

The Muddy Puddle

March 2006

Welcome!

Well, here we are in 2006 – Happy New Year! We have a shedload of diving to look forward to over the next few months. The divesheet came out at the start of the year and is available on the website (hard copies available from the Expeditions Officer). There's more info from Rick on page 8.

2005 was a successful year for the club both in terms of diving and recruiting new members. This trend looks likely to continue as we welcome three more divers to the fold, welcome to Darren Townsend, Tony Dillon and Sandra Dillon. Darren is a PADI Divemaster and has done most of his diving in the US, whilst Tony and Sandra are BSAC Sports Divers and are regular UK divers. Please say hi to them and introduce yourself at the pool/pub.

In terms of diving, there hasn't been an awful lot happening. A few hardy souls have managed to get out over winter, but the vis has not been that good. Let hope that changes for our traditional season opener, the **Great Big Easter Beano to Plymouth**. If you are coming on the Easter trip you should soon receive the usual information from me, in fact if I've pulled my finger out you may already have it. If you have any questions please feel free to give me a call, especially if this is your first trip away with us.

A new event on the divers calendar is the **DiverSE** conference in Guildford on the 12th March. This day of lectures is being organized by the BSAC South East region, see page 19 for a flyer.

Also of note is that the **London International Dive Show** is on soon, over the weekend of the 1st and 2nd April, you can find more info on page 12, but how would you like to go for **FREE**???? Yep – I know, you don't hear the word free banded about in diving much, but I am pleased to say that we have a pair of tickets for the show to give away. Just complete the form on page 12 and send/give to me on a Wednesday night (or forward me your answer by email). The winners will be drawn from correct entries at the club on **Wednesday 22nd March**.

GOOD LUCK!!

So there is plenty to look forward to over the coming months, most of all getting wet!!

Cheers,
Paul

In This Issue...

2. DO's Drivel
4. **NEW** – Club Email list
- 5.. TO's Report
6. Dry Events News
7. Club Raffle
8. Expeditions News
Quotes Quiz
9. Cuba Trip Report
12. Dive Show
Competition
13. Winter Diving
15. Committee help
16. Bad VIZ Top Tips
17. **NEW** – Club Polo
Shirts
18. SE Regional Course
2006

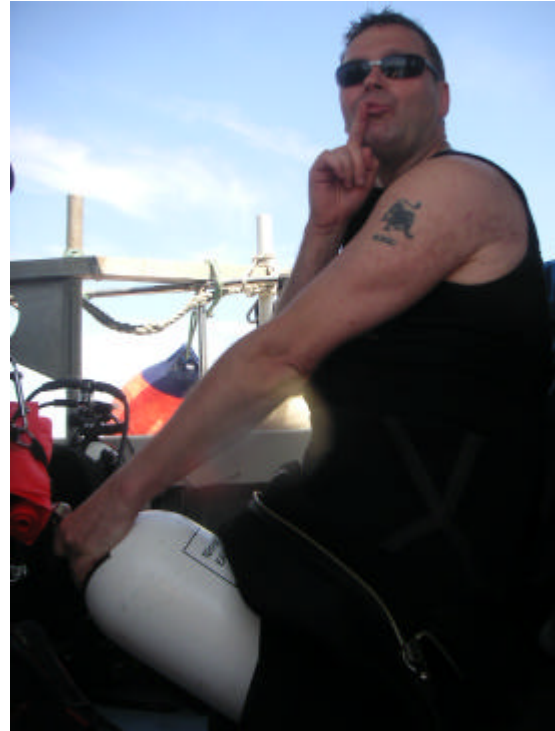
Diving Officer's Drivel

By Paul Carvall

In this edition our hapless fool of a Diving Officer looks at **Hardboat Diving – whassitallabout?**

In order to avoid the many pitfalls scattered along the way there are many guidelines that the seasoned campaigner must follow for successful hardboat diving. Allow me to offer some salient advice...

Lets take a typical day for the Croydon BSAC diver. A good day's diving always starts from home where the first thing to do is get up, and on time. This is a stumbling block that many fall foul of ... Should this objective be achieved, stage two is to retrieve your kit from the various corners of your house, shed, garage or bird table where it has lovingly been stored. At this point it is time for tea and toast and any necessary medication – chiefly hangover cures and sea sickness tablets. It's probably best to leave the 'pick me up' until later. Next it's load up time. How big your car used to look! Cylinders, kit bag, suit, food, flask and once again your on the road!!! At the end of the road you will probably need to go back and pick up your weightbelt from the garage and restart the journey in earnest.



