

Sports profile of Gary MacDonald

York olympian: he beat Spitz

By Kim Llewellyn

Today Gary MacDonald swims for York but usually he competes for Canada.

In his last international competition, the Montreal Olympics, MacDonald was the anchor leg in the Canadian 4x100 metre relay team, a team no one expected to win a medal. The Canadians walked away with the silver.

Sitting in the living room of his Bethune apartment on a late afternoon in mid-December MacDonald recalled that moment of victory.

"When the Canadian team came into the stadium 80,000 people stood up and cheered. It gave me

goose bumps. As I walked up to the blocks, though, all I could think about was swimming two lengths of that pool as fast as I could. The crowd was just a dull roar."

The crowd was deafening at the end. I put on my glasses to see my time on the clock. I was so happy I did a back flip into the diving well behind the swimming pool and forgot my glasses were on. I lost them in the pool and was dragged out to get my medal before I could retrieve them. I didn't have a chance to go back until about an hour later when the diving was about to begin. They were at the bottom of the diving pool."

The Canadian relay team finished with a time of 4:45.9, beating the old world record by two full seconds. Unfortunately the Americans, perennially strong in international swimming, had a three second lead on the Canadians.

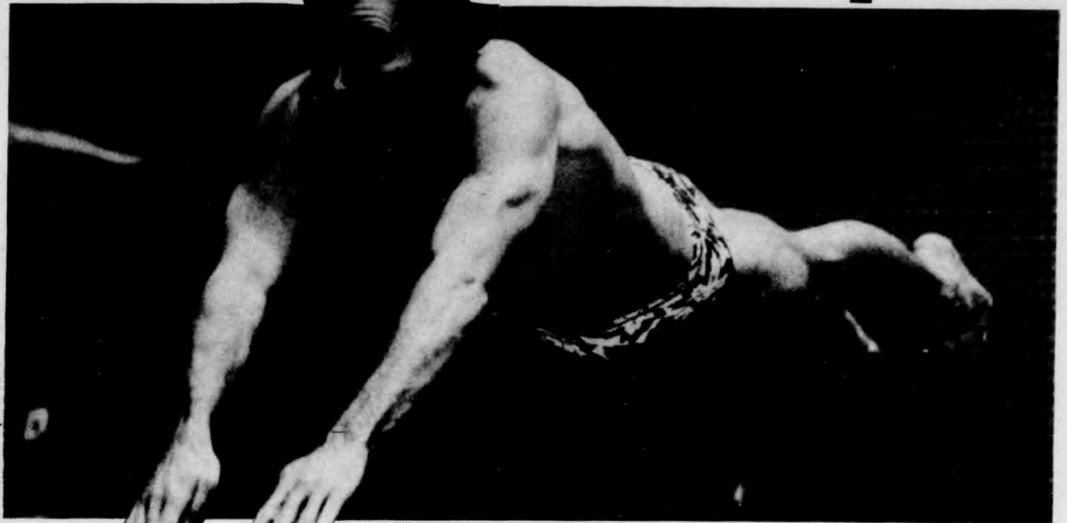
West Germany took bronze two seconds behind Canada.

"At the end of a race like that you realize it's all worth it," says MacDonald.

The training for that race started for MacDonald at 17, in his first year at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia - it was a late start.

MacDonald labelled it "serious training", which means four or five hours a day for a distance of about 10 miles.

As an international swimmer he



MacDonald takes the plunge

Peter Titus photos



Gary MacDonald

has brought home gold, silver, and bronze medals from an impressive list of international competitions. He swam with the Canadian team in the '73 World Student Games in Moscow, the '74 Commonwealth Games in New Zealand and the '75 Pan Am Games in Mexico. The '73 Canada Games saw him compete for B.C.

MacDonald has challenged the world's best, including Mark Spitz, who he beat in 1972.

Shortly before the Munich

Olympics MacDonald found himself in the same heat as Spitz at a swim meet in Santa Clara, California. The event: the 100 metre breast-stroke. MacDonald finished before Spitz but neither won the race.

A little town in British Columbia is very proud of MacDonald. Mission City, his home town, has followed his career closely and its community members set up an educational fund for MacDonald to help him through university.

York is MacDonald's home at the

moment and he still swims, but only because he likes it.

"Since the Olympics I haven't been as serious about training. I only swim once a day. I'm not trying to prove anything anymore. Last year I was trying to demonstrate to myself and other people that I could swim half the distance and still perform up to the same level."

Has he been successful in this most recent swimming ambition? His performance speaks for itself. He is the present Canadian record holder in the 100 metre short course freestyle and the 50 metre long and short course freestyle.

Although he has had several coaching offers from top swimming clubs he is putting school first and finishing up a physical education degree at York. In his spare time he assists an Etobicoke swim club under Olympian coach Derek Snelling.

"I'm going to work my way into coaching after I finish school. I'll start with a younger age group and eventually work with a senior program. I want to be a nationally ranked coach, possibly at the Olympic calibre."

"I haven't really thought about anything else. I just want to stay in the sport of swimming. I really love it."

Swimming fans will have a chance to see MacDonald in action as York hosts McMaster in a coed swim meet next Tuesday. The meet commences at 6:30 p.m.

Hoopers take trio of non-league contests

By Bruce Gates

By the time you read this the basketball Yeomen will have returned from their tough 10-day trip out west where they played in two Christmas tournaments.

We will have more on those games next week.

Before the Yeomen headed west, however, they tuned up with three non-league games against Brock, December 7, Erindale, December 9 and Laurier, December 16.

The Yeomen did everything but make the ball talk in the first five minutes of their game against Laurier when they exploded for 24 consecutive points before the Golden Hawks got on the board.

Several of these baskets were

scored because of good defensive play by the Yeomen, who intercepted Laurier passes and converted them into baskets.

The score at half time was York 70, Laurier 27.

Led by sharpshooting Dave Coulthard with 19 points, Ted Galka with 16, Chris McNeilly with 15, Lonnie Ramati with 14, and Ron Kaknevicus with 10, Yeomen crushed the Golden Hawks 111-60.

And but for a slight let down in the latter part of the second half, the Yeomen probably could have kept Laurier below 50.

Peter Zwart paced the Golden Hawks with 17 points.

Against Erindale in Mississauga, December 9, York fell behind in the

opening minutes of the first half, but when the Yeomen caught fire, they clobbered Erindale 90-40.

Lonnie Ramati led the Yeomen attack with 16 points, followed by Dave Coulthard and Ted Galka, each with 14 points, and Chris McNeilly with 10.

Chris Aubin had 12 points for Erindale.

Earlier that week against Brock and playing without starters Lonnie Ramati and Paul Layefsky, Yeomen doubles the score on the Badgers, outclassing them 102-51.

The "Lithuanian Connection" (Ron Kaknevicus and Frank Zulys) combined for 31 points to help pace the York team.

Zulys netted 17 points and

Kaknevicus scored 14; but holding the hot hand for York in this game was Mike Willins, who just could not miss as he scored 23 points.

Other Yeomen in the double figures against Brock were Harry Hunter with 12 points and Dave Coulthard with 11.

For the Badgers Terry Rigg led with 18 points.

Parting Shots: Don't forget the York-Guelph game tomorrow night at Tait McKenzie at 8:15 p.m. ... In the Laurier game, **Lonnie Ramati**, hauled in 11 rebounds while **Paul Layefsky** and **Frank Zulys** followed six each.... Next weekend, the Yeomen travel to Ottawa for a game against Carleton Friday and Ottawa Saturday. Both are league games.

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