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RECORD SWIMMING LIKELY AT EMPIAD

By LES UREN

IMPRESSIVE training efforts by South African and Rhodesian swimmers in Melbourne last week, a brilliant exhibition by Ron Masters, Australian Empire Games representative, in retaining the Victorian high tower championship, and the good form displayed by D. Norris (diver), J. Johnston and R. Cameron (breast stroke) on Saturday indicate that swimming events will be a feature of the Empiad, and that new records are likely to be established

THE South Africans and Rhodesians, just off the boat on their journey to Sydney, were hardly expected to reveal form that would give any indication as to their prospects. However, work in a belt in an improvised tank, on the voyage, had enabled them to retain the greater portion of their speed. Consequently, when they swam at the Olympic and Richmond pools, they surprised many onlookers.

The initial work out of Carla Gerke, breaststroke, was an outstanding effort, for her stroke was snappy, and although she was not timed, she showed that her speed is good, and justifies the confidence of her team mates in her ability to win.

SHORT ARM ACTION

No other champion who has competed in Melbourne has had such a short arm action, which is efficient for she makes the "catch" firmly. Her kick is wide, and full of punch, and with her body well planed, she glides high over the surface of the water. A repetition of her best African form, where she covered a furlong in 3min. 5sec., would give her a winning chance.

The form of Terry Collard, the sprint hope, was interesting. His style is not modelled on modern Japanese methods, but it resembles the actions of American champions of about five years ago.

Collard, in his six-beat crawl, favors the long arm recovery, while his body rolls considerably. He ploughs his way strongly through the water, and when "wound up" will be fast. He is likely to cover the "100" in 54sec., a time that no Australian would be certain to break.

Although her methods are practically orthodox, Hazel Holmes was a mild sensation, for her arm entry in back stroke is made wide, and just past shoulder level. It could not even be classed, as a compromise of the straight arm style. The movements are not clean, for the arms and shoulders are never quite clear of the water.

Under pressure, Hazel is beautifully balanced, with her head carried high, and the leg thrust is classical and effective. She will be a danger to all comers.

Whoever defeats Molly Ryde over a middle distance, will have to possess stamina in abundance, for she has all the qualifications of a stayer, and her stroke is not likely to break in a grueling test.

Rita Baker (sprinter) and Valerie Astken (middle distance), the two Rhodesians, are young, and are good stylists. They will be dangers at their best.

NEW STARTING METHODS

One noticeable feature of the training

was the starting method adopted by Mr. A. R. Bailey, the swimming selector.

He called to the swimmers to stand on the marks, and at the word "Go," they were compelled to take a short step to the edge of the pool, before taking off.

The method is different from the Australian style, in which the competitors stand on the edge of the starting board prepared for the two commands, "Face the water" and "Go."

The Australian method, in all probability, will be utilized at the Games.

In winning the Victorian tower championship for the seventh successive year, Ron Masters excelled, for his dives were made confidently and gracefully, with one exception, when he slightly misjudged the take-off, lost balance in the air, and made a comparatively poor entry.

The ease with which he accomplished the most difficult flights was astounding, and it will come as a surprise to Australians if he suffers defeat in the same event at the Games.

It is obvious that he is still improving, and it is possible that he will ultimately succeed in equalling or bettering Morris's record of ten consecutive victories in Victorian championships.

In gaining second place, Morris, as a veteran, was remarkably consistent. He made his first appearance in the championships before the war, and since the armistice has competed in 17 successive years.

Tom Garrett, who was third, is on the improve and needs just a little more finish to become a rival to Masters.

Youthful Dave Norris is still progressing, and is gradually extending his range of dives. Much of the lad's development is due to Alan Mott, who carefully supervises and corrects all his efforts. Mott, who is both practical and a theorist, expects his pupil to be a surprise at Sydney.

JOHNSTON SURPRISES

In finishing ahead of Ray Cameron, who is likely to succeed the present Victorian breaststroke champion, W. Weir, over 100 yards and 1500 yards, J. Johnston pleasantly surprised onlookers at Nagambie. He is a strong swimmer, and with slight improvement in his body position and better turning, should break 3min. for 220 yards.

Cameron also is developing and will do better before the season ends.

One of the most remarkably sustained efforts of backstroke swimming was witnessed at Nagambie when C. Eldridge (Aubotsford) was first home in the 1500 yards handicap. Despite the choppy water and the strain of the long race, Eldridge did not swim short at the finish and is a stayer of class.

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D. Farrington, of Shepparton, was another to show to advantage, for he pressed Ron Winning all the way for the time honors in the 1500 yards event, and only just failed to gain the distinction. He also covered 100 yards earlier in the day in 62sec.

It is his intention to live in Melbourne in the near future, and he should be an acquisition to any metropolitan club.

Trials will be conducted this week for selection of the Melbourne team to represent the University in the Australian championships on January 11 and 12. Although some of the outstanding swimmers are not yet at their best, Melbourne should have a strong team, with Linsell, Dennis, Connell and McDonald forming the nucleus of the combination.

