

# Free Flow

The magazine for LSAC

Aug 2004  
Issue 78

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1<sup>st</sup> Wreck Dive

Threat to the Minch

Cover Photo Courtesy of J. Bill

Lions Mane Jelly Fish  
St Abbs  
24/7/04



# Chairman's Report

So, finally the new pool is open.

By the time this issue of *Freeflow* has been circulated , we will have had our first dip.

Lutterworth has waited many years for the new leisure centre, which bearing in mind the enormous increase in population over the last 20 years has been badly needed. Apart from the fact that the pool has been long past it's efficient life for years, sports facilities in the Town have been virtually nil.

The project (like our first RIB) has of course been partly funded by Sport England which is Lottery financed.

We must of course remember that our Club was partly 'to blame' for a 2 year delay to it's building.

The original design was for a 1.8 Meter deep pool which is the standard requirement for public and training pools. This would have been virtually useless for our purposes, so representations were made to Harborough District Council and Sport England, and a campaign started to have the depth increased to 3 meters.

Whilst this did not enhance our popularity with the Council, we won. The result being that the design was changed to provide a maximum depth of 3 meters. Unfortunately this left the Council with a problem. They could not build a pool with a depth of 3 meters for general public use. The only solution was to fit a moving floor. The floor actually fits into a 200mm section at the bottom leaving a clear 3

meters for our use. It can then be raised (it takes about 15 minutes) to whatever depth up to 1.8 meters. There is also a boom which can be raised to the top to divide the pool in half.

Apparently the additional cost of construction was in the region of £250K.

Who said that small organisations cannot take on large ones and win.

A result for our Club.

*Nigel*

# Diving Officer's Report

Well last week saw our first week in the new pool. The pool its self is a fantastic facility even with a few short comings in design like the showers. However we must remember we are very lucky to have this new pool and make the most of it.

The pool is slightly different in design, and three of the four sides have the water lapping up to the floor. I would recommend that when carrying out a stride entry you use the raised section at the deep end. We don't want any fins getting caught in the water resulting in a stumbled entry with the potential for people to harm them selves and the pool.

The storage facility is there, however we do need to put up some racking for the storage of kit. We also found out at the twelfth hour that we could not store cylinders in it. For this reason several members of the club who live in Luterworth have offered to store cylinders. Thanks to these people. A list will be drawn up and we will cater in advanced for cylinder we know we require. Bare with us things might be a little hit and miss for a few weeks to come.

To gain entry to the leisure centre we have made up some card to identify you as belonging to the club so you can have a swift entry into the premises. Nigel is currently handing these out on a Tuesday Night. Anybody wishing to go to the pool side needs to remove shoes and socks or find some protective covers to go over their shoes.

With the need to be extra vigilant as we are still very much under the microscope we have added an extra column to the calendar. This is for the rota of pool marshals. The people selected are those who have Dive Leader qualifications and above but who also hold the lifesaver award. Can you please ensure you are available or let my self or Neil T know in advanced. To see the list follow the link below

<http://www.netcomuk.co.uk/~lucyht/Lsac/downloads/tuesschedule2004.xls>

I think that's about it for now, and continue to have fun

Neil B

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At all good Newsagents now....  
Hence only downloadable from [lsac.co.uk](http://lsac.co.uk)



# Free Flow

## Editors Bit...



Another nice picture from Jon Bill taken at St Abbs the week before I was there.

Last months freeflow there was an item on "Lancaster in the Lakes". If anyone has any information please feel free to pass it on.

Whilst at St Abbs I chatted to a Ranger from the Marine Reserve who was explaining the need to have good relations with the local fishing trawlers. It seems that lobster pots had been targeted for both emptying and destruction by divers. Whilst this may have been done with good intentions it may backfire if the harbour becomes no longer commercially viable. It would not survive relying solely upon anglers and divers.

The advice from the Ranger is please leave the pots alone. The fishing in and around the Reserve is closely monitored and controlled.

For those of you who have yet to enjoy the new pool I can recommend it. It's big, deep, clean and good facilities.

Don't forget all the club information is on the web site, including trips and Tuesday night's timetable

[www.lsac.co.uk](http://www.lsac.co.uk)

Pete

# Page 3 Luvlies

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2 pictures of this month luvlie, yes our esteemed DO. I'm very please to see some more responsible members having a quite word in his ear about his loutish behaviour.

If you would like to become Miss or Mr Aug or know someone who should be, then please email me with the photo and a brief description of why the person should be a page 3 lovely.

