and adults in the different level classes which he taught. He believed that well-structured competitive activities were both healthful and enjoyable for the participants in his classes.

At the time when Matt assumed his early swimming teaching-coaching positions, most of the major swimming competitions in the United States featured races of various standard distances, but did not restrict the competitors to a specific stroke. Many of the top American swimmers, especially in the eastern states, utilized the Trudgen-crawl and the newly developed American crawl as their primary racing strokes. From his initial teaching work, Matt became an exponent of the "crawlstroke first" method for teaching his beginning pupils. Several of the old time swimming professionals in the Boston area questioned and ridiculed the "English neophyte," but it did not take Matt's pupils long to change the opinions of those so-called aquatics experts, as the Brookline swimmers soon established their club, the B.G.A.A., as the top team for boys and girls in New England.

Matt's love for swimming seemed immediately evident to his pupils, both young and adult alike. After his amateur competition days were over, Matt maintained a daily regimen of swimming which enabled him to keep his five foot eight inch frame in trim condition. His face seemed to exude his feelings of joy and pleasure to his
pupils in the teaching and coaching situations. Matt's sincere concern
for his swimming pupils, especially the children, had given him a
rather fatherly image to the point where many of the youngsters at
Brookline called him "Daddy" Mann.

Due to his early coaching successes, Matt, prior to his
fortieth birthday, was hailed by certain members of the sporting press
and by many of his coaching peers as one of the foremost swimming
coaches in the United States. His system of teaching swimming by the
"crawlstroke first" method had proven itself immensely successful for
pupils of the different groups, as well as for small and large group
instruction. Matt's beginning pupils were groomed in the crawlstroke
fundamentals that were also used by the highly skilled competitor. His
instructional methods emphasized teaching the boy or girl, man or
woman, the most efficient techniques to move himself or herself through
the water, regardless of the pupil's competitive intentions. Matt's
instructional classes at the various clubs, served as a feeder system
for his competitive teams at the same clubs or local high school
programs with which he might be affiliated, such as in Buffalo,
Brookline, Duluth, and Detroit. By utilizing effective large group
instructional methods and incorporating enjoyable competitive
activities in his swimming classes, Matt seemed to repeatedly glean
an excellent crop of talented individuals for his competitive teams.

Matt seemed to be the perfect spokesman for the virtues to be
derived from regular and systematic swimming. From the days of his
early teaching and coaching successes to his later triumphs at
Oklahoma, Matt was a favorite sports personality for certain reporters.
An interview with Matt often served as feature material for a choice
place on the sports pages of various newspapers in different sections of the country. The well-proportioned physique, beaming smile and seemingly boundless energy which were some of Matt's overt characteristics throughout his teaching-coaching career were products, he espoused, of his daily swimming program of at least 500 yards. Matt was a firm believer in the tenet that a strong nation was built upon a physically fit citizenry, and that an excellent way to improve the fitness levels of the people in the United States was to increase the opportunities for regular swimming in the schools and communities across the country. During his coaching tenure at the University of Michigan, and later at the University of Oklahoma, the major newspapers in those areas frequently carried articles which disseminated Matt's opinions about the virtues of swimming for the general public.

Except for a few articles which were written by Matt for the N.C.A.A. Swimming Guides, prior to 1920, very little of his specific coaching methods and workout routines were made known in printed media or personal interviews. Matt's swimming coaching philosophies were based upon some of his competitive experiences as a schoolboy, and his observations and associations with certain champion swimmers in England. In each of his coaching positions in the United States, Matt was known for instituting the element of intensity in the work element of his swimmers' workouts. He strongly endorsed swimming workouts which incorporated "swims" at race pace or faster, at distances that were shorter than the competitive races for his team members. While the intensity factor was adopted and refined by most of the progressive American teams from the 1920's through the 1970's, so too was another
element of Matt's early workout programs; that element was the use of a series of swims or repeats at a particular distance, such as 25-yards or 50-yards, where some attempt was made to control the rate of the work interval or rest interval, during the series of swims. Both the intensity factor and the repetition of swims of a particularly short distance may be regarded as forerunners of the almost "universally" used and highly refined interval training programs of the 1960's and 1970's. From the most basic viewpoint, Matt's early coaching ventures proved successful because he worked his swimmers harder than the rival coaches worked their swimmers.

