

Irish embassy receives sports team

During the World Outgames, Team Ireland had an official reception at Ireland's embassy in Copenhagen.



Reception at the Irish embassy.

By Peter Kyhl Olesen

Friday evening of the World Outgames, the Irish Embassy in Copenhagen gave an official reception to 40 Outgames participants and supporters from *Team Ireland*.

"It means a lot for us to be invited here. Not until 1993 was homosexu-

ality legalized in Ireland, and there is still a ways to go. But it feels very good to have 'official' Ireland recognise that we are also part of Irish society," said Edwin Keville, who won five medals at World Outgames.

In Ireland, homosexuality has traditionally been condemned as a sin by the Catholic Church. But the Church lost much of its credibility with the Irish population after paedophile scandals, and today many Irish people have a more positive view of homosexuals.

A similar development has also been seen in Irish sports.

"Some homosexuals have come out to their sports teams in the lo-

wer sports leagues, and this is very positive," said Frank Kelly, manager of Ireland's gay and lesbian sports network. He is happy about the positive attention the Irish team received back home in Ireland, where Irish World Outgames participants have been interviewed in national Irish newspapers.

Tourism Ireland's new publicity campaign in Scandinavia also demonstrates positive changes in the general public's attitudes towards homosexuals in Ireland: making a pun upon the traditional Irish language, Gaelic, Tourism Ireland launched the slogan 'Learn a little gaylic – and get to know the locals.'

Swimmer takes home eight medals

HIV Positive fashion designer and reality TV star Jack Mackenroth cleaned up at the World Outgames with an astounding eight medals.



Jack Mackenroth.

By Stephen J. Lucin

After finishing up a very successful swim meet at the World Outgames,

Jack Mackenroth took home two gold, four silver, and two bronze medals.

"I was really not expecting to win medals in all eight of my events," said Jack Mackenroth. "Needless to say, I'm ecstatic! However, it's not just about winning medals; one of the most fun events was the *Random Rainbow Relay*, where the meet organizers randomly picked swimmers from all different teams and we swam in a friendly relay with colored rainbow swim caps. It was a great way to meet swimmers from different countries."

In the summer of 2006, Jack Mackenroth set a US national record for the breaststroke leg of the 4 x 50 meter relay. To this day, he competes at the most elite level in swimming, and is finally realizing his potential, with the recent eight medal wins at the World Outgames.

Throughout his life, and in addition to his accomplishments as a swimmer,

Jack Mackenroth has always been very open about his positive HIV status. Since his diagnosis in 1990, nearly 20 years ago, he has tried to combat the stigma associated with HIV.

"I believe that public visibility educates and eventually saves lives," he says.

He has worked for many years with HIV/AIDS charities, and each year, his swim team has also organized a benefit that raises more than \$25,000 for local AIDS charities. He recently designed an HIV awareness T-shirt for *Clothing of the American Mind*, from which the proceeds of shirt sales will benefit HIV/AIDS organizations.

Most recently, Jack Mackenroth launched an HIV/AIDS education campaign called *Living Positive by Design*, and he is currently working on a reality TV series of his own with *Project Runway - Season 4* co-star Kevin Christiana.