photos by Hugh C. McBride

Piranha C.J. Beatty competes in the 50-meter butterfly event Jan. 18 during the Stuttgart team's final home meet of the European Forces Swim League 2003-2004 season. In the weeks following this meet, the Piranhas traveled to Berlin for the Rhineland Divisional Championship. They head to Munich soon to cap the season.

Stuttgart swimmers end season with a splash

Piranhas place third in EFSL's Rhineland Division; 20 to compete in championship meet in Munich

By Melanie Casey

The Stuttgart Piranhas Swim Team is wrapping up another long and successful season.

The Piranhas, whose season began in September, traveled to Berlin Jan. 24 to compete in the Rhineland Divisional Championships against teams from Berlin, Geilenkirchen and Wiesbaden.

Although the Piranhas placed third, the swimmers had a chance to hone their skills in Berlin's 50-meter pool and prepare for competition at the European Forces Swim League championship meet set to take place in Munich.

In order to qualify for "Champs," swimmers must meet a pre-set qualifying time.

Hours in the pool (including 6 a.m. practices three times a week) along with instruction from Head Coach Kathleen Raymond and assistant coaches Jeanne Conner, Sarah Kerwin, Greg Soukup and Cory Doubek garnered 20 Piranhas the right to swim at this year's Champs event.

The following swimmers will be competing at Champs this year: Samantha Beatty, Meredith Beatty, C.J. Beatty, Theresa Frame, Alessandra Noelting, Christopher Noelting, Tabitha Silver, Ellie Cayford, Caitlyn Conner, Brian Conner, Zach Mehringer, Terrelle Thomas, Savion Porterfield, Silas Porterfield, John Kellner, Kyle Wolfe, Keenan Wolfe, Brad Lenkeit, Howard Barker and Nikolaus Smith.

The European Forces Swim League is made up of 18 teams.

It was established in 1976 as a way to provide an organized swimming program for the children of U.S. service members and civilians living in Europe.

Who's waiting 'til next year? Piranhas looking for new coaches now

- Though the 2003-2004 swim season is just ending, the Stuttgart Piranhas Swim Team is already looking for assistant coaches for next year's season (August 2004 through February 2005).
- Experience with swim instruction (including stroke development and refinement), working with children and personal competitive swimming experience is preferred. Pay is based on qualifications and experience.
- Applicants should be dependable, dedicated and ready to commit.

For details call Melanie at 0711-120-7638 or e-mail SweetJoeB@aol.com.

[Above] Piranhas Assistant Coach Sarah Kerwin imparts a few pearls of swimming wisdom to 10-year-old Ellie Cayford during the Jan. 18 home meet against teams from Hohenfels, Wiesbaden and Würzburg.

[Left] Widespread use of motivational artwork such as this gives a new meaning to the term "backtalk."

[Right] Stephanie Casey completes the breaststroke leg of a medley relay Jan. 18 in Vaihingen.