





The band plays at Olympia: Augsburg, 1972. (Fred Schöllhorn photo)

Overleaf:

Reinhard Eiben, German Democratic Republic, World, Olympic and Europa Cup Champion. "Eiben was my idol. He threw his body around more than the others and I just naturally start-doing that" -- Jon Lugbill. (Fred Schöllhorn photo)

SHORT HISTORY

The reader might well ask why one must know something about the history of the sport to win the Worlds. The reason is that it helps you define your goals. The more you know about how someone has achieved excellence, the easier it is to see what you will have to do to reach the top. Consider this quote from a recent World Champion:

I can now bench press 275 pounds. That has been my goal ever since I read in your book on the history of the sport that Juergen Bremer could do that much.

For a complete history of the World Championships I refer you to my book The River Masters. What follows here are the highlights.

The World Championships have been held every odd-numbered year since 1949. In general, there have been two periods in which various nations have dominated whitewater slalom. In the first few World Championships, Austria dominated the kayak events, and the French the canoe events. By 1957, however, East Germany was the dominant country in most events. There have been times when they did not send a team (1969 and 1979), but every time they sent a team, they won overall. Clearly, the most successful "system" over the long run has been the East German one, and I will allude to it many times in this book.

The second most successful system has been the Czechoslovakian. Since 1957, the Czechs have been second 10 out of 17 times. Their organized, government-supported training program is very similar to the East Germans' in that both emphasize group training over many years.

A list of all individual slalom World Champions appears on pages 8 and 9. I encourage the reader to learn what he can about these people, for that will surely lead to a greater understanding of how to get to the top. The following is a list of the major slalom individual records:

1. K1: Siegbert Horn of East Germany.

He won two World Championships (1971 and 1975), the Olympics (1972), and the Europa Cup (1976), and placed second once (1973). He won a total of eight medals in his career.

INDIVIDUAL SLALOM WORLD CHAMPIONS

	K1	K1W	C1	C2	C2M
Geneva 1949	AUST Eiterer	AUST Pillwein	FRA D'Alencon	FRA Rousseau- Duboille	
Steyr 1951	AUST Fruewirt	AUST Pertlwieser	SWITZ Dussuet	SWITZ Paris- Neveu	
Merano 1953	BRD Kirschbaum	AUST Schwingl	SWITZ Dussuet	SWITZ Dussuet- Engler	
Tacen 1955	BRD Holtzbauer	BRD Biesinger	CSSR Jirasek	FRA Paris- Neveu	CSSR Martanova- Pecka
Augsburg 1957	BRD Vogt	DDR Magnus	DDR Schubert	DDR Kleinert- Friedrich	DDR Schmidt- Gloeckner
Geneva 1959	GBR Farrant	BRD Urbaniak	CSSR Jirasek	DDR Kleinert- Friedrich	DDR Behrend- Merkel
Dresden 1961	DDR Glaeser	CSSR Veberova (Polesna)	DDR Schubert	DDR Merkel- Merkel	CSSR Novak- Novak
Spittal 1963	DDR Bremer	CSSR (Polesna)	DDR Schubert	DDR Merkel- Merkel	YUG Justin- Bernot
Spittal 1965	AUST Presslmayr	DDR Glaeser	DDR Kleinert	DDR Merkel- Merkel	CSSR Janousek- Sirotkova

