

## PARTICIPATION OF LUBLIN WATER RESCUERS IN THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN WATER RESCUE 1983-2016

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### Abstract:

Material research includes achievements of Lublin water rescuers in the World Championships in Water Rescue. History of Lublin water rescuers started in 1983. The first representative in the World Championship was Wojciech Blechar, then joined: Krzysztof Wabicz, Jarosław Mazurek and Adam Dubiel. All rescuers representing Lublin in the international area trained swimming professionally in WKS Club Lublinianka Lublin after 2000 MTP Lubliniaka. Thanks to the very good work of trainers (Witold Ruzikowski, Piotr Kasperek) Lublin representatives always presented the high physical condition of swimming during the rescue competition.

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### INTRODUCTION

Lublin rescuers started participation in World Championships in 1983. First competitor representing Lublin in the World Championships was Wojciech Blechar. XXII World Championship in Water Rescue took place in Warsaw on 10-11<sup>th</sup> September 1983. Total of 77 competitors included 40 men and 37 women who represented nine countries: Austria, Bulgaria, France, Spain, Holland, Germany, Italy, and Poland<sup>1</sup>. The world champion was an 18 year-old Wojciech Blechar.<sup>2</sup> Very good job of the whole Polish team was noted. Vice World champion was Barbara Simacowicz and Ewa Swoboda took third place.

Poland national team took first place in team classification<sup>3</sup>.

Wojciech Blechar competed in the following competitions:

- 50 m tracking of the dummy - 1st place 36''29 s
- Throw the wheel rescue – 7th place 21,20 m
- Rowing boat rescue – 6th place 1:39,19
- 200 m steeplechase – 2nd place 2:07,75

World Championships in Warsaw were great sport and organizational success of the country. Present representative of FIS Josef Schmitz commented polish efforts in this way „I do not remember event so well prepared and carried out”<sup>4</sup> In these Championships last time throw the wheel was held that was replaced by throw of the rescue dart (ball). It was decided that the World Cup will be held every four years from 1983.

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<sup>1</sup> Protokół FIS mistrzostw świata w ratownictwie wodnym 1983 – ILS result & records

<sup>2</sup> Kurier Lubelski 10.03.1983.

<sup>3</sup> Życie Warszawy 11.12.1983.

<sup>4</sup> Archiwum ZG WOPR –dr Iwona Tabaczek-Bejster.



Fig. 1. Open World Championships in Warsaw . 1983  
Source: Życie Warszawy 11.12.1983



Fig. 2. Wojtek Blechar 1983 r. Medal decoration 50 m manikin tow  
Source: Życie Warszawy 11.12.1983



Fig. 3. Wojtek Blechar 1983 r. Medal decoration 200m steeplechase  
Source: Życie Warszawy 11.12.1983

XXIII World Championships took place in Warendorf (Germany) 20-21st November 1987. The eight numbers' Polish team included four players from Lublin: Wojciech Blechar, Krzysztof Wabicz, Jarosław Buda and Joanna Pizoń. 123 competitors took part and they represented 13 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Egypt, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland<sup>5</sup>.

In the first 50 m manikin tow Lublin rescuers came off perfectly, vice world champion was W. Blechar - time 35 ' 00s., while K. Wabicz won the bronze medal - time is 36 ' 10 s.<sup>6</sup> Among women J. Pizoń won bronze medal - time 42 "50 s. In dart throw rescue bronze medal won K. Wabicz, W. Blachar was eighth and J. Pizoń beyond the first ten.

The third competition was rowing and next success of W. Blechar – he became world champion, the best pole in this competition was J. Pizoń finishing in seventh place. The last competition was the 200 m steeplechase. W. Blechar after spectacular battle with German Manfred Köder won the gold medal with a result of 2:05,40. The result for many years was the only Polish record, only in the 2009 during Polish Championship it was beaten. In the classification of individual men won: W. Blechar, K. Wabicz – 6 place, J. Pizoń – 15 place among women. Team men were champions of the world, women were fourth and in the classification of (W + M) Poland took third place.

