

York Sub Aqua Club Newsletter

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Jan 2004 Issue 6

Chairman's Chat

Firstly I must congratulate those members who took and passed the life saving exam and the boat handling course. The skills they acquired will be of great benefit to the club. Thanks go to Brian for giving his time to instruct on both courses and to Gary for arranging the courses and instructing.

Gary is getting next season's programme of dives and training together, starting with Capernwray on 25th Jan. An ice breaker has been arranged.

On the social side, I must thank Vicki for organizing the Christmas do at the Jiapur Spice. Everyone who went said how enjoyable it was. I was so sorry that after putting in all that effort, following the cancellation at The Willow, Vicki could not make it. Vicki is busy organizing our next social event, which will be the Chairman's do on the 28 Feb. (Venue to be arranged) Dave Scaife will be asking the questions at a planned a quiz night on 26th March at the clubhouse.

It is pleasing to see that Ian seems to be over the worst of his operation on his knee, and he is getting back to his former self. Those divers on the Mull trip may wish to know that Peter's cousin, Mick Needham, was diagnosed as having cancer and was admitted to hospital soon after returning from Mull. He has responded well to treatment, and although not out of the woods just yet, he is much better.

Yours in Diving

Ian

Dive Schedule 2004 – The Diving Officer Reports

The preliminary Dive Schedule for 2004 is attached as a separate Excel spreadsheet. As always, keep your eyes on the Club notice board for any changes and additions. As a guide to members here are some notes on the courses being offered. I am in the process of checking last season's dives- could members please bring their log books to the club so I can verify the number of UK dives Jan – Jan.

O2 Course 21st Feb

The O2 Course is required for the new Dive Leader Grade (2003 +) or old Dive Leaders converting, to proceed with the new Advanced Diver Grade. Members who have already done O2 for the new Dive Leader need not do again, as long as they have done the course within the last 3 years. Single day course at New Earswick. Numbers limited by resuscitators.

New Advanced Diver (2003+)

We have some members wishing to proceed with the New Advanced Diver Grade. We need to pull external Instructors in to teach part of the new Advanced Diver, so this will be done once. Let me know if you are interested. Currently have 3 people on the list.

PRM on 6th March

The PRM course is again a requirement for new Dive Leader (2003+) or old dive leaders wishing to pursue new Advanced Diver. Needs to be refreshed. Early plans are to run this course over 2 days at either Coniston, Ullswater or Windermere. This will give support divers a better environment and much better viz. Should also be able to cope with more students due to being run over a weekend.

Stoney Cove 20th March

Should give anyone the chance to achieve 35 metre dive at Stoney.

Gary Cameron, Diving Officer

Chairman's Dinner

Saturday 28th February

Details soon to be released by Vicki Adams, Social Secretary.

Approx cost per head £25

Dust off those tuxedos, gents, and remember, ladies, it's the 29th Feb at midnight!

York Branch Collect Prize



Following our success in coming second in the national competition organised to find the best way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the BSAC (reported in Bottom Times 5), November 16th saw branch members heading down the motorway to the Birmingham Dive Show to collect our prize. Of course, we also intended having a good look around and maybe picking up some bargains. The Dive Show is well worth a visit, as it is useful to be able to visit the entire range of equipment manufacturers, many of whom have special offers on only available over the weekend. There was an interesting programme of talks, although none of us managed to fit one in, what with all the shopping to be done! Our chairman did find time to try a rebreather in the special pool, and he emerged extremely enthusiastic about the experience. The presentation duly took place, in rather cramped conditions on the BSAC stall, and we returned, laden down with our goodies. The two Beuchat regulators, BCD's, masks and snorkels and Typhoon fins are currently being used in pool training.

Appeal for cylinders - especially 10 and 12 litre

We only have 4 club training cylinders.

If you have any unwanted bottles cluttering up your garage, please contact Dave Blackburn, Equipment Officer. They will be put to good use, and you will earn the undying gratitude of the Committee!

The Diving Officers Conference – Ian Salmons reports

You may know that I attended the Diving Officers Conference in London. There is a report on the conference in the January 2004 edition of Dive, so I won't go over the entire conference. It was pleasing to note that there was a decrease in diving fatalities last year and no rebreather users died. Brian Cummings puts his topic across very sensitively, but he has a waspish sense of humour, too. He spoke about a National Instructor who was the subject of a DCI. Apparently the instructor is somewhat over weight. His idea of pre-dive planning was to spend the evening in the pub, consuming at least eight pints of beer. He never touches water unless it is mixed with malt, yeast and hops. He had no idea about the risk of dehydration to divers, or that passing small quantities of bright yellow urine is a symptom. Well, as Brian says, HE DOES NOW!

Reg Valentine gave a talk on the history of BSAC. He mentioned our club, recalling the incident off Flamborough Head in which a member was shot in the head by a fisherman who had mistaken him for a seal. The lectures that Mike Pitts and David Doubilet gave were truly remarkable. Some of the photographs were astonishing.

I had a chat with Simon Rogerson, editor of Dive magazine and Charlotte Boan, the staff reporter. Of course they are both deep into diving, but they said that all the staff on the magazine are divers. If they are not divers when they join, they are rapidly 'persuaded' to become one.