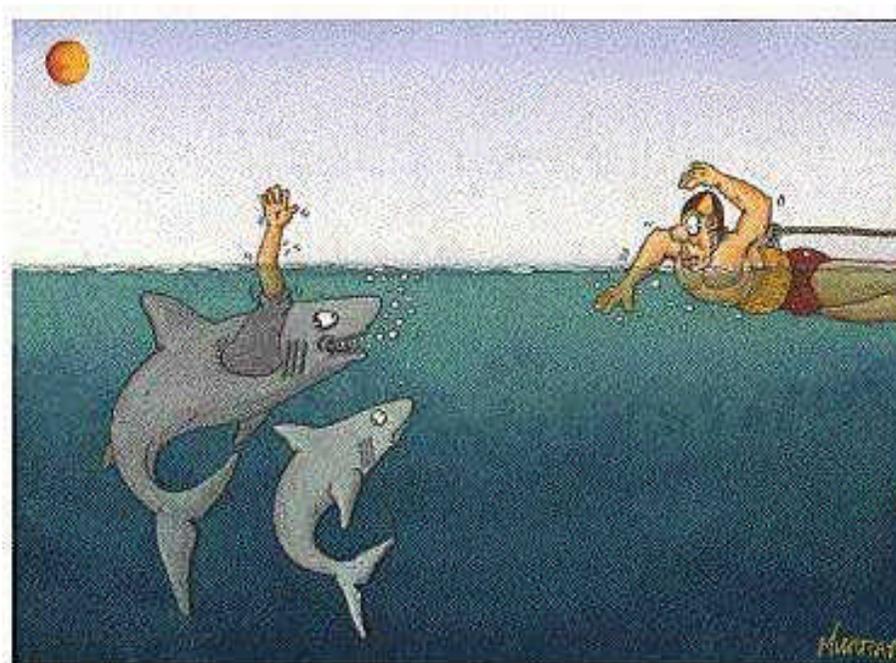
**[pete.barnard@power.alstom.com](mailto:pete.barnard@power.alstom.com)**



## Chuckle corner

Two prawns swimming happily along in the sea - one called Derek, one called Christian. They come across a magic cod who wants to grant them each a wish, he says to Derek "if you could be any sea creature, what would you be?" Derek immediately answers "I would love to be a great white shark" Bish bash boom, Derek turns into a great white. Christian doesn't hang around for his wish and scurries along home before his friend can eat him. Derek follows and bangs on the door, "let me in, let me in, I am still your friend" "No way" says Christian "you will eat me now you're a shark, I don't want to be your friend anymore!" Derek sadly swims away and tries some more friends houses but no-one will let him in. Sod this he thinks and sets off to meet magic cod. "I want to change back, I have no friends" Bish bash boom, magic cod changes the poor shark back into the prawn he was before. Excited, Derek swims back to his Christian's house. "Let me in, let me in" "No" says Christian, "you will eat me" Derek replies "No you don't understand,

I found cod and now I'm a prawn again Christian!!!!!!"



"SEE SON...THIS IS WHY I SAVE THESE BITS."

## My first wreck dive.

After diving for almost 5 years I finally got round to doing some wreck diving. Before it have never really appealed to me, having preferred reefs and wildlife dives instead. I was, however, pleasantly surprised, not only was the diving both thoroughly enjoyable and very interesting, but also full of a large variety of wildlife forming a unique micro-habitat.

The first days' diving was unfortunately cancelled due to bad weather, but this gave me the chance to re-visit a childhood memory – Land's End. This was only a short drive from where we were staying with lots of good cliff walks and beautiful scenery (well so I've been told, as misty weather prevented us seeing anything but the cliff bottom!!). Then at the end awaited the great Cornish tea, with plenty of thick clotted cream! Sennen Cove is a must, with a very cheap way of getting to Land's End – saving us almost £32!!

After an interesting day of exploring both Land's End and Penzance, the Pub called to us! There Claire, Neil. B, Neil. T, Fiona, Rachel, Sarah, dad and I met up with old acquaintances Phil Biggs and Lynn. After a few drinks we went round to Phil's place for a chill followed by more Cornish tea! Thanks to Phil whose help in locating the wrecks, boat driving and local pub info was very useful!

Luck was with us the next day and the sun was shining. We launched from Porthoustock, and with a little gentle persuasion (and a lots of huffing and puffing!!) we finally got the boat in. My first new experience was to drive the boat ~ great fun and with any hope another boat handling course it just around the corner?!!! (hint hint!!)