<sup>5</sup> Protokół FIS mistrzostw świata w ratownictwie wodnym 1987 – ILS result & records

<sup>6</sup> Przegląd Sportowy 01.12.1987.



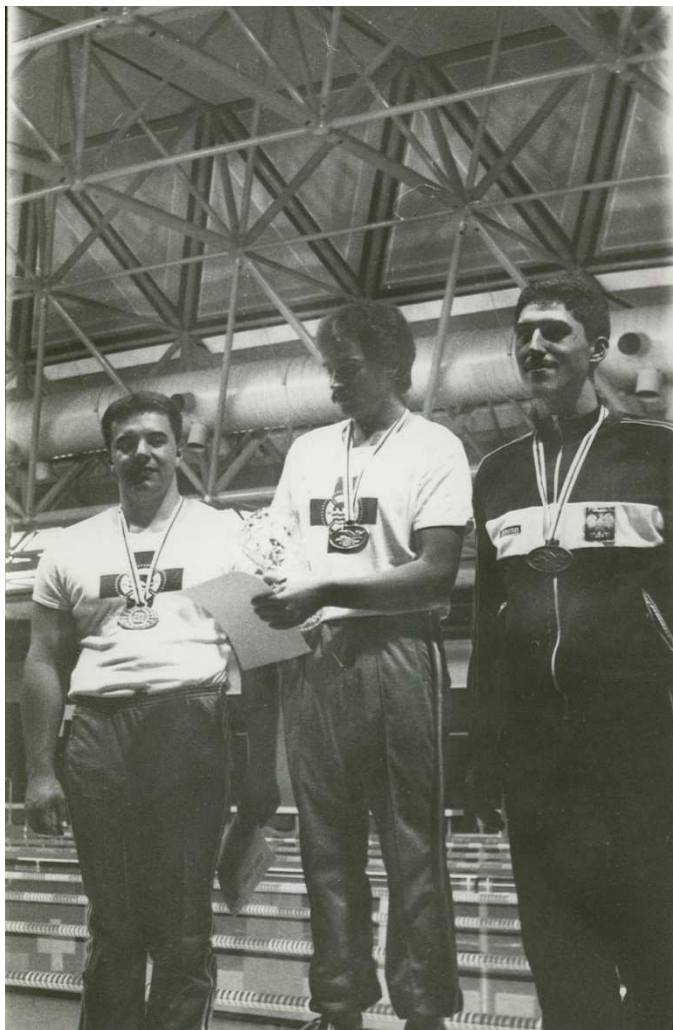


Fig. 4. Krzysztof Wabicz bronze medal dart throw rescue Warendorf 1987.  
Source: Przegląd Sportowy 01.12.1987.

XXIV World Championships took place in Jöngköping (Sweden) 12-19th August 1991. In the Championship was attended by 12 countries from Belgium, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iran, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Sweden<sup>7</sup>. In Polish national team were three players from Lublin: W. Blechar and K. Wabicz, J. Buda.

Total to be played was 9 competition.

There were introduced five new competition, two individual 100 m rescue dummy in the fins (50 m in a flowing fins then take out the dummy and with it the next 50 m), 100 m combined (50 m freestyle, after the turn you have to swim through 17,5 m underwater to the dummy, another 50 m flows with dummy), plus three team competitions 4x 25 m tracking of the dummy, 4x 50 m medley rescue relay and 4 x 50 m rescue tube relay<sup>8</sup>.

Unfortunately, additional competitions and tightened rules on towing the dummy had a big influence on the results of our representatives. Going for championships none of the Polish team did know about the change of the competition as well as the provisions<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Protokół FIS mistrzostw świata w ratownictwie wodnym 1991 – ILS result & records

<sup>8</sup> Kurier Lubelski 01.09.1991.