While hard work was the essential ingredient for producing success at his various coaching positions, Matt recognized that other elements were necessary for a training program to be effective. He was wise enough to realize that the broader the base of swimmers involved in the program, the better the chance of getting a greater number of "talented" or good swimmers. But getting individuals with the potential to be good was only a part of a goal achieved, for Matt's major effort was to inspire and encourage those swimmers to develop their abilities, and to aspire to be champions.

Without the benefit of formal education in behavioral psychology, Matt perceived that champion swimmers and excellent programs could not be developed merely by exposing his teams to daily regimens of long, hard workouts. Rather he identified and utilized three other important ingredients in his recipe for a successful training program; those ingredients were variety in workouts, frequent competitive experiences, and enjoyment. Understandably, all of Matt's workouts did not contain each of the five basic qualities which were
considered essential, but he did strive to incorporate as many of those elements as possible. He made a concerted effort to vary his workouts from day to day, and, many times, from swimmer to swimmer, in order to prevent monotony and emotional staleness. Matt was not governed by set workouts for the team or for certain individuals. If he felt that a group or individual was not responding particularly well to a workout he had prescribed, he would alter the design in an attempt to increase the effectiveness. Matt was very much against his swimmers just spending time in a workout with halfhearted efforts; it was the quality of the workout, rather than the duration, which was the important factor.

Matt believed that getting his swimmers involved in various kinds of competition was also important for developing their potentials. In addition to the typically full schedule of formal meets to which Matt regularly scheduled his teams, from the early club jobs to his university positions, he encouraged competition between team members during various portions of their workouts. Matt also conducted frequent intra-squad competitions, including handicapped races, outside the formal meet season. Matt believed that the frequent competitive opportunities served to expose his swimmers to heightened levels of physical stress and intensity, which in turn would serve to develop more efficiently each swimmer's potential. While he seemed to take great care to promote certain elements of emotional well being for his swimmers in various phases of the training program, Matt no doubt overlooked the potential adverse effects his high pitched competitive atmosphere created for some of his team members, especially some of the children in the club programs. Matt related competition
to fun and enjoyment, and therefore his training programs retained a heavy emphasis on competition in its various forms.

For the individuals who were the most highly skilled on Matt's teams, there was little doubt that the competitive experiences provided many enjoyable and satisfying moments, but probably the greatest opportunities for sheer enjoyment or fun for most of the team members came during the galas. Matt started using the galas during his Brookline days and retained them through his years at the University of Michigan. Matt's galas were great promotional occasions for his swimming programs, as well as being great fun for the participating team members. While standard competitive events were included as an integral part of the gala, the emphasis of the affair was directed towards a wide array of novelty events in which each of the team members participated. The gala was a great promotional tool for Matt, since it incorporated many enjoyable spectator-oriented events which pleased the parents and friends of many of the participants; it also introduced standard swimming competition to many individuals for the first time, who might under other circumstances not come merely to witness a regulation meet. One offshoot which Matt realized from the galas was that spectator attendance at the regulation meets was usually increased following the galas, at both the club and university events, and that swimming programs at the site of the gala generally received increased media and participatory support.

Based on Matt's early association in England with the champion swimmer Barney Kieran, Matt had become a firm believer in the benefits derived from more than one water workout per day for the senior level
competitive swimmer. When the schedules of his swimmers permitted, Matt encouraged and provided opportunities for them to get in two workouts per day, usually a morning session followed by an afternoon or evening session. Matt favored the double workout concept for it permitted the swimmer to apply higher levels of intensity for more yardage, than at a single workout. The two workouts also allowed the swimmer to devote more time to stroke techniques, and some of the other finer points of starting and turning, than might be accomplished at the one daily workout.

