



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

National Sports Vol. VII No. 7

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A School On The Water

At first glance, this building in one of Moscow's finest districts, the Leningradskoye Highway, might be taken for an ordinary school. The impression is created by the sight of a crowd of children with bags (above).

As you enter it, however, you see immediately that it is an unusual kind of school. Look at the teacher explaining the lesson (top right photo on facing page). Is it not a bit too crowded here, and don't both the teacher and pupils wear a rather strange apparel?

The kids in trunks are pupils of nearby schools who come here in their free time, while the teacher is Master of Sport Alexander Liferenko, a swimming instructor.

"This is how the start should be taken," Liferenko says, pointing to one of his charges (bottom left photo on facing page).

Nearby a group of crawl-strokers is training. They learn the style (below) with the help of swimming boards. A few more lessons, and the boards will no longer be needed.

There are children on the diving tower, too. As you watch Lenya Gonitel perform his graceful and dynamic dives, you wonder at the nine-year-old boy's courage, for not every grown-up person would dare plunging down from the five-metre high tower (above).

"Your gliding is no good," the instructor said to Volodya Katerinchuk and Andre Alexeyev. You'll have to put on rubber swim fins. They will help you to float, to glide with the whole of the body, to coordinate the arm and leg movement correctly." Look how they are following their teacher's advice (right).

In the Soviet Union great attention is paid to swimming instruction from child-hood. "Schools on the Water" exist not only in Moscow. A new generation of champions is growing up in Lvov, Kiev, Tbilisi, Leningrad and other cities.



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