The most important step in timekeeping arriving late is particularly important for our type of diving and its fair to say that BSAC 23 members have this down to a fine art. For instance, if it looks like you might arrive on time slow down, stop for petrol, get a packed lunch in, buy a paper – just do anything to get behind schedule again as this enables you to miss the dreaded "Chain". For the uninitiated, this involves helping to load everyone else's kit onto the boat. The latecomer will skilfully avoid this.

Once aboard it won't be long before the Dive Marshall collars you to dive with someone you don't like. There are two responses here, the first is to be down below until he/she gives up, the second is to "take a hit for the team". Should you take the second option it is a club rule to moan about the injustice of it all behind the DM's back. The Dive Marshall will also be looking for a dive monitor. Always be kneeling down at the stern (the less pointy end) until the job has been allocated to someone else, or better still, suggest a suitable candidate at the earliest opportunity. The DM will want to give a dive briefing. He/she will have been briefed (hence "dive briefing") about the site by the skipper and will have worked out projected depths, maximum dive times and salient facts about the wreck. Safety rules and entry and exit points will all be established to ensure your comfort before, during and after the dive. A good DM will bring all this information together whilst constantly updating the situation. When the DM calls everyone for the briefing remember that he is trying to talk above the noise of the engine and other ambient sounds. It is time to do the only decent thing – ignore him and talk to your mates. That way if anything goes wrong it's his fault.

Important kitting up rituals need to be learnt by new members, again some common strands can be identified here. For example when talcum powder is used, reference should always be made to snorting class A drugs. Likewise, when the KY jelly comes out – and it always does – there is a rich vein of jokes to be exhausted (every flippin' time without fail...). If an unfortunate male member innocently bends over to get an item

from his dive box another male member should creep up behind him and goose him in a wrong fashion – all "for a laugh". This is a club rule. SMB's are usually required at some stage, thus affording a stream of genital related gags that are both visual and verbal. BSAC 23 pride themselves on this skill. It almost goes without saying that the ability to snigger at the smallest sexual innuendo is a skill that should be learnt as early as possible – probably at the same stage as mask clearing.

As responsible divers we all know there are rules to be followed prior to the dive, during it and after it. These can be summarised as follows:

- Firstly the buddy check. Are there two of you? If there are then you may proceed.
- Secondly depth. Always try to stop at the bottom. Its bad practice to try and go any deeper.
- On the wreck try to stay within 10m of one another, especially when the vis is below 5m.
- Always check your buddy's air – Is he using some? Is he using yours?

After having kicked around the wreck for half an hour or so, spoilt the vis, killed some fish and tried to pull a section of sheet metal off the side (respectfully of course), its time to go up. There are also important rules to follow here too:

- Always aim to surface within 2 minutes of one another and never more than 100 yards apart.
- Don't forget that it should take a minute (at least) from the surface to the top of the ladder.

Once back on board we have the hardboats ritual of "surface interval". Again some common strands of behaviour can be identified. The surface interval normally starts with passing wind in your drysuit and getting your buddy to unzip you. The next step is to threaten to liberate your buddy's crab/lobster/flatfish no matter how big it is. Ring or jam doughnuts also tend to be a good source of merriment for some reason... It is important to get your packed lunch out last, and then only after wading through everyone else's. If possible eat yours down below, away from the prying eyes of hungry divers.

If a bout of seasickness comes your way please don't look for any sympathy. However, if a fellow diver is really taking the p*** at your expense, a well aimed chunder over their kit should shut them up. For the second dive (for there is normally a second dive, dear reader) you should repeat most of the above for success. Back after the second one and sadly the days diving comes to an end. As you chug back to harbour all that remains is to go missing at unloading time and to short change the DM when he asks for your contribution to the day. Driving home (after a lengthy stay in the pub) it is good to reflect on another day's diving completed within the BSAC 23 guidelines. Who said standards are falling?

The DO's 7 Rules for the New Season

1. Check your kit. Don't let unnecessary equipment failure ruin your and your buddy's dive.
2. Do proper buddy checks. Nobody wants to jump in without a weightbelt.
3. Don't push it. Be up to speed for the dive you are doing.
4. Don't booze before diving.
5. Don't get a bend. Watch those stops and ascents. Going up and down like a fiddlers elbow is not the way forward.
6. Don't drown. It spoils the next dive.
7. Errr...that's it.



NEW CLUB MAILING LIST!!!!

We have started an email list for club members and guests for announcing events/dives/training opportunities etc.

At the moment there are about 25 members, but to really make this work and for everyone to be kept up to date with the latest club news we need **everybody** to join.

Joining the list is easy, just let **Paul Brown** know up want to sign up and he'll send you an e-mail invite, simply click on the link in the mail, fill in a few details and that's it!

