In 1970 increasing concerns were expressed at the levels of pollution in Dublin Bay, the Liffey and its tributaries. Questions were posed about increasing health risks to bathers caused by the discharge of raw sewage into Dublin waters. The Lee Swim from St Vincent’s Bridge to Clontarf Bridge, Cork, had been stopped in 1955 because of pollution for health reasons and moved to a course from Glenbrook, Co Cork to Monkstown. There had also been several cases of typhoid fever associated with swimming in the River Lee. One newspaper described Dublin Bay as ‘becoming a septic tank’. At a seminar on water pollution in October 1967 under the auspices of the Institution of Civil Engineers in Ireland, a leading world expert, Dr Arthur Key, stated “that a society with a high standard of living ought not to have to submit to having to swim in water in which there are visible traces of sewage or walking beside a sea marred by sewage solids and smells”. Dublin officials argued that the cheapest way of disposing of sewage was to put it out to sea and “that bacteria associated with sewage are a natural part of life and, however obnoxious the water, there will be no danger to health from swimming in it unless you swallow large lumps of untreated sewage”.

A report published in 1959 in the Journal of Hygiene entitled “Sewage Contamination of Coastal Bathing Waters in England and Wales” probably had a marked influence on the thinking of Irish public health and governmental authorities. The report reached the conclusion “that bathing in sewage-polluted water carries only a negligible risk to health, even on beaches that are aesthetically very unsatisfactory”. The report further suggested “that, since a serious risk of contracting disease through bathing in sewage-polluted sea-water is probably not incurred unless the water is so fouled as to be aesthetically revolting, public health requirements would seem to be reasonably met by a general policy of improving grossly insanitary bathing waters and of preventing so far as possible the pollution of bathing beaches with undisintegrated faecal matter during the bathing season”. Indeed, the Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Dublin Health Authority, Dr Morgan Crowe, in response to questions on sewage pollution reported that “Intestinal organisms from by far the great majority of persons are not pathogenic, and the dilution effect of sea water is protective, so
that it has not been the experience here that this constitutes a health hazard”. He further stated that “This contamination is the result of sewage works discharging in the sea. This is feature of coastal towns the world over and it would be impractical to campaign for any other system”. Whatever the then current health assessment might be, twelve doctors, all of whom were regular swimmers, wrote a letter stating that, in their opinion, the time was fast approaching that contamination of Dublin bathing places by human excreta would constitute a health hazard unless remedial action was taken.

In that era the efficacy of high coliform counts as a measure of sewage pollution of sea water and thus as an indicative value to the health hazards in sea bathing lacked scientific study. It was estimated that the installation of a sophisticated sewage system for the central Dublin area would cost at least £10 million, with an annual running cost of £500K, a prohibitive cost compared to putting it out to sea. Nowadays there are Blue Flag sea-water bathing standards for coliform bacteria and faecal enterococci with testing at least every 30 days, run under the auspices of the international, non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education). In December 1970 it was announced that Dublin Corporation, the Dublin Port and Docks Board and the Electricity Supply Board were to undertake a joint survey of Dublin Bay pollution from January 1971.

While a Dublin SC-promoted Ladies open sea race for the Dorgan Cup dated from the 1950’s, there was still no Liffey Swim for women in 1970. Young Leinster SC-sponsored open sea races for girls and boys over 800 yards had been held from Blackrock Baths in 1953. The winner of the 600-yards Dublin SC Open Sea Race in 1970 was a 14-year-old, Mary Kirwan (Otter S.C.). The Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim for women had been inaugurated in 1967, albeit over a 600-yard course. The first winner was an 11-year old, Catherine Strecker (Cormorant SC). The winner in 1970 was Brenda McGrory (Cormorant SC). Likewise, the Half Moon SC John Clarke Cup Open Sea Swim had included a women’s race over 600 yards from 1967, when the race was won by Ethna Ward (Cormorant SC). The 1970 winner was Joan Lawlor (Otter SC). Galway SC promoted the inaugural Long John Whiskey Ladies Promenade Swim at Salthill, from the Diving Tower at Blackrock to Palmer’s Rock, on 15 August, 1970. The race over a ¾-mile course attracted 44 entries. The winner was Christine Fulcher (Dublin SC), 2nd was Vickie Smith (Otter SC) and 3rd was Ann Kirwan (Clontarf SC). The Shannon Swim over a 500-yard course at Killaloe from the Pier Head to the Bridge was won in 1969 in Amelia Crowe, a 15-year-old, who placed 2nd in the race in 1970. Was the Liffey Swim considered just too long in distance for women or the waters of the Liffey potentially too dangerous to their health?

September 1970 was a month of long-distance swimming achievements. Larry Burke, a 34-year-old electronics lecturer from Holywood, Co. Down, won the
Galway Bay swim from Ballyvaughan, Co Clare to Salthill, Co Galway in a time of 4 hours 3 min. The Spanish long distance swimmer Montserrat Tresserras placed 4th. She subsequently swam 14 miles from Limerick to Shannon Airport in 7 hours 25 min. She had previously swum the Straits of Gibraltar (1958), the English Channel in both directions – France to England in 1959 and England to France in 1961, the first woman to achieve the Channel swim both ways, Concordia (Argentina) to Colón (Uruguay) on the River Uruguay, Mallorca to Menorca, Sante Fe de la Vera Cruz to Rosario in Argentina on the Paraná River, Lough Neagh, Lake Windermere, and Lake Zurich.

Kevin Murphy, a Middlesex journalist, became only the second person ever to swim the North Channel from Orlock Point between Bangor and Donaghadee, Co. Down, to Killantringan Beach, two miles north of Portpatrick, Galloway, Scotland, in 11 hours 20 min, cutting 4 hours off the time set by Tom Blower of Nottingham in 1947. In August 1970 Murphy became the first British swimmer, and only the third person after Antonio Abertondo (ARG, aged 43, England-France-England, 21 September 1961, 43 hours 10 min) and Ted Erikson (USA, England-France-England, 21 September, 1965, 30 hours 3 min) to swim the English Channel in both directions (England-France-England) in 35 hours 10 min.

The 51st edition of the Liffey Swim took place on Wednesday 24 August with a start time of 7.00 pm. There were 76 entrants for the event. Much interest still focussed on Francis “Chalkey” White (Guinness SC), the only swimmer to have won back-to-back Liffey swims in 1966 and 1967 on the classic course as an 11- and 12-year-old [Richard Case had a treble of wins in 1936–38, but from Bull Wall to Clontarf when the race was moved from the River Liffey because of pollution]. “Chalkey” White was once more handicapped as a back marker, conceding 8 min to the “At Go” swimmers, alongside Donnacha O’Dea (Colmcille SC). Another top Irish swimmer in the race was Frank O’Dwyer (Guinness SC, 7 min).

