

It's Swimmer's Tooth

By Frank E. Walton

It's not enough that some swimmers are plagued by "Swimmer's Ear." Now, according to an article in the December 1983 issue of The Harvard Medical School Health Letter, which quotes an upbeat magazine called *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports*, it appears that swimmers have to keep their mouths shut while they're swimming. Beware of "Swimmer's Tooth."

At least, while they're swimming in chlorinated pools.

A study made by the cheerful *Morbidity, etc.* magazine reports that 39% of competitive swimmers, 15% of frequent swimmers and 3% of occasional swimmers suffered from tooth problems. These included grittiness, transparency, yellowing or chalky white discoloration and pain on chewing. The cause of the tooth "enamel epidemic" turned out to be acid erosion. And the cause of acid erosion was the excess

acid in the water resulting from faulty chlorination practice.

It seems that chlorine gas generates hydrochloric acid as a by-product of its reaction with water. To prevent this, strict monitoring techniques must be employed and soda ash added to the water to prevent it from getting too acidic.

Of course, you don't have to worry about keeping your mouth closed while swimming in our beautiful ocean.

Just don't let a fish mistake your tongue for bait.

Attention Golfers!

The first tournament of 1984 will be held at Hickam on Friday, March 30. Details will be given in next month's *Outrigger*.