<sup>9</sup> Oral interview with Krzysztof Wabicz.

The Poles fought bravely despite several disqualification have won four medals, and engaged in a lot of places in the finals and polish team took 7th place, men 5th place and women ranked 8th in the team classification.

The results of our players:

Wojciech Blechar:

- 200 m steeplechase 5th place -2'05"82s
- 100 m rescue dummy in fins - bronze medal 57"45
- 100 m combined – silver medal 1'08"84
- Rowing- 5th place

Krzysztof Wabicz:

- 50m tracking of the dummy - 4th place 35"42

In addition, three competitors from Lublin sailed in both relays, where won two medals: 4 x 25 m rescue dummy - silver medal and in the variable relay 4x50 m - bronze medal<sup>10</sup>.

In the classification of tracks K. Wabicz was 11 and W. Blechar 13.



Fig. 5. Polish relay 4 x 25 m rescue dummy - silver medal Jöngköping 1991 r.  
Source: Kurier Lubelski 01.09.1991.

XXV World Championships took place in Valenciennes (France) 12-19 .08.1995.

In the event there were 12 teams from Italy, Germany, Spain, Sweden, France, the Netherlands, Slovakia, South Africa, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Estonia and Poland.<sup>11</sup>

Due to financial problems Poland was represented only by three competitors. For the competitions went two players from Lublin W Blechar and K. Wabicz and Joanna Sulewska from Lower Silesia and Polish coach Piotr Furman. This time the players were in excellent

<sup>10</sup> VI Krajowy Zjazd Delegatów WOPR. Sprawozdanie z działalności za lata 1987-1991. Warszawa.

<sup>11</sup> Protokół FIS mistrzostw świata w ratownictwie wodnym 1995 – ILS result & rekords.

form, they won a total of 5 medals although in the first competition - 200 m steeplechase. W. Blechar took 8 positions and K. Wabicz was after the first ten<sup>12</sup>.

The results of the competitors from Lublin:

W. Blechar

- 200 m steeplechase – 9th place 2'08"50
- 100 m rescue dummy in fins – 3rd place 56"04
- Throw the wheel rescue – 8th place 29,42 m
- 100 m combined – 1st place 1'08"80
- 50 m tracking of the dummy - 2nd place 34"68
- Rowing – 3rd place 1'41"00

K. Wabicz

- 100 m rescue dummy in fins – 7th place 57"74
- Throw the wheel rescue – 3rd place 32,12 m
- 50 m tracking of the dummy - 6th place 36"29
- Rowing - 4th place 1'41"10

In the classification of track world champion was W. Blechar and K. Wabicz was the sixth. In the team classification Poland was classified in the far place due to the lack of full team squad<sup>13</sup>.



Fig. 6. National team Poland Valenciennes 1995 r.  
Source: Kurier Lubelski 09.01.1995.

These were the last games in the series of FIS World Championships, and the next official World Championships were games in the series of Rescue. In 1996 Championship held in Durban (South Africa) and in the year 1998 in Auckland (New Zealand). With the lack of money the Polish team did not participated, only in the year 2000 W. Blechar at his own

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<sup>12</sup> Kurier Lubelski 09.01.1995.

<sup>13</sup> Oral interview with Krzysztof Wabicz.



expense went to Rescue World Championships 2000. He won three gold medals in the category Masters 35 +, he set three world records Masters in 200 m steeplechase, 50 m tracking of the dummy and 100 m rescue dummy in fins.



Fig. 7. W. Blechar 100m rescue dummy in fins Valenciennes 1995 r  
Source: Kurier Lubelski 09.01.1995.

It was the last start of W. Blechar in the World Championship, after these competition ended his career<sup>14</sup>, and K. Wabicz ended his career in the 2002.

Lublin rescuers dominated the polish team, they took part in many international competitions as the European Championship, the International German Cup. On the domestic area in the years 1983-2002 Lublin's rescuers dominated the Polish Championship. They have won 18 league titles of Polish Champions in the category men, two Championships in the category of women (J. Pizoń), for that one need to add many medals for individual events.