Once you are a member of the list you can communicate with the whole club by sending an email to a single address:

Croydonbsac@coollist.com



Training Officer's Report

By Alan Glen

Lots of training happening. I am involved with the club on 3 nights a week:

- Sports diver lectures on Monday nights
- Ocean diver lectures on Wednesday with pool sessions on Wednesday
- Dive leader lectures on Thursday

Obviously open water activities will follow on as the year develops.

I also plan to run Advanced diver lectures later in the year with the associated sea dives/skills assessments etc... Several people in the Ensham club have expressed an interest. There are various skill development courses that are part of the Advanced diver qualification, details later along with dates of courses being run by the London Region Coaching scheme.

Some people are yet to get involved and receive lectures at the moment. This will happen asap as I can only comfortably fit in 4 trainees at a time when we sit around my laptop.

I recommend the Practical Rescue Management Skill development course for Dive Leaders as it enables several parts of the Dive leader course to be signed off. Details later of SDC run by the London Region or book onto the course via the BSAC web site.

Recently I became an Advanced Instructor and it was a bit of a revelation to see what is now considered to be the best way of teaching. The goal posts are moving all the time. We must all assess our skill levels honestly and keep practicing. Several members of the club are attending the Instructor Foundation Course on weekend 11/12 Feb. This means that we will have a group of enthusiasts who as well as progressing dive skills are also, in parallel, moving along developing as instructors. I am eager to share what I know and I shall do what I can to assist. Just talk to me.

The Advanced Instructor Course and exam was a bit of an undertaking really and I quickly decided that I should have a bash and try and learn what I could with no real expectation of passing. There are marks given in many separate sections and I got 2 "merit" marks with one borderline pass and passed all the rest. The border line pass was as a result of my not following the proscribed dive lesson assessment debrief pattern. **STEP** is used to debrief a underwater lesson, was it:

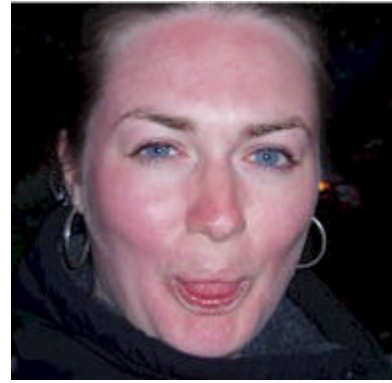
- **Safe?**
- **Technically correct?**
- **Effective?**
- **Progressive?**

The course is still something I would recommend you have a bash at. I shall happily help/advise anyone who wants to develop further.

Put some practice in before you go diving at sea this season. Ask your self, "how long is it since I last went diving....."

Dry Events News

By Clare Walton



A fantastic day out - LIDS

London International Dive Show at ExCel, Docklands on Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd April, 9.30am – 6.00pm (5.00pm Sun). Tickets are £7.50 in advanced or £10.50 on the door. Tickets are valid for either day and allow same day re-admission.

There will be hundreds of exhibitors ranging from manufactures to photography/video camera shops and holiday companies to training organisations. Including AP Values, Alan James Photography, Tony Backhurst Scuba Centre and BSAC to name a few. The show also boasts two pools, a try-dive and a rebreather pool where you can try scuba out for the first time or try your hand at both closed and semi-closed circuit diving. Presentations are given throughout the day and guest speakers this year include Leigh Bishop and Teresa Telus - Ocean liner wreckers, Monty Halls – Ocean adventurer, John Boyle – Award winning underwater film maker and the BBC's Peter Scoones – British underwater cinematographer. Directions and a detailed list of exhibitors can be found at www.diveshows.co.uk

A group of Dive Show enthusiast from the club normally meet up at ExCel to wander round and discuss new innovative ideas, failing this you will find them propping up the nearest bar. This hardcore group currently hold the following record breaking titles: The purchase of a Dive Marshall hat in under 30secs and ordering a beer in under 60secs on entering the exhibition hall!

If you would like a ticket please let me know by 24th March.

Members Photo/Video/DVD evening

Saturday 18th March 2006 at 4.00pm
Marie's house, Wallington, SM6

Here is your opportunity to view members underwater and trip photos and film clips. The club is holding an evening of "the good, the bad and the I can't believe you took a picture of that". This will also be a great chance to meet other members of the club and catch up with familiar faces.

If you have any photos/videos/DVDs (remember scuba diving related only, no special art flicks!!) that you would like to share with the rest of us please could you send me a brief description of what you have. Additionally, if you would like to attend please let me know by March 16th.

Up coming events to watch out for: Comedy Club night, Mexican night and an IMAX feature.

