

October 2025

How to evaluate the chances of a proposed nomination to the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame (IMSHOF).

Induction into IMSHOF was achieved in the last two decades via the annual confidential ballot of a selection panel. The current process is described [here](#) and the makeup of the selection panel [here](#). Fewer than 30% of nominees are generally selected for Induction.

Each annual ballot is different. It is therefore not possible to compare the resume of a current Honoree against a possible nominee to determine their future chance of selection. It is important to understand that it gets progressively more difficult to be selected for induction: there are more swimmers, swims, and contributors in the sport; cheaper travel; and better training/coaching/swim management/nutrition information. A swimmer active in the 1950s might have been inducted based on 4 marathons over a 5-year career – while a swimmer starting after 2000 needs 20+ marathons over an 8+ year career. Finally, some selectors are swayed by “the story” which could involve a country not well represented, physical disability, unique swims/contributions, or overcoming life’s hardships.

A potential nominator of a swimmer or contributor should read the biographies of the Inductees in the [last few years](#) and objectively answer the question: “Is the career of the swimmer or contributor **better** than recent Inductees?” Before submitting a nomination. It is advisable to check with info@imshof.org with the name before executing a nomination. Some already have current nominations. Some are barred based on known ethics issues. Others have previously been nominated and been unsuccessful.

Individuals/organizations that are still active in the sport may best to wait a few more years to further build a resume. A nomination is not an honor – it is the entry into a process. Creating and submitting a nomination can be very positive: a reminder of swimming and contributions career brought to the attention of those in the IMSHOF process. There are some costs and risks (which can be negative). It requires real work/research and several drafts while responding to IMSHOF questions.

There are a few risks: previous [ethics issue](#) may get exposed to the light and the expectations of nominees are raised (with a real possibility of disappointment).

Suggested recent Honoree career to review – to help your evaluation

Swimmers competing in World Aquatics/FINA/Majors races:

[Dr. Evgenij Pop Acev](#) – 3 [Major wins](#) and 106 races in 21 countries.

[Rita Kovács](#) – 36 races (64% podium finishes), silver at 25 km World Championships and after an 8-year career hiatus then won her first race back.

[Georges Michel](#) – [English Channel](#) success on his 10th attempt in the 1920s/set the speed record and top 2 finishes in early Wrigley Marathons.

Swimmers – competing solo swims and competing in other races:

[Courtney Moates Paulk](#) – first to achieve a [triple crown](#) of 2-way swims.

[Grace "Gracie" van der Byl](#) – [Catalina Channel](#) solo record and race wins

[Diane Struble](#) – first ever swims of 32.7 km across Lake Champlain and 51.8 km length of Lake George and eighth swimmer to circle [Manhattan Island](#) (30 years after the seventh swimmer).

[Ros Hardiman](#) - 2019 Loch Ness 36.2 km in at age 67, previously English Channel in 20 hours and 17 minutes overcoming no use of her legs since age 6 due to polio.

Contributors:

Coach [Catherine Vogt Kase](#) - 16 countries as a 4-time FINA World Championship Head Coach and 3-time Olympic Open Water Head Coach (2012-Tunisia, 2016-USA, and 2021-USA).

Coach [Dan Simonelli](#) - supporting more than 300 Catalina and Santa Barbara Channel swims as well as other channel/marathon swims. He coached/crewed swimmers in 6 countries at distances: 10 km - more than 100 swimmers; 10 miles - more than 100 swimmers; and 25 km – more than 65 swimmers.

Administrator [Beth Yudovin](#) - 25+ years as her husband's (David Yudovin Honor Swimmer in IMSHOF & ISHOF) manager and crew chief. Together they completed many first ever marathon swims around the world and IMSHOF's Executive Committee since 2014.

Organization > [Australian Long Distance Swimming Federation](#) – nearly 50 years as longest-serving national open water swimming body in Oceania. Runs a successful marathon and manages the Australia Triple Crown.

Pilot > [Captain John Pittman](#) – During the years 2011 to 2015 he escorted 30+ successful swimmers a year, retiring in 2016.

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