On a personal note, I met the current Chairman and DO from my first club, Alfreton BSAC. They both joined after I left, but it was nice to chat about mutual acquaintances. The DO still had my training record, which he has just sent to me. It makes embarrassing reading – did I really do that? Equally embarrassing is the Golden Karabiner Award, their equivalent of our Mug of the Year. Suffice to say that the award was founded following an incident that involved me!

Fundraiser!

York Sub Aqua Club will be hosting a

Quiz Night Friday 26th March

At the New Earswick Sports and Social Club.

Question master: our very own Dave Scaife.

Full details to be released soon – please make sure you put this one in your diaries!

Ay, Ay, Ay, What's going on 'ere then...



...I couldn't possibly say, except that Santa seemed to have sneaked a few naughty goodies into the Christmas raffle! Our training officer doesn't seem **too** unhappy to see this particular addition to the party, though! The Christmas "Do" at the Jaipur Spice was voted a great success, with glasses raised to Vicki, who despite all her hard work organising the event, couldn't join us as she had to go to Sri Lanka to cook brussel sprouts.

Inspiration Try-dive – Brian Goddard Reports

Recently I ventured to the cold reaches of Capernwray to sample the latest technology in diving equipment. Andy Hayhurst of Dales Divers was offering the opportunity to try out the Inspiration, Azimuth and Drager Rebreathers on an open water try-dive.

The Drager and Azimuth are semi-enclosed units while the Inspiration is closed circuit the difference is significant. Both units use scrubbers to remove carbon dioxide from the expired air and recycle the air to a flexible bladder called the counter-lung. The counter-lung provides air to the diver at ambient pressure and sufficient volume to facilitate respiration. The semi-enclosed unit replenishes the oxygen consumed by injecting nitrox into the counter-lung at a controlled rate. Gas in the counter-lung is maintained at a pre-set pressure above ambient by a pressure relief valve. In practice this valve releases an intermittent stream of gas into the water, hence the term semi-enclosed. The closed circuit set allows no gas to escape the loop and replenishes the oxygen consumed by the diver by the direct injection of pure oxygen.

My interest lay in the Inspiration consisting of two three-litre gas cylinders and a three-litre paint tin sized plastic container containing the scrubber chemical (Sofnolime). The lid of the scrubber unit contains three separate oxygen-sensing cells and four lithium camera batteries that power the two computers for the unit. All this is enclosed in a streamlined plastic backpack. Two large convoluted rubber air hoses carry air to and from the diver via a mouthpiece. The flexible counter-lungs are situated over both shoulders on top of the backpack shoulder straps, an Auto-air provides open circuit bail out and a buddy wing completes the unit.

After all the tales of doom I have heard about this unit I found it a delight to use in the water. Breathing was so effortless and quiet it was a whole new experience and I was immediately at ease and enjoying myself. I practiced closing off the mouth piece under water, essential to prevent flooding of the unit, and bailing out to the Auto-air experiencing no problems. Initially I had jaw fatigue from holding on to the rather large mouth piece and maintaining control of the air pipes which are quite large at approximately 40 millimetres diameter. This did however improve as the dive progressed and I relaxed. At thirteen metres I had no problems swimming mid water and maintaining neutral buoyancy. I could even make out what the instructor was saying to me through his mouthpiece, provided he kept it simple. All too soon my time was up and the most critical part of the dive was about to take place. The latest units are fully automatic in all phases of the dive except the ascent. When ascending the gas in the counter-lung expands and increasing your buoyancy and necessitating manual release. This does require practice to gain perfection particularly near the surface.

So what are the pros and cons of the Inspiration?

It is the only available closed circuit rebreather that is CE approved to a depth of 50 metres using air as a diluent and 100 metres using try mix. The semi-enclosed units are approved to 40 metres only. The two three litre cylinders contained within the unit have a gas equivalent of twenty twelve-litre cylinders used on open circuit at thirty metres. The scrubber has a duration of three hours independent of depth. The unit allows the diver to choose the highest safe partial pressure of oxygen throughout the dive profile reducing nitrogen levels with equivalent reductions in decompression and narcotic effect. The ability to change oxygen partial pressures during the dive permits high oxygen level deco stops. All the advantages of Nitrox without worrying which mix to carry or are multiple mixes required. The unit does require regular careful maintenance and has a running cost of two to three hundred pounds per year not including gas and Sofnolime. The computers have to be monitored regularly during the dive to ensure the partial pressure of oxygen is being maintained at the required level. Unlike open circuit, where any malfunction is evident immediately, a rebreather will allow a diver to continue to breathe normally a gas mix which will not sustain life.

Perhaps for most of us the major draw back is the price. At approximately £4,000 the unit is not cheap. Add to this the maintenance costs and it is clearly for the dedicated diver. It does however allow you to go deeper for longer with less decompression.

Do I want one? **Yes Please!!!**

(Editor's note – Brian has since parted with the cash and is the proud owner...! If you see him down at the club I'm sure he can be persuaded to tell you how his training is going)

Feeling a bit chilly with all this damp weather?

York Sub-Aqua Club shirts & fleeces are always available at very reasonable prices:

Polo Shirts £7.95

Sweatshirts £8.95

Lightweight Fleece £14.95

Heavyweight Fleece £19.95

Your name embroidered at no extra cost!

Contact Pete Dalton

01904 427300

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