



Even jumping is done en masse in the Navy. This photograph shows abandon ship drill at an armed guard center.

SWIMMING IS A SPORT THAT MAY SAVE A MAN'S LIFE

"It is impossible to be too good a swimmer," hence in the Navy physical fitness program swimming is given paramount consideration. To be able to swim may be to be able to live, and the Navy is continually giving increased attention to this important phase of the bluejacket's training. Aside from being a possible means of saving one's life, swimming is an excellent body-building activity. It develops endurance and coordination, and at the same time gives relaxation and is recreational activity.

There are four general areas in swimming as related to use in the Navy. These are (a) fundamental swimming skills; (b) functional swimming drills; (c) abandoning ship drills; and (d) rescue drills. Form and speed swimming are not emphasized because of their relative unimportance and time limitations in training. In the Navy it is more important that a man have a feeling of being at home in the water, and be familiar with several means of keeping afloat, rather than that he be able to execute strokes in perfect form.

Navy Standard Swimming Tests have been developed in order to classify men as to their swimming abilities during

their training period. These tests also serve as a guide in formulating swimming programs at training stations and other naval activities. If a man is able to "enter the water, feet first, from a minimum height of five feet, and swim 50 yards," he is classified as a swimmer-third class. This is the basic Navy swimming test and the means used for determining whether a man is a swimmer or non-swimmer. Approximately 28 percent of the recruits at Naval Training Stations are unable to qualify as swimmers-third class when they begin their training. When they leave, this number is reduced to less than six percent. Those just barely able to pass this test are also indicated as "swimmers who need help." To be a swimmer-second class a man must be able to "take care of himself" in the water. The successful completion of this test necessitates his sustaining himself for a longer period in the water (10 minutes) and use of varied strokes. A swimmer-first class is one able "to help others." He must be an expert swimmer and to pass successfully this test must demonstrate his aquatic ability by rescue drills, underwater swimming, removal of clothing in the water, and limited distance swimming.