Apart from ‘Chalkey’ White, four other former winners were toeing the start line – Seán Heffernan (1960, Clontarf SC, handicap 45 sec), Colm O’Brien (1963, Half Moon SC, handicap 4 min), William H. “Liam” Lacey (1968, Colmcille SC, 3 min 15 sec) and John Mulvey (1969, Half Moon SC, 6 min). Several of the runners-up in previous years were making a further attempt to win the Independent Cup: John Cummins (2nd 1969, formerly Colmcille SC, now St Vincent’s SC, 4 min 45 sec), Michael Chaney (3rd 1969, formerly Colmcille SC, now Marian SC, 5 min 15 sec), Paul Emmett (2nd 1968, Half Moon SC, 3 min 15 sec), Patrick Kennedy (3rd 1968, Half Moon SC, 3 min 15 sec), Don Rumgay (2nd 1966, Bray Cove SC, 2 min 15 sec), Bert O’Brien (2nd 1967, Half Moon SC, 2 min 15 sec), Séamus Heffernan (3rd 1959, Clontarf SC, 2 min 45 sec), and P. Flood (3rd 1957, Half Moon SC, 1 min 30 sec). Ultan Kerrigan (North Dublin SC,
off “go”) and Jackie Kearney (Dublin SC, 45 sec) had competed in the Liffey Swim more than 20 times each.47

Among the competitors who had successes in sea and river races in 1970 were: Francis “Chalkey” White who retained The Irish Times trophy for the 1¼-mile Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim in July,27,48 fastest time in the 1-mile Westclox Trophy Swim promoted by Crusade Aquatic Club at Bull Wall in July,49,50,51 2nd in the 1-mile John Clarke Cup Open Sea Race at the Battery, Ringsend promoted by Half Moon SC and fastest time 29; Paul Farnan (Colmcille SC, 4 min), placed 2nd in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim 27,48; Brendan McGrattan (Guinness SC, 4 min), 3rd in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim 27,48; Dermot Maguire (Cormorant SC, 5 min 30 sec), 5th in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim 27,48, 2nd in the Westclox Trophy Swim at Bull Wall 49–51; Joe Brown (Cormorant SC, 5 min 30 sec), 4th in the ‘Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach’ Swim 55,56, 10th Kilmartin Cup Open Sea Race and fastest time 52–54; Colm O’Brien, 3rd in the 1-mile Half Moon John Clarke Cup Open Sea Race 29; Paul Emmett, 6th in the 1-mile John Clarke Cup Open Sea Race 29; Michael “Mick” Allen (Half Moon, 3 min 15 sec), winner of the ‘Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach’ Swim in July (in name only as the race was swum over a 900-yard course in Howth Harbour because of very rough seas).55,56

Other achievements included: Frank O’Dwyer (Guinness SC, 7 min), 2nd in the ‘Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach’ Swim and fastest nett time 55,56, 10th Kilmartin Cup Open Sea Race and fastest time 52–54, 3rd in the Dublin SC 1,000-yards Seapoint to Blackrock open sea race and fastest time 25; John Mulvey (Half Moon, 6 min), winner of the 1½-mile Kilmartin Cup Open Sea Race at Bray 52–54; Brian Sweeney (Half Moon SC, 4 min), winner of the 1-mile John Clarke Cup Open Sea Race at Ringsend promoted by Half Moon SC 29, 6th in the Dublin SC 1,000-yards Seapoint to Blackrock open sea race 25; Tommy Farrelly (Half Moon, 4 min), 4th in the Westclox Trophy Swim at Bull Wall 49–51 5th in the Dublin SC 1,000-yards Seapoint to Blackrock open sea race 25; Michael “Mick” Byrne (Half Moon, 4 min 30 sec), 4th in the 1-mile John Clarke Cup Open Sea Race 29; and David Fitzgerald (Crusade Aquatic Club, 2 min 30 sec), 3rd in the Kilmartin Cup Open Sea Race.52–54

Among sea race winners who did not contest the 1970 Liffey swim were Fergus Cooney (waterpolo goalkeeper of Pembroke SC), winner of the 1,000-yards Seapoint-Blackrock open sea race 25; Dermot Skehan (Marian SC), winner of the Westclox trophy race at Bull Wall 49–51; Michael Cunningham (Galway SC), winner of the Toft Cup race at Salthill 57; and Eamonn Foley (Sunday’s Well SC), winner of the Lee Swim from Glenbrook to Monkstown.11 The Nore swim was cancelled in 1970 because of the erection of scaffolding under John’s Bridge, Kilkenny for repair works.58
In the pool Liffey Swim entrants had also made their marks in 1970: “Chalkey” White retained his 800m and 1500m National freestyle titles. Donnacha O’Dea won five National swimming titles – 200m freestyle, 100m butterfly, 200m butterfly, and 400m individual medley. At the Leinster Championships Michael Chaney won the 100m backstroke, Frank O’Dwyer won the 200m freestyle, Donnacha O’Dea won the 100m freestyle, 100m butterfly, 400m freestyle, and Chalkey White won the men’s 800m freestyle. Frank O’Dwyer won the 100m freestyle at the Catholic Student Games at Mosney. At the Interprovincial Swimming Championships “Chalkey” White won the Men’s 400m freestyle and the Boys 100m butterfly. “Chalkey” White, Donnacha O’Dea, Michael Chaney, and Frank O’Dwyer represented Ireland against Iceland in Reykjavik.

The winner of the Golden Jubilee anniversary Liffey Swim over the 1¼-mile stretch from Watling Street to just below O’Connell Street Bridge was David Fitzgerald of Crusade Aquatic Club. He became the third backstroke winner of the Liffey Swim after William F “Billy” Case (Clontarf SC) in 1930 and William H “Liam” Lacey (Colmcille SC) in 1968. The finish was one of the closest in the history of the race. Just two yards separated David Fitzgerald from...
John Cummins (St Vincent's SC), who was runner-up for the second year in a row. Paul Emmett (Half Moon SC) placed a close 3rd with Andrew Morrin (Colmcille SC) in 4th place. Similar distances separated 2nd and 3rd and 3rd and 4th places.69

Once Fitzgerald took the lead, he kept in the middle of the river and was able to keep the rest of the field in sight while keeping his speed and rhythm.71 He had also competed in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim off 2min 30sec. Francis “Chalkey White clocked the fastest time in 5th place, almost a ½ min off his record time of 19:52 set in 1968. Mattie Waine, a Guinness SC team-mate, who placed seventh, clocked the second fastest time.72 He had also competed in the
Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim off 9 min. The race was watched by large crowds on both banks of the ‘murky’ river in misty conditions.

The Independent Newspapers Shield for the top team went to Guinness SC, with three swimmers in the top ten – Francis “Chalkey” White 5th, Brendan McGrattan 6th, Mattie Waine 7th and Liam Dunne (Handicap 3 min), place not published.

