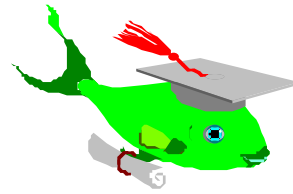


Bubbles in the Bath

The official journal of the Bath University Sub-Aqua Club
Vol 2 No 2 Spring 1994



A few words from the... DO

The new year is well under way and the new diving season is fast approaching. I am busy organizing diving activities for the spring and summer, but before discussing future plans, let's look at what the club has been up to during the autumn.

Novice training

Novice training traditionally occupies the pool sessions and most of the members' time during the autumn and into the spring terms. This year is no exception, but it is the first that the club has run the revised Novice I course in a full term format. An advantage of this is that a much greater emphasis is now placed on practical pool sessions and as a result more demands made on instructors' time. During the first week of the autumn term (whilst Freshers were still recovering from Week 1 hangovers, allegedly) Mark Scaife and I held a pool lesson for the 'new' instructors. We aimed to give confidence and a few new skills. I think that we succeeded, but it is mainly due to the efforts of the regular instructors that have made the Novice course a success. I feel sure that the new members have been impressed with the instruction and are keen to start diving for real. The BS-AC regional coach recently visited a Monday pool session and I am pleased to report that he was

totally satisfied with the organization and training of the club.

Winter activities

In November we went to Weymouth for the now annual Brian Charles hard-boat dive, courtesy of Alan 'organization' Odeku. By 'we went', I mean to say 'those hardy souls and their dry-suits'. As is normal for November, the sky was very grey, the sea was green-grey, and the wrecks were, well, black-grey. It was a team spirit-building day and oh, Max dived with her swanky new Oceanic (and swanky new buddy!!). See later for more details.

December is not a good month for diving at sea. So instead, I arranged a boat-handling course at a BS-AC school. The opportunity to cox a 175 hp RIB that surged with instant power was too great an opportunity to miss. Everyone successfully gained their boat-handling and RYA Powerboat Level 2 certificates, and have been conditioned to shout 'man overboard, post...no star..err, left-side'. I'll never know how a certain anonymous [but outstanding diver and brilliant good-looking (*grammar taken verbatim*, ed.) member passed after a crunch with the instructor's car.

I represented the branch at the Diving Officers' Conference in London in November. This is an annual event and brings together the clubs' DOs and NQIs (*just looked it up and it's 'Nationally Qualified Instructors'*, ed.).

SPECIAL HOLIDAY ISSUE

I was impressively reminded by the presence of 2000 delegates from countries as far-flung as New Zealand, Qatar and Bermuda, that the BS-AC is the biggest and best diving organization in the World (*Deric says the cheque's in the post*, ed.). Several interesting lectures were given, most notable was a presentation on the history of scuba diving by Hans Haas (himself a pioneer of scuba diving, predating Cousteau). Then bang up-to-date, a presentation detailing the latest advances in re-breathing equipment. The National Diving Committee explained the intended future direction for the BS-AC.; they felt that after 2 years of very rapid development (particularly in the area of training), a period of consolidation was appropriate. I am in total agreement.

Dive Leader and Advanced Diver Training

I am very keen to ensure that the Novice and Sports training activity does not overload the club's instructors so that existing Sports Divers are not able to progress to Dive Leader. In the past, the club has not directed enough effort towards Dive Leader training. A Dive Leader is 'an experienced and competent diver able to lead Novice divers' (BS-AC qualification definition). With 25 keen Novices, the club will need the skills of more Dive Leaders. In December I ran a one-day DL event and this requires a lot of time and effort; but as a result we gained one more Dive Leader with two more on the way!

Diving, diving, and going to the pub

For the new Novices the spring term sees the completion of the Novice practical. This is being done in a deep

pool in Bristol before...yes...open water dives! Several day trips will be run to that diver's paradise, Stoney Cove, to give open water experience before....

The Novice Holiday

This will take place during the first week of the Easter holiday. There will be lots of opportunity to do Sports Diver training around the Lizard and Porthkerris, Cornwall. Guy is the key man on this one. Price and dates are not available at the moment_ keep your eyes peeled.

Isles of Scilly

For some years, the club has dived the Scillies at Easter, under the super planning of Mark Scaife; this year we're not, oh no, so instead we are running a trip at the height of summer. Stunning undersea life and intact wrecks beckon with the best viz in the UK. (July 9th for 1 week, limited places, please contact Paul for info and deposits.)

The summer

Several other hard-boat trips are being planned to take place during the summer, destinations currently include Poole, Plymouth and Wales.

'The diving season is fast approaching' is how I began, let me finish with 'lets make it fun and safe'. Diving inherently involves some risk, but if everyone dives according to safe diving practises, then no-one will get hurt. Happy diving!

