

## Social Events

### CLUB MEETINGS

The next "normal" club meeting will be at the Coast Bar in Royal Beach Hotel on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June. The menu is the ever popular Cow Pie and Mustard mash. Please let us know if you are coming and bring enough cash to cover any guests you bring along.

### SUMMER BALL – QUEENS HOTEL



Summer Ball tickets are now on sale in the dive centre. To remind you, the ball is on 15 August. As well as the usual dancing drinking and eating we have a few additional bits of entertainment to put a smile on your face. But that is a big surprise so you will have to buy your ticket to find out more. Cost is £15 for members and £35 for guests.

### CLUB WEEKEND

23/24/25 MAY

"Phew what a scorcher...."

Well are we glad we didn't go down to the Dive Fest last weekend in Cornwall. Howling gales, no diving plus a £35 ticket for a pork roll and a couple of second rate bands! Sorry, but we have to say it .... what a rip off.



So onto the better value more fun option over 23 - 25 May. We were hoping that the forecast for the Bank

Holiday was going to be good and we were not disappointed. It was not the massive turnout that we had hoped for mainly due to a lot of club members going away for the Bank Holiday, but it was still a cracking weekend with around 16 members making the most of the opportunity.



A few turned up for a couple of beers on the Friday night and watched the sunset before a good nights rest and the UB74 on the Saturday morning. This is a lovely wreck, with some good vis, (around the 5m mark) and was followed later in the day by the Dredger. The plan had been to do the Countess, but as the boat got close, the guys who had just come up said the vis wasn't brilliant so they went outside the harbour and it was lovely. The Saturday evening BBQ was great fun – and FREE to club members – and while Ian got merry enough to talk utter "bo\*\*%cks, Gavin chomped away on curry for 4 people. Scott and I exchanged war stories and we all made a serious dent on the wine cellar at F&B. Rachel did her usual "3 glasses of wine" and was out of it and Tom, still marvelling at Ian's BBQ skills .... fell asleep at the table.



Sunday morning and it was Fleet Flying time. We had to cancel the Saturday flight due to the other boat trips going on but the Sunday was a full boat. It was a while since I had done it, but as I was the only one who had done it was down to me to give the briefing.



We went around a mile upstream in what were lovely conditions and it was a real treat just to cruise upstream and take in the sights and sounds of the fleet. It is a beautiful piece of water and a lovely area and I would recommend walking or paddling up there if you ever get the opportunity.



As we were travelling we did notice that the boats that were moored were not exactly straining at their mooring chains and unfortunately we were a bit early – rather than ebbing ferociously it was still trying to build up a head of steam. Damn, forgot about the fact that the fleet tide is an hour later than the rest of Weymouth. Still, undeterred, the 8 divers plopped into 4m of water.



The plan was to keep to the main channel and slightly right, around 4m of water at the most. The result – well even though it was a bit of a tame drift, it was a fantastic dive. The marine life was amazing with large dinner plate sized flounders, and even a **seahorse**, which really made it special for Andi and Jules who were lucky enough to see it.



Zara and Ian managed to get separated and in spite of a good briefing, Ian managed to find himself a bit close to the Oyster beds. But everyone agreed it was a really lovely dive, something a bit different and something they would do again. Other dives done throughout the weekend included a mix of harbour and offshore and every one was a treat. So, general thoughts on the weekend – quite simply the good weather, great diving and fantastic company made it another club weekend to remember and we look forward to the next one.

#### **NEXT BIG CLUB DIVING WEEKEND 18 – 19 JULY**

Don't forget the next club weekend is going to be in July. We are still working out some plans for this, but needless to say, it will be a good 'un so put it in your diaries.

## **The Deep South Tour**

(By Rick Astley – Aged 8)

It was a great adventure and it started for Lamby as we arrived at the airport. Not content with the exciting news that vodka was £20 for 2 litres, he upped the anti by forgetting his passport! Panic ensued and phone calls were made. The plane was delayed, Stu broke the land speed record on his R1

and the passport arrived with minutes to spare. With the thought of the boat being dry he still had time to make a quick stop in duty free and get vodka and ciggies. You may have heard that for some bizarre reason some people think that I have a striking resemblance to a famous 1980's pop star. And thanks to Barnes Wallace, so now do 2 of the bar staff in Lloyds bar, as well as half the passengers and the plane crew who all wanted signed photos that had been conveniently distributed! Thanks Ginge for that. We were greeted with the news that Swine flu was coming and that we all had to have our temperatures taken. Mike was a little concerned at this as the rumour was they only had rectal thermometers however this proved to be a big fib!