Top 10 finishers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Handicap*</th>
<th>Nett Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>David Fitzgerald</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Crusade Aquatic Club</td>
<td>2 min 30 sec</td>
<td>25:01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>John Cummins</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>St Vincent’s SC</td>
<td>4 min 45 sec</td>
<td>22:48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Paul Emmett</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>3 min 15 sec</td>
<td>24:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Andrew Morrin</td>
<td></td>
<td>Colmcille SC</td>
<td>5 min 00 sec</td>
<td>23:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Francis “Chalkey” White†</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Guinness SC</td>
<td>8 min 00 sec</td>
<td>20:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Brendan McGrattan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guinness SC</td>
<td>4 min 00 sec</td>
<td>24:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mattie Waine</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Guinness SC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Michael “Mick” Allen</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>3 min 15 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jackie Kearney</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dublin SC</td>
<td>0 min 45 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>William H “Liam” Lacey</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Colmcille SC</td>
<td>3 min 15 sec</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Time after limit man
†Scratch Swimmer with Donnacha O’Dea

1971 Liffey Swim

The issue of the pollution of Dublin Bay waters with sewage from Howth to Bray still featured in the newspapers. Sewage emptied in the Dublin area at Bray, near Shankill, at Bullock Harbour, from the West Pier at Dún Laoghaire, from the Pigeon House and Half Moon on the South Wall, and through a deep tunnel off Howth. Maintenance of the Pigeon House pumping and purifying station, through which a large proportion of Dublin sewage was funnelled to separate solids from liquid sewage, the former being then brought several miles out to sea to be dumped, was estimated to cost £70K annually. With Dublin Bay taking some 50 million gallons of untreated sewage per day, it was credited on British Admiralty charts “as an area of high pollution”, with the possibility that polio, typhoid or dysentery might be contracted from its putrid waters.

In the Dail, pollution was raised as a National problem. TDs spoke on the deteriorating situation in regard to air and water pollution and the lack of appropriate legislation to tackle these problems. Rivers were no longer things of
beauty. Not only were rivers contaminated with sewage, but also used as dumping grounds for all sorts of filth and debris. The need for a national programme to ensure clean rivers, a healthy fish stock and wild life, and safe bathing in rivers, lakes and coastal waters as part of national heritage was required. The growing problem of the pollution of Dublin Bay as a result of the release of untreated sewage required to be examined and solutions sought even if they proved to be expensive. The mechanical disintegration of sewage solids was not a substitute for proper sewage treatment, if this treatment was just done merely to speed up oxidation of organic matter after discharge into the sea. The settling of sewage particles as sludge was producing a layer of “foetid black and grey mud” which putrefied on the river bed and in Dublin harbour to give rise to the stench at low tide.\(^\text{83}\) With regularity, through the river’s own (bio)chemical reactions, black clots floated on the surface of the Liffey.\(^\text{78}\) Internationally the importance of the sea as a source of oxygen and the dangers posed by pollution of its surface were highlighted by Jacques Piccard, a Swiss oceanographer and engineer.\(^\text{84}\)

The Dodder and the Tolka had lost their charm experienced by earlier generations of Dubliners because of pollution and rubbish.\(^\text{78,81}\) The Camac tributary was already designated by Dublin Corporation as ‘a natural sewer’.\(^\text{78}\) There were howls of protest at plans of Kildare County Council to divert sewage into the River Rye, a tributary of the Liffey, at Leixlip as well as effluent discharges from the Irish Meat Packers factory.\(^\text{85}\) Many people who had previously enjoyed swimming in Dublin Bay were reluctant to do so, disbelieving that the presence of sewage did not present a health hazard. In July 1971 an unexplained, awful stench hung over the Dublin area in a period of hot dry weather.\(^\text{86}\) A Mrs Catherine Mooney, secretary of the Save City Quay Protest Committee, claimed that no City Quay child had ever drowned because they had all learned to swim in the river. She pondered that this might not last given that the Liffey was now so dirty that nobody wanted to swim in it.\(^\text{87}\)

Thus, raised voices from many quarters were protesting that the quality of bathing water around the city was deteriorating steadily and that Dublin Bay’s capacity to absorb the human waste of the city was not infinite. Sooner or later a proper sewage treatment plant would have to be built, albeit at a cost in £millions. The likelihood of that happening expediently was considered to be low as “as there were no votes in sewage”, but a South Dublin/Dodder Drainage Scheme was under construction at a cost of £2 million \(^\text{81}\) and a Greater Dublin Drainage Scheme was on the drawing boards.\(^\text{88}\)

Swimming hit the headlines for reasons other than competitions. A team of six men and women attempted to swim the English Channel in a nude relay to raise money for the Lea Valley Emergency Assistance Fund, which helped elderly people.\(^\text{89}\) The swimmers’ starts and changeovers took place beneath the cover of a blanket. Three young Dublin men were fined £3 each at Kilkenny District Court
for swimming nude at John’s Bridge, Kilkenny, in such a way as to offend public modesty. The annual Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach race had a moment of drama when Brendan Keyes (North Dublin SC) got into difficulties and called for help. Two swimmers, Dermot Kelleher (Half Moon SC) and Pascal Breen (North Dublin SC) abandoned the race to go to his assistance. A scientific study of stress in competitive sports – rugby players, oarsmen, long distance cyclists, Liffey swimmers – by Professor Daniel Hingerty (Biochemistry Department, UCD) examined urine for metabolic breakdown products of adrenal gland hormones, which regulate heart rate, blood pressure and other bodily functions in ‘flight’ or ‘flight’ situations. The Liffey swimmers showed the lowest levels. The study concluded that swimming did not appear to involve a particularly stressful effort, indicating that it was a safe rehabilitation exercise.

The 52nd Liffey Swim took place on Monday 30 August at 7.00 pm. On the starting line were several previous winners of the race among the 75 entries: Francis “Chalkey” White (1966 & 1967, Guinness SC, handicap 9min 30 sec), who had flown home from representing Ireland in a European Cup Group “C” contest Oslo, Norway, was again last to enter the water; Colm O’Brien (1963, Half Moon SC, handicap 5min 30sec), William H. “Liam” Lacey (1968, Guinness SC, handicap 6min), and John Mulvey (1969, Half Moon SC, handicap 7min) and David Fitzgerald (1970, Crusade Aquatic Club, handicap 5min 45 sec). Jim Kavanagh (North Dublin SC, handicap 1min), who had been competing for over 20 years was joined by his 14-year-old son, J.J. Kavanagh (Greystones SC, handicap 4min). Ultan Kerrigan, the limit man at “Go” and a veteran of North Dublin SC, was under starter’s orders for the 25th time. Donnacha O’Dea was an absentee.

