

JR. SWIMMER-SWIMMING WORLD
COACH OF THE MONTH

TIGER OF THE SOUTH

BUDDY BAARCKE, JR.

By Bob Balfe

The sound of water being splashed by swimmers is the sweetest melody ever heard by L. A. "Buddy" Baarcke, Jr., who really should insist on a background theme of "Dixie" for his perfect aria.

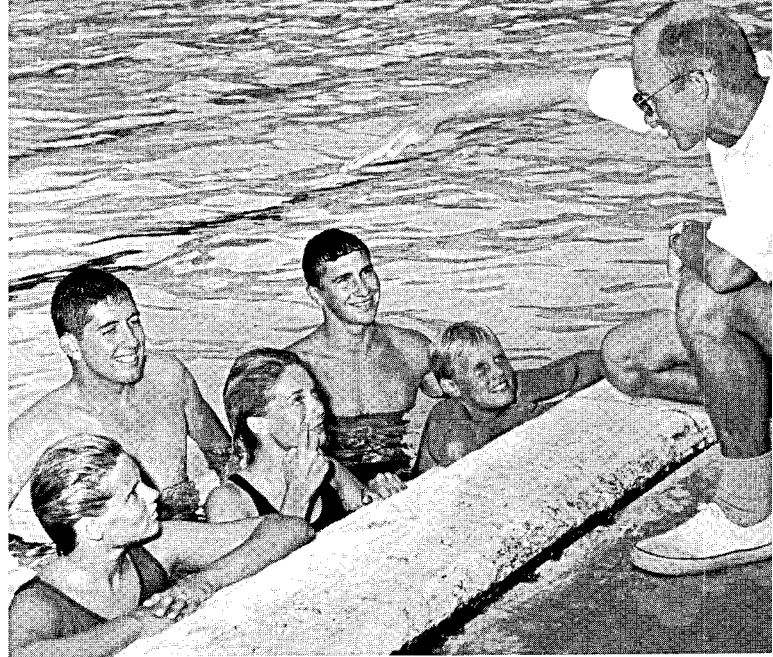
The Deep South has to be part of a fellow who learned to swim in Alabama, had his first competition in Tennessee, became a collegiate All-America while in North Carolina, and had a meteoric rise as a coach in South Florida.

But there is nothing sectional in the Baarcke coaching book. He is shooting for national and international fame for his young pupils, and some of them are well on the way to these goals.

The Gold Coast AAU is a comparatively modern offshoot of the Florida branch, but everyone in swimming knows what has already been accomplished in this mushrooming sector, and Coach Buddy Baarcke is one of the reasons.

There isn't a more dedicated teacher in swimming, whose continuing enthusiasm reflects the training he had under coaches like Lewis Hill at Sewanee Military Academy in Tennessee, and Ralph Casey, now of Southern Illinois University, when Casey was at the Univ. of North Carolina.

Originally from Birmingham, Ala., Baarcke won numerous honors as a Tar Heel, taking the Southern Conference 100 and 200 backstroke titles and gaining All-America recognition. Later, on the Chapel Hill Swim Club team he broke the world record in the 100-yard butterfly and the American record in the 100-meter butterfly.



POOLSIDE INSTRUCTION by Coach Baarcke to five of his swimmers, Susan Myers, Diane Morris, Debbie Graves, and in back, Ed Danehy and Doug Long.

During subsequent military duty, after training as a tank radio technician, Baarcke returned to the kind of tank he likes best, one filled with water. He had time to train for the 1955 Pan-American Games, qualifying first in the backstroke, taking a first and third in the Mexico City games. After a State Department good will swim tour of Asia, during which he swam in the Ganges River, Baarcke was in training for the 1956 Olympics when he developed infectious hepatitis and was in bed instead of at the Olympics.

Out of the service, he spent two years as an assistant coach under Ralph Casey at Chapel Hill, and in June, 1958, moved to Florida as assistant coach to E. R. "Buddy" Goodell with the Swimming Association of the Palm Beaches.

THE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION OF PALM BEACH (Coach Baarcke at right)



After that first summer, according to pre-arranged plan, one "Buddy" succeeded the other—Baarcke for Goodell—and now Baarcke is embarked on his fifth season with the SAPB, getting closer and closer to the goal of national achievement.

"Last summer we had the finest all-around program in Florida," he says, "and we have grown in stature, with intensified training and a year-round program that has helped the Gold Coast share with California the national spotlight."

