

= David Larson =

David Erwin Larson (born June 25 , 1959) is an American former competition swimmer who is an Olympic gold medalist and former world record @-@ holder . Larson is a Georgia native who became an All @-@ American college swimmer for the University of Florida . He was known for his success as a member of American relay teams in international competition at the Pan American Games and the Olympics ? and for setting two world records in the 4 x 200 @-@ meter relay event on the same day at the 1984 Olympics .

= = Early years = =

Larson was born in the small town of Jesup , Georgia in 1959 . He started swimming as an age @-@ group competitor in 1963 . He attended the Bolles School in Jacksonville , Florida , where he swam for the Bolles high school swim team . He graduated from Bolles in 1977 .

= = College swimming career = =

Larson accepted an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Florida in Gainesville , Florida , where he swam for the Florida Gators swimming and diving team in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and Southeastern Conference (SEC) competition under coach Randy Reese from 1978 to 1981 . Larson won two NCAA championships at Florida in the 800 @-@ yard freestyle relay (1979 , 1981) , setting American and NCAA records in the process . He finished second in the 200 @-@ yard freestyle to Rowdy Gaines of Auburn in 1981 , but then out @-@ swam Gaines on the final leg of the 800 @-@ yard freestyle relay to claim the NCAA championship in the event . Larson earned twenty @-@ one All @-@ American honors and was national record holder in the 400 @-@ yard freestyle relay .

Larson graduated from the University of Florida with a bachelor 's degree in sociology in 1987 , and was later inducted into the University of Florida Athletic Hall of Fame as a " Gator Great . "

= = International swimming career = =

Larson was first selected for the U.S. national swim team for the 1979 Pan American Games held in San Juan , Puerto Rico . In what would become a regular match @-@ up , Larson earned a silver medal in the men 's 200 @-@ meter freestyle for his second @-@ place finish (1 : 52 @.@ 24) behind American teammate Rowdy Gaines (1 : 51 @.@ 22) . Two days later , Larson and Gaines combined with fellow Americans Brian Goodell and Kris Kirchner to win a Pan American Games gold medal in the 4 x 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay (7 : 31 @.@ 28) .

He qualified for the U.S. Olympic Team in 1980 , as a member of the U.S. team in the men 's 4 x 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay , but was unable to compete because of the United States @-@ led boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics held in Moscow . After completing his college career in 1981 , Larson was tired of swimming and quit , only to return to competition a year later because he missed the focus . Larson continued his training with the program that coach Randy Reese had created for post @-@ college swimmers in Gainesville , Florida .

At the 1983 Pan American Games in Caracas , Venezuela , he again won a gold medal as a member of the winning U.S. team in the men 's 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay , together with Richard Saeger , Bruce Hayes and Rowdy Gaines (7 : 23 @.@ 63) .

Larson represented the United States at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles . In the preliminary heats of the men 's 4 x 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay , he and U.S. teammates Geoff Gaberino , Hayes and Saeger set a new world record of 7 : 18 @.@ 87 . But the new record was short @-@ lived . Later that same afternoon , Larson won the gold medal in the event final of the 4 x 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay , together with his American teammates Mike Heath , Jeff Float and Hayes , by defeating the Michael Gross @-@ anchored West German team by four one @-@ hundredths (0 @.@ 04) of a second , and setting yet another new world record of 7 : 15 @.@ 69 in

the process . The American media dubbed the four swimmers the " Gross Busters , " a play on the title of the popular 1984 movie Ghostbusters .

In the aftermath of the 1984 Olympics , Larson retired from competitive swimming at the age of 25 .

= = Life after swimming = =

After the post @-@ Olympic national celebrations , Larson was offered an opportunity to work in sports marketing in New York City . His early professional career involved dealings with agents , creating event sponsorships , and negotiating athlete contracts . He spent the next decade working in sports marketing , then in television . He worked with NBC on its Olympic broadcasts , including the 2005 Winter Games .

Larson and his wife Kitty , a Miami lawyer , have a son .

= = World records = =

Men 's 4 × 200 @-@ meter medley relay