



WHAT'S BUBBLING

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The Magazine of Ealing Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC 514)

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Editor's Note: What's Bubbling is a Newsletter written FOR members BY members; the Committee does not govern its contents. At present an advance, courtesy, copy is emailed to the Chair immediately prior to general circulation. Letters written to the Editor, on any diving-related topic, will be submitted to the Chair for discussion with the Committee if a reply is sought. If you have something to say, write to the Editor. The Editor will respect a writer's request for anonymity.

Diary Dates

Friday 16th April, 7.30pm, Northolt Community Centre - Craig Burrell

Have you got this date in your diary? Please come along, talk with all ESAC members, about what we want to doGo Diving. Or anything else related to the activities of the Club. I am still looking for some more topics for discussion. What do you want to talk about? How can we make the Club better? How can we make diving easier? Better? What help can the Regional coaching team offer? What are we doing to attract new members? What are we doing to maintain the interest of older members? How can I persuade my partner that they want to look after the kids for a weekend whilst I go diving? What is a Nitrox? What is technical diving? Can we organise some cave diving? I can think of lots of questions but some would probably be inappropriate. This is about what **you** want to know, not about what I, others on the committee, or others in the Club want to tell you. They are not chairing this forum. The London regional coach, Colin Wilde, is.

Bring a few bottles of wine, a packet of crisps and come and enjoy the evening. Any discussion topics or specific questions to me in the first instance please.

Monday 12th April & Sunday 18th April 2004 - Craig Burrell

We are planning two training days at Wraysbury to kick start the season. These will take place on Monday 12th April (Easter Monday) and Sunday 18th April (a week later!). We will start at 9.30 am and finish when we're done.

These days are primarily aimed at anyone training towards Ocean Diver so that you can complete your sheltered water training prior to the Weymouth trip on 30th April. Note, you must have completed your pool sessions and passed your theory exam before you go into the water.

Anyone else is more than welcome to attend and blast a few cobwebs out of their kit before doing the real stuff later in the month! We are hoping to have plenty of instructors available to help, advise and coach as required. If anyone wants shore dive marshalling experience this could also be your opportunity. Please sign up on the notice board, or e-mail me, if you will be attending

LETTERS PAGE

Dear Ed

The Health and Safety Practitioner has recently published an article concerning the numbers of decompression illness incidents recorded by BSAC. I realise there has been quite a lot of discussion going on recently within ESAC regarding risk assessments and dive planning. However, it might be useful for us to make everyone more aware of what is being done to comply with "The Diving at Work Regulations 1997".

Does the organisation base training and planning on current HSE guidance, or are there a different set of standards eg the BSAC Standard, that applies to recreational diving clubs, as opposed to commercial diving schools?

As a new member and a full time health and safety manager, I would be grateful for a response from the Committee on the issues outlined in the article (copy of which has been passed to the Chair) and some details on our current arrangements.

Best Wishes and good diving- Denis McCarthy

Committee Response:

Dear Denis,

Thank you for forwarding the very interesting article from The Safety & Health Practitioner, Jan 2004 Edition, Delving Deep Into The Diving World.

For those who have not yet read it, and I suggest you do, the summary is reproduced here:

"Summary

Recreational divers must take responsible care to avoid acts or omissions which they can foresee are likely to injure their neighbour (a buddy diver or anyone who ought reasonably to have been kept in mind). Amateur recreational diving club officials are likely to be seen to have a much greater duty of care than the ordinary diver buddy. Every amateur recreational diving club member should be fully aware of their governing body/club safe diving practices and adhere to these 'club rules'. In the unfortunate event of being involved in litigation due to a serious incident, being knowledgeable of safe diving practices and being able to demonstrate compliance with the Club Rules may play a vital part in any case for the defence."

So if that is the summary what did the article say? Well, it is based around amongst other things "The Diving at Work Regulations 1997". This is the legislation that covers all professional diving activities. However, if you dive for money or reward, even using recreational techniques and equipment, you are considered to be a professional diver and are subject to the requirements of The Diving at Work Regulations, 1997.

