

= Mike Heath ( swimmer ) =

Michael Steward Heath ( born April 9 , 1964 ) is an American former competition swimmer who specialized in freestyle events . He is a three @-@ time Olympic gold medalist , and a former world record @-@ holder in two relay swimming events . A native of Texas , he won two national collegiate championship competing for the University of Florida . During his elite swimming career , Heath won ten medals in major international championships , including seven golds , two silvers and a bronze , spanning the Olympic Games , FINA World Championships , and Pan Pacific Championships .

= = Early years = =

Heath was born in McAllen , Texas . He attended Highland Park High School in University Park , Texas ( a Dallas suburb ) , and competed for the Highland Park High School swim team . In 1980 , he set a new Texas state high school record in the boys ' 200 @-@ yard freestyle ( 1 : 37 @.@ 88 ) ; he set a second state record in the event in 1982 ( 1 : 37 @.@ 53 ) , breaking his own previous record in the process .

= = College swimming career = =

Heath accepted an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Florida in Gainesville , Florida , where he swam for coach Randy Reese 's Florida Gators swimming and diving team in National Collegiate Athletic Association ( NCAA ) and Southeastern Conference ( SEC ) competition from 1983 to 1986 . He was a member of the Gators ' 1983 and 1984 NCAA men 's championship teams , as well as four consecutive SEC championships teams . As a Gator swimmer , he won NCAA national titles in the 400 @-@ yard freestyle relay ( 1983 ) , 800 @-@ yard freestyle relay ( 1983 , 1984 ) , and 200 @-@ yard freestyle ( 1984 ) , and received nineteen All @-@ American honors . His strong finish swimming the anchor leg for the Gators in the 4 × 100 @-@ yard freestyle relay provided the Gators ' winning points in their first NCAA national team championship in 1983 . He also won seven SEC titles , and was recognized as the SEC male swimmer of the year in 1983 and 1985 . Heath graduated from the University of Florida with a bachelor 's degree in exercise and sports science in 1988 , and was inducted into the University of Florida Athletic Hall of Fame as a " Gator Great " in 1996 .

= = International swimming career = =

Heath , who had not previously been a member of the U.S. national team , won the 100- and 200 @-@ meter freestyle events at the 1984 U.S. Olympic trials , and thereby qualified to compete in the two Olympic individual events and for the U.S. relay teams . As a newcomer to the U.S. trials , he made a dramatic statement by setting a new American record in the preliminary heats of the 200 @-@ meter freestyle . At the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles , he won three gold medals and a silver .

He won his first Olympic gold medal by swimming the lead @-@ off leg in the men 's 4 × 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay , and Heath and his American teammates David Larson , Jeff Float and Bruce Hayes set a new world record of 7 : 15 @.@ 69 , edging the Michael Gross @-@ led West Germans by four one @-@ hundredths ( 0 @.@ 04 ) of a second . He won his second gold medal by helping set another world record of 3 : 19 @.@ 03 in the men 's 4 × 100 @-@ meter freestyle relay , together with fellow Americans Chris Cavanaugh , Matt Biondi and Rowdy Gaines , finishing sixty @-@ five one @-@ hundredths ( 0 @.@ 65 ) of a second ahead of the second @-@ place Australians . He then earned a third gold medal by swimming for the winning U.S. team in the preliminary heats of the 4 × 100 @-@ meter medley relay . In a word play on the title of the popular 1984 movie Ghostbusters , American media dubbed Heath and his 4 × 200 @-@ meter relay teammates the " Gross Busters . "

In individual Olympic competition , Heath won a silver medal in the 200 @-@ meter freestyle ( 1 : 49 @.@ 10 ) behind Gross 's world record @-@ setting performance ( 1 : 47 @.@ 44 ) . He also placed fourth in the 100 @-@ meter freestyle event final ( 50 @.@ 41 ) ; the outcome was controversial , however , because of a premature starter gun and a quick start by Gaines , the winner . Gaines ' coach , Richard Quick , knew of starter Frank Silvestri 's propensity to fire the starter gun almost immediately when the swimmers mounted the blocks . Gaines gained about a meter 's head start on the competition ; video of the event later confirmed that one or more of the swimmers had not been set when the starter gun fired .

After the 1984 Olympics , Heath continued to swim for the U.S. national team , and remained a fixture on the freestyle relay teams . At the 1985 Pan Pacific Championships in Tokyo , gold medalists Scott McCadam , Heath , Paul Wallace and Biondi set a new world record of 3 : 17 @.@ 08 in the 4 × 100 @-@ meter freestyle relay . Together with Biondi , Duffy Dillon and Craig Oppel , he won another gold medal in the 4 × 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay ( 7 : 17 @.@ 63 ) . Individually , Heath won a Pan Pacific Championships gold medal in the 200 @-@ meter freestyle ( 1 : 49 @.@ 29 ) by beating Biondi ( 1 : 50 @.@ 19 ) and Canadian Sandy Goss ( 1 : 50 @.@ 56 ) . He also won a Pan Pacific silver medal in the 100 @-@ meter freestyle ( 50 @.@ 78 ) , finishing a fraction of a second behind Biondi ( 50 @.@ 44 ) . Heath again swam for the U.S. relay teams at the 1986 World Aquatics Championships in Madrid ; Tom Jager , Heath , Paul Wallace and Biondi won the 4 × 100 @-@ meter freestyle ( 3 : 19 @.@ 89 ) ; and Eric Boyer , Heath , Dan Jorgensen and Biondi placed third in the 4 × 200 @-@ meter freestyle ( 7 : 18 @.@ 29 ) .

= = Life after competition swimming = =

Heath was an assistant coach for the Florida Gators swim team from 1988 to 1989 . After graduating from the University of Florida , Heath first worked as a salesman , before he coached swimming at Fletcher High School in Neptune Beach , Florida , for six years , and thereafter at Episcopal High School in Jacksonville , Florida . He is married to Sherri @-@ Lee Schricker , who was a member of the Florida Gators swim team at the University of Florida from 1984 to 1987 , and they have two children . Their son Grady will swim for the Florida Gators beginning in 2015 ? 16 .

= = World records = =

Men 's 4 × 100 @-@ meter freestyle relay

Men 's 4 × 200 @-@ meter freestyle relay