All of the top ten finishers in 1970 were entered for the 1971 Liffey Swim. Among the competitors who had successes in sea and river races in 1971 were: Ultan Kerrigan, winner of the Kilmartin Cup Sea Race at Bray from the Harbour to Bray Head, 2nd in the 1¼-mile Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim; Francis “Chalkey” White, 5th and fastest time in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim, fastest time in the 1-mile Westclox Swim at Bull Wall; Paul Farnan, a 14-year-old at Moyle Park School (Half Moon, handicap 8min), winner of the 1-mile John Clarke Cup open sea race at the Battery, 4th in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim; Francis Bohane (Half Moon, 4min 45sec), 5th in the Clarke Cup 1-mile sea race, 6th in the Westclox Swim at Bull Wall; Joe Brown (Crusade Aquatic Club, 4min), 4th in the Clarke Cup 1-mile sea race, 3rd in the Dublin SC Seapoint—Blackrock open sea race; John Mulvey, 4th in the Kilmartin Cup race at Bray; Derry O’Rourke (Half Moon SC, formerly Colmcille SC, 7min 15sec), 6th in the Kilmartin Cup sea race; John Quinn (Nomads SC), winner of the Nore Swim at Kilkenny in July; Paul Emmett (Half Moon SC, 5 min), winner of the Plunkett-McAllister Cup race at Clontarf; 3rd in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach sea race; and Michael “Mick”
Fitzpatrick (Half Moon SC, 1min 30sec), 4th in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach sea race; Pat White (Guinness SC, 6min 15sec), 3rd in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim; and David Cochrane (Atlanta SC, 1min 30sec), 6th in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach sea race.

Other notable efforts in sea swimming included: Brian Sweeney (Half Moon SC, 6min), 7th in the Laoghaire Harbour Swim; Peter McKenna, a 13-year-old student at Marian College (Nomads SC, 5min 10sec), winner of the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim; Jackie Kearney (Dublin SC, 2min), winner of the P.T. Kelly Cup for the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach sea race; Dermot Neyland (Grey Seals SC, Greystones), 2nd in the Half Moon SC Clarke Cup open sea race, 4th in the Westclox Swim at Bull Wall; Michael “Mick” Allen (Half Moon SC, 5min), 2nd in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach sea race; D. Begley (Crusade Aquatic Club, 4min 30sec), 5th in the Westclox Swim at Bull Wall; David O’Dwyer (Crusade Aquatic Club, 5min 45 sec), a 19-year-old Cork bank clerk resident in Dublin, former captain of Presentation College, Cork, swimming team; Michael “Mick” Allen (Half Moon SC, 5min), 2nd in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach sea race; D. Begley (Crusade Aquatic Club, 4min 30sec), 5th in the Westclox Swim at Bull Wall; David O’Dwyer (Crusade Aquatic Club, 5min 45 sec), a 19-year-old Cork bank clerk resident in Dublin, former captain of Presentation College, Cork, swimming team; Anthony “Tony” Morris (Marian College SC, 8min 15sec), 2nd in the Plunkett-McAllister Cup race at Clontarf; and Pascal Lynch (Atlanta SC, 3 min), 6th= in the Plunkett-McAllister Cup race at Clontarf, 4th in the Dublin SC Seapoint–Blackrock open sea race; Don Rumgay (Bray Cove SC, 2min 45sec), 6th in the Dublin SC Seapoint–Blackrock open sea race; P. Nolan (Clontarf SC, 3min), winner of the Dublin SC Seapoint–Blackrock open sea race.

Competitors line up at Guinness Wharf
(Irish Press, 31 August, 1971, page 14)
In the pool at Larne Francis “Chalkey” White won the Irish Senior 400m freestyle title, and retained his 800m and 1500m freestyle titles. He also won the 200m backstroke Gold medal in an Irish record time and the 400m individual medley championship.

The Ladies continued to compete in open sea and river races. The Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim over 750 yards provided a nail-biting finish with 12-year-old Terry Mason (Otter SC, 1min 15 sec) just holding off a fast-finishing Ellen Waine (Guinness SC, 3min 20sec) by three yards. The fastest time was recorded by Bernadette Byrne (Guinness SC, 3min 30sec) of 13:01. The Long John Prom Open Sea Handicap Swim for Ladies at Salthill produced another tight finish between three Galway SC swimmers. Susan Small won from her clubmates Paula Kennedy and Agnes Desmond. The 1,000-yards Dublin SC Seapoint–Blackrock open sea race was won by S. Truff (Clontarf SC) who was followed home by two girls for Otter SC, Katherine Lawlor and Alice Kissane. The fastest time was achieved by Mary Kirwan (Otter SC). Otter SC took the team prize. In The Greenvale SC Nore swim in July at Kilkenny, Sony Kavanagh (Otter SC) with Katherine and Ann Lawlor (Otter SC) tying for second place. The fastest time was recorded by Vickie Smith (Otter SC). In the Dalkey Island to Bullock Harbour open sea race, Claire Griffiths of Coliemore and 13-year-old Fiona Smyth were the first female swimmers home (placed 3rd and 4th in the race, respectively).

Among sea race winners who did not contest the 1971 Liffey swim was Graham Connors, winner of the ¾-mile Dalkey Island to Bullock Harbour open sea race for the Tom Ross Memorial Cup in 15:42. The race attracted 61 competitors. He and his brother, Eric Connors, who placed second were holidaying in the locality from England. The annual 1¼-mile Lee Swim from Glenbrook to Monkstown Pier was won by 11-year-old Greg Buckley (Sunday’s Well SC, handicap 90sec), who held off the back marker, John Donnelly, of the same club, who recorded the fastest time. The Promenade Open Handicap Swim promoted by Blackrock SC at Salthill, Co Galway, for the Connacht Tribune Cup was won by Declan Bowles (Sunday’s Well SC). His clubmate Brian Clifford placed 2nd in the fastest time with Billy Dunne (Galway SC) in 3rd place.

On the occasion of his 25th Liffey Swim, Ultan Kerrigan (North Dublin SC) won the Independent Cup and medal from a star-studded field. Of the 75 entrants, 51 finished the race. Kerrigan led from “Go” to the finish. He succeeded in holding off the late challenge of 12-year-old Paul O’Dea (Half Moon SC), younger brother of Donnacha O’Dea, who finished 10 yards behind Kerrigan with John Murphy (Guinness SC) in 3rd place. Veteran Jim Kavanagh, also a member of North Dublin SC, made up ground on Kerrigan but tired after Capel Street Bridge to be overtaken by O’Dea and in the end finished...
in 9\textsuperscript{th} place.\textsuperscript{118} The race for the finish warmed up after the Halfpenny Bridge, but
the order of the swimmers at this point – Kerrigan, O’Dea, Murphy, Heffernan, Rumgay and Emmett – was maintained to the finish.\textsuperscript{126}

Francis “Chalkey” White, who placed 14\textsuperscript{th}, was again the fastest swimmer in
19:25, just outside the all-time record of Jack Wardrop set in 1949.\textsuperscript{118,126,127} The
presentation of the trophies and prizes took place at a reception in Liberty Hall.\textsuperscript{126}

