

February 2011

Portsmouth's Premier Diving and Watersports Centre

Hot News ...

Deposits for the Egypt trip are required by 18 March, but the deposit price has gone down!

TRITON SCUBA *and* Watersports



The first Sidemount course of the year

WELCOME TO THE FEBRUARY 2011

The season is already underway

Well what a difference to last year the mild weather seems to have brought you all out early. February saw us running a Rescue course, Tec 40, Open Water, Sidemount courses and a couple of specialities. as well as a rash of try dives and refreshers. We even threw in a speciality instructors course for a couple of guys heading off to run a resort out in Belize. This time last year we were sitting in the old dive centre looking forward to the summer. So what I hear you say? Well the early start to the season means that we can bring forward a few plans so you will start to see some new gear coming in during March including the Ocean Pro range which is ideal for the casual snorkeller or for those on a budget. We are also increasing the range of O'Neill products on offer and a sample of the new wetsuit range is available in the dive

centre to look at now. We will also be bringing in a few accessory items including a very good glove (report inside) and a rather nice lined wetsuit boot at a very reasonable price.

There is plenty of stuff in this months newsletter, including details of the next social events, club trips and a reminder on the holidays (including a change in details for those of you going on the Egypt Liveaboard) We also have a report from the instructor rescue training workshop, as well as a report from the Big Scuba Show. There are also details on a few website changes, shop changes, our success getting shark fin off the menus, and a rather special award. The one thing that is not in here which I had planned to put in is the dive schedule - I just have not got around to doing that, but we will be pushing out an email once I get back from Sri Lanka in the middle of March. Did I tell you I was going there - more details inside



During the Instructor and DM rescue training workshop, some familiar faces were put through their paces some of the staff also wore really ridiculous hats!

Winner of Portsmouth's Best Small Business Award

the best diver training, the best dive club and without doubt the best facilities in Portsmouth and the surrounding area



O'NEILL GLOVES

Tom from O'Neill came to see us with the new range of Dive wetsuits

and one of the products he had with him was a glove. A very plain glove, similar to the Fourth Element style in that it was quite stretchy and had no zips. It also had a small seal on the inside and when I tried them on they felt really good. Anyway, I suggested that they let us have some for a trial and they agreed. Nigel happened to walk by and so I asked him to do a trial and compare them against the very popular Oceanic Mako 5mm - remember the O'Neill's were only a lined 3mm, and he agreed. I expected him to come back with "alright", or "ok" but instead he produced a full report! I have posted this onto the website but for those of you who haven't seen it, here it is:

"We turned up at Vobster the other Sunday to water at a chilly 4 degrees. Is this the right time to try a 3mm glove I ask myself? Could have waited for warm climes!

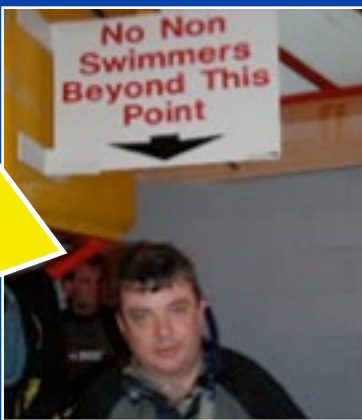
Off we went for the first dive with the O'Neil 3mm gloves on. These gloves have a small internal seal around the

wrist. Very easy to pull on dry. The question is, do they let in water. I can safely say they do when wearing a dry suit, however the seal does mean they act like a semi dry and do not let water out again. Oh yes easy to pull on wet as well.

On with the dive. Down to 18 meters we go (Had an Open Water Diver with me). Definitely 3 degrees and not the band. Round the boat and plane we go. After 25 minutes, my buddy had enough. Not surprised she was in a wet suit!!! Oh yes the hands. Toasty warm not even a hint of cold finger tips.

On to the Oceanic gloves; Now I expected similar results to be honest, I had heard great things about these gloves. Ask Ian he told me!!! In we went again and conducted the same dive in the same conditions pretty much. Returned to the safety stop and my hands were cold. By the time we surfaced my finger tips were tingling!!! Not as cold as cheaper gloves I have used in the past granted but colder than the 3mm's

In conclusion, this trial was a total success from O'Neil's point of view. Oceanic, may be not so good. It has made me look very closely at the O'Neil range of diving wet suits for the summer. At last thermal protection that does what it says on the tin!!!"