A major movement of the 1970's in the United States was the creation of expanded opportunities for women in many prominent sectors of society. Participation in sports and athletic competition by females was enhanced by notable changes in societal mores, and even federal legislation. But Matt was actually in tune with that "melody" of the 1970's, as early as 1910. In his instructional, life saving and competitive swimming programs at the Brookline Gymnasium Athletic Association facility, Matt organized programs for girls and women which were on a par for those available to the male membership. He actively supported and encouraged family participation in swimming activities, which meant no distinction of program offerings based on the sexes. In positions Matt held at the Duluth Boat Club and the Detroit Athletic Club, he established instructional and competitive programs for girls and women in organizations regarded at the time as male "bastions."

The love and enthusiasm Matt displayed for swimming and his associated work enabled him to pioneer the opportunities for girls and women.
In many sports, women and men compete in separate competitions, but under similar rules; Matt, very early in his career, envisioned "water" as a great equalizer. He could foresee a day when women and men would be able to race side by side in the same competition without a distinction due to sexual characteristics. During the 1970's the world class swimming performances for men and women showed dramatic improvements. However, it was a period when the times for the female swimmers broke through several "barriers," and approached or exceeded standards that were regarded as top flight male performances the previous decade. While there was still a considerable margin between the best male and female performances by the end of the 1970's, the gap had been narrowed, and many of the top women from high school and college ranks were capable of holding their own, on the basis of time comparisons, with many very fine male collegiate swimmers. The decade of the 1980's may be the occasion for the realization of Matt's early prediction of open competition for male and female swimmers.

Whereas the concept of year-round swimming training became an essential component in the continued development of the top American male and female swimmers of the 1960's and 1970's, Matt had recognized the importance of continuous training and competition from his work at the New York Athletic Club. During Matt's close association with N.Y.A.C. swimming team star Bud Goodwin, the former attributed much of the latter's success to the strict observance to a regular year-round swimming training program. While at the Duluth Boat Club and the Detroit Athletic Club, Matt strongly encouraged his swimmers, especially the top individuals from the different age classifications, to continue their training throughout the spring and summer months.
At the Duluth Boat Club in May of 1918, Matt organized and supervised a swimming training camp for his senior level boys. The camp allowed the boys to work out in the morning and evening each day with provision for meals and overnight lodging in the D.B.C.'s facilities. The establishment of such a swimming training camp was probably one of the first of its kind in the United States; it was more than 50 years ahead of the "boom" of such swimming camps which took place in the 1970's on many college campuses and private clubs for competitive swimmers of upper elementary school level through college.

But Matt's taste for camp experience, which he had developed during his Brookline years at the New England summer camps, was not satisfied by his Duluth operation. He yearned for the role of entrepreneur for a summer camp in the woods with ample space available for a program of several sports for the campers. Matt's camp ownership dream was fulfilled early in the 1920's when he, with the help of others, established Camp Chikopi for boys in Canada. His camp, which possessed a definite flavor of the New England summer sports oriented camps at which he had worked, provided the campers with competitive opportunities in several sports with a special emphasis on the aquatic activities. Camp Chikopi was one of the first major camps in the proximity of the upper Midwest which provided the kinds of summer experiences which were formerly held in the exclusive domain of the camps in the East. Matt's camp was a essentially a sports-oriented operation in a rustic environment, without the inclusion of the camp craft and arts-crafts components which were an integral part of the eastern camps. Later in the 1920's, Matt's camping operation was expanded with the creation of Camp AK-O-MAK.
for girls located across the lake from Camp Chikopi. The concept of setting up camps for each of the sexes, or "brother-sister" camps, in the same proximity was a most novel approach for the period. The program at the girls' camp was also designed to provide the campers with a wide range of competitive experiences in several sports. While Matt maintained authority over both camps, his most immediate concerns were usually focussed on the boys' activities, with a competent person overseeing the activities at Camp AK-O-MAK.

