

# PERFECT WOMAN OF TODAY IS VENUS OF BEACHES, SAYS SYBIL BAUER, CHAMPION GIRL SWIMMER

**"We Can't All Be Beautiful But We Can Suggest Beauty by Possessing Health and Charm," Observes Mermaid, Holder of Three Records**

**TELLS TRAINING METHODS AND SWIMMING SECRETS FOR BENEFIT OF OTHERS**

**Goes Through Setting-Up Exercises Every Morning Before Breakfast to Develop All Muscles; Offers Magic Tonic for Scrawny Necks and Arms**

*Dawn is dim on the dark soft water,  
Soft and passionate, dark and sweet.  
Love's own self was the deep sea's daughter,  
Fair and flawless from face to feet,  
Hailed of all when the world was golden,  
Loved of lovers whose names beholden  
Thrill men's eyes as with light of olden  
Days more glad than their flight was fleet.*  
—Swainburne's *Summer's Dream*.

**THE FLAWLESS** and perfect Aphrodite arose from the waves. The perfect woman of today, in an allegorical sense, comes from the water. She is the swimmer, the Venus of the beaches.

"We can't all be beautiful," says Sybil Bauer, of Chicago, eighteen-year-old world champion backstroke. "But we can suggest beauty by possessing health and charm. A wise man once said that one had to be born with charm—it could never be acquired. Perhaps he is right.

"But health we can all have it, if we will work for it.

"One of the greatest girl swimmers of the world was a delicate, underdeveloped child. A physician told her to take up swimming, and today she is a perfect physical specimen.

"Swimming is a splendid, all-around exercise and makes for perfection in figure. Other sports, of course, are also good."

Miss Bauer will be remembered in the East by her sensational swimming during the first of this month. July 1 the youthful Illinois Athletic Club champion, regarded as the leading woman backstroke swimmer in the country, started her Eastern assault by slashing three world's records. Miss Bauer competed in New York in a 100-meter race and a fifty-yard race, winning both in hollow fashion and in record time.

In the longer backstroke race Miss Bauer's only rival was Miss Dorothy Donahue, of the New York Women's Swimming Association. Miss Bauer won in 1:24.1-5, displacing Ethelda Bleibtrey's mark, set last year at 1:33.2-5. As she swam past the 100-yard mark. Miss Bauer was timed in the record time of 1:15.2-5, three-fifths of a second faster than her own mark last August in Chicago.

Both races were contested over a straightaway course of 100 meters and it was Miss Bauer's first competition in salt water. July 6 she again defeated Miss Donahue in a 400-yard swim at the Manhattan Beach lagoon. The time was 6 minutes and 38.3-5 seconds, 11.2-5 seconds lower than the previous world's record established in the Illinois Athletic Club.

### Tells Training Methods and Swimming Secrets

When asked about her phenomenal rise to swimming fame—something accomplished in about three years—Miss Bauer will detail to you her methods of training and her secrets, which, if they do not lead to fame, will at least help other women to enjoy good health and perfection of figure.

"Correct posture and physical fitness go hand in hand," says Miss Bauer. "Swimming is the greatest exercise for both of these, of course, but there are exercises that every one can take to strengthen the swimming muscles. A person not used to the water swims a short distance and comes out very stiff. If exercises are taken daily, for five or ten minutes, with the mind centered on the exercises and nothing else, great benefits can be derived. Then when one goes in the tank or into the water outdoors one can swim without fear of cramps or that tired feeling.

"The first thing to learn is to stand correctly. Don't slouch. When you are waiting for the street car, standing before the baggage counter or at your boss' desk, remember, don't slouch; stand correctly.

### Could Do Nothing But "Paddle Dog Fashion"

It was at this school that Miss Bauer obtained her first desire to swim. As she expressed it, she could do nothing but "paddle dog fashion." She knew nothing of the finer arts of swimming, the manner of breathing through the mouth and out the nose—the opposite as when on land—and that keeping the head under water makes the body more buoyant, because the head is the heaviest part of the body in proportion, and displacement in water lightens the load.

Miss Bauer showed promise and learned quickly and one of the instructors taught her the crawl. She made fair progress and became greatly interested in swimming, especially when she noticed that it improved her figure and aided her general health.

### Girls, Can You Swim?

*If you cannot, is it because you are afraid of the water or that you are not strong enough physically?*

*If either is the case, here are a few pointers given by Miss Sybil Bauer, champion woman backstroke swimmer:*

- Your diet should be wholesome.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Raise the arms above the head and then bend from the waist, touching the floor with the hands.
- Don't cheat; flex the leg muscles and describe a semi-circle with the arms in touching the floor.
- Do a lot of walking.

