



Cliff Lumsdon, CM, Honor Swimmer, Canada, 1969



Videos: [Show 1 at 4:08 and 7:23 Swim 1 ISHOF 1](#)

Cliff Lumsdon, CM won 7 Majors: 1949, 1950, 1952, 1953 and 1955 Canadian National Exhibition; and 1956 and 1959 Around Atlantic City.

He was known for his ability to swim in cold water, once going 51.5 km in 18-plus hours in water temperatures ranging between 8.8° – 11.1°C. Cliff's most famous swim was the 51.5 km Canadian National Exhibition swim in 1955. The 35 starters dropped out with Cliff the only one left in the water; however, after 26 miles, he had also started to tire. The remaining 9.6 km saw lots of media involvement – leading local businesspeople adding numerous extra items to the \$15,000 first prize. Offers included: \$1 for every stroke used on the last 8 km; another \$15,000 to the finishing prize; a hunting lodge; and a house. The result was that Cliff was the only finisher, with prizes/gifts and consumer endorsements that totaled US\$84,000. His cold-water abilities were reflected in his 1956 11 hours and 35 minutes crossing of the Strait of Juan de Fuca between the state of Washington and Vancouver Island in 8.8°C water.

He finished 2nd in the 35 km Around Atlantic City in 1954, 1955, 1958, 1960, 1962 and 3rd in 1961 and 4th in 1963 and 1964 – to go with his 2 wins. He finished 3rd in 7 hours and 22 minutes in the 37 km Saguenay in 1965 and tied for 3rd in 6 hours and 39 minutes in 1966. His 5 wins in the Canadian

National Exhibition came with strong finishes over many years: 2nd in 1962; 3rd in 1951; 4th in 1961; 5th in 1948 and 6th in 1947 and 1963. He completed the Lac St.-Jean race 5 times.

In 1972, Lumsdon was elected president of the World Professional Marathon Swimming Federation. He is an inductee in the International Swimming Hall of Fame (2013).

[Expanded Biography \(Openwaterpedia\)](#)

[Long Swims Database \(Marathon Swimmers Federation\)](#)