An integral part of Matt's successful summer camp operation was involvement of his immediate family members in various phases of business. It was at the summer camp environment that Matt was able to realize a fusion of his three great loves in life: his family, swimming and his summer camps. When Matt started Camp Chikopi, he called immediately upon the business "know-how" and bookkeeping expertise of his wife Lea. As a matter of fact, Lea Mann, one of Matt's former Duluth swimming pupils, served as Matt's most loved companion and closest business confidant for his entire life. In addition to her business acumen, Lea Mann also had the marvelous ability to calm Matt's sometimes volatile temper when certain things went awry at the camps, or coaching situations, particularly at the University of Michigan. Lea Mann was an important comforting and stabilizing force in Matt's life, as was their membership in the Christian Science Church. When Matt had started his courtship with Lea in Duluth, there must have been some long and hard thought about the marital decision on his part, for it was to be his second marriage. Matt had been married during his years in Brookline, but that relationship had ended in divorce before Matt left New York City for
the Duluth Boat Club position. But in Lea Mann, Matt had discovered
the perfect chemistry for 43 exciting and eventful years until his
death at Camp Chikopi in 1962.

Matt and Lea had two wonderful children, Rose Mary and
Matt III, who spent each of their summers to adulthood at Camps Chikopi
and AK-O-MAK. Summer life at the camps had enabled the Mann family to
become especially close. Whereas the school year had each of the family
members going in separate directions, with the dinner table and
evening hours providing some opportunity for family fellowship, the
life at the camps provided for numerous opportunities of different
kinds of pleasant interaction among Matt and his family. In addition
to Rose Mary and Matt III becoming highly accomplished in a variety
of aquatic skills as competitors, they both in their adult years
became excellent swimming coaches. Rose Mary distinguished herself
in the coaching ranks by having a team of Canadian girls win an
Indoor Canadian Women's National Collegiate Championship in 1964 and
later having her girls team at the Ann Arbor Swim Club placed second
in the Indoor United States National Championship in 1961. Matt was
especially proud of the competitive and coaching exploits of his
children, but he felt an additional source of pride in the desire and
the ability of Rose Mary and Matt III to competently administer the
camp operation when he had started to slow his pace somewhat in the
late 1950's. Matt III had retained essentially the same type of
atmosphere at Camp Chikopi that Matt had established, but Rose Mary
started the movement in Camp AK-O-MAK to a more specifically aquatic
sport-training oriented environment. She had decided to make
opportunities available for the girls who were interested in serious
swimming or canoeing training regimens during the summer months. From those fledgling camps of the 1920's, Matt's two camps have retained a popularity and an affiliation for many high caliber aquatic competitors through the 1970's.

It was during Matt's years in Detroit that he became a United States citizen. He spoke out frequently about how Americans could improve the internal strength of its nation by elevating their personal fitness levels. Matt campaigned frequently in the press, throughout his career, that "all" Americans should be able to swim for personal safety reasons, and as a means for improving their physical fitness status. Matt had a strong nationalistic spirit for America, and on at least two official occasions he assisted United States servicemen with their swimming skills at the request of the federal government. During World War II, Matt conducted several special instructional swimming sessions at the University of Michigan for the Navy's officer candidates who were on campus. Following those war years, in 1946, Matt went to Germany for several weeks at the request of United States Army officials to conduct special swimming clinics for selected members of that branch of the armed forces. Throughout his life, Matt staunchly supported the fundamental tenets of the American way of life because he believed them to be right, and they enabled him to make his place as an immigrant.

Just as Matt believed in and supported America as the number one nation in the world, he held the University of Michigan in similar esteem as an institution of higher learning. Matt believed "his" Michigan was number one, and he did his best to prove that in the collegiate swimming world. He pursued his swimming coach's
position at the University of Michigan with tremendous zeal and dedication. Matt had little patience with candidates for his Wolverine teams who were not respectful of the University, and who might have approached his swimming workouts in a halfhearted manner. Matt shared his plaudits among his team members, champions and "third-stringers," who did their best in the daily practice sessions. He worked to instill in his Wolverine swimmers the spirit that if they practiced "hard," then they would be rewarded with good meet performances.

