



asked him who'd taught him to swim and how he had become such an expert human "fish".

"I guess I've never really thought about it," came his reply, "you see, I've never known a time when I haven't felt at home in the water."

It seems that David could swim almost from the time he could walk and he's always gone in for water sports in a big way. One of his big thrills when he and his mother first moved out West was the discovery that in California you could swim every single day of the year if you wanted! And David didn't come far short of that!

Surfing

"It didn't take long after our move to the West coast," he continued, "for surfing to get its hold on me. We'd spend whole long days down on the beach - Sam and me with a crowd of pals.

"Man, surfing sure is a fantastic sport! If I had my way, every kid in the whole world would get a chance to give it a go."

"You don't surf that much now, though, do you, David?" I asked, wondering what could have made him give up something that had evidently meant so much to him.

"Oh, I still do from time to time. . . . I usually have a board with me if I go down to the beach, especially in Hawaii. But, you're right, Linda, it's not the big thing it used to be with me when I was at high school."

"Any special reason, or did you just grow out of it?"

"I guess it's more a case of growing *into* something else! I knew all the thrills and excitement on top of the waves. So I thought to myself it might be an idea to take a look and see how they were from down under!

And that was how the scuba-diving craze got a hold on me."

I have never done any diving myself, so I was fascinated to hear all that David had to say about his sensations underwater.

"Lots of folks like to wear wet-suits in deep water," he told me, "because it can get amazingly cold down there, even if the sun is blazing up at the surface!"

But David prefers just to wear trunks and the essential scuba equipment and to risk a bit of cold.

"I love the sensation of the water all round me and the extra sense of freedom that it gives me, he explained. "In fact, the sense of a newfound freedom in your own world down there is tremendous. . . . There is this wonderful liberation from the laws of gravity . . . for a start . . . you have to wear a special weight belt to enable you to stay down there, and, when you start to surface again - man, it's out of this world."

"I'll never forget my first deep-sea dive," he went on, "when I knew very little about the whole technique of scuba. I'd been under with a snorkel before that, of course; so I thought I knew what it would be like. But, man, I was in for a revelation! For a start, you

lose all sense of time and restriction - which you can obviously never do with a snorkel! You feel you've got all the time in the world to take in the miracles of nature all around you. You've got to promise me you'll try it yourself some time soon, Linda."

Scuba Diving

I gave David my promise that I would try scuba diving just as soon as I'd put in some practice with a snorkel first - because he stressed to me that this is vital, to get me used to the technique of breathing underwater. He gave me a long, technical account of the whole business which, I am afraid, went rather over my head. But it impressed me so much that I was stunned to hear David saying modestly after he'd finished: "But you need a teacher who really knows something about it all. I'm only a beginner myself, so you mustn't accept everything I tell you."

It was the same with his ski-ing when he came back from Europe earlier this year. He was full of how much he loved ski-ing, but kept on telling us all how hilariously bad he had been at it. He had us all weak with laughter when he gave us a practical demonstration of how his legs got tangled up with his skis! But I'll bet that, if we could have actually seen him on those slopes, we'd have gotten a very different picture!

Still, that's just how David is, and I guess none of us would want him any other way!