With four scoring swimmers in the top 15 – Paul O’Dea (2\textsuperscript{nd}), Paul Emmett (6\textsuperscript{th}),
Liam Bohane (13\textsuperscript{th}) and Michael “Mick” Fitzpatrick (15\textsuperscript{th}) – the Independent
Newspapers Shield for the top team went to Half Moon SC,\textsuperscript{118,126,127} which added
to their tally of team successes in open sea races (Dún Laoghaire Harbour
Swim,\textsuperscript{99–101} Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach, Kilmartin Cup race at Bray,\textsuperscript{97,98}
Clarke Cup race at the Battery \textsuperscript{104} and the Dublin SC Seapoint–Blackrock race
\textsuperscript{107}).
**Top 10 finishers:** 118, 126, 127

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Handicap*</th>
<th>Nett Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ultan Kerrigan</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>North Dublin SC</td>
<td>At Go</td>
<td>27:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Paul O’Dea†</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>2 min 30 sec</td>
<td>24:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>John Murphy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guinness SC</td>
<td>4 min 45 sec</td>
<td>23:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Peter Heffernan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clontarf SC</td>
<td>2 min 45 sec</td>
<td>25:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Don Rumsay</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bray Cove SC</td>
<td>2 min 45 sec</td>
<td>25:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Paul Emmett</td>
<td></td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>5 min 00 sec</td>
<td>23:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Philip Kealy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nomads SC</td>
<td>4 min 30 sec</td>
<td>24:01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>David Cochrane</td>
<td></td>
<td>Atlanta SC</td>
<td>1 min 45 sec</td>
<td>26:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jim Kavanagh</td>
<td></td>
<td>North Dublin SC</td>
<td>1 min 00 sec</td>
<td>27:37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Brendan McGrattan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guinness SC</td>
<td>6 min 45 sec</td>
<td>21:59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Francis “Chalkey” White‡</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Guinness SC</td>
<td>9 min 30 sec</td>
<td>19:25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Time after limit man  
†Younger brother of Donnacha O'Dea  
‡Scratch swimmer

Mr Paul Meehan, Publicity Manager Independent Newspapers Ltd, presenting the Irish Independent Shield team trophy to Liam Bohane (13th) of Half Moon SC, with his team-mates (from left), Michael “Mick” Fitzpatrick (15th), Paul O’Dea (2nd) and Paul Emmett (6th)  
*Irish Independent*, 31 August 1971, page 11
The 1972 Liffey Swim

Yet again pollution in Dublin Bay was a topic in newspapers and a political hot potato – a battle between the development of port and docks involving reclamation (jobs) and the conservation of the amenity and recreational value of Dublin Bay. The year began with an announcement that Dublin was to have a new sewage works sited on reclaimed land in the vicinity of Pigeon House. The stage being launched would deal with flows coming through the new Dodder Valley sewer. The cynics felt that date lines for further development would probably slip and that there would be many more announcements before Dublin had adequate sewage treatment. In October plans for a 3-mile long drainage tunnel alongside the Grand Canal costing £3.5 million were unveiled by Dublin Corporation as part of a £12 million Dublin drainage system. The overall scheme would take 5 years to complete. The River Camac would drain into the tunnel instead of the Liffey and then to the new sewage works at Ringsend.

The Minister for Local Government, Mr Robert “Bobby” Molloy, stated that to clean up water around Dublin could cost £12.5 million. He argued that Dublin Bay, polluted as it was, did not pose a hazard to health, but rather was an amenity hazard. The Irish Press did a survey of bathing areas in Dublin Bay. The newspaper stated that bathing in parts of the Bay was no better than bathing in giant sewerage containers and that unless steps were taken to deal with the situation, swimmers would be confronted with “having to bathe in areas as hygienic as domestic baths filled with buckets of partially flushed toilet water”. Dollymount was given the rating of cleanest, followed by Jameson’s Pool and Seapoint, while at Clontarf one was advised “to bring along Jeyes Fluid in gallons”, Sutton Strand was only for the brave and Sandymount was strictly for dipping toes. Some 40–50 million gallons of sewage was discharged into Dublin Bay daily. In addition, sewage sludge was dumped by the SS Shamrock about two miles east of Howth Head.

Long distance swimming made headlines. On the 13 August, Edward “Teddy” Keenan, a 37-year-old clerk of works from Cornagrade, Enniskillen, set off from Shakespeare Beach near Dover to swim the English Channel to France. In July 1968 he had swum across Lower Lough Erne from Holme Bay to Kesh (about 10 miles) and a month later swam Donegal Bay from Mullaghmore to Bundoran (about 9 miles). His attempt in 1969 to swim from St John’s Point in Donegal to Bundoran ended in failure because of the tide. In 1970 his first attempt to swim the English Channel from France was unsuccessful because his accompanying boat was edging dangerously close to the notorious Goodwin Sands. Keenan was ordered out of the water with only two miles to go. This time he was successful, becoming the first Irishman to achieve this feat and only one of thirty in the world to do so from England to France. Keenan had to
swim through oil slicks and sewage discharged from ships.\textsuperscript{143} He landed on the sands of Cap Gris Nez west of Calais, a distance of about 20½ miles as the crow flies from his starting point.\textsuperscript{141,143}

Notable absentees from the starting line-up for the 53\textsuperscript{rd} Liffey Swim were Francis “Chalkey” White and Donnacha O’Dea, both of whom were competing with the Irish team in a pre-Olympic Games international meet in Belgium in the hope of securing selection for the Olympic Games in Munich.\textsuperscript{144,145} White had won the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim for the 3\textsuperscript{rd} time as the scratch man off 11½ min \textsuperscript{146,147} and the Crusade Aquatic Club’s Westclox Open Sea Race at Bull Wall.\textsuperscript{148} White retained his Senior Irish titles in the 400m \textsuperscript{149,150}, 800m \textsuperscript{149,150} and 1500m \textsuperscript{151} freestyle and in the 200m backstroke.\textsuperscript{149,150} Donnacha O’Dea won his 8\textsuperscript{th} consecutive 100m \textsuperscript{151} and 200m \textsuperscript{149,150} butterfly titles and regained the 400m individual medley championship.\textsuperscript{152} In late August, Francis “Chalkey” White left Ireland to take up a four-year sport scholarship at Villanova University.\textsuperscript{153} In February he had received his award as one of the ten Texaco Sports Stars of the Year 1971 at a banquet at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin.\textsuperscript{154,155} As in 1971, White was awarded the accolade of Irish Amateur Swimming Association (Leinster Branch) “Swimmer of the Year”.\textsuperscript{156}

