

**SELECTED SPORT COMPETITION IN WATER RESCUE
IN THE OPINION OF WATER RESCUERS****ВИБРАНІ СПОРТИВНІ ЗМАГАННЯ З РЯТУВАННЯ НА ВОДІ
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Rivne, Ukraine*DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/2522-1795.2022.12.23>**Summary**

Rescuers must demonstrate their skills during each rescue competition. At each start, they are judged by the audience that came to see if they really felt safe by the water. It depends on the level of training of lifeguards and what level they will present during the competition between themselves and whether these people will enjoy a rest at a guarded bathing beach during warm days. Will they go, for example, 200 meters further to the water that no one is guarding, because they think that the lifeguard will not provide them with adequate safety anyway? They will do so because they will be convinced that a man standing by the water in an orange T-shirt with the inscription "RESCUER" can do nothing, and he chose this activity by chance, or in order to spend a pleasant vacation. Another positive reason is that during the observation of individual competitions, WOPR instructors draw conclusions on what elements during the training should be given more attention and devote more time to. Their task is also to catch the mistakes made by individual players and pass it on to them after the end of the competition. Thanks to this, the rescuer knows which elements are being performed incorrectly and, through consultation with the instructor, learns how to correct them. At the same time, they encourage the participants to constantly practice and improve their skills, thanks to which they become better rescuers. Rescue competitions played in the real work environment of rescuers, e.g. competitions in coastal rescue, test the skills of rescuers much better than competitions played, for example, in an indoor swimming pool. Swimming in the pool does not fully reflect the natural environment and only through the water it is filled with does it resemble it. The main difference between the water in the pool and in the natural environment is that it is transparent all the time, thanks to which the rescuer can see everything perfectly. In addition, competitions played by the sea are very similar to the situations in which rescuers can actually find themselves while performing their duties during the summer season.

Key words: water rescue, sport, swimming, competition.

Рятувальники мають продемонструвати свою майстерність під час кожного змагання. На кожному старті їх оцінюють відвідувачі, які прийшли перевірити, чи справді вони почуваються у безпеці біля води. Від рівня підготовки рятувальників і того, який рівень вони представлять під час змагань між собою, залежить, чи сподобається цим людям відпочивати в теплі дні на пляжі, який охороняється. Чи підуть вони, наприклад, на 200 метрів далі до води, яку ніхто не охороняє, бо вважають, що рятувальник все одно не забезпечить їм належної безпеки? Вони так зроблять, тому що переконуються, що чоловік, який стоїть біля води в помаранчевій футболці з надписом «РЯТУВАЛЬНИК», нічого не зможе робити, і він обрав це заняття випадково, або щоб приємно провести відпустку. Ще однією позитивною причиною є те, що під час спостереження за індивідуальними змаганнями інструктори роблять висновки, яким елементам під час тренувань варто приділяти більше уваги та часу. Їх завдання також визначити помилки окремих гравців і передати їм це після закінчення змагань. Завдяки цьому рятувальник знає, які елементи виконуються неправильно, і, консультуючись з інструктором, вчиться їх виправляти. Водночас заохочують учасників постійно практикуватися

та вдосконалювати свої навички, завдяки чому вони стають кращими рятувальниками. Рятувальні змагання, що проводяться в реальному робочому середовищі рятувальників, наприклад, змагання з берегового порятунку перевіряють майстерність рятувальників набагато краще, ніж змагання, які проводяться, наприклад, у критому басейні. Плавання в басейні не повністю відображає навколишнє природне середовище і лише через воду, якою наповнений басейн, нагадує його. Основна відмінність води в басейні від природного середовища полягає в тому, що вона весь час прозора, завдяки чому рятувальнику все добре видно. Крім того, змагання на березі моря дуже схожі на ситуації, в які реально потрапляють рятувальники під час виконання своїх обов'язків у літній сезон.

Необхідно зазначити, що переважна більшість респондентів вважають, що в майбутньому Поморська ліга рятувальників на воді може стати одним із провідних змагань. Поморська ліга рятувальників на воді може стати змаганням національного рівня, що призведе до підвищення рівня безпеки на пляжах і у воді.

Ключові слова: рятування на воді, спорт, плавання, змагання.