Paul



Dear Bubbles

Congratulations to...

Nick Clark (Dive Leader, once he's found the pen)

Max Smith (Dive Leader)

Fred Brewin (Dive Leader)

Paul Cracknell (Advanced Diver)

Emma Joynson (Advanced Diver)



I am pleased to hear that some people have been behaving themselves and are assets to the club (see above); however, there appears to be a persistent group of people that cannot cope with the high-flying world of diving.

Q. When I recently attended a boat-handling course at Weymouth, I had the misfortune to reverse into the instructor's car.

Luckily he passed me; however, when I return to do the Diver Coxswain exam, do you think he will be so fair-minded? Also, I am getting worried about the number of mishaps I am having (see tent ripping in previous issue). Do you think that I am cursed? *Blushing, Bristol.*

A. I think that it is time to adopt a low attitude and possibly use some sort of disguise.

Q. I keep filling my piggy bank with lots of cheques, saving them for a rainy day, but then people take them away insisting that they would be better off in a bank. Is this fair? *Hoarding, Bath.*

A. I think that you should pass the cheques on to the bank as soon as possible in order to get over your problem.

Q. Whilst relaxing on a hard-boat one afternoon in November, my buddy, without any warning, vomited over me. I overcame the initial smell, but now I am left with an awful stain on my dry-suit. Can you recommend a dry-cleaner who could remedy my problem? *Stained, Bath.*

A. I suggest that your buddy does not visit an Indian take-away the eve before a dive trip.

Finally, I sneaked a look at a logbook belonging to someone who went on a hard-boat dive with the club in November; they seemed pretty upset about the whole thing, I hope that all of the club's dives aren't like this one.

Why were we there? It was cold, we were going to get wet, the sea did not resemble a mirror, and it was November. The faithful crowd, although dwindling in numbers, returned for the annual November hard-boat dive off Weymouth. The standard of previous years' trips meant that

the *Alex Van Opstal* had a lot to live up to: the *M-2* (and there are a few who will not forget that trip), the *Binnendijk* which never materialized so we dived *The Hood* instead.



After allowing at least an hour faff factor, everyone was keenly gathered on the quay_ well Nick, Howard, Paul and Alan O. were trying to find somewhere to park their cars, and Lucas, Mark W., Sean (the Brummy) and me (Max) were lugging the kit on board.

At last we set off, into the white water_ still if the dives were called off at least we would get some of Brian Charles' soup. It was quite a ride out to the *AVO*, the boat was all over the place, and it didn't help that the DO was hogging the wheel-house. At one point a couple of people smiled nervously, and Nick was grateful that someone had reminded him to take some Stugeron that morning. Once again, it was the DO who initiated the Mexican vomit wave—although stunted compared with the Poole hard-boat trip in July.

Alan and Lucas were first in the water; Nick was so keen to get in that he forgot to do up all of the buckles on his stab-jacket and had to get hauled in, along with me, which unfortunately placed me downwind of Howard's stomach contents. Sean was very excited about the prospect of diving with such a slick diving club, but Paul (his buddy) was going to make sure that he did not abuse the computer that had been lent to him.

It was dark down there, and the most interesting item that I saw was a yellow dustpan. Nick reckoned that he saw a Tompot blenny. Trust our luck that the anchor was dropped in at the mangled end, rather than the intact end, and embarrassingly no-one had asked which way the wreck lay.

Back on the boat people's stomachs were calming down with the prospect that the next dive would be inside the breakwater. The *Countess of*

Erne is a really good dive and the ship is reasonably intact; however, this fact made no difference to us as the viz was rubbish and meeting Paul and Sean at the bow did not help matters.

I'm sure that everybody enjoyed themselves that day, and that we are all better people from the experience. Let's make it the same time next year?

Club announcement

In October the club changed its status from a BS-AC Special Branch to a BS-AC Youth Federation Branch. In effect, this reduces the BS-AC subscription for members aged 14–22, who do not now receive a Sport Diving manual when first joining and who also forfeit voting rights at BS-AC elections. Old folks over 23 pay the usual subscription and this change has no effect upon them; they remain full diving members of the BS-AC.

Scillie Summer Extravaganza

Your chance to spend a week (starting July 9) meeting interesting new fish (or



looking up old mates) in your local tropical paradise. All from Tim Allsop's palatial hard-boat

Morvoren.

Just £220 all-in, £50 deposit. Book

now! or you'll get trampled in the rush of people who went last year and the year before that and...etc. etc.