While Matt's demanding practice sessions served as the primary basis for the success of his teams throughout his career, his ability to get his teams ready for the big meets, especially during his University of Michigan years, was indeed his coaching trademark. Many of Matt's coaching rivals pointed to his seemingly uncanny ability to get his Wolverine, and later University of Oklahoma, swimmers emotionally prepared for the championship meets. By many of his coaching peers, Matt was accorded the title as "the greatest seat of the pants psychologist" in the swimming game. He had no professional or self study in the area of psychology, but he did possess a great intuition for evaluating his swimmers' competitive needs. During a typical training season, Matt often gave the impression to many of his swimmers, especially the newcomers, that he knew very little about them. It was not difficult for the swimmers to develop such an opinion, since Matt had a difficult time remembering the names of his swimmers and most often greeted each with, "Hi Son," when he reported to practice. But when the big meet time arrived, Matt's personal concern and knowledge for each of his "boys" would be reflected in
the great confidence each swimmer seemed to exude following Matt's individual personal conference sessions. Matt made his Wolverine swimmers such believers in their efforts offered for the "Glory of Michigan," that anything less than a personal best or high scoring performance in the big meet might be regarded as a "black mark" against the University. But it should not be misinterpreted that Matt's great teams were made up of "brainwashed" robots who competed as if obsessed by some fanatical cause. Matt's swimmers, throughout his career, greatly respected him and indeed possessed a sincere admiration and sometimes love for the club or university for which they were swimming. Matt's ability to develop the emotional readiness for the big meet performances, an art recognized by rival coaches, could not be written down in a patented descriptive fashion. The procedures which Matt followed as a championship meet approached seemed to come to him innately, without any special concern for the unique ability which he possessed. Matt's approach evolved as a basic element of his personality which had developed over the years from his love for swimming, love for competition, and a sincere interest in the people with whom he worked.

Matt accepted the challenge of each of his coaching positions with fervor. His training programs were designed to bring out the best in those of his swimmers who were willing to accept the hard work regimens. In each of Matt's full-time coaching jobs he displayed the unique ability of being able to "produce" a champion of national caliber, and in some cases international stature. At Brookline, Leo Handy had achieved acclaim as a national interscholastic star. While at the N.Y.A.C., Ted Cann had achieved national and international
recognition for the national championships he had won, and for the world records he had established. In Duluth, Richard Bennett had won a national junior championship crown. While at the Detroit Athletic Club, Matt had developed the talented Margaret Woodbridge, in less than two years, from the novice level to the stature of a national champion and Olympic medalist during 1920. Ted Cann was rejuvenated to the national champion level, after a respite in the latter part of World War I, under the tutelage of Matt, also at the Detroit Athletic Club. Matt's most impressive record of developing swimmers to the championship level came during his 30 seasons at the University of Michigan. Throughout his years with the Ann Arbor institution, various Wolverine athletes won individual and relay titles in each of the events contested in the National Collegiate Swimming and Diving Championships. As further evidence of Matt's unique ability to develop champion swimmers, regardless of the program, he continued to work that coaching "magic" at the University of Oklahoma, following his mandatory retirement from Michigan, when two of his swimmers, in different years, won individual championships at the N.C.A.A. meets.

The development of champions was important to Matt and his programs for several reasons, especially from the standpoint of bringing recognition to the program with which the athlete was affiliated. Matt looked upon his individual champions as necessary ingredients for championship teams. Within the parameters of each of the major coaching positions which Matt held, he worked long hours to develop his team to the number one ranking. In many of Matt's positions, various factors, such as facilities, financial backing and the availability of quality athletes, limited his ability to develop
the top national team he so desired. But the University of Michigan swimming coach's position enabled Matt to have access to the necessary resources for his quest to achieve the apex of competitive swimming in the United States. But Matt's insatiable ambition to take his Wolverine swimming team to the top of the collegiate swimming rankings gave many rival coaches and impartial observers of his meet tactics, the impression that his goal was to be achieved in a rather "ruthless" fashion. Throughout his career as the Wolverine mentor, Matt displayed little compassion for his dual meet opponents in terms of running up lopsided point totals on the way to the victories. Even when it was obvious the Wolverines' opponents would provide only token opposition in the various events on the meet programs, Matt would arrange his lineup with his swimmers, usually in their strongest events, with the opposing teams coming out of the meets with very meager scores. It was apparent that Matt believed his teams' margins of victory in their meets would enhance their image as being a very powerful team. The negative emotional impact which those crushing defeats might have had upon the members of the losing teams and their coaches seemed to be of little concern to Matt, for he continued the practice whenever the opportunity presented itself, including his years at Oklahoma.