Introduction. Since time immemorial people provided aid to each other in different ways. As the civilization developed, people helped not only their tribesman [12, 13, 26], but also third parties. In the beginning some help groups and then bigger organizations were created of people called rescuers whose goal was to rescue other people. In the territory of Poland first such organization was mentioned in 1604. Alongside with the creation of new associations for saving the drowning also new books describing methods and ways to provide help were published. And so, in Breslau in 1775 under the rule of Prussian king Frederick II, the Immediate Rescue Edict was declared and the book "On rescuing the drowning" was published which is the first manual on water rescue [2-4, 16, 17]. Other books, such as "Learning the art of swimming" by Karol Heinitz (1820) and „Rescuing people endangered with sudden life threat" by a physician J. Gawlik (1869), describe not only methods of providing first aid but also methods how to haul a person and set of tools handy in water rescue [6, 15, 25]. In the territory of Poland, the first such organization was created in 1898 in Kalisz, it was called Imperial Society to Help the Drowning [1, 4, 5, 10]. In 1901 in Warsaw acted Petersburg Society to Help the Drowning where the first water rescue competition took place [18-21]. Following this dynamic development, a physician Leon Wernic published a book called "How to rescue the drowning" (1902), and a teacher of a "Falcon" association in "Cracow" Bartłomiej Wydlyka published "Swimming" (1910). Equally significant change took place in the water rescue worldwide [7-9]. In 1954 it was renamed to the International Federation of Providing Life Saving and Utilitarian

Sports, and in 1963 it was finally called – the International Federation of Life Saving and Utilitarian Sports (FIS) [22, 25].

At that time also the swimming had been dynamically developing in Poland. In 1922 Polish Swimming Association (PZP) was created [13, 14, 23]. Also, water rescue had been developing alongside with swimming. Water rescuers pursued to have some formal background and a Water Rescue Committee was created at the PZP meeting on 20th April 1925. Two years later 29 June was announced a Rescue Day. The same year the Committee organized the first training course for water rescuers. At the beginning of 1950s water rescue entered into the curricula at Universities of Physical Education. A few years later professor M. Witkowski – cofounder of WOPR – published a writing called "Rescuing the Drowning". Thanks to the initiative of professor Witkowski and others, the Chairman of the Main Committee of Physical Culture and Tourism issued Order №. 74 creating Water Rescue Organization (in short WOPR) on 11 April 1962 [11, 22, 24].

Area of research

Survey was carried out among 100 rescuers working in Pomeranian Voivodship age over 15. The survey was carried out in June and August 2018.

Analysis of data collected in survey

First, I will characterise researched group regarding gender, age, education, social and economic background, occupation, financial status, time and location. In the second part I will refer to the main questions asked in the survey.

Characteristics of the surveyed

100 respondents participated in the survey, 65 % of them were man and 35 % woman. The

most numerous groups were the rescuers age 20-29. They consisted of over 50%. The second most numerous groups were rescuers age 15-19. They consisted of 23% of rescuers. Not much smaller was the group of 30-39-year-old consisting of 15 competitors. There were no participants in the age category of 50-59 and over 60s. The most people (58 %) have higher education. 40% of the surveyed have secondary education and only 2% vocational. No one has primary education. As the survey shows most rescuers are students (50 % of respondents). The second biggest group consists of employees (25 %). Also, entrepreneurs work as rescuers (15 %). The least numerous groups consisted of uniform services (10 %). There were no unemployed. Also, majority of the rescuers was currently employed (85 %). Only 15 % of the respondents was not working.

Evaluation of popularity of rescue competition

Among surveyed most people assess their skills as good (50 %), 30 % people swim very good, and 20 % – average. None of the surveyed declared that they swim badly. Against, most of the surveyed did not trained swimming – 55 %, only 45 % of rescuers trained swimming in the past. Also, most rescuers have never heard about rescue competitions organized in Pomeranian Voivod ship (55 %). Despite the fact that they are

widely advertised, only 45 % rescuers know that there are such competitions. Likewise, majority of the respondents (60 %) declared that there is no such organization in their neighbourhood. Despite growing popularity of sports water rescue only 40 % of rescuers have a sports water rescue organization in their neighbourhood. Also, majority of the surveyed have never participated in such competition (68 %). Only 32 % water rescuers participated in such event.

Table 1 presents who enrolls a rescuer to a water rescue competition. It was the sports club who enrolled most competitors – as many as 20 % of rescuers. Some people have decided to participate by themselves and did not belong to any sports club. They accounted for 7 % of the rescuers. Also, senior rescuers enrolled junior rescuers – 5 %. According to the survey there were no cases where a manager of a bathing beach enrolled rescuers to a competition.

Table 2 presents in which competitions participated rescuers during rescue competitions. The survey shows that most rescuers choose speed competitions (20 % of the surveyed). Only 6 % participated in competitions requiring specialistic equipment. The same number of people started both in speed and specialistic equipment competitions. Majority of the surveyed have never participated in such competitions – 68%.

Table 1

Number distribution of responses to the following question in the survey: If you participated in a water rescue competition, who enrolled you?

Answers	%
Sports club	20
Senior rescuer	5
Bathing beach manager	-
Myself	7
Didn't participate	68

(Source: own compilation)

Table 2

Number distribution of responses to the following question in the survey: In what competitions have you participated?

Answers	%
Speed competitions	20
Specialistic equipment competitions	6
Speed and specialistic equipment competitions	6
Didn't participate	68

(Source: own compilation)

In the opinion of the surveyed, sports water rescue definitely increases the efficiency of a rescue action. This belief was expressed by 58 % of the surveyed. Not much less (32 %) stated that sports rescue probably increases the efficiency of a rescue action. Only 10 % expressed opinion that sports rescue probably will not increase the efficiency of a rescue action. None of the surveyed stated that sports rescue does not increase the efficiency of a rescue action at all.