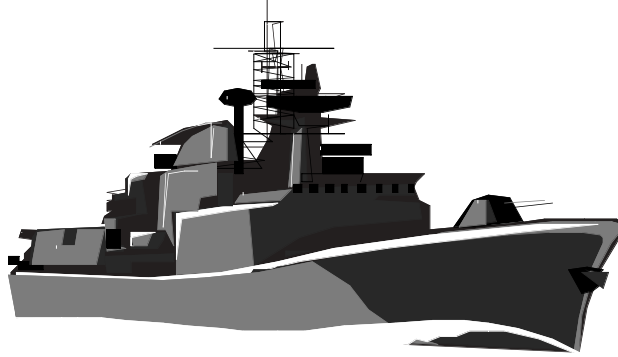
***Rivet-heads'* corner**

U-boat aces

Many of the wrecks that we dive on were sunk by torpedoes fired from U-boats during the first world war. 1917, in particular, was a bad year for British and Allied shipping losses, and shipping production struggled to keep up with the losses. Generally, there were two types of U-boat: UB, or attack boats, and the UC class which laid mines. The fastest U-boats could manage 13.5 kt on the surface and ~7 kt underwater. When not in use the U-boats were kept in well-built shelters. As many as 25 would be kept under a roof of cement, iron and gravel more than 6 ft thick.

Being a U-boat crewman was by no means easy and definitely not without danger: the average life-span was 6 weeks. The U-boats mainly responsible for the wrecks along the coast were known as the Flanders Flotilla and came were based at Bruges or Zeebrugge. The boats then had to traverse the barrages, of which the Dover Barrage was the most notorious. There were nets and mines, patrol boats, then mines anchored in tiers plus lights in the water, and also giant search lights. The U-boats tended to go over the barrages at night to avoid detection. Apparently, one night 18 of them left port and only 2 returned: usually 1 boat per week was lost, 199 in total for the First World War. All of the crew were volunteers, until the last few months of the war when Germany needed all the men it could get.

The German U-boat commanders made no secret of their identity and that of their comrades' to British and Allied



intelligence. Hence the Navy knew the existence of the U-boat aces: Johann Lohs of UB-57, Reinhold Salzwedel of UB-10, UC-21 and UC-71, Ramien of UB-109, Pustkuchen of UB-66, Otto Steinbrinck of UB-10, UB-18, UB-57 and UC-65. Ober-Leutnant zur see Howaldt was also a U-boat ace. He managed 60 days of undersea warfare and was considered to be very lucky to survive the war. He commanded two U-boats in total (UB-40 and UB-107), both of which were sunk; UB-40 displaced 260 tons, it could do 9.2 kt on the surface and 5.8 kt underwater, and had a crew of 21. He was eventually promoted to Kapitänleutnant for his services. 100,000 tons of shipping were sunk by him and his crew: between June to September 1917, there were 19 hits from 24 torpedoes fired, (17,812 tons of large shipping and 39,253 tons of small shipping). He was no ordinary U-boat commander, he and his crew used to board ships that they had captured, steal valuables and then sink them. This was rather hazardous as some small boats carried professional Royal Navy crews

One of his most successful 'outings' commenced on July 15, when Howaldt and his crew of UB-40 surfaced on the Sussex coast and sank a small group of fishing boats. On July 16, they surfaced in Lyme Bucht, or Lyme Bay, which was his favourite hunting ground. They waited for 4 days in wait for the sound of a ship's engines. On July 20, 1917 Howaldt's luck was in. The long-awaited sound of engines belonged to none other than the *Salsette*. She was highly sought after among enemies of the allies. She was a very attractive P&O liner, and although she

had a gun mounted on her deck to ward off 'intruders', it was a dummy. She weighed 5842 tons, was 440 ft long, with a 53 ft beam, 10,000 hp engine and twin bronze screws drove her along at ~20 kt.

The first torpedo struck in the engine room. It took only 28 minutes to sink. Fourteen people were killed. The *Salsette* now lies in Lyme Bay off Portland Bill. UB-40 did not hang around for long, it descended rapidly and managed to dodge the depth charges which did not take long in coming. The charges were very concentrated and the blast caused a minor leak in the engine room. One hour later Howaldt surfaced so that he could repair the leak, however, not content with sinking just a P&O liner, he tried his hand at the *L.H.Carl*: 1 torpedo was enough to sink her quicker than his previous customer, killing 2 people. The *Rota* was another victim of Howaldt on July 22 in Tor Bay. UB-40 got back to Zeebrugge on July 25. Howaldt was then promoted to Kapitänleutnant.

Other ships that he sank in UB-40 were the *Marguerite* and *Northfield* (28/6/17, Lyme Bay), *Glocliffe* (19/8/17, Berry Head), *Radaas* (21/9/17, Lyme Bay), *Greleen* (22/9/17, North Tor Bay), *City of Swansea* (24/9/17, Babbacombe Bay), *Gefion* (25/10/17, Babbacombe Bay), and *Chateau Yquem* (17/4/18).