As members of the BSAC and ESAC we are recreational divers, and hence are not subject to the Regulations. However, we do have a 'duty of care' to our fellow divers. In the world of increased litigation, it is even more important that we consider our 'duty of care' to others and can be seen to be following best practice.

Since the publication of the Regulations in 1997 the BSAC, as our governing body, have been updating and modifying several areas of our diving practises. By complying with the BSAC regulations, and hence the HSE regulations, should any member be unfortunate enough to find themselves involved in

litigation, they can say that they are following not only our governing body's best practices but also HSE Guidelines.

The BSAC have produced a number of new publications and training schemes in recent years. Instructor training is more progressive and involves increased assessments thus ensuring our instructors have good theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and that the BSAC can prove it. The whole diver training scheme has been updated, taking into account findings from BSAC incident reports, current best practice, and ensuring Divers are being given suitable training for the activities they want to do at each level. Dive planning and marshalling is now taught much earlier in a divers career and is recorded in a different format, a risk assessment.

As highlighted in the article, the BSAC 2002 Incident Report showed a significant increase in the number of decompression incidents had occurred within the year. This was attributed to divers failing to correctly control their ascents, especially in the 10 metre zone. In trying to learn from past mistakes the BSAC have done a number of things to highlight this problem to BSAC members. Firstly the Incident Report is issued to all Diving Officers so the findings can be discussed and circulated within the Branches. Greater emphasis has been placed on buoyancy control within the training scheme. A high proportion of the decompression incidents occurred during dives to 30m plus, hence for dives in excess of 30 metres it is now mandatory to complete a risk assessment. The risk of DCI will, however, never be eliminated, and all new divers are given the student notes for oxygen administration so they should know what to do in an emergency. We are reminded that diligence in the form of having the correct equipment for the dive, serviced and in working order also plays a vital role in incident prevention.

Within ESAC, the Committee, take their 'duty of care' very seriously. The BSAC provide guidance to Branch Officers in the form of the Branch Officer's Handbook, which was updated in Oct 2003. By following this guidance, we can provide evidence of our own 'duty of care' to all ESAC members. In turn by the use of this guidance, Instructors, Dive Marshals and buddies would be able to prove their 'duty of care' has been fulfilled. As a Committee, however, we take the next step. We organise revalidations for all members to update their skills before the start of the dive season, this includes in-water skills, CPR skills and use of the oxygen kits. Boat Handlers and Club Coxswains refamiliarise themselves with the Club boats to ensure not only that they remember which is the front and which is the back (sorry bow and stern) but also, where the first aid kit is, where the flares are, how the radio works, how the GPS works, and how we protect the Club's greatest assets.

I hope this answers your questions, if however you or any other club member would like to discuss these issues further please contact me.

Craig Burrell – Diving Officer
On behalf of the Committee

Dear Editor (another response to the anonymous author)

As last years Chairman and by referring to my resignation last year, you have dragged me once more up to the computer in reply to your comments.

All clubs, groups, associations etc go through stages of change, FORM, STORM & NORM? FORMation of a group, like-minded people get together and say "ha! This is fun, lets get together and form a group".

STORM, the group grows and growth can be a painful process, the group makes changes, it establishes rules of association, (in ESAC we are a part of BSAC)

NORMalise, the group settles into a routine, it goes about its business in the normal way.

From time to time, things change outside the group that by their very nature, affect the group, we belong to BSAC if we wish to continue to do so (Greg's article WB14 puts it very well).

To facilitate change the group then has to go back into the STORM role; for the most part this is a condition, which, given time empowers the group with the new tools and techniques necessary to go about their NORMAl business.

In Summary: I feel that ESAC is coming out of a period of STORM, brought about by BSAC realising that they have to off load the liability they hold as the governing body for UK diving.

I for one will be supporting this year's committee during this STORM in any way I can.

I'm troubled that anyone chooses to be anonymous, it should be ok to put your opinion or concerns in writing, as a paid up member of ESAC you have that right!

