

DIVE FILES

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

NAME, RANK, DATE OF QUALIFYING, YEARS WORKING IN DIVING, NUMBER OF DIVES?

Triton Scuba is owned by PADI Course Director David Jones, (yes, I know, good name for a diver – heard them all before). First started diving with Ipswich BSAC club in 1978. Started working as a diver in the military in 1986 and have been running my own dive centre since November 2000. Dives are into the thousands, but not entirely sure on the number.



WHAT'S YOUR STORY – HOW DID IT ALL COME ABOUT?

Well, it was never planned. I had always enjoyed sport diving, as well as being a military diver. In 1997, Triton started as a small business servicing regs and equipment. In 2000, I was serving as the Superintendent of Diving (Army), based at Horsea Island, and I saw an opportunity to start a diving centre in Portsmouth, so rented premises, took out a loan and off we went. After a tour trying to sort out the minefields of Bosnia, I thought there were probably more fun ways to earn a living, so I left the Army to run the dive centre full-time.

Triton Scuba

As a PADI five-star IDC centre and IATND facility, we offer just about every course you can imagine. With over 500 successful students last year, it is an incredibly busy dive centre! I think that this success is based around the family atmosphere of the centre. People feel welcome when they come in. My mum and dad are a part of this, without a doubt. Everyone loves them. Just make sure you wash your cups up, though, when mum is around!

We are realistic and know you can't please everyone, no matter how hard you try. So every now and again, you will end up with a disgruntled customer, it's a fact of life. However, our success and growth is indicative that we must be doing something right.

The family atmosphere pervades into the club – it's huge, with over 250 members, at least five nationalities and a fantastic social life. The centre resembles a café during the week, and a bar at weekends, but that might have something to do with our habit of opening up the bubbly after all our courses! The club members give us great support and we have up to 80 turn up every month for club meetings, and 130 at the four big functions we run each year.

We also run about five trips overseas every year and raise huge amounts of money for charity (currently over £13,000 in the last two years). You can find out loads about the club and the centre on the website: www.tritonscuba.co.uk





THE FACTS

OPENING HOURS:
8.30am to 5.30pm, seven days a week

CONTACT DETAILS:
147 Highland Road, Southsea,
Portsmouth, PO4 9EY
02392 838773

COURSES AVAILABLE:
DSD through to Instructor, full range of speciality courses, EFR, DAN and MFA courses, IANTD Courses up to Trimix and CCR

RENTAL KIT AND MAKE:
40 sets of Scubapro

SHOP:
Fully stocked with Oceanic, Scubapro, Aqualung, Dacor, Fourth Element, WeeZie, Northern Diver, Beaver, Fuji and more

VEHICLES:
VW Transporter, Renault Traffic and Vauxhall Movano

AIR/NITROX/TRIMIX/ARGON:
Air/nitrox/trimix

SERVICING:
ASSET-trained staff. All makes catered for.

ACTIVE DIVE CLUB:
Very active and very friendly club. Cost is £10 a month and there are loads of benefits.

BOTH BRITISH AND FOREIGN TRIPS:
Yes—so far this year, Dartmouth, Tenerife and Egypt, with Gozo, Philippines, Egypt round two and Normandy still to come.

Q How would you describe your team at your dive centre in no more than 15 words?

A Hard working, good fun, and one or two clearly have a drinking problem!

Q What's the male-to-female ratio of staff at the centre?

A Including my mum, 3:2 (But she can be quite formidable when she wants to be, so that changes the ratio a bit).

Q Who's the boss, and are they the first to get a round in at the pub after work?

A I am the boss (although Tony likes to think he is) and I get the first round in. Tony slopes off to the shop as we go into the pub. We always finish off the day with a bottle of wine – and I get those as well! Hang on a minute!

Q When was the last dive club night out, and who is, more often than not, the first one dancing on the table after a shandy and who's the last one to the bar to get a round in?

A Katie, shop girl and YTS trainee paparazzi photographer, is getting a bit of a name for

herself for having one too many on the club nights. Two glasses of wine and the clothes start coming off. Last to the bar has to be Ryan.

Q What is your most embarrassing teaching moment?

A Have to confess to picking the wrong boat on return from a dive in Egypt. Actually got on board before I noticed the bemused crew.

Q Name your best student in the last year?

A My own son, Sam. A proud moment for any dad.

Q Who's the worst air-guzzler in the team?

A Now that has to be Donk, one of our trainee DMs (although he is getting better). Was that 20 minutes on a full 18-litre in Horsea Island? No, I am not going to twin them up for you, mate...

Q Who's the biggest wimp out of the lot of you, and give a recent example?



A Dr Evil, because he hurled at the sight of the skipper eating a raw scallop in Scapa Flow.

Q Who attracts the most attention, bad or good?

A Probably Mel Seary. Mainly because she is looking for a boyfriend and looks damn fine in a swimming costume...

Q If you could teach a celebrity to dive, who would it be and why? (Try and keep it clean!)

A Well, I taught James Blunt in Egypt many years ago.

Q What's been the biggest fear factor in your diving career to date?

A The constant possibility that I might get back to a boat one day and find Tony Medley lying naked and waiting, declaring his undying love for me!

Q You can have the last word!

A • I wish Mark would give me a bit more time in future when he asks me to write things like this. (Ed – quit your moaning!)
• If the water off Portsmouth was 28°C and we had 30 metre vis all year – it's still great, though, check out: www.tritonscuba.co.uk