

## CLUB MEETINGS

There is no club meeting in December due to the Christmas Ball, which is on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December. It is now full.** The next "normal" club meeting will be in the Coast Bar on 6 January 2009

### TRAINING

November was pretty busy on the training front. Many congratulations to everyone who successfully qualified on the following training programmes.

#### Scuba Diver

Terry Russell

#### Open Water

Helen Russel, Jennifer Ifould, Tim Miller, Michaela East, Robert Farrell

#### Advanced Open Water

Tom Perrin (Junior Advanced), Jennifer Ifould, Ed Butcher, Dave Standley

#### Enriched Air Nitrox

Rhidian Davies, Jennifer Ifould, Andy Taylor

#### Instructor Development Course

Zara Dyer, Nigel Clay, Chris Surtees, Richard (Sharon) Hall

#### Speciality Instructor (7 specialities)

Ian Perry, Dave Rous, Alex Morris, Zara Dyer, Chris Surtees, Richard Hall

#### EFR Instructor

Adam Hamilton, Chris Surtees, Sharon Hall

## CLUB HALLOWEEN PARTY



The Halloween was spookily good we have to admit. In the end we sold 120 tickets for the event. Nearly everybody went to loads of effort to get dressed up – with one or two exceptions (Brown!). Some of the costumes were quite brilliant. We particularly liked Derrick's Hellraiser mask (above), and I loved Uncle and Aunt Fester! The food on the evening offered a choice of chilli and lasagne with rustic bread, rice and salads. Everyone was met

at the entrance with a free cocktail (vaguely resembled a vodka punch) with "brain" ice cubes and floating eyeballs.



Maz Redman was extremely keen on the cocktail by all accounts (hic!). Many thanks to everyone who came for making it such a fantastic evening and as well to everyone who helped to set up the room and for those who lent us lots of the gear to make it something special.



On the strength of such a great party we have already booked the same room for next year – it is going to be on Halloween night so put it in your diaries.

## THE MARATHON DES SABLES



At the end of March 2009 I will be joining around 700 other competitors in Morocco to take part in what has been called the

toughest endurance race in the world. Over 6 days and carrying everything I need including food, I will race 151 miles across the Sahara. This is the equivalent of a marathon every day! I am doing this event to raise money and awareness for Water Aid, a charity committed to providing clean water to the World. Did you know that one in 8 people do not have access to safe clean drinking water – something that we all take for granted. I have produced a website all about the event, which I hope

you get the time to have a browse through [www.run-the-sahara.org](http://www.run-the-sahara.org) It has details about the event, my chosen charity, my training regime and what I have to take.



However, the main point of the run is to raise money for charity. When sending out this newsletter I have included a link to an information sheet and sponsorship form (some of you have already had a copy). I ask you to dig deep if you can, but even if you can't any amount, no matter how small, can make a difference. So please please sponsor me.

### UNWANTED XMAS PRESENT RAFFLE

An opportunity to offload those unwanted gifts you get – you know the sort of thing, 2008 advent calendars, the 12<sup>th</sup> bag of pot pourri. At the January club meeting you can raffle them off for Charity. The rules are they must be wrapped so it cannot be seen. We have done it before and it was great fun – so keep hold of unwanted presents and bring to the club night in January. As usual, please let us know if you are coming.

### INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT COURSE AND THE INSTRUCTORS EXAM



Our 3<sup>rd</sup> IDC of the year saw another 4 students learning how to teach scuba diving. Our very own Zara from the dive centre was one of the candidates as was Nigel Clay, a familiar face around the centre and one of more regular divemasters. The format for the training was pretty much the same as usual, with the exception that we ran the open water training from our boat down in Portland. This actually turned out to be a really excellent venue for the training and gave the candidates plenty of opportunity to practice their skills in a "real" environment. It was a fun course but as usual there were one or two "special" moments along the way – for example Chris seemed to think that his slates were a decoration or Ice

Scraper for the car and kept forgetting to use them. And then of course there was Richard Hall, from the Joint Services Diving Centre in Bovisand - when asked whether he preferred Rich, Richy, Dick, Dicky or Richard, he turned around and said "call me what you want". Excellent, "Sharon" it is then! (He really doesn't know us very well at all does he!!) Infact, he was even known as Sharon at the IE as someone had phoned ahead to let the examiners know. Everyone worked hard and we were ready for the exam .....