If you have any suggestions for events you would like to do please feel free to contact me at clare@croydonbsac.com or 07971 455 892

Yep, the Dry Officer is *actually* organising something!!!

Club Raffle

Prizes to include diving gear and
booze!!!

Tickets £3 for 2 strips

Raffle to be drawn on
Wednesday the 22nd March
@ the Rose & Crown

Tickets available from
Clare Walton or Chris Griffiths

Expeditions News

By Rick Whitby



What on Earth have I let myself in for? After ~~volunteering~~ being press ganged for the job I am beginning to realise how much work goes on behind the scenes to organize our diving fun. Fortunately for me all of this years diving, apart from the West of Scotland trip, was organized by our happy go lucky Chairman or others. As a club we have an excellent reputation with various skippers which enables us to book so many dates year on year; however the dates themselves were all sorted prior to me taking over.

Anyway enough about that - what have we got to look forward to this year? Well as usual we have the day dives off Nauticat with Steve and WightDiver. Weekend trips this year include the Easter Plymouth trip which is open to all; Paul B is kindly running this one and those of you going should have received his detailed notes about the trip. The May bank holiday sees us back in Plymouth for the second time; this time the depth will be a little greater (min Sports Diver). July sees us travelling to Weymouth on Clare W's trip on Wey Chieftan III, where the entire club have been invited to come on Clare's boat. We have 2 separate trips planned to Scotland – the more astute of you might realise these slightly overlap; Alan Glen is running his Scapa Week on Sunrise; this trip is filling up fast but as of the time of writing I think there may still be a place or 2 available – Scapa is legendary amongst wreck divers world wide however not many people realise that a young 7 year old from Ireland was actually present when Rear Admiral Ludwig von Reuter scuttled the German High Seas Fleet in 1919; that same 7 year old has been running Scapa wreck expeditions ever since. Finally I will be running a trip a trip off the West of Scotland this is currently full but let me know if you want to be put on the reserves.

Elsewhere in this issue should be a list of upcoming club dives and a note of available spaces – please do not be disappointed if the date you wish to dive is already booked. As you might be aware I have also been organising some non-club diving during the closed season and also expect to do the same throughout the year on days we are not diving as a club on full charters. The best way to find out about these is to contact

Quotes...

A quick 5 min quiz for you. Name the members, ex-members or associates of the club who came out with the following quotes:

"This is not a holiday, its an expedition. You are not here to enjoy yourselves". Happy as ever...

"I always knew I could instruct - I just need a bit more practice". Humility personified...

"My face is the only contraceptive I need". Chi chi does it again...

"I've lost Tony's compass...". No, that was a dive computer love, not a compass...

"She sank after hitting a whale, f**g whale meat everywhere there was..."**. Lies from this CBSAC stalwart regarding the sinking of the Oceana...

"Get that bloody arse out of my wheelhouse!". Friendly Northern charm from one of our regular skippers...

"You get up that ladder quite quickly for a fat kid..." That self same friendly Northern skipper 'compliments' the Chairman...

"Whats the matter Tone, lost your bottle?" A rather rotund ex-expeditions officer endears himself to our Mr Ray...

"Do you think he'd mind if I grabbed him and had a little steer?" Turtle conservation in action from this wildlife lover...

Upcoming Dives

Please contact Rick to book on any of these dives:

8th April, *Nauticat*, Ramsgarth, 25m.

14th – 17th April, *Venture*, Plymouth Easter weekender 25m max.

18th June, *Nauticat*, shallow, 25m.

7th May *Nauticat*, Pentryct, 20m.

20th May, *Wight Diver*, Ashborg, 20m.

27th – 29th May, *Venture*, Plymouth, 35m max.

11th June, *Nauticat*, Braunton, 38m.

24th June, *Wight Diver*, Camswain 25m.

Paul B about being added to the club group e-mail address (croydonbsac@coolist.com) which I will be using to inform members about late notice dive spaces and to organise ad-hoc dives.

I wont go on about the wrecks or reefs/scenic sites we will be doing I will leave that to whoever the club appoints as dive marshal on the day – however please take the time if you are new to the club or to UK diving to listen to/ask one of the older hands about boat procedures on a particular day and follow the skipper's instructions. We have a good safe record at the club and want to maintain the excellent relationships we have with the skippers.

If you have any questions about upcoming dives (club or otherwise) feel free to chat to me on Wednesdays at the pool or pub or contact me by e-mail: rick@croydonbsac.com.

