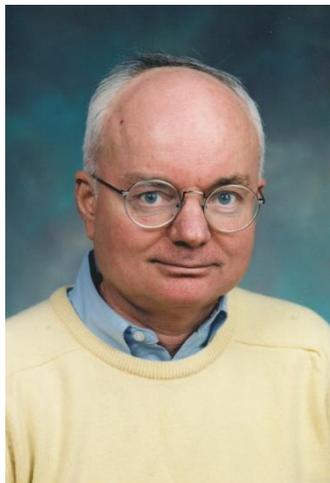


**Nick Thierry**  
**Recipient of the 2013 R. Max Ritter Award**  
**Presented by United States Aquatic Sports**

Nick Thierry is the 2013 recipient of the R. Max Ritter Award presented posthumously and in recognition of his life-long affair with swimming. United States Aquatic Sports honors the memory of a man whose unselfish contributions including keeping the history book of swimming straight, simple and true for the benefit of athletes, coaches and also for national federations as well as the international body FINA.



"Before his passing on October 2, 2012 Nick invested in the development of a database that contains 40 years of swimming rankings and statistics. That immense work is part of his legacy. When swimmers swim head to head in elite international competition, their foremost goal is to beat the opposition. Once the race is over and they glance up to the scoreboard to see their finish place, their next thought is, "My time, did I do a personal best? Was it a record?" Moments after swimmers hit the finish wall, Nick Thierry took over.

Nick Thierry kept the record of the sport alive for more than four decades as the keeper of the world rankings. He was the bastion of swimming statistics and a pioneer in the art of swimming news. His guardianship of the record of athletes performances has been treasured by swimmers, coaches, sports scientists, journalists, sports institutions and swimming federations since he first started to register and chronicle all meets that produced performances worthy of a place in the top 300 across all events.

Born in Hungary on December 2, 1938, Nick spent the first eight years of his life in Budapest. In 1948 his family moved to Havana, Cuba, where his father had been transferred. Nick swam competitively for three years while in Havana and another three years in Canada, while studying at the University of Toronto. He obtained a Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1964. For the next four years he worked in an architect's office; that experience was partly responsible for Nick's overriding philosophy in life: keep it simple.

In 1961, at the University of Toronto, he served as assistant swimming coach and for the next 21 years he placed swimmers on the Canadian Olympic teams of 1964, 1968 and 1972. He was Canadian head coach for the 1970 Commonwealth Games team which competed in Edinburgh, Scotland and two other tours.

It was while coaching that Nick first saw the need to keep swimming statistics. "It was a very effective training tool for my swimmers," he said when inducted into the International Hall of Fame in 2005. "The need to know what was going on worldwide was growing in the sport." He organized the formation of Swim Canada, a monthly magazine publication that later became SwimNews. If the publication attracted thousands of subscribers from around the world, the online site grew from pioneering status to a portal that attracted several million hits during the eighth days of swimming at the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Nick was publisher, editor, writer and, above all in later years, guardian to a team of writers in whom he saw promise and encouraged to use their skills in the interests of keeping a true record of the sport of swimming. His encouragement and support in the role of "second father" set sail many on a fine media career. His generosity was second to none: the requests and demands for help with rankings, statistics, biographies and more often came thick and fast - and Nick's standard reply was "Sure, I'll send it straight through".

It was Nick's quest to locate and publish every available swimming performance that led to the formation of the International Swimming Statisticians Association at the 1986 FINA World Championships held in Madrid, Spain. In 1992, statistics in SwimNews were supplemented by printing monthly FINA world rankings and yearly short and long course FINA annuals. Originally, record keeping was done manually with Nick personally hand typing each line of statistics. With the introduction of the fax machine, records and dates could instantly be transmitted and received for publication. With the advent of the computer and swimming software programs, data became instantly transmitted and printable on demand.

Nick was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 2001 as Honor Contributor for his dedication to the sport. The ISHOF citation included the following: "Sorting through the seemingly endless volumes of numbers and times, Nick makes order out of chaos and assures every swimmer that his or her time will be accurately placed in the pecking order of performances. Nick's no-nonsense approach to his work, his coolness under pressure and his unique style and perseverance, in a very unassuming way, have contributed to his success as publisher/editor of SwimNews and as swimming's top record keeper.

Nick saw the need for good communication in 1958 as a writer for Bob Kiputh's newly formed Swimming World magazine. He never wavered in that mission. Nick was the recipient of the Al Shoenfield Media Award from ISHOF and was honored by Swimming Canada, the American Swimming Coaches Association and the World Swimming Coaches Association. Nick was a member of the FINA Press Commission.

Nick loved the classics, in literature and music, his collection of classical composers fit to challenge the volume of his swim rankings. A fine chef, he loved to entertain friends at his home in Toronto and was a wealth of knowledge not only in the pool but also in the kitchen and the concert hall as well. Nick was an accomplished painter, his water colors lived proudly alongside his collection of fine art. If his work on rankings, records, results and biographies will be sorely missed, it is for a man of many more talents who those closest to him will mourn."

*Written by Craig Lord, October 2012*



## The R. Max Ritter Award

Richard Max Ritter (November 7, 1886 – May 24, 1974) was born in Magdeburg, Germany and competed for Germany in the 1908 and 1912 Summer Olympics. He was educated in London from 1906 to 1909 and in 1910 he immigrated to the United States. He was one of the 8 founders of FINA on July 19, 1908 where the group set uniform international rules for swimming, diving, water polo and established world records for swimming.

Ritter was the only person to have served in each of the three officer positions within FINA. Ritter served as FINA Honorary Secretary and FINA Honorary Treasurer. In 1960 he was elected FINA President, the first American to serve in a FINA leadership position. At the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, under Ritter's leadership, FINA membership grew to more than 90 National Federations.

He served as the treasurer of the US Olympic Committee and was active for more than 50 years in the Amateur Athletic Union. In 1965 he was inducted as an Honor Contributor in the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

The R. Max Ritter Award is donated by the Ritter Family and is presented annually by United States Aquatic Sports to the organization or individual of a FINA member country who has contributed the most to the advancement of understanding and good will among nations through international participation in amateur aquatic sports. Past recipients of this award are listed below:



2013	Nick Thierry	1991	Ross Wales
2012	William "Bill" Matson	1990	Mustapha Larfaoui
2011	Eldon Godfrey	1989	William Lippman
2010	Francisco Javier López Chaves	1988	Robert H. Helmick
2009	Bartolo Consolo	1987	Dr. John A Bogert
2007	Coarcy Nunes Filho	1986	Javier Ostos Mora
2006	Tom Gompf	1985	David Jay Flood
2005	Orban Mendoza	1984	Jan Armburst
2003	Gerald T. Olson	1983	Masaji Kiyokawa
2001	Hironoshin Furuhashi	1982	Buck Dawson
2000	Lynn Bates	1981	Pat Besfort
1999	Julio Maglione	1980	Dr. James E. Counsilman
1998	Carol Zaleski	1979	Deutscher Schwim-Verband
1997	Allen B. Richardson, MD	1978	Douglas F. Roby
1996	Klaus van de Pol	1977	Yugoslav Swim Federation
1995	Billy Payne	1976	Dr. Harold W. Henning
1992	Spanish Swim Federation		



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