Fig. 8. K. Wabicz Throw the wheel rescue Valenciennes 1995 r.  
Source: Kurier Lubelski 09.01.1995.

<sup>14</sup> Oral interview with W. Blechar.

In the years 2002-2006 there has been break in races of Lublin rescuers. Only in the year 2006 K. Wabicz reactivated Lublin team of rescuers, in the year 2007 he was the coach of the national team<sup>15</sup>. On the effects of long there was no need to wait, and in 2008 during 2008 RECUE World Championships in Berlin/Warnemunde (Germany) in the composition of the Polish team were three players from Lublin: Jarosław Mazurek, Wojciech and Paweł Dziechcierewicz<sup>16</sup>.

In Rescue 2008 started 36 countries, the competitors appeared from countries such as: Hon Kong, St.-Lucia, Mexico, Singapor and Tajwan. Poland was represented by 10 players including 5 women<sup>17</sup>. Competitions took place on the swimming pool 50 m in Berlin and later moved to the beaches in Warnemunde. The first competition was 200 m steeplechase. Preferably with the Poles went off P. Dziechcierewicz occupying 12th place, in 100 m rescue dummy in the fins. J. Mazurek won the bronze medal with the time 52 "23, fourth place went to Marcin Pyrzyński from Wałbrzych. J. Mazurek, well presented himself in competitions: 50 m tracking of the dummy - 8 place 32 ' 90, and in the competition 100 m combined rescue he won 6th place 1 ' 06 "19. Poland team in the 4x50 trail with a rescue belt including three competitors from Lublin won 6 place setting a new Polish record 1 ' 34 ' 99<sup>18</sup>.

On the beach the best launch turned out to be a belt action relay rescue - 8 place. The competition was that the first competitor flows as soon as possible to the mark, which is located at a distance of 200 m, after being dropped off the second competitor takes the fins and rescue belt, he flows for a partner to the mark and coming back being towed. Only working with legs and after being dropped off two consecutive partners pulls him out from the water and carry him to the finish line. J. Mazurek, M. Pyrzyński i P. Dziechcierewich, W. Sadowski took part in that competition<sup>19</sup>.

In the team classification Poland took the 11th place.



Fig. 9. National team Poland 2008 r.  
Source: Jarek Mazurek collections

<sup>15</sup> Sprawozdanie z działalności WOPR W VIII kadencji (2003-2008). Warszawa 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Rozwój sportu ratowniczego w latach 1967-2012 I. Tabaczek-Bejster, G. Konieczny.

<sup>17</sup> Protokół Mistrzostw Świata ILS Rescue 2008.

<sup>18</sup> Oral interview with J. Mazurek.

<sup>19</sup> Kurier Lubelski 07.08.2008.



In 2010 championship held in Alexandria (Egypt), again with no fund went a modest three persons representation: J. Mazurek, Joanna Gołębiowska from Warsaw and Daniel Bugdol from Racibórz<sup>20</sup>. Despite the many organizational and financial difficulties, the Polish national team have won a couple of finals A and B. J. Mazurek in 100 tracking of the dummy in fins placed at the 8 position by obtaining a 51 ' 75<sup>21</sup>. On the beach Polish rescuers took part in only one race competition in the sea - surf race (competitor flows 400 m in the sea after a semi-circle)<sup>22</sup>.



Fig. 5. Polska reprezentacja Egipt 2010r.  
Source: Jarek Mazurek collections

In 2012 the story is repeated and for Australia competitions did not go the representation of Poland, because in Polish team, there were four representatives from Lublin.

In 2014 championship held in Montpellier, France<sup>23</sup>. The competitions attended large representation of Lublin. Adam Dubiel and Agata Wiertel represented us in category open , Krzysztof Rutkowski, Arkadiusz Środek and Weronika Śliczniak in category Junior and Krzysztof Wabicz, Jarosław Mazurek i Jerzy Mamczur represented Poland in category masters<sup>24</sup>.

