



The Carbine Club of NSW

John Konrads

Born: Latvia, 1942

Carbine Club Member since: 1996

John is an Australian former freestyle swimmer of the 1950s and 1960s, who won the 1500 m freestyle at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome. In his career, he set 26 individual world records.

His first national title came in 1956, winning the junior 440yd freestyle. This led to Konrads being selected for the team to attend the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne.

In the space of eight days, he broke world records in the 200 m, 220yd, 400 m, 440yd, 800 m and 800yd, for a total of six world records. He set another eight in February and March, including a 1500 m and 1650yd world record, and proceeded to win the 220yd, 440yd and 1650yd freestyle at the Australian Championships.

At the 1958 Empire Games in Cardiff, he won the 440yd and 1650yd and then combined with John Devitt, Gary Chapman and Brian Wilkinson to claim the 4x220yd freestyle.

In 1959 he broke six world records in the same six events as he did in January the previous year, and was the first person to sweep the freestyle events from 110yd to 1650yd at the Australian Championships, winning the Helms Award.

He decided in conjunction with Talbot to concentrate on the 400 m and 1500 m events for the Olympics, and in 1960, at the Australian championships, set world records in the 400 m, 440yd, 1500 m and 1650yd events. He also won the 220yd event in world record time, but it was not an Olympic event at the time.

After retirement, Konrads became a swimming coach, and with his marketing degree from USC, he eventually rose to the Australasian directorship of L'Oréal. He later established a consultancy and advertising firm.

Konrads was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 1985.^[6] In 2000, he received an Australian Sports Medal.