Cuba Trip Report

By Chris Griffiths



Our trip to Cuba started with the usual conversation down the pub about potential holidays followed by the immortal 'OK you organise it then'. With these words it was on the phone to the nice lady at Scuba en Cuba to discuss various itineraries and costs and a little bit of research on the Interweb. There were two dive areas in Cuba that I was particularly interested in. One was called Jardin de la Reina for the possibility of seeing whale sharks and the other was Santa Lucia famed for its' Bull Sharks. Andy was also interested in doing something a little bit cultural so we included Havana and Camaguey in the itinerary.

Now a little bit of the historical and cultural background for those of you that don't know much about Cuba. Cuba is the victim (*by 'victim' he means 'was liberated from the clutches of a corrupt Yankee financed Government' - ED*) of a glorious revolution in the 50's that has resulted in a generally pretty dire existence and massive poverty for the populace ever since. It also resulted in a large black market based on the American dollar. This is significant when travelling in Cuba as this market was effectively shut down at the beginning of last year when Fidel made selling anything for dollars illegal. This put us in a bit of a bind with an awful lot of dollars and no way to shift them

without going to a bank and paying a 20% commission. Top tip number 1 'Don't take dollars'.

We spent the first couple of days wandering around the historic part of town getting hassled and realizing that Havana isn't actually that big and that after being accosted by the local hookers within five minutes the first time that we left the hotel, dollars were definitely no longer acceptable in Cuba, although certain services were freely available for about 10 pesos.



The next stage of the trip was a bus ride in some comfort from Havana down to the coast for a boat ride to the floating hotel fifty odd miles out to see called the Tortuga. Here Andy and I were to share a cabin for the next six nights and road test all of the various ear plugs that I'd brought with me to see which were the most effective. The final conclusion incidentally was that the cheap foam ones seemed to work best and we managed to survive the week without Andy having to resort to murder for a good nights sleep.

However this report is meant to be about diving and Tortuga was definitely the best diving that I have ever had the pleasure to do. The check out dive on the first day was a bit pants but then you expect that. The next days diving were however incredible. We tended to do three dives a day and with the further dives lunch was brought out to us by boat and this was where we tended to see more sharks. The dives primarily consisted of reef dives and the odd deeper dive to see Caribbean reef sharks and also Silky sharks closer to the surface who seemed to like to get fairly friendly especially when it was near to feeding time. This was quite intimidating at the beginning of the week when we were constantly being charged by sharks but ultimately became quite normal. There were other things to see though, these included the usual reef fish, large grouper, turtles, barracuda and once even a tarpon in the distance. The highlight of the week was however jumping in to a shoal of bonito out in the deep ocean to swim with a whale shark. This was also where Andy gets his nomination for diver of the month by jumping into the sea, which was approximately a mile deep, without holding his mask. Inevitably Andy's favourite prescription mask took the fast route to the bottom of the sea. The look on Andy's face of disbelief with the possible trace of a tear in the corner of his eye as the shark swam away is one that I'll remember for a long time.

After six days and nights on the Tortuga, which incidentally also has excellent food, have you ever got bored of lobster? We moved onto an all inclusive resort at Santa Lucia for a chance to dive with Bull Sharks. We were unfortunately somewhat delayed on our way to Santa Lucia by no transfer turning up to take us to the resort. However this ultimately managed to resolve itself in typical Cuban fashion and we were on our way 'In Cuba it's complicated'. We got to the resort just as the entertainment was finishing for the evening and found out that AI stood for all inclusive and that included the drinks. We also found out that coke was obviously expensive so they tended to top the drinks up with rum instead. The next day feeling slightly the worse for wear we staggered down to the dive centre to do the



usual fairly pants check out dive. Santa Lucia is on the opposite side of the island to Jardin de la Reina and there is a lot less sea life at Santa Lucia. The next dive was somewhat different though. We got back to the dive centre to be told that the weather was too rough for diving in the bay that afternoon but we could go and dive with the bull sharks instead for a \$20 supplement. I have to admit that I was a tad nervous as we boarded the dodgy old bus to drive to the dive site for one of the first shore dives I had done in a long while. Andy wasn't particularly talkative either especially after we noticed that a large number of the dive masters were coming too and they were all carrying spear guns!



The dive masters jumped in first with the spear guns and swam off and Andy, myself and another diver followed them in with the dive guide. We swam down the wreck of a ship that started at about six metres and then dropped down into the channel at about 25m to the bottom. The fish life around the wreck and the wreck itself were actually quite spectacular but for some reason I wasn't really concentrating on this at the time as there were sharks to consider. I managed to get myself set up behind the dive guide with my back to the wreck and camera in front of me and ready to record and then the other dive guides started to turn up with fresh fish that they had been spearing round the wreck. Shortly afterwards the sharks themselves started to turn up and Eric the guide fed by hand and also teased them a little. These were big sharks, and I mean big because they were wide as well as long. However after a while it all settled down to a routine and I managed to get a little bit closer but with the water being very coloured the video wasn't brilliant when I reviewed it later that night. Anyway the next day we repeated the dive with far more people in much better light and visibility and the whole experience was a lot less scary when you know what is going to happen.