	K1	K1W	C1	C2	C2M
Lipno 1967	DDR Bremer	CSSR Polesna	BRD Peters	CSSR Valenta- Stach	CSSR Svoboda- Krcalova
Bourg 1969	FRA Peschier	CSSR Polesna	BRD Peters	FRA Olry- Olry	CSSR Svoboda- Traplova
Merano 1971	DDR Horn	DDR Bahmann	BRD Kauder	DDR Trummer- Kretschmer	CSSR Koudela- Koudelova
Olympics 1972	DDR Horn	DDR Bahmann	DDR Eiben	DDR Hofmann- Amend	
Muota 1973	AUST Sattler	DDR Spindler	DDR Eiben	CSSR Krejza- Pollert	USA Knight- Knight
Skopje 1975	DDR Horn	POL Cwiertniewicz	CSSR Sodomka	DDR Trummer- Kretschmer	USA Lyda- Gilman
Spittal 1977	GBR Kerr	DDR Bahmann	CSSR Sodomka	DDR Hofmann- Kalbitz	USA Lyda- Gilman
Jonquiere 1979	AUST Fauster	USA Hearn	USA Lugbill	BRD Welsink- Czupryna	



Frantisek Kadanka and Antonin Brabec, Czechoslovakia, Bronze Medalists at Skopje, 1975. (Fred Schöllhorn photo)



Walter Hofmann and Rolf-Dieter Amend, German Democratic Republic, Olympic Champions: "They were so fast it seemed like they had an outboard motor". (Fred Schöllhorn photo)

2. C1: Manfred Schubert of East Germany.

He won three World Championships (1957, 1961, and 1963), placed second once (1959), and third once (1965). He won a total of 12 slalom medals in his career.

3. K1W: Ludmila Polesna of Czechoslovakia.

She won the World Championships four times, more than anyone else (1961, 1963, 1967, and 1969), and placed second once (1971). She won 11 slalom medals overall.

4. C2: Manfred and Guenther Merkel of East Germany.

They won the World Championships three consecutive times (1961, 1963, and 1965). They won six slalom medals in their career.

5. C2M: Chuck Lyda and Marietta Gilman of the United States.

They won two consecutive World Championships (1975 and 1977).



Chuck Lyda and Marietta Gilman, USA, winning their second consecutive Gold Medal, at Skopje, 1975.

(photo courtesy of Chuck Lyda)

Records for the future include the following:

1. No K1W has ever come closer than 121% of the K1 score (Cathy Hearn, 1979).
2. No C1 has ever come closer than 114% of the winning K1 score (Jon Lugbill, 1979).
3. No C2 has ever come closer than 112% of the winning K1 score (Klaus Trummer-Juergen Kretschmer, 1971).
4. No C2M has won more than two World Championships (Chuck Lyda-Marietta Gilman, 1975 and 1977).
5. No one has ever won four gold medals in a single World Championships, winning the downriver and slalom individual and team. Several people have won three golds, with Juergen Bremer coming the closest to winning four in 1967. He lost the K1 downriver race by one second and won everything else.



Zbynek Pulec, Czechoslovakia, Bronze Medalist at Bourg St. Maurice, 1969, rolls during the Olympic Games, 1972.

(Fred Schöllhorn photo)



Angelika Bahmann, German Democratic Republic, World, Olympic, and Europa Cup Champion. (Fred Schöllhorn photo)



Harald Gimpel, German Democratic Republic, Bronze Medalist in the Olympic Games and the Skopje World Championships. (Fred Schöllhorn photo)

6. No one has paddled in more than eight slalom World Championships (Ludmila Polesna, 1961 to 1975).
7. No K1 team has ever come closer than 112% of the winning K1 score (Kerr, Fox, Edge in 1979).
8. No K1W team has ever come closer than 128%* of the winning K1W score (Glaeser, Bauer, Merkel, 1967).
9. No C1 team has come closer than 115% of the winning C1 score (Massalski, Eiben, Koerner, 1977).
10. No C2 team has come closer than 125% of the winning C2 score (Hofmann-Amend, Kretschmer-Trummer, Henze-Fischer, 1975).



Homage to the past: Austria's Edi Wolffhardt, Silver Medalist in 1979, talks with Milo Duffek, Silver Medalist in 1959, and also the inventor of the Duffek stroke.

(CEGEP photo)

* In 1973, the percentages were closer, but it was because a rain storm caused the water level to rise during the individual runs, thus ruining the comparison.