

## **HAYES SWIMS TO OLYMPIC GOLD**

**(Written for Crum & Forster Corporation subsidiary USIG newsletter)**

USIG had its own gold medal winner in the 1984 Summer Olympics. He is swimmer Bruce Hayes, who anchored the U.S. team in the incredibly close 800-meter freestyle relay.

Hayes (his father is Larry Hayes, USIG staff counsel in Dallas) provided one of the high points of the Olympic games.

When he dove into the pool, his teammates had given him a lead of almost two body lengths. In any other race, this would have assured victory. But Hayes was swimming the last 200 meters against Michael Gross of West Germany. Six feet, seven-and-a-half inches tall, with an arm span of 7'4", Gross, nicknamed "The Albatross," had already set Olympic world records in both the freestyle and butterfly earlier in the week.

In less than two seconds, Gross gained nine feet on Hayes. Then Gross surged ahead by two feet. U.S. team members and the watching world thought the race was over. Fiercely determined, Hayes strained his body and slowly closed the gap.

With less than five meters to go, the two burst towards the finish in a dead heat. Known as a strong finisher, Hayes gave it all he had. Miraculously he touched first—four-hundredths of a second ahead of Gross, or the distance of an outstretched hand. The U.S. team broke the world record with 7 minutes, 15.69 seconds.

"It's hard to describe how I felt watching Bruce swim that sensational race," said Larry Hayes. "I was so proud and happy to see him achieve something he wanted so much. Bruce has worked hard for many years, training five-six hours a day, six days a week. It's great to see his hard work pay off."

The 21-year-old Hayes is a senior at UCLA. He has been swimming competitively for 15 years, the last four as a member of the U.S. National Swim Team. At the Pan American Games in Venezuela last summer, he won three gold medals in the 200- and 400-meter freestyle and the 800-meter freestyle relay.