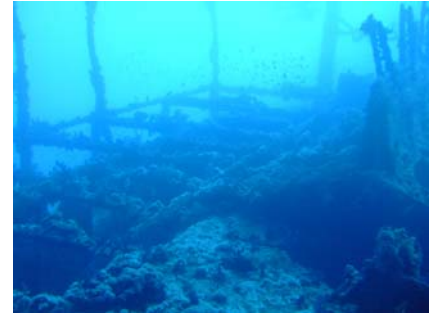


After the usual welcome on this "substantial" boat Lamby decided that it would be best to forget about the start of the day and make a well deserved start on the provisions he'd brought on the way. Not wanting him to feel left out I decided that I'd keep him company – until 3 o'clock in the morning. Check out dives on day 1 provided us with some very pretty reefs and the opportunity for Sue, Lamby, Noel and Tim to do dive 1 of the DPV speciality before heading off to the Bothers.



The journey was a little choppy to say the least. I managed to stay at the dinner table for less than 2 minutes before having to retire to the back of the boat and after feeding the local fish population with what little food I had consumed in those 2 minutes, I decided that was the best place to stay. I was soon joined by Julie who was a little concerned that the bathroom would become unusable as

she'd managed to block the sink with her dinner. Needless to say we were both relieved once the boat was moored.

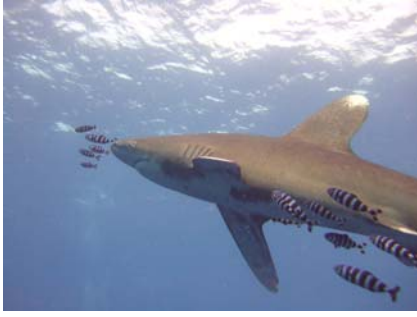


Diving on the Brothers was superb. The Aida dive was a treat - we dropped down to 30m, carried out some Deep Diver Speciality skills and then had a nice drift along the reef until we found the wreck. The second wreck dive on Big Brother was the Namibia. She lies almost vertically on the side of the reef, so the descent inside is quite disorientating as the ribs of the superstructure addle the brain a bit. When we popped out we were immediately surrounded by masses of fish. After getting the obligatory photos we ascended and had a look at the reef. Amazingly the engines of the Aida were just a stones throw away virtually on top of the reef and were covered in hard and soft corals. A fantastic dive.



We motored on to Daedalus Reef - now this was the daddy we were looking forward to!!! Straight away we had a tantalising glimpse of a Thresher shark and then nothing for the next 40 minutes. We hadn't come all this was to hang in the blue and see nothing. All of a sudden Lamby started flapping like a demented goose as he pointed out the shoal of 15 Hammerheads that were fast approaching. They were totally unfazed by us coming within a few feet of us and spending a couple of minutes circling us. We thought that would be it but just towards the end of the dive we were joined by a solitary Oceanic White Tip complete with a complement of pilot fish. Again this magnificent animal came within feet of us and spent a couple of minutes circling.

**The best dive club and the best diver training in Portsmouth**



Shark!! Someone shouted and looking over the side of the boat we saw not 1 but 3 Oceanic White Tips under the boat in no more than 5 metres of water. We were diving nowhere else but here and right now! We all spent over an hour hanging around watching these graceful creatures moving in and out of us. Donk had a slightly closer encounter with a slightly over amorous specimen when it started to nuzzle his groin and spent several hours on the boat crying like a girl with stories of being nearly eaten alive.



After doing a night dive on Abu Dabab we moved onto Elphinstone reef where we had another fantastic dive. Barnes Wallace was sulking as various faults meant that his shiny black box resembled a Christmas tree rather than a rebreather. Back on open circuit he complained that he was diving in the dark ages, but insisted on taking another 12ltr just in case he didn't have enough gas. For the last dive of the holiday we went to Um El Russ in search of the dugong. Some of the group managed to come across one and watched it spend 20 minutes munching away on weed, while some of us were lucky enough to see the exotic and rare Ginger Dugong. (See next article).



The holiday ended with Lord Smith nicking Lamby's passport for fun and lounging by the pool. There was a water polo gauntlet thrown down and while Lord Smith and his valet decided that exercise was not the done thing and retired to TGIs to drink Margaritas,



the rest of us got in the pool. The subdued game soon descended into a mass brawl; Rick's modelling career was brought to an abrupt end with a split lip, and Andi, having being smacked so hard around the face by Tim that she saw stars, grabbed at the nearest person to leave some interesting scratch marks on James back! After a day dozing by the pool and finishing off the rest of the duty free we were told that our flight was cancelled! After some negotiation we were moved to an all inclusive 5 star resort – bumper eh! 9 hours later and with the bar totally dry we retired very hurt to bed hoping that the hangover wasn't going to be that bad in 3 hours!



We all made it back and once again a fabulous time was had by all who came. Another fantastic Triton trip to the Red Sea.

**RARE "GINGER DUGONG"  
SIGHTED IN MARSA ALAM  
(From an Idea by Ian Brown – aged 6)**

As expected, the Deep South Liveaboard trip was a great success. However, the highlight for many of the group was the opportunity to dive with the extremely rare "Ginger Dugong". This shy, pale creature is seldom seen in the shallows because it tends to have an almost allergic, blotchy reaction to excessive sunlight.