However, all surveyed stated that speed competition have influence on the success of a rescue action. Definitely Yes was chosen by 80 % of the surveyed, while Probably Yes was chosen by 20 % of the rescuers. None of the surveyed stated that speed competitions do not have or probably do not have influence on a rescue action. Most rescuers believes that specialistic equipment competition rather has an influence on success of a rescue action. Such opinion expressed 56 % of the surveyed. Slightly less (namely 44 %) answered that it definitely has influence on the success of the action. None of the respondents chosen answers „Probably No” or „No” answering the question about the influence of specialistic equipment competition on success of a rescue action.

Table 3 presents reasons to choose speed competition. The reason to choose speed competition are good swimming skills, in opinion of most of the respondents. This was the answer of 50 % of the surveyed. Simple rules are the reason to choose this competition in the view of 24 % of people. Meanwhile 20 % of rescuers believes that lack of specialistic equipment encourages to choose speed competitions. Other reasons to choose speed competition was stated only by 6% people.

Table 4 presents reasons for low popularity of the specialistic equipment competition. On the basis of the survey, it can be stated that the reason for still low popularity of the specialistic equipment competitions are shortages in various areas. A shortage of specialistic equipment was the main reason stated by 32 % of the respondents. Not much less, namely 24 %, stated that poor technical skills are the reason for low popularity of this type of competition. Moreover, 20% of people believes that restrictive rules are the main reason for small number of competitors in such competition. 12 % believes that it is caused by the lack of knowledge of the equipment. Not much less (10 %) states that there are still too few trainings on using specialistic equipment. Only 2 % of people stated other reasons for poor attendance in specialistic equipment competition.

Table 3

**Number distribution of responses to the following question in the survey:
What, in your opinion, decided about choosing speed competition?**

Answers	%
Good swimming skills	50
Lack of specialistic equipment	20
Simple rules	24
Other	6

(Source: own compilation)

Table 4

Number distribution of responses to the following question in the survey: What, in your opinion, is the reason for low popularity of the specialistic equipment competition?

Answers	%
Poor technical skills	24
Shortage of specialistic equipment	32
Restrictive rules	20
Few trainings with the equipment	10
Not knowing the equipment	12
Other	2

(Source: own compilation)

Assessment of the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue by water rescuers

The surveyed rescuers have very good opinion on the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue (table 5-7). 30 % of the respondents perceives the competitions organized by the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue as spectacular, while 29 % of the surveyed stated that the competitions increase quality of water rescue. The same number of rescuers answered that the competitions are attractive. The least number of people (namely 12 %) stated that the competitions promote the Pomerania Region.

Most surveyed learned about the competitions organized by the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue from the Internet (55 % of the respond-

ents). 20% of the rescuers heard about the competitions from their coach. 15 % respondents learned about the competition from some advertising posters. The smallest number (10 %) of people was informed by friends.

(Source: own compilation)

Conclusions. The surveyed rescuers have a very positive opinion on the future of the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue. 80 % of the respondents believe that in the future the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue may become one of the leading competitions. The rest of the respondents confirmed this belief but was less decisive than the previous group. However, they also believe that this competition will be highly evaluated among other competitions. Despite

Table 5

Number distribution of responses to the following question in the survey: What do you think about the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue?

Answers	%
Spectacular competitions in Pomerania	30
Increase quality of water rescue	29
Competition attractive for rescuers	29
Competitions promoting Pomerania	12

(Source: own compilation)

Table 6

Number distribution of responses to the following question in the survey: Where did you learn about the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue?

Answers	%
Internet	55
Advertising Posters	15
Friends	10
Coach	20

(Source: own compilation)

Table 7

Comparison of competitions with rescuers' opinion

Most popular competitions	Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue	Rescuers' opinion
Speed competitions	50 m hauling manikin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – simple rules – spectacular competitions – no equipment – universal competition, – everyone can participate – only swimming skills needed
	100 m obstacle race	
	100 m combined	
Specialistic equipment competitions	100 m rescue with fins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – restrictive rules – poor technical skills – rarely trained competitions – too rare exercises with the equipment during trainings
	100 m rescue	
	Line throwing	

high attendance and big success of the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue, many rescuers have never heard about the competitions organized in the Pomerania. The reason can be too small promotion of this competition in media. The Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue may become a high range competition on the national level. According to all surveyed water rescuers in the future the Pomeranian Ligue of Water Rescue will have

high importance in water rescue. Proper promotion in media and promoting water rescue among youngsters in Pomerania will result in more competitors entering such competitions and it will result in higher security levels on beaches and in water, because skilled and swift water rescuer is a very significant factor in a rescue action and leads to higher success rate of rescue actions in water.

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