In the previous ten years the winner of the Liffey Swim had been in the 11–year-old to 17-year-old age group on eight occasions,\textsuperscript{69,74,75,157,158,159,160,161} although in 1971 Ultan Kerrigan had struck a blow for older swimmers by leading from “Go” to the finish line.\textsuperscript{126,127} Kerrigan (North Dublin SC, handicap 15 sec) was among the starters. Previous winners who had entered were Seán Heffernan (1960, Clontarf SC, handicap 4 min 20sec), Colm O’Brien (1963, Half Moon SC, 4min 40sec), and David Fitzgerald (1970, Crusade Aquatic Club, handicap 5min). Among the youngest entrants in the 1972 Liffey Swim were 10-year-old Declan O’Toole (Dublin SC) and 11-year-old Pat O’Driscoll (Dublin SC). Among the veteran stalwarts were 39-year-old Michael “Mick” Fitzpatrick (Half Moon SC, At Go), 45-year-old Jim Kavanagh (Dublin SC, handicap 15sec), competing for the 21\textsuperscript{st} time, and Dublin taxi driver Paul Emmett (Half Moon, handicap 4min 30sec), who 2\textsuperscript{nd} in 1968, 3\textsuperscript{rd} in 1970 and 6\textsuperscript{th} in 1971. The scratch man was Robert Bushell (North Dublin SC, handicap 6min 15sec)

The top ten finishers in the 1971 Liffey Swim were all entrants.\textsuperscript{118,126,127,162} Successes in sea swims among the competitors included: Mick Fitzpatrick, Kilmartin Cup winner at Bray \textsuperscript{163,5\textsuperscript{th} in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach race}, \textsuperscript{164} runner-up in the Half Moon SC Clarke Cup Open Sea Race at South Wall \textsuperscript{165,166, 10\textsuperscript{th} in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Race}; \textsuperscript{146,147} David Cochrane (Atlanta SC, handicap 3min), winner of the Kelly Cup and Irish Independent medal for the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach race \textsuperscript{164, 5\textsuperscript{th} in the Kilmartin Cup Open Sea Race at Bray}; Michael “Mick” Allen (Half Moon SC, 3min 50sec), runner-up in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Beach race; \textsuperscript{164} Fintan O’Meara (Clontarf SC, at Go), a 16-year-old, 3\textsuperscript{rd} in the Kilmartin Cup race at Bray \textsuperscript{163}. P.
Russell (Atlanta SC, 3min 30sec), runner-up in the Kilmartin Cup race \footnote{163}, 6th in the 1,000-yards North Dublin SC Plunkett-McAllister Open Sea Race at Clontarf \footnote{167,168}; 9th in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Race \footnote{146,147}; D.J. McCarthy (Clontarf SC, 1min 10 sec), 4th in the Ireland’s Eye Open Sea Race \footnote{164}, 6th in the Clarke Cup race at South Wall \footnote{165,166}, 5th in the Westclox Open Sea Race at Bull Wall \footnote{148}; Paul Emmett, 6th in the Ireland’s Eye to Balscadden Open Sea Race \footnote{164}, winner of the Dublin SC Seapoint-Blackrock open sea race.\footnote{169,170}

Other achievements were: Pascal Lynch (Atlanta SC, 3min 50sec), winner of the Clarke Cup race at the South Wall \footnote{165,166}; Joe Brown (Crusade Aquatic Club, 2min 30 sec), 3rd in the Clarke Cup race at South Wall \footnote{165,166}; Philip Kealy (Nomads SC, 4min 30sec), 5th in the Clarke Cup race at South Wall \footnote{165,166}, 5th in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Race \footnote{146,147}, 5th in the 1,000-yards North Dublin SC Plunkett-McAllister Open Sea Race at Clontarf \footnote{167,168}; Dermot Neyland (Marian SC, 5min 30sec), runner-up in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Race \footnote{146,147}, 4th in the Plunkett-McAllister Cup race at Clontarf \footnote{167,168}, 4th in the Dublin SC Seapoint-Blackrock open sea race \footnote{169,170}, Pat O’Driscoll, 3rd in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Race \footnote{146,147}; Con Davis (Dublin SC, 5min 45sec), 6th in the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Race \footnote{146,147}, runner-up in the Dublin SC Seapoint-Blackrock open sea race \footnote{169,170}; Derek Fitzpatrick (North Dublin SC, 5 min), a 14-year-old student of Beneavin College, winner of the Plunkett-McAllister race at Clontarf \footnote{167,168}; John Murphy (Guinness SC, 5min 45 sec), 3rd in the Westclox Open Sea Race at Bull Wall \footnote{148}; Donal Davis (Dublin SC, 5min 20sec), 3rd in the Dublin SC Seapoint-Blackrock race \footnote{169,170}, 2nd in the Connacht Tribune Cup sea swim at Salthill \footnote{171}; Emmet Sweeney (Half Moon SC, 1min 50sec), 6th in the Dublin SC Seapoint-Blackrock race.\footnote{169,170}

Women continued to compete in open sea and river races. A women’s race over of half-mile course held in conjunction with the Half Moon SC Clarke Cup race was won by Terry Mason (Otter SC). The runner-up was Vickie Smith (Otter SC) and 3rd place went to Bernadette Byrne (Guinness SC), who had the fastest time 11:42.\footnote{165,166} Otter SC took the team prize [Mason, Smith, Mary-Jo Kissane (4th), Mary Kirwan]. The Ladies Dún Laoghaire Harbour Swim for the Irish Times Cup over 800 yards was won by Brenda McGrory (Otter SC), with Dolores Kenny 2nd (Atlanta SC) and Hazel Nolan 3rd (Otter SC), who had the fastest time of 11:37, challenging hard over the last 50 yards. The team prize went to Otter SC [McGrory, Nolan, A. Myles-Hook (5th), Elizabeth McGrory (6th)].\footnote{146,147} The 3rd Long John Prom Swim at Salthill was won by Susan Small (Galway SC), 2nd was Stella Bowles (Sunday’s Well SC), 3rd was Paula Kennedy (Galway SC) and 4th was Eileen Davis (Dublin SC). Some competitors dropped out because of jellyfish on the course.\footnote{172,173} Deirdre Kenny (Dublin SC) won Dublin SC-promoted Ladies race at Seapoint-Blackrock. The runner-up was Alice Kissane (Otter SC) and 3rd place was taken by Sandra Trapp (Dublin SC). Terry Mason (Otter SC) recorded the fastest time of 10:00 and the team prize was won by Dublin SC [Kenny, Trapp, B. Carney (4th)].\footnote{169,170}
Among the other winners of open sea races who did not compete in the Liffey Swim were: **Billy Dunne** (Galway SC), winner of the Blackrock SC Connacht Tribune Cup for the Prom Swim at Salthill; **Michael Langan** (Galway SC), winner for the Galway SC Toft Cup Prom Swim at Salthill. The long distance swim (about 4½ miles) was held in Lough Erne from Castle Archdale jetty rounding White Island and an adjoining island back to the jetty. The race was won by **Larry Burke**, a Belfast Technical College lecturer, who won the Galway Bay swim in 1970. He had previously swum Dublin Bay, Belfast Lough and two-way swim of Lake Windermere (about 20 miles).

The 53rd Liffey Swim took place on Thursday 3 August at 7.00 pm. One newspaper report recorded it as the 52nd Liffey Swim. There were 71 contestants. For the second year in a row the Independent Cup and Gold medal were won by a limit swimmer “At Go”, a 16-year-old Dublin schoolboy, **Fintan O’Meara** (Clontarf SC). O’Meara lived in Artane and attended Kostka College, Seafield Road, Clontarf. It was his 3rd attempt at the Liffey Swim.