Eventually he was given a new U-boat. UB-107 displaced 640 tons and its top speed was 14 kt, it had four bow tubes, one stern tube and could carry 10 spare torpedoes. In July 1918, Howaldt went on a hard-earned rest, but UB-107 went out on a mission to the North Sea. UB-107 was depth-charged fatally on July 27 off Scarborough. Eventually, UB-40 was blown up by the Germans

when Flanders was re-taken by the Allies.

Max



A day in the life of a U-boat commander



Ober-Leutnant zur see T. Farmeruthless was just a plain old hero.

Ober-Leutnant zur see Tim Farmeruthless was considered to be an ass ace. The sudden appearance of the distinctive huge

cheesy grin painted on the bows of his command, UB-P45, as it

surfaced to face the enemy, struck terror into the heart of many an enemy seaman. Such was Farmeruthless' renown that UB-P45 was crewed entirely by volunteers who didn't even get their long hours of overtime paid, because Chequenstaschenführer Mark Mattissöhn was not very efficient at budgeting the U-boat Department. Farmeruthless had meticulously trained his crew to be efficient and fast (despite not being able to spell meticulously), and as a result thought of him as their hero. Farmeruthless insisted on receiving exactly the same rations of bully beef and sauerkraut as them; this would have improved their morale still further were it not for the fact that they had to spend long periods of time hermetically sealed into a confined space with him. Those who survived the experience admired Farmeruthless as he was cool and calm, even when going through the Kent Barrages. 'He knows

the barrages like the hair (note singular) on his head' remarked his second in command Sub-Leutnant Blaubuchtickenführer Paul Krauschnell. Krauschnell had taken over command of UB - P 4 5 while Farmeruthless was seconded on a dangerous mission commanding an uberwaterfallenflippenraft-mit-splach-und-glugg in the East African theatre of war. Although he did drive UB-P45 rather too fast and tended to reverse into things, Krauschnell's spell in charge of UB-P45 had been successful. On Farmeruthless' return, Krauschnell continued to take the helm as often as he was allowed. This suited Farmeruthless who liked nothing better than to leave the control room altogether and go and see what everybody else was doing, and tell them how they could do it better: after all he was the captain so he could do anything he wanted. However, it was because of Farmeruthless' unparalleled skill in underwater navigation that he had been selected for today's mission: a reconnaissance to investigate the British secret weapon, *HMS Scaife*, which was out on sea trials. Farmeruthless did not need to switch his engines off to listen for ships' engines 'he could smell ships coming 10 miles off', remarked another of his crew Untersee Leutnant Nikolaus Klarkhaus. Contact was successfully made and Farmeruthless had time to note the ingenious drainage system in the scuppers of the innovative vessel before the lifeboats arrived to tow it



Farmeruthless devised his greatest battle plans whilst in the shower.

back to port (shoreline membership £9 only, see Nick for details).

The mission went without a hitch due to the slick organization of Farmeruthless, and UB-P45 returned back in port just in time for tea.



Nick and Max

STOP PRESS

See Alan O. if you're interested in a trip to Gozo in September.

Congratulations to Lucas Partridge on obtaining his Ph.D.

Diary (Spring Term 1994)

Week 1

Mon (17/1): Pool session (18.30–22.00; pool)

Wed (19/1): Pool session (20.15–21.05; pool)

Week 2

Mon (24/1): Deep pool session (meet 18.30 in Bath; Bristol)

Wed (26/1): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), Pool session (20.15; pool)

Week 3

Mon (31/1): Deep pool session (meet 18.30 in Bath; Bristol)

Wed (2/2): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), Pool session (20.15; pool)

Week 4

Mon (7/2): Deep pool session (meet 18.30 in Bath; Bristol)

Wed (9/2): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), swimming (20.15; pool)

Week 5

Mon (14/2): Sports Diver pool session (18.30–22.00; pool)

Wed (16/2): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), swimming (20.15; pool)

Week 6

Mon (21/2): Sports Diver pool session (18.30–22.00; pool)

Wed (23/2): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), swimming (20.15; pool)

Week 7

Mon (28/2): Sports Diver pool session (18.30–22.00; pool)

Wed (2/3): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), swimming (20.15; pool)

Week 8

Mon (7/3): Sports Diver pool session (18.30–22.00; pool)

Wed (9/3, Max's birthday, please don't ask which one): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), swimming (20.15; pool)

Week 9

Mon (14/3): Sports Diver pool session (18.30–22.00; pool)

Wed (16/3): Sports Diver lecture (18.30; 3E 2.4), swimming (20.15; pool)

Week 10

Mon (21/3): Sports Diver pool session (18.30–22.00; pool)

Wed (23/3): Sports Diver theory exam (18.30; 3E 2.4), swimming (20.15; pool)

Fri (1/4)?: Novice holiday (t.b.a.)