GEORGIA COLEMAN
GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Georgia Coleman had been diving six months when she made the 1928 Olympic team and placed second on both springboard and tower. In 1929 she won every U.S. National diving title and in the next four years, lost only once from the one meter board. She climax her career by winning the 1932 Olympic springboard title and was second off the platform to Dorothy Poynton another Hall of Fame diver from California. There have been several girl divers to win more than Georgia Coleman’s 11 National AAU Championships, but no one who saw her dive denies her milestoneright to the Hall of Fame as the first girl to combine the men’s acrobatic strength with the women’s grace and beauty. It all adds up to skill and Georgia had it.

Coleman also had a smile that never wore off and a personality that made her the favorite wherever she would dive. When she died at the age of 29, columnist Dick Hyland concluded her obituary by writing: “She never said an uncomplimentary word about anyone. She never did a bad thing in her life. They can open the gates of heaven wide, because a champion of champions is headed that way. Aloha, nui loa, Georgia. We’ll never forget you.”

Somewhere She Is Still Smiling!
By Charles W. Paddock
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Somewhere, Georgia Coleman is still smiling!
The gamest dives of them all lost her four-year battle with Death. But she never stopped smiling.

Win, lose or draw, blonde Georgia was ever courageous in competition and out of it; and always came up with a bright grin; ready to take another chance. In Paris, four years ago, Georgia dove into a five-foot pool, thinking it was much deeper. Her head struck the bottom with terrific force. She never knew sound health again. Operation followed operation. She contracted bronchial pneumonia and then fell a victim to infantile paralysis. Even then, with her arms and legs useless, she still smiled and said: "I'll lick this thing. You wait and see!"

Georgia almost did. Her great courage, her unflagging optimism, her gallant spirit stood her in good hand. Gradually she gained the use of her limbs. Heroically, she exercised long, 4 full hours each day until at last she could hobble around again. That was not enough. She even dreamed of future competition. Then came one relapse after another and she dropped from 251 pounds to less than 80 and a week ago slipped into an unconsciousness from which she never recovered.

Born in Idaho, Georgia Coleman spent all but the first year of her early life in Southern California. She learned to swim at Catalina and when her family moved to Los Angeles she became a sensational diver as a student at Polytechnic High School and the University of Southern California. In her first major competition she won the national diving championship and a few weeks later the Olympic title at Amsterdam in 1928 when barely 16.

During the next four years, Georgia Coleman won every important diving title in this country and abroad. Her blonde, curly head was to be seen wherever great swimmers congregated. Her boundless enthusiasm, extreme friendliness, and splendid sportsmanship endeared her to all. Steadily she improved her diving technique until she was considered as the greatest feminine star in her favorite event that the world had known.

Then in her home town of Los Angeles in 1932 she successfully defended her Olympic crown. From this point she went on to triumph after triumph throughout the United States and Europe. Georgia Coleman never took her honors seriously. She was the same sweet, cheerful "tom boy" she had always been and that grand smile of hers never wore off.

She was born with it and she died with it. Somewhere, Georgia Coleman is still smiling!