![The winner Fintan O’Meara (Clontarf SC) is helped out of the Liffey, while runner-up Mick Fitzpatrick (Half Moon SC) looks on.](image)

“Irish Times, 4 August, 1972, page 3)

‘Veteran’ **Mick Fitzpatrick** (Half Moon SC), who also started “At Go”, clung to a four-yard lead from O’Meara most of the way. Nearing O’Connell Street Bridge...
with the other 64 competitors still struggling to get in touch, O’Meara put in a
determined spurt to challenge for the lead. O’Meara hit the front with 150 yards
to the finish at Butt Bridge. Fitzpatrick fought back, but O’Meara pulled away
again to win by five yards.\(^\text{179–181}\) A ‘flying’ Liam Bohane (Half Moon SC) came
through for 3\(^{rd}\) place from his club-mate Gerry Dunne in 4\(^{th}\) place.\(^\text{179}\) Robert
Bushell (North Dublin SC), the lone back marker off 6min 15 sec, placed 34\(^{th}\).\(^\text{181}\)
The 1971 winner, ‘veteran’ Ultan Kerrigan, placed 7\(^{th}\).\(^\text{179–181}\)

![](image)

A smiling Fintan O’Meara, Winner of the 1972 Liffey Swim

*Irish Press*, 4 August, 1972, page 13)

Liam Bohane, handicapped at 4min, clocked the fastest time of 20:00.\(^\text{179–181}\)
Derek Neyland (Marian SC) recorded the 2\(^{nd}\) fastest time of 20:09.\(^\text{181}\) The top two
teams each had their four scoring swimmers in the top ten finishers. The Half
Moon SC quartet of Fitzpatrick (2\(^{nd}\)), Bohane (3\(^{rd}\)), Dunne (4\(^{th}\)) and Emmet
Sweeney (8\(^{th}\)), 17 points, scored a close victory over Clontarf SC [O’Meara (1\(^{st}\)),
David McCarthy (5\(^{th}\)), Peter Heffernan (6\(^{th}\)) and D. Gaughan (10\(^{th}\))] 22 points, to
retain the *Irish Independent* Shield for best team.\(^\text{179–181}\)

Two of the youngest swimmers Declan O’Toole and Pat O’Driscoll, both
members of Dublin SC, completed the race.\(^\text{178}\) Both found the water to be “very,
very, cold”. Somewhat surprisingly many of the competitors stated that they
thought that the Liffey was getting cleaner.\(^\text{178}\)
Top 10 finishers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Handicap*</th>
<th>Nett Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fintan O’Meara</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Clontarf SC</td>
<td>At Go</td>
<td>23:38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Michael “Mick” Fitzpatrick</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>At Go</td>
<td>23:43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Liam Bohane</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>4 min 00 sec</td>
<td>20:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gerry Dunne</td>
<td></td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>1 min 30 sec</td>
<td>22:47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dave McCarthy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clontarf SC</td>
<td>1 min 10 sec</td>
<td>23:26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Peter Heffernan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clontarf SC</td>
<td>2 min 45 sec</td>
<td>21:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ultan Kerrigan</td>
<td></td>
<td>North Dublin SC</td>
<td>0 min 15 sec</td>
<td>24:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Emmet Sweeney</td>
<td></td>
<td>Half Moon SC</td>
<td>1 min 50 sec</td>
<td>23:02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Brendan McEvoy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Half Moon</td>
<td>1 min 50 sec</td>
<td>23:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>D. Gaughan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clontarf SC</td>
<td>1 min 50 sec</td>
<td>23:07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dermot Neyland</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marian SC</td>
<td>5 min 30 sec</td>
<td>20:09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Time after limit man

Six swimmers were selected to represent Ireland in swimming at the XX Summer Olympiad in Munich, two men – Liam Ball (City of Derry SC) and Andrew Hunter (Leander SC) – and four women – Christine Fulcher (Cormorant SC), Brenda
McGrory (Otter SC), Aisling O’Leary (Cormorant SC) and Ann O’Connor (Guinness SC). There was disappointment for Francis “Chalkey” White and Donnacha O’Dea, in spite of their sterling performances in the Irish Championships in Tuam 149–152 and at the Ireland v Iceland international meet 183,184 and the International Brussels Meet in early August 144,145 and clamour from various quarters for their inclusion. 185

The swimming year ended with court appearances and a suspension. Three young Guinness SC swimmers (all of whom had competed in Liffey Swims), who had been in Tuam for the National Championships in August, appeared before the Tuam Court in September for taking and crashing a car without the owner’s consent. 186 All pleaded guilty and had fines and driving bans imposed, while reparations for the damage caused to the car and a caravan were paid. The Irish Amateur Swimming Association imposed a two-year ban from competing in international competitions and a six-month ban from competing in all types of home competition on Donnacha O’Dea. 187,188,189 He was “alleged to have behaved in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Association” at a banquet following the international swimming meet in Brussels in early August 144,145 [one newspaper recorded that he had been involved in a punch-up with Liam Ball (City of Derry SC) 187]. Following a review by the I.A.S.A. Appeals Committee, the international ban was reduced by one year until 30 September, 1973 and suspension from local competition (swimming and water polo) until 31 March, 1973. 190,191

References

1 Foul-smelling Dublin Bay is a health menace, Irish Independent, 28 February, 1970, page 2
2 M.O. says sewage no health risk in sea, Irish Times, 15 May, 1970, page 11
3 Dublin Bay cross-fire continues, Irish Times, 29 June, 1970, page 13
5 Liffey tributary blamed, Irish Times, 1 September, 1970, page 8
6 Dublin Bay pollution condemned, Irish Times, 10 October, 1970, page 13
7 Claims firms are polluting Liffey, Irish Times, 9 October 1970, page 10
8 Industry and Pollution (1). A healthy response to the challenge, Irish Press, 12 February 19790, page 11
9 Dublin Bay is becoming a septic tank: new survey – Clontarf and Killiney grossly polluted, Irish Press, 10 June, 1970, page 12
11 Cork boy has typhoid: Warning against swimming in the Lee, Irish Examiner, 2 September 1955, page 9
12 Fined for swimming near waterworks, Irish Examiner, 9 September, 1955, page 8
13 City M.O.H. and Lee bathing – Corporation advised to prohibit it, Irish Examiner, 11 April, 1956, page 7
Proceedings of the Symposium on Water Pollution Control in Coastal Areas, Bournemouth, 19–21 May, 1970, p. 111. Institute of Water Pollution Control, London