My first dive was with Neil. T to the Mohgon, which is approximately 25ms deep. The water was relatively clear with 10-15m visibility and after a short 5 min swim we found the wreck (thank goodness for Phil and his blue rope!). I admit to being a bit surprised (probably silly of me) but I had expected a more boat-like structure to the wreck, whereas this one didn't have that and it was not so easy to picture as it may once have been. After exploring the wreck and boilers of the boat we started our ascent and had the pleasure of meeting some quite large and beautiful jellyfish.

Once back on the surface and after 1 lost fin (so if anyone needs a fin strap I hear Neil. T has one!) and 1 emergency dive to rescue the short rope, which was stuck on the bottom we headed back into port for filling cylinders and to drop off Neil. B and Claire. Then we went straight back out for our second dive.

The second dive, with dad and Neil. T, was on the Volney wreck, resting about 20m down. This was definitely the wreck I enjoyed the most of the two, as it was more like I have imagined. I got a really good feel for the whole ship, as the shape of this boat was still intact

giving a good sense of what it must have been like when it was above water. The shot line was bang-on, under 2m from the boilers and the wreck having again quite a lot of wildlife with plenty of nooks and crannies to explore.

After 2 enjoyable dives we headed back to port and to the campsite. The campsite we stayed at was perfect with peacocks wandering around and plenty of space for both divers and boats. There is an air fill there and an owner who is nuts about diving, with lots of useful diving knowledge (especially good places to go around the area) and plenty of interesting and amazing dive tales!! The camping price is very good, at only £3.50 a head with showers (needing 10p for hot water) and good bathroom facilities.

So all in all a very good and enjoyable experience and I am determined to get lots more wreck diving done!!

Ann-Marie. B

## **BSAC AND MCS JOIN FORCES TO HIGHLIGHT THREAT TO THE MINCH**

Members of two British Sub-Aqua Clubs teamed up on an environmental expedition with the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) to record precious sea life around Rum on 9-11 June. What motivated a collaboration of 24 divers in four tiny rigid hull inflatable boats to brave the waters of the Atlantic? The wish to highlight the wealth of life in UK seas at incident, proving that divers care about Britain's marine life.

The British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC) understand that their sport relies upon good water quality and undisturbed underwater habitats and is getting active in the environmental arena. BSAC members from Dalriada Diving, Argyll and Perth Sub Aqua Club collaborated with MCS to form a team of divers, boat Cox'ns and marine biologists to spend three days diving based on the Isle of Rum, southwest of the Isle of Skye. Rum, largest of the 'Small Isles' (Canna, Sanday, Rum, Eigg and Muck/, is a National Nature reserve, supporting 70,000 pairs of Manx Shearwater, one of the largest colonies in the world, and sea eagles. However its valuable waters and the life they support are all at risk.

The expedition concentrated upon sites that had never been surveyed before. Using the Seasearch method Marine Conservation Society divers recorded some of the rich life to be found in UK seas. What they found amazed some of the divers. "We dived on submarine plateaus towering out of deep seas and topped with rolling downs and home to forests of hydroids and feather stars. We dived over precipitous walls festooned with fluorescent green and pinkjewel anemones.' One of the party exclaimed that the wall was "like the inside of the Queens purse". Expedition organiser and Environmental officer with the BSAC Andrew MacLeod explains: The Minch, a narrow corridor of water to the west of Skye, is home to several dolphin, whale and seabird species and grey seals. The Minch and the rest of Scotland's inshore seas also support one of the

most diverse mosaics of marine habitat on earth, considered by the World Wide Fund for Nature and MCS to be of world class conservation value.'

Annually it is estimated that 20% of all British crude oil is tankered through the Minch, whilst some 400 bulk carriers and tankers transporting oil and other chemicals pass through the Minch every month. Oil pollution is a UK problem, Andrew MacLeod continues: 'The UK has already suffered three of the worlds 20 most catastrophic spills of all time. Those very features that make great diving such as rocky reefs and skerries also endanger shipping. The Torrey canyon disaster off Cornwall in 1967 and the Sea Empress in Milford Haven in 1996 demonstrated that vast areas of prime diving sites are at risk. The Rum expedition is a platform to express our national concerns in a practical way.' January the 5th 1993 is not a day that will be forgotten in Shetland. By 7 am that morning oil fumes could be smelled three kilometres away from the rocks of Garth Ness onto which the tanker 'Braer' had foundered after losing power an hour earlier. The tanker, carrying 84.000 tones of light crude oil from a Norwegian refinery near Stavenger to Ouebec, was taking a shortcut through Shetland waters. By early afternoon seals were being covered in oil and thousands of sea birds were endangered.

