

Jack Thompson  
1906-1999

Jack Thompson contributed significantly to the sport of swimming in Kentucky for nearly 50 years. Known to many as "Mr. Lakeside" for the Lakeside Swim Club in Louisville, Kentucky, he served as Manager from 1947 to 1980. He is credited with..... almost single-handedly converting a former rock quarry into one of the most unique and beautiful swimming facilities in the United States."

During that time he also coached the swim team in the early 1950's; thereafter he was the driving force behind the swim team as thousands of young people benefited from the program.

Shortly after the completion of the University of Kentucky Memorial Coliseum Swim Pool in 1951, Jack Thompson and Alfred Reese (then U.K. Swim Coach) together brought the Kentucky High School Swimming and Diving Championships to the then "gigantic" six-lane indoor pool. Prior to 1952, the High School meet had been held in the contemporary indoor pools of four lanes and minuscule spectator seating! Jack Thompson served as the Meet Director and chief organizer until the mid-1980s and served on the Kentucky State High School Swimming Committee until the mid-1990s.

During his tenure as the Meet Director, he saw the addition of the girls' competition (1962), the addition and subtraction of one, two and three divisions of the meet by school size until a one meet format was instituted in 1979; the Regional format was adopted in 1980. He was elected to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame in 1990.

Jack Thompson was born in Elkton, Kentucky, graduating number one in his class from Elkton High School. He was a multi-sport athlete at Western Kentucky University playing basketball and the number one position on the varsity tennis team. He graduated in 1929. After college, he taught school, was a Principal, and coached basketball and football.

He officiated for 45 years in basketball, calling some 4,500 games (one year calling 156!), and he officiated for 42 years in football. In addition to managing the Lakeside Swim Club, he was a textbook representative for the Economy Publishing Company, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for many years before retiring from that job in 1970.

He was active in the administration of the Amateur Athletic Union (the former governing body for Olympic sports in the U.S.) and served as President of the Kentucky A.A.U. for many years. He was named to the National A.A.U. Hall of Fame in 1990.

Jack Thompson organized the first Kentucky Masters Swim Committee in 1981 to promote competitive swimming for persons over 19 years of age.

He was honored in 1983 as the "Jack Thompson Swim Pavilion" was dedicated at the Lakeside Club. He authored a book "The Lakeside Story" in 1988 which was also brought out in a second edition in 1991.

Jack and his wife, Roma, retired to The Forum community in Middletown, Ky, in 1993. Roma died in 1994. Their two sons, Jack Jr., and John Allen survive them.

Over his 50 some years of working with both young people and adults, he influenced the lives of thousands of persons. His sense of fair play, honesty, hard work, determination, and good humor was an inspiration to everyone who knew him.