Anonymity by its very nature implies a hidden agenda and undermines the validity of what ever you write in future editions of this fine publication.

Richard Ayers.

(If you are offended in any way, shape, or form by reading this article, this was not my intention and I apologise without reservations, the views & opinions expressed above are my own and in no way reflect other people's views.)

Ed's Note – no Committee response requested.

Dear Ed,

It was very pleasing to read Greg's article in the last edition, regarding the history and philosophy of our Club. The sentiments expressed I'm sure are shared by many more of us "rambling old men".

One point, however. The reference to the BSAC uniform of a "purple and yellow drysuit" refers I believe to my particular suit. All should now know that the uniform has changed; the 2004 model is a rather fetching number in navy blue and yellow, the previous suit having finally succumbed to the porous graveyard. The uniform sports dinky little pockets to take the diver's knife, crowbar and lump hammer, everything that a roughie-toughtie diver such as myself could want. I'm sure it will catch on and I could arrange a discount if the Club would like to place a bulk order.

Another interesting read was February's committee meeting minutes. Picking up Craig's point about the Club's lack of dive records, I may be able to throw some light on this. A common problem with all officers of every committee ESAC has ever seen has been lack of storage space at home. The first exercise that I and many other former officers have done when taking on a new role was to discard old paper records – rightly or wrongly I never considered it important to keep a record of Joe Bloggs' uneventful dive in 1997 to 20m for 35 minutes. As long as I have been a member of ESAC there has always been dive records. I consider myself privileged to have been a member for so long to a Club that has held safety and good diving practices so highly. These records have been destroyed by previous D.O.s such as myself. Their absence should not in any way discredit this Club and its members in the years before Craig and others joined. The act of planning and executing a dive plan has changed little over the years; dive record sheets have changed enormously. Our current record sheet is the best I have ever seen or used and I would encourage all to embrace it.

Regards

Nigel Ealand

Ed's Note – no Committee response requested.

Advanced instructor course 2004 – Richard Ayers

The inspiration for the course came from Michelle, Dominic and I attending the Diving Officers' Conference back in November 2003. The conversation went along the lines of "shall we do it? Why not?" now the tricky part was how to break the news to Maggie. I was going to Tenerife but not to have a holiday, honest. Instead to attend a two day course on how to teach Instructors, then a one day written exam and then to cap it all a two day practical / constant assessment exam, being assessed by some of BSAC's finest National Instructors. Why on earth would anyone want to?

I'm the sort who is keen to get to the airport then relax, so the 03:30 pick up of Michelle seemed like a good idea at the time we discussed it, in practice not the best. The 4 hour flight was only spoiled by the knot-tying which the people behind us were giggling over, "no like this, not like that" were the noises, we turned around only to discover three others who would be attending the course and exam with us too. As we landed Michelle and I looked at each other and said "Why are we here?" We relaxed by the salt water pool which the hotel offered and became friends with everyone who brought us a beer, we met a lot of new friends as the whole group began to gather around the nearest watering hole in town, it was very difficult to remember that we were all here to work.

We all gathered the following day at 09:00; Dennis Rigg was 'Bossing' the whole event, as we sat by the poolside he ran through what was about to unfold. The whole group discussed and agreed the Advanced Instructors role; Quality control; Authorative; Polished Presentation; Depth of Knowledge; Communication Skills; Link from HQ to local Club; Advanced Planning; Project Management and above all NO BULLSHIT! (If you don't know, find out, but no bullshit).

We then built on the role of A.D.I. to define a good quality diving lesson, we looked at what the essential criteria should be in every teaching dive, it must be SAFE; DEMO/DO; PROGRESSIVE; FAULT CORRECTION. I know what you're thinking "I do this on every dive when I have someone who is less qualified than me" I know you do! Ealing has very high standards, but for some people on the trip, this was going to be a challenge.

