

UM Math Whiz Has Formula

Three and a half years ago, a shy German girl who spoke very little English entered the University of Miami as a freshman.

Monday Mrs. Dagmar Kirchner Henney will receive a master's degree in mathematics during UM commencement exercises—half a year earlier than most of her 1952 freshman classmates will receive bachelor's degrees.

How did she do it? Results from her freshman placement tests, which nearly shattered the delicate machinery of IBM tabulating machines, forecast a quick trip through university studies.

Her "beginning" courses, largely on the graduate level, included advanced calculus and nuclear physics. She was allowed 63 credits on German "high school" subjects and two years later received a bachelor's degree with a major in physics and a minor in mathematics and chemistry.

But Dagmar had other interests besides formulae and equations. One of them was a young physics student named Alan Henney whom she met during her first year of college. A year later they were married.

"Alan said I was the smartest girl in the class," Dagmar said with a smile. "Of course I was the only girl, but it was nice of him to say so anyway."

The young couple has a home at 9780 SW 49th St. but have been separated since last year when Alan went to study for a master's degree at the University of Maryland and to work in a Naval ordnance laboratory there.

They will be together from now on, though. Alan came home to see his wife graduate and plans to take her back to Maryland where she will work for a Ph. D. in math at Johns Hopkins University.

Both still have a lot of schooling ahead of them. As soon as Alan tucks away his master's

degree next February, he too will aim for a Ph. D. at Johns Hopkins. They hope eventually to come back to Miami to live.

Dagmar's ambition is to be a university mathematics professor.

Dagmar's scientific aptitude probably is inherited from her late father, a nuclear physicist in Germany during the Nazi regime. He taught her at home when Hitler's "super race" doctrines forbade Jewish girls to go to school.

She prefers to forget her life in Berlin during the war years when her home was destroyed and she and her father were under the vigilant eyes of German police.

Dagmar speaks fluent English and French in addition to her native tongue. She perfected her English while working as a theater cashier and "seeing all the movies three or four times."



—Herald Staff Photo by Dous Kennedy

STUDYING STILL AHEAD FOR THESE TWO
... Mr. and Mrs. Alan Henney, UM graduates