After Santa Lucia and some other adventures that I'm sure Andy would love to tell you about we then moved on to the town of Camaguey which was fairly ramshackle. We met up with Abdel one of the dive guides from earlier in the week and he showed us the other side of Cuban life. We met his wife and family and saw the houses that they lived in (that were actually quite nice and certainly nothing I could afford in the UK).



After this we moved back to Havana for a night before flying back to the UK. I'd like to thank Andy for coming with me on what turned out to be a great holiday and would recommend Cuba to anyone but I definitely rank the Tortuga as the highlight of the holiday and the culture stuff isn't massively interesting (mainly because everything is in Spanish and pretty run down).

Dive Show Competition

This year's London International Dive Show (LIDS) takes place at the Excel Centre on the 1st and 2nd April and you lucky Croydon BSAC members could be there for free!!!!

LIDS 2006 will be a feast for existing divers and newcomers alike. More than 250 companies will be lining up at the ExCeL Exhibition Centre on 1 and 2 April to show off the latest kit, holidays, training options, dive leisure wear, and much, much more. So, regardless of whether you have many years of experience under your belt or have just taken up the sport, LIDS 2006 will be one of the most important dates in your diving calendar.



Up for it? GOOD because those lovely people at LIDS have give us a pair of tickets to give away **ABSOLUTELY FREE**.

To win, answer the following simple question and return to me either on the form below or by email (paul@dive50.freeserve.co.uk):

Which top BBC wildlife cameraman will be speaking at LIDS 2006?

(Hint: look at the show preview in DIVER, on www.diveshows.co.uk, or elsewhere in this issue...)

If you don't win but would still like tickets for LIDS 2006, which is organised by Diver Group in association with the British Sub-Aqua Club, go to www.diveshows.co.uk or call the ticket hotline, 0208 977 9878.

Tickets cost £7.50 if booked in advance and £10.50 on the door (children £2). Visitors booking in advance will also be able to collect a free Show Guide worth £2 (one per ticket order) on arrival.

CROYDON BSAC LIDS COMPETITON

Question: Which top BBC wildlife cameraman will be speaking at LIDS 2006?

Answer:	
Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Pass to Paul Brown on a Wednesday night OR email paul@dive50.freeserve.co.uk OR post to . Closing date 20th March, draw taking place 22nd March at the club.

Winter Diving: Stoney Cove (where else???)

by Rick Whitby



Don't be fooled – it is always busier than this

Diving seemed to become more and more sporadic since the close of the normal season and our abortive attempt to dive in November in Weymouth (see last Muddle Puddle) so I decided I needed to get my sea fix again. Unfortunately several attempts at booking sea dives fell foul of the weather so I used the opportunity to acquaint myself with the delights of Stoney Cove. I was somewhat apprehensive about going to Stoney Cove as it seems to have a reputation of being a muddy puddle however although I still prefer sea dives I enjoyed my three times there recently.

For those who haven't yet been to Stoney or are about to go there for the first time, Stoney Cove is a flooded quarry in Leicestershire which is used for basic training and deeper training by what seems to be the entire diving community of the UK. On the average weekend what seems to be hundreds of divers descend onto Stoney causing queues at ridiculous hours of the morning. The reason for this spectacle is to get the much vaunted water-side car parking – apparently anything after 7.30am in the morning and the overflow car parks come into play with the extra haul of equipment and tanks that requires.

My first trip was in mid November acting as a body for Paul B who was completing his Advanced diver training with Sue Eames – the visibility was excellent and the air temperature was probably only 4 or 5° C but the water temperature was a balmy 11° C. After sitting at the surface in the water freezing during various tows and lifts, which Paul B completed faultlessly, we went on a quick tour of the Viscount aircraft cockpit which lies around 6m, down the 'cliff face', which is part of the old quarry workings and down to the 'floor' of the quarry which had a handy chain out to the Stanegarth – a sunken tug boat sitting in 20m of water and which has easy entrances and exits for penetration.

One thing does seem constant at Stoney - after mucking around in the water and getting out of drysuits and drinking mugs of hot sugary tea from Paul's thermos the attraction of getting back into drysuits and going for a second dive doesn't seem so appealing.