(Dugong sleeping in the shallows)

It has also evolved over the past few years and has now developed a tendency to dive to much deeper depths with his friend, the broken black box of death fish, in search of fulfilment.



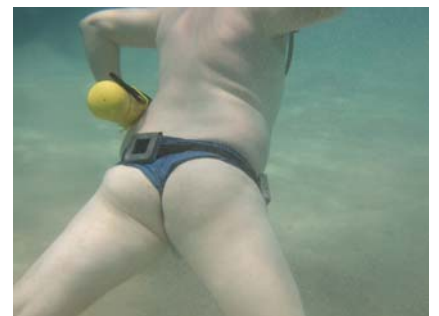
(The rare Ginger Dugong "frolicking")

On this occasion the Ginger Dugong playfully frolicked with the divers (in a gingery sort of way), allowing divers to get quite close and get some quite amazing photographic and video evidence. At one stage, it even managed to haul itself onto the boat before slipping gracelessly back into the water.



(Dugong on back of boat)

Eventually though, like with all stupid but funny ideas, the amusement wore off and the divers left the Dugong, known as "Barnes" to swim away with a flick of his tail.



(The Dugong swims away)

The photos of this unique encounter have been shown to other dive centres around the South Coast and some were so excited they have even displayed the pictures on their centre notice boards, so Barnes the "Ginger Dugong" is famous at last. Revenge is so, so sweet!

## New Kit on the block...

**AQUALUNG®**  
FIRST TO DIVE

### AN AMAZING AQUALUNG DEAL THE NEW FOR OLD REGULATOR OFFER

It is not so much new kit, but it is an amazing offer that we need to tell you about. Some years ago, Aqualung had a great offer – hand in an old regulator and get 20% off the price of a new Aqualung regulator as a replacement. We thought they had finished this, however, we recently found out that this fantastic deal is still going strong. This means that you can get a new Aqualung regulator and octopus at 20% off our normal price. **THIS IS ON TOP OF THE HUGE DISCOUNTS ALREADY ON OFFER.** So, if you want say a new Titan LX and octopus (shown below), the normal RRP would be £478.



By going to [www.directdivegear.com](http://www.directdivegear.com) and handing in an old regulator and octo that you can probably pick up at a car boot sale, you can buy the same package for £328, which is an incredible £150 off. We are not sure how long they are going to keep this offer going so if you want to upgrade now is a good time to do it.



### BRILLIANT DRYSUIT OFFER

We have just taken delivery of a new stock of Typhoon Pro-Sport drysuits for the shop and by way of a promotion how about this ..... we are selling all Typhoon drysuits on offer to club members at 20% off RRP – yes I said 20%. However, that is not all. If you buy one during June, we will also give you a **FREE** Typhoon Undersuit worth £100.



The RRP of the Gents and Ladies Pro-Sport (shown above) and a 100 gram undersuit comes to £599. The club member price is £399 giving you an amazing saving of £200.

There are plenty of men's and ladies suits now in stock downstairs in the dive centre, so why not pop along and take a look. **And** if you decide that you don't want the Pro-Sport but would prefer another suit from the Typhoon range, the offer still stands. Remember the offer lasts until end of June.

## Training

### UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY (Addendum)



I forgot to mention in the last news letter that Club Members get a 10% discount on Photography Training Weekend on 11/12 July. This means that the course will cost £236, which **includes** the boat fees for 4 fantastic dives, certification, training and

materials. Call the dive centre to book onto this very special programme.

## Spaces Left

### DEEP DIVER SPECIALITY – NEW DATE

We have put on **another** date for a Deep Diver speciality courses due to popular demand. Still a couple of spaces on **4/5 July** and one space on **11/12 July**. Both courses will be running from the boat in Portland so good dives as well as some excellent training. If you want to book a space give us a call.

### PEAK PERFORMANCE BUOYANCY 6 JUNE (£99)

Still a couple of spaces left.

### REEL AND SMB 7 JUNE (£99)

Still a couple of spaces left.

## Course Success



Many congratulations to everyone who completed some training with us during the last month, including Rod Harris (Nitrox), and the guys who did the Deep course and the DPV (how much fun was that?) on the liveaboard trip.

### COMING UP IN NEXT MONTHS NEWSLETTER ...

**DAHAB IDC** – We are taking our next IDC to Dahab in June so we will give you a full rundown of who, what, when and why. Big Gaza is finally doing it after months of hard work and a great deal of effort and we wish him well.

**CHANGES TO OUR RYA TRAINING CENTRE** .... We have made a few changes so more information on that. It will mean that we can offer more choice.

**PLUS LOTS, LOTS MORE – YOU ARE GOING TO LOVE IT .....**

**The best dive club and the best diver training in Portsmouth**