Matt had always been an astute judge of the talent his opposition possessed before a meet occurred, so it can not be said that his lineups were arranged for the unexpected performances of the opposition. In his early years at the University of Michigan, when Matt anticipated a weak dual meet opponent for the contest on the Ann Arbor campus, he promoted the upcoming meet with some special attraction to be included in the program. Matt realized that the
spectators for his home meets would not turn out in large numbers for an obvious Wolverine victory over a weak opponent, so he constantly implemented ways to bring out a crowd. A full gallery provided Matt with the opportunity to "showcase" his Wolverine swimmers, and in a general sense, to promote competitive swimming and skillful natation.

The greatest heights of Matt's competitive intensity, on the collegiate level, were achieved during the natatorial "incursions" of the Wolverine swimmers with teams from Yale and Ohio State. In Matt's climb for the top of the collegiate swimming "ladder," his meet scheduling philosophy was governed by a simple motto, "If you want to be the best, then you've got to beat the best." ¹ When Matt started his coaching career at the University of Michigan, he first set his sights on winning the Big Ten swimming title. By the end of his third season, the Wolverines captured their first conference swimming crown. As Matt developed his Michigan program he had kept an eye on the achievements and progress of his former "understudy," Bob Kiphuth, at Yale University, Kiphuth had successfully maintained the winning tradition at the New Haven institution, which Matt and his predecessors had established. Yale's domination of the Intercollegiate Swimming Association, and its outstanding dual meet record had accorded the Elis the access to the sports pages of some of the largest newspapers in the country, and the recognition as the top collegiate swimming team in the United States.

If Yale was in fact the country's top team in the 1920's, then Matt wanted an opportunity for his Wolverines to test their skills

¹Matt Mann Cassette Collection, Tape 8.
against the nation's "best," in the hopes of his "chargers" gaining the top rung on the mythical collegiate ladder. The first of six dual meets between Yale and Michigan was contested in 1928. Kiphuth who had carefully set the date, time, and setting of the meet to work in Yale's best interests, won the first encounter with his former "mentor." Following that initial meeting between the two swimming giants, Matt and Kiphuth, the ground rules had been established for what would become a true vendetta in the collegiate swimming world. Matt's intensity for the Yale competitions was kindled from at least three main sources. First he welcomed the opportunity to engage the nation's top ranked collegiate team, Yale, especially in the late 1920's and early 1930's, in competition for a chance to dethrone the kingpin. Secondly, Matt resented the "stranglehold" Kiphuth had assumed on American competitive swimming, especially on the collegiate and Olympic levels. Matt realized he could not defeat Kiphuth at the politics of swimming, but the former could gain a measure of satisfaction by hanging a defeat on the Yale coach's "elite" swimming corps. Matt had hoped that such defeats as his Wolverines might inflict upon Yale in dual and national championship competition, might help to chip away at Kiphuth's "godlike" edifice, which had been created in the swimming world. The third source of "fuel" for Matt's ambition to succeed against Yale was a desire to make a point to the "powers to be" at the New Haven institution, that they had made a mistake by not hiring him, instead of Kiphuth, when the opportunity had first presented itself. But as successful as Matt's teams were throughout his tenure at Michigan, he was unable to gain the recognition from the national and international swimming communities
he so fervently sought, and richly desired. Kiphuth and the cadre of men he had established in the prominent governing bodies of United States competitive swimming, successfully kept Matt out of the national limelight for most of the latter's coaching career.