The Stanegarth – don't call it a proper wreck in front of the Chairman



Honest the viz is this good

So what else is there to do at Stoney? Well there is the burger stall for that vital early morning bacon roll that seems to be have a permanent queue about 30 people long all waiting to be served by a small hatch in the freezing weather. A large dive shop is also present on site selling very, very expensive DUI drysuits and various bits and pieces of dive tat but prices seem to be generally more expensive than Amphibian Sports and you can't nag them into making you a cup of tea.

As for underwater attractions there is surprisingly a lot of freshwater marine life in the lake including shoals of perch and roach (? Well some silvery fish) and pike. Also, don't forget to look up to see the funny antics of ducks swimming across the surface waters.

Underwater attractions to keep the divers happy include a whole heap of deliberately sunken attractions; these include various cars and trucks, underwater rooms to enter, the Viscount and Stanegarth mentioned earlier and a fake-submarine sculpture called the 'Nautilus'. Some are easily found by means of anchor chains on the quarry floor such as the Stanegarth; others have to be found by compass bearings from other easily recognised objects which are printed on the back of the sheet which is filled out on entry to Stoney Cove.

In January I returned with Alan Glen and Dave Inglis; this was because I was blown out of a sea dive off Brighton due to winds of 5-6 gusting 7s. This is the other major attraction of Stoney and presumably other inland sites – it enables diving to continue when the weather prevents us diving sea diving, the visibility is also on the whole pretty reliable, at least when I have been so far.

On this occasion the weather was against us and it was raining by the time we arrived and the site was surprisingly empty – we managed to get into the bottom car park even at 8.30am. Fortunately Stoney has some dry and warm changing facilities on site. Visibility was again excellent and a good bumble was had. Dave complained back in the changing rooms that he was feeling a little chilly and a quick inspection of his drysuit showed broken teeth on his rear zip which had led to a total flood! Given the water was 7°C he was either mad/brave or just comatose to have survived for 30 minutes plus in such cold waters, this was made worse by Stoney being tighter than a bunch of Scotsmen on holiday in England by charging for use of the hot showers! Apparently this is the second time in as many dives to quarries (the other being Wraysbury) where Dave's suit has flooded so a quick trip back to the dive shop is imminent.



A pike; haven't see one of these yet but apparently they live in Stoney

For more information about Stoney Cove go to www.stoneycove.com.



This may seem a little premature, but there will several committee posts available at the next AGM. You may not know, but the club rules say that no person can stay in a single post for more than three years. This allows the committee to stay fresh and to get on board new members to help with the running of the club.

At the next AGM the following positions will be available:

- Diving Officer
- Training Officer
- Chairman
- Treasurer

If you would like to help with the running of the club and feel you could fill one of these (or indeed any of the other) positions let a member of the current committee know.

Bad-VIZ TOP TIPS

Holiday Divers

Whilst enjoying your week in the Channel Islands, annoy your hung-over skipper by making sure you all ask individually "What time's slack?". Experience suggests that you will get 8 answers of "10am" before the ninth and final answer of "For f***s sake, don't you lot f*****g talk to each other out there?".

Drunkards

When booking diving weekends ensure you choose mid-November as your chosen time to go away. This virtually guarantees that you won't have to go diving, thus allowing 14 hour pub sessions. Should the weather take a turn for the better, make sure the skipper is with you on said session, so he knocks it even if its flat calm.

Dive Boat Skippers

NEVER say to your piss-taking crew of tekkies "I haven't had a single helicopter out this year" as this inevitably leads to the following weekends fun that starts 'Mayday mayday mayday, this is dive boat *****...' and a lot of stick next time said tekkies are on board.

Diving Officers

Impress your wife and family by going out for a few beers "with the dive lot" then not arriving home until lunchtime the following day. Cement your place in your loved ones bad books by nicking off to the Red Sea a day later, causing you to miss your wedding anniversary.

Honeymooners

Please remember that when in flash hotels in Singapore it is customary to use the toilet to relieve your "Delhi Belly", not the sink.

Experienced Divers

Please ensure that your weightbelts are done up securely before jumping in the water. You wouldn't want it to drop off and sink into the briney blue, would you?

Boat Crew

When coming out to "crew" for a week in Sark with a bunch of Croydon BSAC's finest, try to do something useful instead of swimming, diving, water skiing and generally f*****g about.

Northerners

Don't be disheartened when your oh-so-funny crewmates have watched you waste £5 to park for the day, knowing full well the boat isn't going out.

Stevenage-Based Dive Girls

Do not try to climb the social ladder by swanning about with a copy of popular magazine "The Lady" under your arm - we all know you better than that!

Old Dive Shop Owners

The word "discount" is not blasphemy or swearing, please use it more often when Croydon BSAC's finest visit you with their hard-earned.

Builders

Whilst out on trips to the Red Sea, make sure you look under rocks carefully - there might just be a nice digital camera sitting there...

