

CLUB MEETING DATES

There is a club meeting on 3 April in the Royal Beach as usual. Menu for the evening is Cow and Beer Pie and there will be the usual raffle and general merriment. If you are intending to come can you let us know so that we can order enough food. Food for guests is £5 payable on the night. To remind you, the club meeting on 1 May is a joint function that will include a talk by John Bevan on the History of Diving in the Solent. This is a **ticket only** event as numbers are limited to around 120 and there is an entry of £5 (£11 for guests), which will be donated to charity. It is filling up, so if you want to go please let us know.

It has been a busy month for courses, especially for March – many congratulations to everyone who braved some pretty miserable weather at times to successfully complete training with us

Open Water

Jonathan Devine, Douglas Maxwell, Elliott Chaston, Richard Doyle, James Peggs, Rebecca Ogilvie, Carl Hudghton, Calum Millington, Robert Witham, Darren Lackey, Matthew Longville, Allan Macleod, Colin Hill, Elizabeth Procter, Gary White,

Advanced Open Water

Daniel Frost, Richard Doyle, James Peggs, Darren Vale

Nitrox

Crispin Brocks, Serena Brocks

Drysuit

Robert Southwell

SPRING BALL



Well over 100 turned up for the Spring Ball on Saturday evening. The weather was atrocious, but it didn't dampen spirits as we partied into the early hours of the morning.

We had a jazz band (many thanks again Steve) to play us through an excellent dinner and then the disco took over. The raffle was well supported and raised a WHOPPING £405. Many thanks to Andi Davies, David Hyde, Margaret Reed, Bob and Kerstin, and The Royal Beach for their generous donations. It was a night of birthday celebrations as well - astonishingly 4 of the guests had birthdays on the same day as the ball, so we decided to give them a gift of Sunday lunches for 2 at the Royal Beach - just to say happy birthday.



The plan had been to have an early night as quite a few of us had booked up to do the Sport Relief run the following day - 3.30 am in the morning a few members with concrete constitutions were still hard at it in



the bar and some of us were getting worried about how we might feel the next day! More of that below ... Once again it was a great night out that any dive club would aspire to achieve. We are now looking forward to the next big function and we are already taking bookings for the Summer Ball which is going to be on 2 August 2008 – put it in your diaries

PORTLAND

I'm getting my months confused – the Portland trip is 12 – 13 April, so not quite sure how I was going to write a report on it. Anyway – about 20 going on this now, so if you want to come along let us know. We have "teamed up" with Dale and Ron at Fathom and Blues in Portland for 2 days of diving. If you are going, you need to be at the dive centre at 8.00 am on the Saturday morning (assuming you want to dive the Saturday) to check what dives are going on. If you have paid a deposit we have reserved your accommodation.

Jules will be helping to run the trip, so if you need any help when there give him a shout. There is still space so let me know if you want to go.



And ... Fathom and Blues have moved to what is/was The Ferry Bridge Inn (the pub on the right as you crossed the fleet to get onto Portland). It is eventually going to be called the Fathom and Blues Inn once the brewery have the money to change all the signs. So yes, you can get a pint at the end of the day. Dale has bunk accommodation on the Bill as well as rooms in the Inn. Should be a good weekend and still some space if you want to go.

SPORT RELIEF DAY – AKA A HANGOVER TOO FAR

It was an Heroic effort from the Triton "Team". Too much drink, food, dancing and partying and they still got up early after the spring ball to raise money for a good cause. Incredibly, everyone who said they would turn up and do it did! "It" was to run a mile in full scuba gear by the way, and some of the team had only got to bed at gone 4.00 in the morning – an impressive effort Ian!



Some rather pale looking faces met at the dive centre at around 9.00 to get changed and then drive (or be driven) up to the Mountbatten Centre. The organizers thought we were mad - and so did we by this stage to be honest – did we really volunteer for this!

Before the start of the race we had our first radio interview – “Are you really going to run around dressed like that” said the interviewer. Taking a big breath of heliox and sounding like Donald duck the reply was “more importantly, are you really going to air an interview with me sounding like this” at which point the interviewer cracked up with laughter and had to leave the track.