..... the following weekend at Peterborough .....



We arrived at the hotel in dribs and drabs again and met for some food. Last minute cramming on the theory was done and everyone had an early night. The 7.30 start for the IE (still don't understand why they have to do that) saw around 26 people sitting down so between Dale from Fathom and Blues and our candidates (Ian Perry had joined the other 4) we made up over 40% of the total!



After the exams, Sharon was clear but 3 others needed a resit on one exam (which they all passed after additional swotting the following morning). Nigel had a bit of a "brain fart" (sic) on 2 exams and needs to nip up to Rugby for another attempt. It is strange how it works out - he had no problems at all during the course, but silly mistakes can creep up on you. Chris sailed through physics and physiology .... and then mucked up equipment which is probably the easiest exam of all. The pool work went swimmingly well (sorry) and the following day we all drove to Gildenborough Lake for the open water evaluations. There were a couple of

moments .... Chris decided to change the normal count between rescue breaths from 5 to 25 seconds and had to do that one again - must have been one of Nigel's brain fart moments, but by the end all 5 candidates produced a crop of excellent scores. Well done to all of you. Next year we have lots of IDC dates planned and we already have 4 candidates booked onto courses - if you think you would like to teach, why not get in touch.

#### SPECIALITY INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

There were 6 candidates for the speciality instructor training programme that we ran at the end of the month. In total we covered 7 speciality programmes, drysuit, wreck, deep, boat, nitrox, navigation and search and recovery. We ran one of the days from the boat in Portland which was excellent. A good 4 - 5m of vis on the Saturday (see the photo below taken on the dredger at 10m)



as well as excellent conditions for boat diving. We had planned another day on the boat on the Sunday, but gale force 8 winds from the North saw us back up to Vobster to finish off the training. This included navigation and wreck instructor training.



So, not only do we have some new Open Water Instructors but we now have plenty of speciality instructors - extremely useful for next season when we are planning to do a number of exciting speciality courses. If you are interested in speciality instructor training give me a call.

#### THE LAST DIVE OF THE YEAR TUESDAY 30 DECEMBER

Traditionally we have always organized a "last dive of the year". No exception this year. It is planned for 30 December in Portland. There are going to be 3 dives running with 10 spaces on each. The plan is for a reasonably shallow harbour dive in the morning. Around 11.00 there will be a trip out to the M2 or something similar and then around 2.30 there will be a final dive

available again probably within the harbour. You can hop onto one or two dives - entirely up to you, however, we need payment in advance as we already have a lot of interest in the day. For those who want to go the night before, accommodation will be available at £15 for the bunk rooms and £25 per person in the hotel. Should be good fun, an opportunity to get wet and have a couple of beers before the New Year.

#### JOIN US FOR SOME MOOSE MILK

We like to celebrate Christmas and we like to share the odd tippie with you as you know. So, over the weekend of 20 and 21 December we will be having Moose Milk in the shop along with a selection of food. We would like to invite all club members, customers and friends to pop around and join us for a glass or 3 so that we can say thank you for the support you have given us over the past 12 months. For those who have not had it before, the Milk of the Moose is a Canadian delicacy that makes you very happy albeit slightly wobbly, so please leave your cars behind.

## GRIM



As part of my build up for the Marathon des Sables (MdS) I have done something a bit daft - I have entered the GRIM challenge. This race is an 8 miler across country. As well as some pretty steep slopes, plenty of sand and mud, there are also cargo nets and waist deep puddles of freezing water to deal with. So, if you are looking for another reason to sponsor me for the MdS, maybe this event will convince you. I will let you know how it goes and will hopefully have some photos from the event.

#### SCUBAPRO KINETIX FINS

We have had another batch in this month - at £30 for a £59 pair of fins they are not going to last long so if you want a pair get in quickly. When they have gone that is it.

#### COMING IN NEXT MONTHS NEWSLETTER

**The Christmas Ball** - We will tell you all about it.

**The GRIM Challenge** - I will let you know how I get on in this build up race for MdS

**The Last Dive of the Year** - A full report from Portland

**The best training - from the premier dive centre in Portsmouth**