Expeditions Officers

Stop blowing out nitrox courses just because you have a bit of a sniffle, you'll get the club a rep as not being ruffy-tuffy enough!

Experienced Divers

On the Easter trip, try to remember you are supposed to be setting an example to the less experienced divers. Examples to be set **DO NOT** include spending a day moving only between the pub and the gin distillery or mooning at the skipper.

Chairmen

When sending out mass emails to the club, remember to proof read them before clicking the send button. The addition of an N to the word CUT causes a different slant on what you are trying to say and causes much embarrassment.

Old Timers

When buying flash new umbilical torches try to make sure they don't burn out on the second dive you use them on. Failure to do this will mean a lack of sympathy from your fellow divers and endless bouts of torch-based unfunnies.

Red Sea Divers

Be sure to lie about the number of dives you have done - increasing the number by a factor of 10 usually does enough to gain your group the name "The Awesome Foursome"...

Club Polo Shirts

100% cotton polo shirts with embroidered club logo.
Available in either Black or Navy

Size Guide (All measurements are in inches)

Unisex	S	M	L	XL	XXL	XXL
To fit chest	38	40	42-44	46	48	50-52

Priced at just **£15.00 EACH**



******* Special offer *******

Purchase two polo shirts of any size or colour for **£28.00**

Please note this offer is only valid until 31st March 2006

Order form

Please print out and return your completed order form to **Chris Griffiths** or **Clare Walton**

Name: _____

Contact number in case of any queries: _____

Colour	Size	Quantity	Amount
Total			

Please make cheques payable to **Croydon BSAC 23**

Treasurer use only:

Date ____/____/____

Cheque

Cash

Amount received for £_____

South East Region Courses for 2006

Below is the course list from our region for 2006. These courses are well worth doing and are usually a good laugh, they are also cheap compared to the cost of similar courses though a commercial diving school. For booking details and further information regarding these regional courses go to: www.bsac-se.org.uk

DATE	DURATION	COURSE	LOCATION	COST
04/03/2006	2	Lifesaver Award	Camberley	£60
18/03/2006	1	Compressor Operation	Kingston	£35
25/03/2006	1	Practical Rescue Management	Maidstone	£55
26/03/2006	1	Diver Coxswain Award	Newhaven	£30
08/04/2006	1	Oxygen Administration	Crawley	£40
09/04/2006	1	First Aid for Divers	Crawley	£35
22/04/2006	1	Diver Cox Preparation	Newhaven	£20
22/04/2006	2	Instructor Foundation Course	Camberley	£75
06/05/2006	2	Boat Handling	Newhaven	£77
13/05/2006	2	Chartwork and Position Fixing	Newhaven	£70
20/05/2006	2	Advanced Nitrox Diver	Kingston	£70
20/05/2006	2	Combined Nitrox	Kingston	£80
20/05/2006	1	Diver Coxswain Award	Newhaven	£30
20/05/2006	1	Nitrox Diver	Kingston	£45
04/06/2006	1	Advanced Lifesaver Award	Newhaven	£45
10/06/2006	2	Search and Recovery	Newhaven	£60
17/06/2006	2	Dive Planning and Marshalling	Newhaven	£70
17/06/2006	1	Open Water Instructor Course	Horsea Island	£40
18/06/2006	1	Practical Instructor Exam	Horsea Island	£35
09/09/2006	2	Chartwork and Position Fixing	Newhaven	£70
09/09/2006	1	Diver Cox Preparation	Newhaven	£20
16/09/2006	2	Advanced Nitrox Diver	Kingston	£70
16/09/2006	2	Combined Nitrox	Kingston	£80
16/09/2006	1	Nitrox Diver	Kingston	£45
23/09/2006	2	Boat Handling	Newhaven	£77
30/09/2006	1	Open Water Instructor Course	Horsea Island	£40
01/10/2006	1	Practical Instructor Exam	Horsea Island	£35
14/10/2006	1	Practical Rescue Management	Horsea Island	£55
15/10/2006	1	Diver Coxswain Award	Newhaven	£30
04/11/2006	1	Equipment Care	Kingston	£40
11/11/2006	1	Oxygen Administration	Crawley	£40
12/11/2006	1	First Aid for Divers	Crawley	£35
18/11/2006	2	Instructor Foundation Course	Camberley	£75
18/11/2006	1	Rescue First Aid	Crawley	£37
26/11/2006	1	Compressor Operation	Kingston	£35
09/12/2006	1	Theory Instructor Exam	Camberley	£25

Well, that's your lot for this edition.

The next issue of the *Muddy Puddle* will be out around June time, please send any contributions to Paul Brown.