We separated off into our groups of three pupils to one National Instructor; I had Andy Borreer, Michelle was with Mark Mumford (South Eastern Region Coach), these guys held our hands through the next couple of days which was the Advanced Instructor Course (AIC). I did not know half of what was required, and I was rusty for the other half, you are taught to look at things from a different view, you are taught to criticise in a constructive manner using the mnemonic R.E.A.P. (if you have done the OWI course you will already be there for this one). My group gelled immediately, we had to, and Andy was in the background as we threw in ideas and he threw them out, in a very constructive way I might add, after all this was only the morning of the course, the exam was days away yet.

Lunch was a small break, then the afternoon session began, as a group we had to plan an underwater exercise, break it down into three training opportunities, then make it work, oh yes, underwater! We were given the task to build a shot line with jackstay. Then from that construct a triangle, which returned to the shot line. We sketched it out on paper and broke it down into bite size pieces, we built in safety, teaching opportunities and progression, fault correction would need to be adhoc (you can help yourselves here by telling everyone that "you are all dive leaders" by doing that you can assume everyone will at least float the right way up!). Denise in my group taught the swim from shore, deploy the top delay SMB, deploy the jack stay in a southerly direction, she then handed over to me. I taught, add 120 degrees to begin the first leg, attach a weight, add 120 degrees to begin the second leg, arrive at the shot line and stop. Darryl then taught return and recover the equipment, lift the whole lot to the surface using an assisted controlled lift then swim back to the shore.

We had been underwater for an hour, and although the water was 18 degrees, we had started to get cold by now, once on the shore we stowed the kit in the cave which the dive school offered, then it was time to debrief your leg of the exercise, using R.E.A.P. Things had gone well for the first day. Andy debriefed us all with constructive comments and the day finished around 18:00. Time for a beer? Wrong! Tomorrow we would be on the boats and working even harder. Michelle's group day had been based on the boats today, so she and I spent the evening comparing notes, it was time very well spent.

The boat day; we were given a series of scenarios based around a boat dive, they were; Scenic dive, Wall dive & Marine I.D. As a group we had to take them apart and find 'opportunities' to teach skills with in those dives. The mind set needed is how to get them on the boat, safely, demo / do, progressively, correct the faults gently, I can do this and the day went very well, I thought. Having done my lesson we surfaced from the lovely wall type dive site only to find people puking over the side of the boat, YUK! I debriefed Andy on the boat as quickly as possible. In theory I had to watch people puke and wait for the others to have a dive, which meant at least another hour on the boat; I looked around for a way out and noticed a guy sitting in the corner, I said "hello! Can you dive?" he replied; "I'm the centre's dive instructor" good I said lets go diving rather than wait up here, thankfully he agreed and we had a lovely half hour stress-free dive around this 12m wall - it was great.

Tomorrow was going to be Monday and the prospect of the written exam was to be faced, this was the point when we discovered that any one can do the exam back at home before coming all this way only to fail at this hurdle, because the Boss made it very clear that if we did not pass the theory, you would then be on holiday for the rest of the trip. We had to pass. At this point I need to 'big it up' for Michelle, she eats this theory stuff for breakfast and was great and surprisingly patient with me even at 04:00 in the morning. I ran through the goings on inside a demand valve for her and she helped me with multi level tables, I never use them in the real world. So "thank you Michelle".

"Ok enough of that praise stuff!" We both passed the written exam; nuff said. Not everyone did though, in the UK you are told in a letter two weeks after the event, however in Tenerife you have the opportunity to sit the test again, after an afternoon of coaching from the National Instructors' team. Everyone passed on the second attempt.

Now it gets serious, the next two days was to be a repeat of the first two days but with the Instructors taking on the Examiners' role and under exam conditions, No Bullshit it had to be right.

Rather than bore you with the detail here, come along on the 16th April 04 to the meeting, during which I will give a short run down of what happened next, what's involved in gaining the next logical instructor level after O.W.I. and how we can now run our own Skill Development Courses within ESAC.