While Matt's name and his Wolverine swimmers were not given wide acclaim for their outstanding swimming achievements in the sports pages of many major newspapers across the country, and especially in the East, they did command the attention of the midwestern sporting press. Matt actively promoted the accomplishments of his Wolverine swimmers wherever they traveled and a sports writer would listen. Although an official team score was not maintained at the N.C.A.A. Swimming Championships prior to 1937, Matt proudly accepted the accolades of many sports writers who recognized in print, the University of Michigan's swimming team as "National Collegiate Champions" on seven separate occasions from 1927 through 1936. Matt openly stated that "great" swimming teams proved themselves in national competition, and not on the basis of glowing dual meet records. Without mentioning specific personalities or teams, it was obvious Matt's remarks were directed at Kiphuth and Yale. The Yale coach publicly remained undaunted by Matt's remarks, and Kiphuth's place at the top of American swimming remained intact in spite of Yale's apparent deficiencies in national competition.

Matt's claim to the seven national championships prior to 1937 was challenged on numerous occasions, though, by intraconference rival Ohio State. Mike Peppe, the Ohio State mentor, had taken his "lumps" from the Wolverine teams for most of the 1930's and the early 1940's, but by the mid-1940's Peppe had developed a very successful program
of swimmers and divers that "turned the tables" on Matt's "boys" for all but one of the latter's remaining years in the Big Ten Conference. Matt approached the competitions with Ohio State in a very intense fashion for two basic reasons. The first of those reasons was that Peppe's Buckeyes served as a constant threat to the Wolverines' prestige and championship status within the Big Ten Conference which Matt had worked so hard to establish. By the mid-1940's, Ohio State's program had become such a powerhouse that Matt opted to swim the Buckeyes only once in dual competition each season, rather than the home and home seasonal series which had been established when Michigan was at the top of Western Conference swimming. Matt had told Mike Peppe that it did not make any sense for the former to schedule two losses into a season's schedule. Such an acknowledgement from Matt was a basic retreat from the posture he had always purported that his Wolverine squad would swim any team, anywhere and at any time, in order to establish which team might be America's top collegiate power. In addition to the loss of conference stature which the emergent Buckeyes had inflicted upon the Wolverines, from the mid-1940's through the early 1950's, Matt's "boys" had also lost their top place on the national collegiate swimming scene. Peppe had carefully built his program upon swimmers and divers, whereas the Wolverines maintained an excellent "string" of champion swimmers without the high caliber divers capable of breaking through the Buckeye domination of those events on the national level. In his last years at Michigan,

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2Based on statements made by Mike Peppe in a personal interview.
Matt seemed frustrated season after season in the championship meets, when on several occasions his swimmers outscored the Buckeye swimmers, only to lose the team title because of Ohio State's overwhelming point total from the diving events.

But as intensively as Matt and Peppe "battled" on the pool decks, each had a true respect and admiration for the other man's coaching ability. Together they had decried Kiphuth and the "eastern swimming establishment" for the manner in which the Yale coach and his cronies had controlled certain aspects of collegiate, A.A.U. and international swimming. Peppe's intervention at the time of the coaching selection process for the United States Olympic Team in 1952, enabled Matt to serve as the men's swimming coach for the 1952 Games. Without Peppe's effort, Kiphuth would probably have prevented Matt from serving in the position he so richly deserved, actually many years prior to 1952.

Out of those years of Wolverine swimming greatness, Matt successfully sowed the seeds for many of his proven coaching techniques to be passed on to ensuing generations of young swimmers throughout the United States. From the spirit of intense competitions, with Matt often testing the rules of competition to the limit against his most formidable opponents, came a following of Matt Mann coaching "disciples." From an ethical standpoint, some of the techniques Matt used to attempt to "coerce" or persuade an official to make a decision in behalf of the Wolverines, during a meet, could have been deemed as untenable practices. But Matt's positive coaching attributes with which he helped so many young men develop their athletic and academic potentials throughout the years, far outweighed his "negative"
qualities. The number of Matt's "boys" from both Michigan and Oklahoma who became outstanding coaches on the collegiate, A.A.U. and high school levels stood as a living testament to the fine leadership he was affording those young men during their college days. Most of the former Wolverine and Sooner swimmers who had assumed swimming coaching positions gave credit to the coaching "lessons" they had learned so well, under Matt's careful tutelage. Matt did not make a special effort to groom his "boys" to become swimming coaches, but it was his love for the sport and his work which seemed to serve as an inspiration to so many of his swimmers to enter the coaching profession.