### Beat Ethelda Bleibtrey, Was Her One Ambition

Her greatest ambition was to beat Ethelda Bleibtrey's record at Honolulu of 3:36 for fifty yards. And last year she did this at a meet in the Great Lakes Naval Training Station pool, when she established a national record of 3:35.3-5. She now holds the world's championship in the 100 back stroke. She has distinguished herself in the Eastern cities and is the first woman champion to bring such honors to Chicago.

Swimming has done much to Miss Bauer. She declares that she has not "sick a day in her life." She is graceful in her walk, her actions.

"Any woman can do it," she likes to repeat. "There are startling cases where girls whose figures were even deformed who have attained perfection through swimming. There is nothing like it. Look at Annette Kellermann. At nine they say her body was terribly twisted. And to think that she could become such a perfect woman.

"As I say, swimming is the real exercise. But one should not neglect walking, one of the most beautiful exercises. The average person thinks that in walking only the leg muscles are developed. But this is not true. You swing your arms, you breathe deep, your back muscles are in constant action, and your abdominal muscles are in play. All the muscles are benefited. Walk briskly, the head up, eyes gazing at some object about forty yards ahead. This will fit you for swimming.

### Tells of Method to Develop Your Muscles

"Lie flat on the floor or bed and raise your leg five times, alternate with the right and then with both. You are looking at the ceiling. Nothing is better than this exercise for reducing the hips and abdomen. And it prepares your muscles for swimming. The most powerful muscles of the leg which are used for swimming are thus developed. This exercise is especially beneficial for people who lead sedentary lives. It

limbers up the muscles which are not usually brought into play."

The exercises which Miss Bauer advocates for those who wish to first strengthen the swimming muscles are very simple—exercises, which will not cause too great a strain in the beginning. They may be performed by persons who have never been in a swimming pool or a gymnasium. As one becomes supple they are increased gradually. The leg exercises given above should be done about eight times with each leg and eight times with both.

Along with the exercises she stresses the importance of plain, wholesome diet. Highly seasoned food is bad for the digestive organs, as are also too hot or too cold solids.

"Drink plenty of water," Miss Bauer advises. "Water should be sipped at the meals. It stimulates the stomach. It assists in the digestion of starches.

"Another good exercise is to raise the arms above the head, and then bend from the waist, touching the floor with the hands. This is an exercise that increases the abdominal muscles, muscles which play a great part in swimming."

Miss Bauer bent over, knees straight, and touched the floor with the tips of her fingers.

"Don't cheat," she admonished. "Like this,"—then bending her knees.

"Flex the leg muscles and describe a semi-circle with the arms in touching the floor. It is difficult at first, but, as the muscles become limbered up, it may be performed without effort.

### Take Exercise Gradually, Is Miss Bauer's Advice

"Don't try to do too much in the beginning. Take the exercises gradually, increasing as the muscles become more flexible."

Miss Bauer lists walking as a good all-around exercise, open to anybody.

"Walk to and from work or hike out in the country Sunday," she ad-

vises. "During the war our soldiers were taught not to let the legs do all the work. Take the body settle down. Keep the chest high and leading, chin in—not up—and abdomen back."

"Never hit the heel or the ball of the foot hard on the ground. Try to make them both touch the ground at the same time."

"Let the legs swing easily and nat-

urally from the hips, with very little hands come around to the chest with a graceful, scooping movement, which is necessary to hurl the body through the water. The hands then meet again in front of the chest and shoot upward to the first position.

"Next practice the leg movements, the body on a footstool with the legs extending horizontally, the feet together, the back rigid.

"The feet are now thrust back and out at the same time.

**Draw Toes Up to Offer Resistance to the Water**

"From this position the knees are swept forward and apart, the feet still together, in the squatting position. Then thrust the legs back and out, in the horizontal position again. Before taking the last movement, draw the toes

up as to offer as much resistance to the water as possible.

"In the final movements the arms and legs are thrust forth, the hands going back to the first position, and the legs shooting out at an angle, with the toes turned to offer resistance to the water. The feet are brought forward as in the first position.

"Practice the first position until you feel you have mastered it. Then take

the second and practice it faithfully. When you are confident you know them, combine the two positions and practice on the footstool.

"I like swimming best of all. But of course other women may like other sports. So I say practice the sport you like best. Some women have taken up bowling. It is a bit strenuous for the woman who has allowed herself to become sluggish and inactive, but it is excellent for one in good physical condition.

