

Somebody made the remark on the day after Mariechen Wehselau, Outrigger Canoe Club swimmer, lost to Ethel Lackie of Chicago in the 100 yards free style for women in the Olympic Games, that the result would have been different had George ("Dad") Center, Outrigger Club trainer, been present.

And the report of the event brought back by Dick Gartley, island pole vaulter, who went to Paris and saw the race, proves the remark outlined above as true. Further, recent pictures of Mariechen might seem to indicate why she is not as fast as before. She is gaining weight on the tour.

In the first race Center would never have allowed Mariechen to race her heart out in the first 50 meters. Just remember that Mariechen made the first 50 in 32 seconds flat. That's mighty close to what ordinary men sprinters make it in and far too fast for a woman's century.

For instance, if she made the other 50 in 32 she would be doing 1:04 for the total distance which is more than eight seconds under the women's world mark of 1:12.2, held jointly by Mariechen, Ethel Lackie and Gertrude Ederle.

If Mariechen had made the first 50 in 34 seconds and the second 50 in 37 seconds she would still have broken the record and no doubt have won her race.

Had Center been there Mariechen's orders would have been to stay even with the leader to the 60-meter or 70 meter mark and then to step out. Whenever Mariechen swims alone she wants to win the race in a leap. This was brought out at the Punahou tank one afternoon in a Punahou meet. Mariechen and Helen Moses met in a 50-yard race. Now Helen is no sprint swimmer, but she got the jump on Mariechen and won the event. It made Mariechen excited and in the 100 that afternoon she tried to win the race in a leap and as a result Lillie Bowmer beat her out in the stretch. Then Center arrived on the scene and in the 220 she followed his orders and won. She stayed with the leader until within striking distance of the finish and then she sprinted and won.

Weismuller is one of the few swimmers who can take the jump from the start and stay in front. He always has the ability to keep a lead. Duke Kahanamoku, on the other hand, was never a front runner. Whether it was 50 yards or 100 yards, the great old boy never opened up until within striking distance of the finish line. And he always came through with the necessary reserve power.

Mariechen apparently does not know how to keep cool unless her coach and trainer, George ("Dad") Center happens to be around.