



John Kinsella, Honor Swimmer, United States of America, 1978



Videos: [Interview 1](#) [Documentary 1](#) [Panel 1](#) [Swim 1](#)

John Kinsella won 7 Majors: 1979 English Channel Race; 1978 Capri to Naples; and 1974, 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979 World Professional Marathon Swimming Federation. He won every major professional marathon swimming race he entered, including: 32 km lac St-Jean in 7 hours and 54 minutes in 1974, in 7 hours and 36 minutes in 1975, in 7 hours and 18 minutes in 1976, in 7 hours and 32 minutes in 1977, in 7 hours and 13 minutes in 1978 and in 7 hours and 1 minute in 1979. Each time he set the overall speed record – which held until 2023 (and beyond). Other wins came in: 2 times Laval; 4 times Chicago; 2 times Chibougamau; 3 times Paspébiac; 2 times Rio Coronda; 2 times Capri Naples; Canadian National Exhibition; Atlantic City; and Nile.

He won silver in the 1500-meter freestyle at the 1968 Olympics and a gold in the 800-meter freestyle relay in 1972. John started the decade by winning the Amateur Athletic Union's James E. Sullivan Award for America's outstanding amateur athlete and ended the decade by winning the English Channel race in 1979.

He was inducted in the International Swimming Hall of Fame (1986).

[Expanded Biography \(Openwaterpedia\)](#)

[Long Swims Database \(Marathon Swimmers Federation\)](#)