

Captain Al tackles the Mississippi

From AP Reports

Capt. Al Jones, the Marine who spent six straight days swimming in Leighton Pool last fall to raise money for the Oregon swim program, is at it again.

The diminutive physical fitness nut is currently making his way down the Mississippi River from Minneapolis, with hopes of reaching St. Louis by June 14.

Accompanying the 29-year-old Iowa native is Wayne Thompson, a Portland insurance agent who also dotes on physical fitness.

"I want to look after my investment," joked the curly-haired Thompson, 33, who wrote a \$50,000 life insurance policy on Jones, stationed at the Quantico, Va., Marine Base.

Jones, standing 5-feet-9, is wiry compared with the muscular, 195-pound Thompson, who was heavyweight boxing champion of his Marine battalion in the early 1960s. The pair met when Jones was on recruiting duty at Portland in recent years.

Jones' size surprises people, but that's not all:

•He has compiled several other endurance tests, claiming a 500-mile swim on the Snake and Columbia rivers from Lewiston, Idaho, to the Pacific Ocean last year; has done 51,000 consecutive sit-ups; skipped rope 48,000 times; swam in a pool 150 hours in a row, and ran and jogged 199 miles with only an occasional rest stop.

•He's not a meat-eater, but favors fruit juices and honey as his prime fuel on endurance tests. He and Thompson agreed that meat protein tends to make them "sluggish."

•Jones overcame polio that kept him off his feet for a year when he was 5 at his home town of LeMars, Iowa. He also rallied from a severe back injury at age 17, when he got hurt jumping over a parking meter and a physician told him he'd have to settle for a lifetime desk job.

They plan to swim the approximately 700 miles to St. Louis' Gateway Arch by Flag Day, June 14. That will help mark the nation's Bicentennial.

Jones, author of a book "Quit is a Four Letter Word," also is swimming as a benefit event for the Sister Kenny Institute, Minneapolis, a rehabilitation organization specializing in care of severely disabled.

Jones and Thompson were interviewed by reporters before they began their swim. They rubbed themselves with grease to ward off cold.

Asked what the risks were, Jones said, "The river traffic is the biggest thing. We'll have to get out of the barges' way."

"Then sometimes, boaters come out to 'save you.'"

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In proof of what Jones said, four barges blocked their path about 15 minutes while maneuvering for a dockside load of sand and gravel. That left no room until the barges swung away from a lock and dam at the other end.

With 40 feet of clearance, the swimmers, decked out in red, white and blue trunks, stepped gingerly over rocks into the water. Jones paused to pick up one of the dozen dead carp lining the backwash, amid lumber, tree branches and a truck tire.

He made as if to take a big bite out of the fish, then tossed it back and plunged in. Thompson joined him, and they headed toward open water with powerful strokes.

They expect to average about 40 miles a day, and Thompson hopes he'll feel strong enough to continue to New Orleans.

"But I'll have to get back to the Marine base," said Jones, who is swimming on his own leave.

His wife, Linda, and sister, Jill, 18, a recent graduate of Laurens, Iowa, High School, are following them with a supply van.

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Voorhees wins honors

Weightman Dave Voorhees won the Scharps Award for the outstanding performer and was also recognized for scoring the most points at the Oregon track banquet held Wednesday night at the Black Angus Restaurant.

Quartermiler Dacre Bowen was named the most improved athlete while Craig Brigham was honored as the most inspirational member of the '76 Duck squad.

Ducks slate Hi-Lite meet

The final track and field action for Oregon prior to the NCAA Championships will be tonight at the Staters Hi-Lite Meet in Corvallis with action getting underway at 5 p.m.

Bill Dellinger will use the meet primarily as a tuneup for the NCAAAs. However, it could be the final chance for several Ducks to reach NCAA qualifying marks and earn a trip to Philadelphia.

Trials tickets going fast

Ticket sales for the 1976 Olympic Trials are going at a record pace, according to ticket manager Herb Yamanaka. The entire West Grandstand and one third of the East Grandstand have been sold to season ticket holders (\$36.00).

Persons can still order tickets by contacting the UO Ticket Office at 686-4461. With portable bleachers, Hayward Field can accommodate about 16,000 spectators.

Olympic souvenirs on sale

The Oregon swim team is currently selling 1976 Olympic souvenirs at Leighton Pool from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Souvenirs include Montreal shirts, gym shorts, caps and bags. They will also be sold at the Prefontaine Classic June 5 and at the Olympic Trials June 19-27.

Proceeds will go to support the Ducks swimming and diving team.

Smith takes batting title

Ray Smith wound up as Oregon's top hitter this season, finishing with a .308 batting average. Mike Connolly was second at .307, followed by Rob Closs (.294), Tim Stack (.291), Paul Kirsch (.287), Jeff Stanton (.281), Dave Ulrich (.277), Hank Love (.270) and Glenn Gaboury (.260).

Smith had 14 extra-base hits, including nine doubles, five home runs and a triple.

Mark Carnathan fashioned the best Duck pitching record — 4-1 while Vic Kelley turned in the best ERA among starters (2.06).

Masters swim program set

If you're over 20 and deeply into swimming, Oregon swim coach Don Van Rossen may have something for you.

Van Rossen is organizing a master's swim program for students and faculty. The program's first workout meeting will be tonight at 6:30 p.m. at Leighton Pool.

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See A CHORUS LINE on our upcoming theater tour to San Francisco. Depart Eugene June 11 on Amtrak at 6:40 p.m. and return via United Airlines on June 13 at 8:08 p.m. Accommodations are at the new Sheraton-Fisherman's Wharf. Tickets for A CHORUS LINE are for Saturday evening. Cost per person is \$131.50/double occupancy.



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