

LIKE DUTCH TO WATER

The people of the Netherlands spend all their lives on or near water - not surprising when you remember that much of their country is actually below sea-level; but what is surprising is that over two-thirds of them can't swim. This raises quite a few problems - particularly for mother of young children, who solve them in various ways of their own.

That's all right till he learns to undo knots - any day now. And the mother who owns this pram has twice the worry.

Of course, there is an answer - and the villagers of Hoorn decided to try it. If you can't keep the kids out of the water - teach them to swim in it, at the earliest possible moment. Swimming instructor Dick Schermer took on the job - incidentally he built the bath as well - and his pupils are from two to five years old.

Dick's theory - that the younger a child when you teach him not to be afraid of the water, the quicker and better he'll learn. And he certainly seems to be proving his point.

He doesn't only teach them to swim, he teaches them life-saving, too. With a bit of play acting thrown in; just watch this.

One way and another, Dick Schermere's pupils take to it like Dutch to water.