

The funny side of Swimming



It is not necessary to be an all-round expert before you can do swimming tricks

THIS is an aspect of swimming which can confidently be recommended to all. It is linked with Ornamental and Trick swimming and is really an immense aid to general efficiency—apart from the fun and amusement to be got from it.

In itself, the learning of swimming tricks is good, because it greatly increases self-confidence. It is by no means necessary that you should become an all-round expert swimmer before trying to teach yourself some of the fancy tricks in the water. If you know how to float, you can learn one simple trick in a very short time. It is called:

THE ROLLING LOG

To those who can't swim at all, this trick is something of a mystery, so little is the exertion needed by the performer to roll himself over and over while in the water.

First of all get into the correct floating position, head well back, arms fully extended beyond the head. And here let me say a word about breathing while floating. *Don't* breathe deeply, and take a long time over breathing out. The

lungs should have some air in them all the time. It makes floating easier. Take in the air by short breaths, and exhale similarly. Don't try to breathe in until you have settled into a comfortable position, as the face usually sinks a little at first.

Having got into position, lock the thumbs together. Keeping the arms and legs quite still, but exerting the muscles of the side, bear down on, say, the right while lifting the left. You'll turn over all right; then, before sinking much, reverse your exertion, bearing down on the left side and trying to raise the right; you will then complete a circle in the water, coming face upwards again.

Of course, you are not going to do this perfectly the first time you try. It is best at the commencement to make your trial in fairly shallow water—where you can find a footing if required. Do the turning slowly—

as slowly as you can. Don't get flurried. Don't unloose your hands or bend your legs, or double up your body. The turn is much more easily made than you'd suppose, and it won't take many trials before you get the hang of it and discover



You may not pull a trick off perfectly first time—but keep on trying.

that it is quite possible to continue turning, at quite a fast rate, just like a log being rolled over and over.

"DOG" PADDLING

HAVE you ever noticed how a dog swims? He doesn't require any teaching, either. You can learn to swim in the same fashion, though it may take you a while to learn the knack of it.

Start by getting into position for the breast stroke. Here the arms don't work in unison with the legs but separately and alternately. Left arm and right leg work together right arm with left leg. Keeping the palm down, the arm goes forward to three-quarter reach, but instead of being taken out to the side as in the breast stroke, it comes down through the water and in to the body describing a circle. As it completes its stroke, the other arm starts. The movement of the legs is almost identical with that of bicycling—and the splashing is great!

SOMERSAULTING

LIKE many another trick, there's nothing particularly difficult, even clever, about this; what you need chiefly is confidence. First of all, though, you do need to know how to tread water—a most useful accomplishment. It is a matter of balance and confidence, and the arms need not be used at all. The head must be kept well back, as that prevents the lips sinking below the surface. The action of the legs is very similar to that of "marking time" somewhat quickly. If you like, keep the arms fully extended sideways and horizontal, palms down; this is actually the position of the arms when about to try the forward somersault. Come into the upright position, bend the head sharply forward and, as the arms make a forcible downward stroke, forcing the body to go forward, curve the back, keeping it curved until, perhaps to your surprise, you find yourself rising and coming into the original starting position.

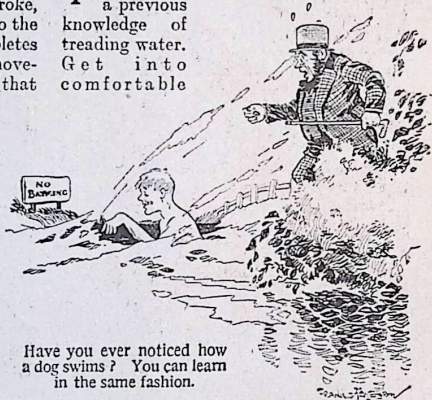
You may try this a dozen times and without success; then, quite suddenly and, apparently, without your doing anything at all

different, you discover that you have succeeded perfectly. Thereafter, it is all plain sailing. Once having the knack, you will never lose it. And you will find yourself able to turn several somersaults in quick succession.

Turning backwards heels over head is not more difficult. You just reverse the process. Starting from same position as above, throw back the head—don't open your mouth—curve the back, and bend your knees well under you. Put a spring into the movement, and, your hands making a quick strong stroke at the same time, you'll find yourself spinning over without any trouble.

SPINNING THE TOP

THIS is another funny trick which requires a previous knowledge of treading water. Get into comfortable



Have you ever noticed how a dog swims? You can learn in the same fashion.

position as described, then bend knees and bring them up close to your chest. Without hesitation, start the arms working, alternately. Put plenty of force into the strokes, which are made, of course, parallel with surface of water, the hands being turned so as to get the maximum of resistance against the water. The movement of arm is backward, the following stroke being forward, and so alternately. The arms never leave the water, but are brought back after each stroke, hand turned so that palm lies downward, and so offering no resistance against the water.