"But don't let your previous inactivity deter you. Get into form now. For swimmers I want to speak of one essential thing. That is breathing. No person can be a good swimmer without first learning how to breathe. To breathe properly in the water is not the same as breathing properly on land. In the latter case one should always breathe through the nose.

breathes out, do half of your breathing as it were, and when you come up you are ready for another breath.

"Do this in shallow water, sinking down and standing up. Learn to breathe first.

"Then learn to swim with your head under water. The head in proportion to the heaviest part of the body. Every one knows that a rock feels lighter in the water than it does out. No factitiousness meant here, but the head is the same. The head submerged is comparatively light.

"Now as to the position of the body in the water. If you swim, get into deep water and let yourself float. You will find that the body, unless some effort is made, naturally turns face downward, the arms and legs hanging down. About all that can be seen is the back of the head and the shoulders.

"That's the way a drowned man looks in the water. Face downward, feet and arms hanging down. You can float forever that way. Some people with small bones can float on their backs—fat men float with ease on their backs. They have a lot of buoyancy. But the average person floats face downward.

"Thus you should swim. Don't move the arms. Now churn the legs. Don't bend the knees. Kick from the hips. It is known as the 'straight-legged kick' and is a short, alternate kick.

### Must Learn to Work Your Arms Properly

"With the legs alone one can speed through the water.

"Next learn to work the arms properly.

"In the crawl the arms are brought forward out of the water. They should work just like the oars of a boat. In rowing you don't want to dig too deep with the oars. It tires you out and you have more water than you can pull.

"It's the same way in using the arms in the crawl. Don't dig them too deep into the water. When you bring the arms forward after a stroke, an alternate stroke, of course, keep the backs of the hands to the water. In fact, some swimmers skim the water with the backs of the hands.

"Another thing about keeping the backs of the hands to the water or the palms up, the smallest surface of the hand is against the wind. The back of the hand against the wind would offer some resistance; although slight, it means a lot in a race.

"The arm requires a great deal of practice. The arms are brought forward with the shoulders. Just stand before a mirror and work the shoulders in an alternate forward rotary movement. With a movement of the shoulder then throw the arm forward. At the time you are bending forward, it is nearly the position as when swimming.

"If you have ever noticed a graceful swimmer in the water, one who swims with apparently no effort, you will know that that swimmer has learned to relax every muscle in his body on the return stroke. When the arm is brought forward it is perfectly limp and all the muscles are relaxed. Only the large muscle of the back is used to throw the arm forward. But when the hand grasps the water all the muscles are tightened for one supreme pull."

Miss Bauer advises all persons to go into the water at every opportunity. In the big cities, she says, there are many opportunities in the winter for swimming.

"Unless you know how to swim and have laid out on the water, held up at every point in this soft and wondrous cushion, you have not experienced one of the greatest joys of life. You are in arms as soft as the air which holds the bird.

"You glide along through the water with hardly any effort and with a poetry of motion.

Then she quotes Swainburne, her favorite poet:

"A purer passion, a lordlier leisure,  
A peace more happy than lives on land,  
Fulfills with pulse of divine pleasure  
The dreaming head and the steering hand.  
I lean my cheek to the cold, gray pillow,  
The deep, soft swell of the full broad billow,  
And close mine eyes for delight past measure,  
And wish the wheel of the world would stand."



Champion mermaid in characteristic out-of-water pose

Sybil is shown here giving correct position to stand



breathes out, do half of your breathing as it were, and when you come up you are ready for another breath.

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Sybil Bauer, world's premier backstroke swimmer

Sybil often amuses herself by sitting on the beach and watching others splash water

strangle by water taken through the nose. Water passing into the mouth is only swallowed at most, and one does not swallow unless one wants to.

### Try Sniffing a Little Water Into Your Nose

"Try sniffing a little water into your nose. You cough, strangle and choke. That's the way in the water.

"Now to learn to breathe properly in the water for the more advanced strokes take a deep breath, hold it, and sink down until your head is under water. Then bubble the water out through your nose. Thus you lose no time. When your head is under water you

These are little hairs in the nose which catch the dust.

"But in the water there is no dust. One breathes through the mouth and out the nose. Whenever you get into a bathtub, under a shower bath, remember that. Open your mouth and breathe and exhale through your nostrils.

"Some people will say, 'My goodness, I'll strangle.' No, you don't strangle by water taken into the mouth. You