15m. gallons sewage per day in Bay, Irish Press, 20 November, 1970, page 16


Survey of Dublin Bay pollution, Irish Times, 2 December, 1970, page 11

Tullamore swimmers best at Blackrock, Irish Independent, 29 June, 1955, page 11

Good performances by girl swimmers, Irish Independent, 2 September 1953, page 10


Swimming: O’Dea streaks his way to victory, Irish Times, 30 August, 1967, page 3


Clarke Cup for Sweeney, Sunday Independent, 30 August, 1970, page 11


Bad weather hit Prom Swim, Connacht Sentinel, 18 August, 1970, page 5 [NB: The newspaper report gives the winner’s name erroneously as Katherine Fulcher]

Record time for Shannon Swim, Nenagh Guardian, 12 September 1970, page 10

Swim plans, Connacht Sentinel, 25 August, 1970, page 1

Record swim, Connacht Sentinel, 8 September 1970, page 5

Burke best in Galway Bay swim, Irish Independent, 7 September 1970, page 14

From Spain to the Bay, Connacht Sentinel, 8 September, 1970, page 3


Spanish woman swims Limerick – Shannon, Irish Examiner, 12 September, 1970, page 14


Kevin Murphy breaks North Channel record, Irish Examiner, 12 September 1970, page 13

Breaks North Channel record, Irish Independent, 12 September, 1970, page 9

Swan North Channel, Irish Press, 12 September, 1970, page 4

Swimmer reaches Scotland, Irish Times, 12 September, 1970, page 1


Briton’s record Channel swim, Irish Independent, 7 August, 1970, page 12

Briton’s record Channel swim, Irish Examiner, 7 August, 1970, page 16

Increased entry in Liffey Swim, Irish Independent, 24 August, 1970, page 9


Swimming: Skehan’s dominate Bull Wall race, Irish Times, 29 July 1970, page 3

Swimming: Skehans clean-up in Bull Wall swim, Irish Independent, 29 July 1970, page 14

Skehan family show the way, Irish Press, 29 July, 1970, page 22

Mulvey was in command, Irish Independent, 10 August, 1970, page 11

Kilmartin cup, Irish Press, 10 August, 1970, page 15

Mulvey at ease in Bray swim, Irish Times, 10 August, 1970, page 3


Needle end to Prom contest, Connacht Sentinel, 25 August, 1970, page 5;

Frustration for swimmers, Kilkenny People, 22 May, 1970, page 1


Swimming at Mosney: O’Dea takes honours, Irish Independent, 21 August, 1970, page 16

Swimming Clarke set two records: O’Dea disappointed with new figures, Irish Independent, 22 August, 1970, page 11


Dublin Bay swimming unpleasant – but not lethal, *Irish Times*, 7 August, 1971


Action on pollution of rivers demanded, *Irish Times*, 10 June, 1971, page 8

Pollution and the Dodder, *Irish Times*, 10 June, 1971, page 8

In the Dail: Comprehensive plan needed for pollution – Our heritage could be destroyed forever, *Irish Press*, 2 July, 1971, page 4


The stench that hangs over Dublin, *Connacht Sentinel*, 3 August, 1971, page 4


Carney (NB misspelling of name) wins open sea swim race, *Irish Independent*, 3 July, 1971, page 12


Swimming focus moves indoors, *Irish Independent*, 8 September, 1971, page 17


Swimming: No holding dynamic White, *Irish Times*, 21 August, page 4


Two successful Prom swims, *Connacht Tribune*, 9 September, 1971, page 7


Bowles takes ‘Open’, *Irish Independent*, 4 September, 1971, page 17


Bowles takes Salthill swim, *Irish Press*, 4 September, 1971, page


Swimming: Chalky White enjoys successful week, *Irish Independent*, 1 September, 1971, page 11

Swimming: Kerrigan is first home, *Irish Times*, 31 August, 1971, page 3

Chalky White enjoys successful week, *Irish Independent*, 1 September, 1971, page 11


Battle of the Bay, *Irish Times*, 7 October, 1972, page 10

Just what is Ireland doing to fight pollution, *Irish Times*, 2 August, 1972, page 12

Reclamation plan may add 200 acres to Dublin port, *Irish Times*, 5 January 1972, page 16

£2m. for Liffey ‘clean-up’ – contract for sewage works, *Irish Times*, 18 January, 1972, page 1

English firm to build £3.5m. drain – Tunnel will run beside Grand Canal, *Irish Times*, 26 October, 1972, page 13

Planners opt for a £12.5m programme, *Irish Times*, 27 June, 1972, page 9

Clean rivers may cost Dublin around £12.5m., *Irish Times*, 19 April, 1972, page 1

Serious pollution in some rivers, *Irish Press*, 19 April, 1972, page 4


First Irishman to swim English Channel is from Enniskillen, *Fermanagh Herald*, 2 September, 1972, page 7

First Irishman to swim English Channel (Continued from page 7), *Fermanagh Herald*, 2 September, 1972, page 10

Ted Keenan is first Irishman to swim English Channel, *Fermanagh Herald*, 19 August, 1972, page 7


Irish share second in swim match, *Irish Independent*, 7 August, 1972, page 12


Great last ditch by ‘Chalkey’, *Irish Press*, 11 August, 1972, page 14


Sport plays vital role for peace – Mr Lynch, *Irish Examiner*, 26 February, page 15

Prize Winners at the Texaco Sport Stars of the Year banquet (photo), *Irish Independent*, 26 February 1972, page 22

Swim meeting is adjourned, *Irish Independent*, 28 October, 1972, page 12

Boy of 12 first home in Liffey Swim, *Irish Independent*, 10 August, 1962 page 1


Holder defends in Liffey Swim, *Irish Independent*, 3 August, 1972, page 10


Tribune Prom Swim for Billy Dunne, *Connacht Sentinel*, 22 August, 1972, page 11
Long John cup, *Connacht Tribune*, 1 September 1972, page 18
Tribune Prom Swim for Billy Dunne, *Connacht Tribune*, 25 August, 1972, page 16
Mr Claude Toft, Salthill presenting the Toft Cup (Photo), *Connacht Tribune*, 1 September, 1972, page 10

Enniskillen man, well-known lifeguard, helps organise Erne marathon, *Fermanagh Herald*, 16 September, page 7
Swimmers say Liffey is cleaner!, *Irish Independent*, 4 August, 1972, page 6
Schoolboy takes Liffey Swim, *Irish Independent*, 4 August, 1972, page 12
Third time lucky for O’Meara, *Irish Press*, 4 August, 1972, page 13
Swimming: O’Meara at third attempt, *Irish Times*, 4 August, 1972, page 3
Meet our Olympians, *Irish Independent*, 17 August, 1972, page 10
White’s new record, *Irish Independent*, 3 July, 1972, page 9
Swimming: No surprise Olympians surface at Tuam, *Irish Times*, 17 August, 1972, page 4
Dublin youths took car and had a £450 crash, *Connacht Tribune*, 8 September, 1972, page 17
O’Dea to appeal swimming ban, *Irish Press*, 4 October, 1972, page 16
Date is fixed for O’Dea’s appeal, *Irish Times*, 14 November, 1972, page 3
O’Dea’s suspension is halved, *Irish Times*, 21 November, 1972, page 4