

Bill, girlfriend get along just swimmingly

My girlfriend likes to swim. She used to be an AAU swimmer. The AAU stands for something, I don't know what. You know, like NFL and NCAA. It's not "Aau." That's what you say if you bump your head on something.

When I was 10, I got a Boy Scout merit badge for



Bill Allen

swimming a mile nonstop. I've always been very proud of that. I told my girlfriend about it once.

She said, "A mile? So what, I used to swim that far in warm ups."

I was hurt, but didn't let her know it. I handled the whole thing maturely.

I got another girlfriend.

I'm just kidding.

Before I go on with this column I might as well warn you that you're not going to learn anything from it. A columnist isn't normally supposed to relate personal experiences, but there's never been anything normal about this column.

So, I'm going to relate a humorous personal experience to you that may or may not be true.

Anyway, she's going to swim in an intramural meet. I went with her to one of her few workouts.

We walked into Mabel Lee and all eyes turned . . . the other way.

"What's the matter with them?" I asked, referring to a group of people at poolside who were staring at us.

"I don't know," she said, "Perhaps they've never seen a man walk into an indoor pool wearing a Hawaiian shirt, sunglasses, and carrying a beach umbrella."

I have to admit that I tend to overdress.

"Don't make fun of me," I said, "Look at yourself. I'm going to call your swimsuit 'Punctuation.'"

"Why's that?"

"Because all it consists of is two dots and a dash."

I laughed.

"In that case," she said, "I'll have to call your sense of humor 'Flattery.'"

"Why's that?"

"Because it gets you nowhere."

She's quick.

She dove in and started swimming to the other side of the pool. Once there she turned and made her way steadily back.

I watched the smooth, even strokes. Swimming is supposed to be one of the best forms of exercise because it forces you to use so many muscles. I dove in.

After our swim, my girlfriend gave me some advice on how to enjoy swimming more. Many of you probably don't swim often and know about as much about the subject as I do, so I'll share some of her advice with you. These are just helpful hints she gave me after I'd spent an hour in the pool.

- When your nose hits the bottom of the pool after a dive you know it's time to surface.

- Don't try to stay under water until you get your swim trunks back on after they come off when you dive. Come up for air, then go back down after them. And ignore the applause.

- Always breathe in when your face is above water and breathe out when your face is under water. I got confused. Luckily, she's a trained lifeguard, too.

- Keep moving. I was resting and someone thought I'd drowned.

- Never expect the side of the pool to slow down and stop for you. You have to do that yourself. Luckily, she's a trained lifeguard, too.

- Finally, if you go swimming with your girlfriend (or boyfriend), pretend like you don't even notice there are other girls (or boys) in the pool. And if you do notice, and she notices you noticed, remember to hide your beach umbrella from her. Luckily, there were other trained lifeguards around.

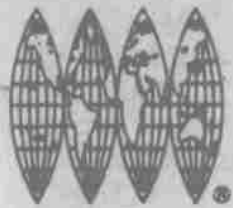
I'll be glad when it's warm enough to swim outside, won't you? Bye bye.

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