Baarcke's group includes about 80 swimmers, but nearly half of the number is in the midget group, others in the 8 to 20 age brackets, and they won 29 first places in 1961 in national age-group and Junior Olympic competition.

"Naturally I like to see novices get the thrill of winning in competition," says Coach Baarcke, "but I like to think big. I've been in big-time swimming myself and so I like to think that way. I tell our swimmers they have hard work ahead, but the results will be worth it, and I speak from experience."

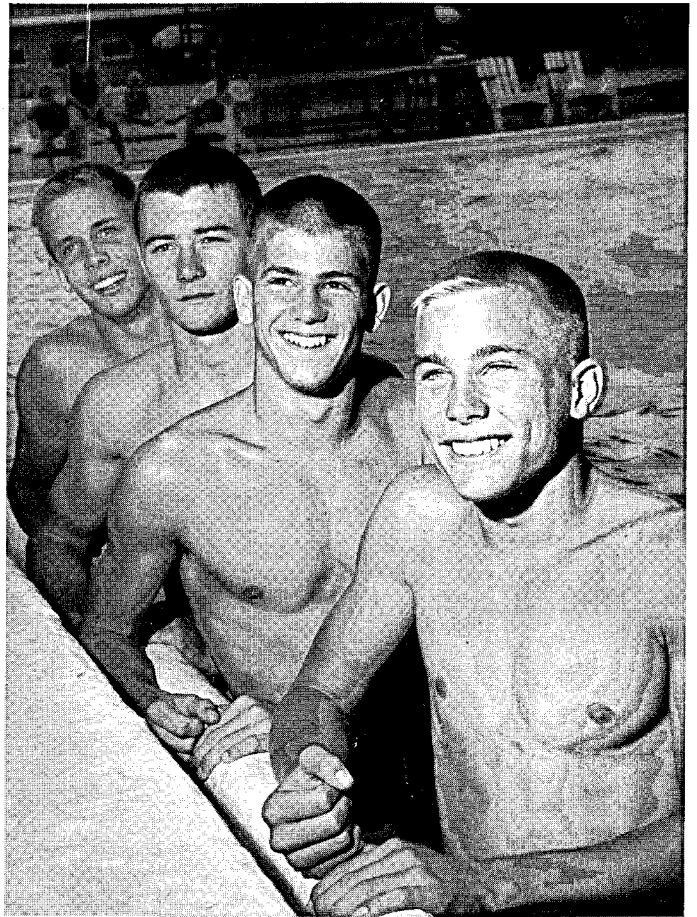
"Our slogan is 'Be a tiger,' and I publish a newsletter called the 'Tiger Rag' which I find is a good way to reach the swimmers and their parents to accent our discipline and to motivate toward our goal."

Baarcke thinks that the year-round advantages of South Florida climate may be over-emphasized by some coaches in other sections of the country.

"Actually, we have no heated pools available to our group," he explains, "and this is a slight disadvantage compared to Northern swim clubs with indoor pools. We have no pool of our own, but thanks to the wonderful cooperation of the management of Lido Pools, we have year-round use of pools there, even though it is occasionally too cold in winter for the best results."

"We try to work three days a week in the fall and in the winter we now have a development program, followed by a daily step-up in spring pace and the summer competition schedule."

Opening 1962 competition on a winning note, the SAPB swimmers smashed seven records in the Lake Worth Relays in June. Some of these were by the crack quartet of Don Beutenmueller, Richard Ahrens, Bobby Bridges and John Causey, who the year before won seven firsts in



RECORD SETTING RELAY TEAM of (L to R) Don Beutenmueller, John Causey, Bobby Bridges and Richard Ahrens.

George Gullien, assistant

All photos by Palm Beach Post-Times



age-group and Jr. Olympic action, in the 13-14 bracket.

In general, the SAPB boys have not matched the girls in national calibre. Susan Myers took third in the 1500 meters freestyle and seventh in the 400-freestyle a year ago, but has been ill this year. Diane Morris was unplaced in the nationals but is improving and Debbie Graves, Doug Long and Ed Danehy are others with national possibilities this year and next.

Baarcke's theory is that a good coach must be able to recognize talent as well as to know how to develop it. His actual timetable of training is adjustable to conditions, but is based on the idea that conditioning is hard work for which there is no substitute.

"Swimming," says Coach Baarcke, "is my life. I love it, and I want my youngsters to love it, and I want them to understand that when we say 'Be a tiger' we really mean it."

OUTSTANDING TRIO from his girl's team. L to R—Debbie Graves, Susan Myers and Norma Oliphant.