As early as the 1930's some of Matt's Michigan "boys" were out in the coaching world improving the swimming "game" for young men on both the college and high school levels. Several of the former Wolverines gave credit publicly for part of the success they had achieved to the "Matt Mann Way" of coaching swimming on the college level. That list of Matt's coaching "offspring" included Dick Papenguth, Purdue; Charles McCaffree, Iowa State, and later Michigan State; Ben Grady, Pittsburgh; Tom Haynie, Stanford; "Tex" Robertson, Texas; Hanley Staley, Cornell; Bob Mowerson, Minnesota; and Gus Stager, Michigan. There was little doubt that the high level of esteem with which interscholastic swimming in the states of Michigan and Illinois was held from the 1940's through the 1970's, must be attributed to many of the outstanding coaches who swam and received their coaching "classes" from Matt during their competitive days of Michigan. Several of the aforementioned collegiate coaches had launched their careers with very successful interscholastic programs in Michigan. But some of the Wolverines who had established
and stayed with top high school positions included Dave Robertson, New Trier, Illinois; Dobson Burton, Evanston, Illinois; Matt Mann III, Lansing (Sexton), Michigan; Alex Canja, Ypsilanti, Michigan; Paul Clifford, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Dave Geiney, Saginaw (Arthur Hill), Michigan; Willard Kooley, Jackson, Michigan; William Kogan, Oak Park (River Forest), Michigan; and Wally Laury, Detroit (Cody), Michigan.  

As further proof of Matt's genius, not only to produce winning teams and champion swimmers, but to inspire some of his gifted "pupils" to enter the coaching ranks, were his years at Oklahoma. To those members of the swimming coaches' "fraternity" who knew Matt well, his achievements at Oklahoma did not amaze them. Although Matt was approaching his seventy-first birthday when he assumed the coaching "reins" at Oklahoma, his ability to work with young men, plus his skill to motivate those swimmers to appreciate the value of hard training sessions, enabled him to transcend the labels of a "has been" or the "former great coach." Matt's record of seven seasons without a dual meet loss to a conference opponent, plus the conference titles for each of those seasons, was unparalleled in Big Eight Conference History. His true devotion to the sport of competitive swimming and his real concern for his swimmers continued to inspire many of his top Sooner "boys" to enter the swimming coaching profession. The most notable of the former University of Oklahoma swimmers to achieve success at coaching swimming were: Rick Rowland, Pepperdine University, California; Dick Thatcher, Rochester High School, 

3 Based on statements by Gus Stager, in a personal interview.
Minnesota; Bob Connor, University of Oklahoma; and Gordon Collet, University of the Pacific, California. Several other former Sooner swimmers also carried on the "Matt Mann Way" successfully on the interscholastic level in parts of the Southwest and Far West.\(^4\)

The legacy of Matt Mann II to competitive swimming in the United States was indelibly imprinted upon the sport by his personal actions and his illustrious achievements, and by those self proclaimed disciples of his coaching philosophy and methods. By the last two decades of the twentieth century it may be difficult to get a particular swimming coach to acknowledge that a specific coaching technique was a "patented" Matt Mann approach, or even to remember Matt Mann. But, it can be safely assumed that Matt's positive impact on the sport of competitive swimming, through some of his disciples still active in coaching, or "offspring" from many of his disciples' programs, will be clearly in evidence throughout much of the twenty-first century. Matt Mann II was truly an outstanding contributor to the development of competitive swimming in the United States during the twentieth century, and his story, along with those of Bob Kiphuth and Mike Peppe, should be shared with members of the swimming coaching profession for ensuing generations.

\(^{4}\)Based on statements by Bob Connor, in a personal interview.
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I. MISCELLANEOUS PRINTED MATERIAL


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