

# THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

## Seniors fight for gold in the pool (with video)

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2009-05-02 03:00:00



LAGUNA WOODS -- Just minutes before the beginning of the Senior Olympics swimming finals on Saturday, the community's oldest and most gold-medaled swimmer made one of his toughest decisions.

He pulled out of the competition reluctantly following doctor's orders.

Woody Bowersock, who will turn 96 later this month, fell two weeks ago breaking some ribs and suffering a mild concussion.

Instead of competing, he donned sweats and sat at the side of the pool cheering on his wife Luscje, 87.

"Make your turns," he yelled as she came to his corner during her 100-freestyle."

Luscje Bowersock was one of 45 competing in the swim meet Saturday during the 6th Annual Senior Games in Laguna Woods Village. The swimming event - as always - drew the largest crowd. Several hundred people watched as the swimmers competed in an Olympic size pool at Clubhouse 2 under partly cloudy skies.

Overall, the games featured 24 sports including lawn bowling, horseback riding and tennis. More than 700 competed over the three-week period - many in multiple sports. Athletes ranging in age from 55 to 99 competed by age categories. More than 1,000 gold, silver and bronze medals were handed out.

Luscje Bowersock ended up with two gold and two silver medals. She swam in the 25-, 50-, 100-, 200-yard and medley races.

"I'm not a sprinter like Woody," she said following her fourth event. She explained that an accident last year left her left arm powerless. "I swim for pleasure and for health. The buoyancy of the water makes me swim. I like to win but it doesn't affect me if I don't. I'm still as happy."

For Margo Bouer, 73, water gave her a new sense of freedom. Stricken with Multiple Sclerosis her body is deteriorating and she walks with a walker. In the pool Bouer glides like a fish.

She also swam in five races taking gold in most. The 100-yard medley - a race that requires four swimming styles - was her favorite. She got gold there too.

"I have to have endurance and swim all strokes: butterfly, backstroke, breast stroke and freestyle. Most women don't do that. It's my *crème de la crème*."

Tibor Csiszar, 65, won gold medals in five of his six races. He attributes his success to eating good Hungarian food and living healthy.

The former competitive swimmer moved to Laguna Woods Village two years ago to help out his father, Frank, 94, who also competed last year.

Csiszar plans to give his medals to his granddaughter, Sophia Martinez, 4, from Oxnard, who adamantly cheered him on.

Sophia thought that was a pretty good idea since she helped her grandfather win.

"I thought he would win because I love him so much," she said confidently.

Csiszar swims five days a week. He looks to Bowersock as inspiration.

"That's why he's so old," said Csiszar. "He never stops practicing."

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