Some of us started off in fins but this foolish idea only lasted for a few hundred metres. There were some outrageous burst of energy from several team members - which generally coincided with the proximity of the crowds and the cameras!



Bunch of posers! With some good heliox mixtures and plenty of O2 going around from the “hangover” cylinders we all survived. Needless to say we came in last - and those that chose to carry 12 litre cylinders were glad to see the finish line! A bit of a shock to the system I know us coming last - we even got beaten by a giant chipmunk! But we didn't care - we raised around £800 between us, had some fun and cleared away the hangovers. After the run the team had a photo call with the Mayor and Mayoress (as Ali G might say “some serious bling goin on der guy innit”) and then it was back, changed and down to The Duke of Buckingham in Old Portsmouth for a sedate Sunday lunch to nurse our aching heads..... and a few pints of lager to just make sure.



Many thanks to everyone who sponsored us, a big thanks to those who got up to cheer us along on the day and an even bigger thank you to everyone who was mad enough to take part.

HORSEA CLOSURE (OR NOT)

The good news is that Horsea Island is not going to be closing. There was a rumour that the military were going to be stopping the use of the lake by civilian recreational divers. Many of you will have signed the petition that was produced at the booking office. I have to be honest and say it is not the first time that I have heard such rumours, but the last time I was sat on the other side of the fence as the person running the military training and sorting out the contract with HIDC – irony. I suspect it will raise its head again in the future unfortunately - that is the nature of the beast. However, for now, HIDC have a concession to continue to operate and we hope it continues.



There have been a few additional restrictions placed on diving in the lake though and I received the following from Karen at HIDC:

“As many of you will know we have recently been campaigning to keep Horsea Island Dive Centre open as a civilian dive site, and for all the support, you, our valued customers have given us we are thankful. So it's now with a big sigh of relief that we can announce that Horsea will be OPEN at weekends 0800-1630. There are however, some changes to the rules, firstly we will only have access to the small toilet block at the top of Zone 3 (ask any staff if you are unsure about the location), and we will now be using Zone 2 (Sea Survival) changing facilities as our primary toilets/showers.

The second change is that security will be stepped up; we will now be requiring photo ID upon entry to the site. The other security change will be that we will now be escorting people on the site, to make this work efficiently can we ask that groups arrange to meet at the booking office at the same time. Sadly currently we are closed midweek due to continuing military operations, we hope that we can gain access to the site Wed-Fri again soon, however this does not affect your bookings, if you wish to make a booking, you can still call/email/fax us during the week and a member of staff will be here”

So, a bit of a walk for a pee and you will need to bring some ID with you but otherwise business as usual.

LACK OF DIVING CAN CHANGE YOUR HAIR COLOUR

Scientist have made a recent discovery – if you abstain from diving for a long period when you have previously done quite a lot – it can change your hair colour. See.....



The discovery was made after detailed and painstaking research was conducted over a protracted period of several seconds. PADI Instructor Timeeeee, who used to be a regular at the centre and was always jumping into water all the time, has been away for a while. Incredibly, the absence from the centre and water has resulted in Timeees hair radically changing to a greeny, yellowy, gingery sort of colour. Our advanced scientific research has put this down to his recent lack of diving and not a bottle of dye as some of you cynically suggested. Isn't science wonderful!

RIB DIVING

This year we have once again “teamed up” with Jed who operates O2 to offer some Rib diving at a reasonable price. For 2008 Jed has also got another big RIB “Inspiration”.



Weather permitting we will be advertising rib diving every weekend. The cost of the dive trips to club members is going to be just £20 for up to 8 miles (around Nab Tower) and £25 up to 12 miles out. This is for a one dive trip, but it does mean that you are not paying £40 – £48 for one decent dive and a second crap one drifting around Bembridge or similar. Not only that, but transfer times are going to be really quick so you don't spend the whole day sitting on a boat.

We are going to be publishing planned dives on the calendar on the members forum area and the dive trips calendar on the website. In addition, we will be letting you know about dives in emails. If 4 of you have a dive you really want to do, let me know and we can arrange that as well through Jed.

The best training - from the premier dive centre in Portsmouth