

*Nyad's deceit,
thrust,
Lawsuit*

W.P. Gresham face on Leinath's body

Poenisch: For a while was in contact with Chuck Jones, New York agent who purported to be helping him; unknown to Poenisch, Jones was more interested in Diana Nyad. Very mysteriously, almost identical material to what Poenisch sent to Jones wound up in Nyad book and in publicity releases for her swims. The Nyad swim (apparently one thing she took was the idea for it) about two months after Poenisch's was promoted by Nyad and Jones as first effort to swim Cuba to U.S., which Poenisch not only had tried but done two months before. Nyad wouldn't make a major swim without big media present, three times had tried (and failed) English Channel with coverage. Was expert at manipulating media from childhood on, when a big piece appeared on her in Fort Lauderdale News & Sun Sentinel (which I wrote), story stressed her looks as much as her accomplishments, she was more photogenic than talented at that time. Poenisch won \$5,000 from Swim Hall, \$5,000 from Dick Mullins, \$5,000 from Nyad for libel and slander, plus letters admitting their public statements about him were fabrications. Ongoing series of insults (mention the activity of Mullins at press conference), culminating with scorn at his Cuban attempt (of course, they weren't there, but Mullins went so far as to claim somebody else was in water for him). Poenisch actually spent more than 34 hours in water in Cuban swim, total 34:15, less than 12 minutes (out of allowed 20) out of water for treatment of man-of-war stings. Poenisch had severe left eye problem for year after swim due to lengthy exposure to salt water. He was 65 at that time, now a healthy 77. [QL]

Kicker: was it the just deserts of a hustler to be hustled?

*Important
Notes from Poenisch
re Lalanne + Nyad*

[QL]
[QL]
Customs law, [QL]
[QL]
[QL]

why ernest hemingsway, sitting on rock in key west, moon rise, etc., romantic. [Q]

[QL]
[QL]

Never met JACK Lalanne, saw him when pulled boats. Next day wind was behind him, rowboats hit him in head. was on interview in Columbus, challenged him, was in 1990, would pull anything he would twice as far, but he wouldn't talk to me, he had written me letter about advertising svms, saw him in miami in water, didn't get chance to talk to him. I wrote to him when he was pulling rowboat with 100 pounds of sand from alcatraz to mainland which is couple miles. Pictures they sent me, looked exhausted, didn't look like an athlete to me. I wondered why there was so much publicity for him pulling 100 pounds of sand, can you imagine him hooked up to 30-ton ferryboat with hands and feet tied. he was in columbus, recently, but he wouldn't talk. they told him walter poenisch on phone, he wouldn't talk. i was first one to pull boats while swimming, to my knowledge. [Q]

[QL]
[QL]

never met diana nyad to this day, not even in court. was out of court settlement. castro said nothing about her; we didn't see anything about her in cuba. she kept insisting she had visa; it was in newspaper that she had roused the ire of Fidel Castro by calling walter a phony, couldn't get visa, was in newspaper. She wanted to do it before poenisch, we got letter from Washington, they kept asking him, Rene Mujica, second secretary to the Cuban Interest section in washington, wrote Poenisch to say he was only one with visa. pushed Nyad. She never got visa, started from deserted island near cuba, castro wouldn't let her start from havana. She announced had visa before they even wrote about Walter having visa. Saw article in Miami Herald. Mujica said didn't know why she was saying that. Then we called Herald and told them Walter had worked 15 years and got his. In June was controversy about visas. I swam July 11, she swam late August. She couldn't get visa, said Cubans owe me this. she was 80 miles away from reaching USA (re 95).
(END)

*END IN 1990, stayed 77,
trying to hustle jack Lalanne*