

AYA swimmers hopeful after SHAPE meet

by JIM DONAHUE

The AYA Swim Team, called the Berlin American Aquatic Club (BAAC), recently returned from a trip to SHAPE Belgium, where they competed against the locals in a 54-event swimming meet. This meet was the second time that the Berlin team has been out of Berlin and the first that they have traveled into another country.

The SHAPE Team, comprised of swimmers from most of the 15 NATO countries, was by far the best that we have been up against this year. The girls are the Belgium champions and the boys were the runners-up in the same area.

At the beginning of the meet, the Berlin team jumped out to a quick seven-point lead with the swimming of Bucky Lahue, Charles McLaughlin, John Baker and Richard Weinzetl in the 200-meter medley relay. However, from that point on it was an uphill battle for the BAAC as the host started to roll up the points. The final score was SHAPE 341, BAAC 134.

The score, however, is not indicative of the quality of swimming that the BAAC is capable of. Long hours of traveling and swimming in a strange pool drastically affect the chance of success, especially in such a physically exhausting sport as swimming.

Overall the trip was very successful in light of the excellent performances turned in by a few of the swimmers. The relay team of Michelle and Sheree Shachnow, Karen Totman and Tori and Sue Lewane won both relays that they entered.

Michelle Shachnow, who was entered in seven events, came in first in six of them to dominate her category. This is an accomplishment unparalleled in BAAC swimming.

Bucky Lahue in the 10 and under age group won four of the five events that he was entered in and clearly dominated the backstroke and free style events.

Derrick Fulton in the 15 and over age group had three firsts, one second and a third place finish in the five events that he entered. In the 100-meter freestyle, Derrick set a BAAC record of sorts by being the first AYA swimmer ever to break the 1:10 barrier when he won with the time of 1:09.9.

BAAC swimmers in double figures in points scored were (boys) Bucky Lahue (25), John Baker (23), Derrick Fulton (19), Richard Weinzetl (15) and Charles McLaughlin (14); (girls) Michelle Shachnow (35), Sheree Shachnow (20), Karen Totman (15), Sue Lewane (13) and Donna Holsapple (11).