After the Erica polluted the Bay of Biscay in 1999, the EEC and International Maritime Authority (IMO) stated that they would act by introducing a raft of measures to improve the safety of oil tankers. However for many these have not gone anywhere near far enough. The 'Right of Innocent Passage' refers to a right of a ship to pass through waters without having to declare what cargo it is carrying or details about its voyage. Local Politicians have been warning of the potential for environmental catastrophe in the Minch and have called for laws that will abolish the right of innocent passage, compelling the Captain to inform the Coastguard of the cargo and to follow safe navigation advice. They would also like to see requirements for pilot boats to be provided.

Calum Duncan, Marine Conservation Society Scottish Officer and Seasearch Scotland co-ordinator said: 'The Rum BSAC/Seasearch expedition has highlighted once again the wonderful life beneath UK seas. The spectacular submarine walls of Canna and Sanday were cloaked in northern sea fans (a type of branching coral/ and jewel anemones) northern Rum was crawling with colourful sea slugs (nudibranchs); south Rum crawling with large cotton-spinner sea cucumbers and un-surveyed offshore banks were carpeted in meadows of lush red seaweeds and celtic featherstars.'

Calum continued: 'Following the Braer tanker accident in 1991, the Donaldson Inquiry recommended the introduction of Marine Environmental High Risk Areas (MEHRAs) in UK waters, which the inquiry defined as "comparatively limited areas of high sensitivity which are also at risk from shipping". If ever a stretch of water was worthy of MEHRA designation, it is the Minch, bordering as it does some of the richest marine habitats on Earth, including the Small Isles. MCS, BSAC, other NGOs, community groups and Councilors are all calling for the immediate designation of MEHRAs, including the Minch, to ensure that fragile marine habitats and coastal economies will not be devastated by a Braerlike, or worse still, Prestige-like tanker accident.'

The English Channel is another area of concern. Transshipment of oil refers to the practice of decanting the cargo from Massive bulk tankers into smaller ones for transport ashore. Concerns have been expressed over the age of some of the larger vessels.

Concludes: The expedition demonstrates that BSAC's interests in environmental affairs is going to be an active and campaigning one. It has shown that local diving clubs can get involved if they want to, through supporting initiatives such as Seasearch, and help to conserve the environment upon which our sport depends. BSAC will be further engaging their membership in environmental matters and adding their voice to the growing clamour for marine reform in the UK. 'We will also be engaging with Government at all levels other this issue and other environmental issues.

For further details contact:

BSAC Environmental officer Andrew MacLeod on 01631 562125 Ext 2007 /Office hours/, 01631 570165 (Home/ or 07901 510667, [andrew.macleod@argyllbute.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.macleod@argyllbute.gov.uk)

Calum Duncan, Marine Conservation Society Scottish Officer on 0131 226 6360 or 07879 821 494 or email [mcs.scotland@care4free.net](mailto:mcs.scotland@care4free.net) Chris Wood, UK Seasearch Co-ordinator 07776 14Z 096

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q.** I have a leak in my dry suit.

After every dive my left arm is soaking and the rest of my under suit varies from damp to dripping wet. Although I have tried with empty pop bottles and a football to inflate the suit I cannot find a leak. I also have tried over inflating whilst in the swimming pool with no success. Can you advise how to find the leak or is there any other issues (poor technique etc) I may have. I have over 200 dives in the suit and very few (less than a handful) have been dry. The suit is a membrane one and has an auto shoulder dump.

**A.** Dry suits should be just that - dry.

As the leak is from the left arm, have you checked that the dump valve is seated well? Also try a different valve unit to eliminate that.

Have you got skinny wrists? - maybe a prominent tendon could be forming a channel?

Membrane suits are taped on the inside and leaks occur from external pressure. Over inflating the suit will press the tape closer to the fabric and may not show a leak. Therefore to conduct a pressure test effectively, you need to turn the suit inside out, reversing the inflate and dump valves accordingly. Seal the wrists and neck, inflate and use a spray bottle of soapy water over the suspected area. Leaks should be revealed as bubbles. If that shows nothing, take it to a reputable dealer - they are more experienced in detecting leaks Good Luck!

If you have any questions and can't get sense from other club members, or are afraid to ask, then drop me a line and I'll see what I can do. - Ed