A little note on Flying and Diving, taken from Ocean Diver lesson 4 - Craig Burrell

Flying before Diving

- All passengers' tissues off gas whilst flying and, depending on the length of flight, take some time to return to their normal nitrogen levels. Diving after flying may seem a good idea as the nitrogen loading is reduced but flying has other effects on the body.
- Most people suffer from stresses of air travel such as disorientation, tiredness, nervousness, irritability and dehydration.
- This will increase the risk of DCI so divers should not dive until they feel physically and mentally rested following a flight
- A good interval should therefore be allowed to elapse between flying and diving - particularly for flights of over 90 minutes in pressurised aircraft. This interval should be at least 10 hours.

Flying after Diving.

- Tissues continue to off gas after a dive
- Even in a pressurised aircraft, the reduced ambient pressure will cause any existing bubbles in the divers body to expand or new bubbles to form. This greatly increases the risk of DCI
- Again, the stresses of air travel can have an effect on the body

- A good surface interval must elapse before flying. Due to the stresses of flying, it is strongly recommended that a diver do not fly within 24 hours of their last dive.

The sinking of HMS Scylla – Nigel Ealand

I'm sure you are all acutely aware that we have a new wreck to explore. HMS Scylla has been sunk in Whitsand Bay, nr Plymouth, to create an artificial reef. The ship has been stripped down, all oils removed, access ways opened up for divers to enter and the more dangerous areas secured and barred.

How many of us actually knew when it was being sunk until we read about it in Diver? Not many is my guess. It was a Tuesday, I was sitting at my desk when a colleague lent back in his chair and said "Nige, what do you know about having a "live" camera on a sinking ship?" The word "live" means it continues to transmit pictures as the sea envelopes it and the ship plummets to the bottom. "Can I phone a friend?" I asked.



One of the big advantages of working in the BBC is that we have lots of experts. I spoke to the guys that put the cameras in the cricket stumps and pockets of a snooker table. Ginger (he's got red hair) from Special Facilities said "Yep, we've got an old "bullet" camera we can make waterproof, only we think you're mad, we don't think the camera will survive so you have to buy it from us – that's £600". In a similar vein, my mate Chris Cobb from the Outside Broadcast Radio Links section found the oldest set of radio link transmitters the BBC possesses, with little expectation of seeing them returned.

The Navy put me in touch with Andy Kerr from a company called QinetiQ (pronounced Kinetic). Andy has a communications buoy and a big battery. So, with a heavily laden van full of kit I travelled to Plymouth to meet up with Andy and another BBC engineer called Nigel (strange but true). We then spent 6 hours fitting the transmitters into the



buoy; mounting the aerials on top and hauling the whole lot up to the funnel area of the Scylla.

The buoy was then placed into a convenient hatch. The camera was G-clamped to a handrail looking in through the bridge window; and the wire was tie-wrapped up the anchor line.



The principle was simple – the ship sinks, the buoy floats and viola, live pictures all the way down. The Canadian demolition guys were keen to meet us and find out more about the technology we were using. They were somewhat disappointed when they learnt it was the oldest kit we owned.

While rigging the ship we managed to get a few photos (not allowed in the secured dock) and signed our names. If you dive Scylla look out for my name printed boldly on the lip of the 3m sq. hatch directly behind the bridge.

What happened next was incredible. The ship gets towed out and anchored. We set ourselves up on shore. We've got guests to interview, my radio link receivers are working and when the guy called to fire nothing happens. We were all listening on VHF Ch16 while fire control was on Ch74. Cock Up! Next we have a jet ski run through the site and get chased off by the Navy. All sorted ...3, 2, 1, BANG!



The camera goes to black and then recovers with the explosive fireballs. Debris cascades down, the ship lists to starboard and water starts to wash down the decks.



The bridge floods, my buoy get stuck because of the ship's list, the picture goes to black. A second later the buoy pops out like a cork, the picture comes back, we're under water, bubbles and debris everywhere and finally out of gloom appears the bridge again. Pop - the camera died - bugger, too much water.

The end tally - we got the money shot (a term used apparently in some film circles) - we killed a camera and one aerial by filling them with water. Just another boring day working for the BBC ☺