Lublin team in the junior completed their great results. Krzysztof Rutkowski ended the struggle for the World Cup with 6 result in 100 m tracking of the dummy with the fins and took 11 position in the 200 m with steeplechase.<sup>25</sup> Arkadiusz Środek's starts ended on 9 place

<sup>20</sup> Rozwój sportu ratowniczego w latach 1967-2012 I. Tabaczek-Bejster, G. Konieczny.

<sup>21</sup> Protokół Mistrzostw Świata Rescue 2010.

<sup>22</sup> Oral interview with J. Mazurek.

<sup>23</sup> Protokół ILS Mistrzostw Świata Rescue 2014.

<sup>24</sup> Kurier Lubelski 10.09.2014.

<sup>25</sup> Dziennik Wschodni 12.09.2014.

both 100 m combined rescue and 200 m super rescuer. The youngest polish representative Weronika Śliczniak also was well taking along with her 9th place in the 4 x 10 km and 25 place in 200 m steeplechase and 100 m combined rescue.

Junior achievement is the fact that Rutkowski and Środek with colleagues from Szczecin were close to the podium finishing in 4th and 5th place in the relay pool. "The cherry on the cake" may be the fact that the Lublin Juniors of World Cup 10 times broke polish records<sup>26</sup>.

Very high physical condition was presented by Lublin competitors "masters". At the first pole start stood Jarosław Mazurek, who in 200 m steeplechase took 1st place winning the gold medal, at the 5 position was Krzysztof Wabicz. Another competition was 100 m rescue dummy, where again Jarosław Mazurek won gold medal setting a new the world record in the competition. Krzysztof Wabicz graduated from the competition on the 10 place while Jerzy Mamczur on the last meters lost contact with the manikin and got disqualifications<sup>27</sup>.

The second day of the Championship began from the competition 100 m of dummy tow with belt, where Jarosław Mazurek did on medal finishing in second place in this competition. The next competition was 50 m of manikin tow. Players have won: Jarosław Mazurek-gold medal, Krzysztof Wabicz-silver medal Jerzy Mamczur-final, 7th place. In total, in confined water MOSiR team Rescue Team Lublin won five medals, three gold and two silver. Six players from Lublin went to the Netherlands for The World Cup. In masters category started: J. Mazurek, in open: A. Dubiel, K. Rutkowski and A. Wiertel, in the youngest category Junior started: W. Samuła and W. Śliczniak. Junior women were very well. Victoria Samuła won the bronze medal in the World Junior Championships 100 m rescue dummy in fins with excellent time - Polish Record-56.78. , Weronika took sixth place in the 200 m steeplechase, and the relay with our girls 4 x 25 won the silver medal in the dummy's towing<sup>28</sup>. Among the seniors Adam Dubiel was sixth player of the world in the 200 m steeplechase, his time was 1:57,77, what is also the new Polish Record. A. Dubiel won a silver medal in the relay 4 x 25 tracking the dummy. K. Rutkowski started in B final in 100 m rescue dummy in the fins<sup>29</sup>. In the category masters famously went off J. Mazurek, who won three gold medals in the competitions: 200 m steeplechase, 50 m tracking the dummy, 100 m rescue dummy in the fins.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Lublin rescuers have made a large contribution to the development and popularization of water rescue in Poland. In total - Lublin rescuers fought in the World Championships twenty-eight medals – ten gold, nine silver and nine bronze. In addition, the masters won eleven medals including nine gold while the juniors won three medals. The players during Championships set several world records in events: 100 m combined rescue – W. Blechar, 100 m rescue dummy in fins - J. Mazurek, throw the wheel rescue – K..Wabicz.

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<sup>26</sup> Kurier Lubelski 28.09.2014.

<sup>27</sup> Oral interview with J. Mamczur

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