NIGEL

Nigel's Score Card

Gloves	Dexterity	Ease of Use	Temp Retention	Overall
Oceanic Mako 5mm	***	***	****	***
O'Neil 3mm	*****	****	*****	*****

THE NEW FUJI FINEPIX CAMERA F550 EXR

We wondered when it was coming ... the F80 had been around for about 18 months and so as cameras struggle to keep the pace with technology camera manufacturers are bringing out new models every 18 months at the moment. The latest one from Fuji is the F550 EXR 16 mega pixel monster, and we have already got these on order. If you thought the F80 was good, wait till you see the features and functions on this. I am hopefully going to be taking one with me to Sri Lanka as a small video camera - it shoots in HD - so will hopefully have a report and some images for you when I get back which I will publish in next months letter., if not we will have some more details for you.



CLUB SOCIAL EVENTS

Club Night - February 2011

The February club night was another good one. Quite a lot of the regulars were away, but it was still a very good turnout. What made it was the great raffle prizes that were on offer. We had free tickets to the Big Scuba Show to hand out as well as tickets for the Royal Beach hotel's Valentines ball. As a result the raffle raised much more than normal which was excellent, so many thanks to everyone for coming along and supporting that event.

Next Club Night - 3 March 2011

The next club night is going to be a curry evening in the Royal Beach Hotel on 3 March. The menu for the evening is, a mild chicken curry, and hot beef curry and a tree curry for the plant huggers. Start time is 7.30 in the Coast Bar. As always, can you please let us know if you are coming and by all means bring a guest but just let us have £7 towards their meal.

INSTRUCTOR RESCUE WORKSHOP

One of the things that we take very seriously here is safety and to this end we have regular meetings with instructors and DMs. You may remember in last months newsletter we mentioned the instructors meeting that covered all the changes in standards and procedures. The other regular instructor event is the Rescue Training workshop. This has been running for several years now in order to ensure that all the staff that run courses are up to date with the latest teaching, and have had some practice. We think we are the only dive centre that does this apart from those that "own" lakes. We also think that more centres should follow our lead, because once you have completed you DM course, unless you go onto the instructor course you have no reason to practice it again. The same is true of instructors unless they actually teach the course.

It was an early start in order to get to Vobster for 9.00 but the majority of people who said they were going turned up. The day included a range of scenarios, including recovery of unconscious divers, however, without the pressure of trying to complete a course it was possible to extend the exercises and add a touch of reality. Divers had to be recovered from various, and often challenging points around the lake - well lets face it, they are not likely to come up in the easiest place in the world. Patients were also provided with CPR and O2 for extended periods requiring the instructors and DMs to work as teams, managing the situation and maintaining airways for a long time - ambulances don't arrive in the middle of somerset in 5 minutes after all.

The feedback from the day was excellent, so much so that we are going to be running another one later in the year **and** we are opening up this session to anyone!. So if you think your rescue skills are a little bit rusty, or you want to know a bit more about rescue techniques, watch this space for details in the next few months, or call the dive centre to get your name down. More details later in this newsletter.



Looking for a Dive Club?

Call 023 9283 8773 for details

OCEANIC SEMINARS 2011



**WE
WON!**

As one of the top dealers in the country we are invited to the Oceanic Dealer Seminar every year so the meeting in February was not something new. However there was a lot of new stuff on show that will be coming in this year so I thought we would give you an update.

NEW EQUIPMENT

THE PIONEER SUIT RANGE

The most important product on show was the new range of suits. Last year the company presented a range of suits that would not have been out of place at a Star Trek convention. It was nearly a done deal until myself and the owner of Blue Ocean Diving in Maidstone told them what we thought. You might remember the rather ugly Neo suit that they have been selling for the last 2 years; we refused to stock that one. Anyway, we told them what we wanted and they responded with the new Pioneer range. Some of you may remember the Shadow - a brilliant suit that many of you bought. Why they had to stop making it I have no idea, but it is now back, and better. Fluid seal seams, chicken vest options, 3mm and 5mm options and a neoprene drysuit with the same design, this suit is a winner. We have a complete range coming in next month (hopefully if the shipment arrives) so why not come and have a look.

COMPUTERS

We have been waiting a while but this year will see the arrival at last of the Atom 3 and the VT4 both of which are going to take the computer market by storm. Both have the dual algorithm and the VT 4 is sporting a new screen and compass software less affected by tilt than all of its rivals.

HOLLIS DRYSUIT

Another suit that has been a long time coming but orders are now being taken. Made of an incredibly

tough, flexible membrane material that is totally sealed (you can't see the seams at all). Not only that but it is virtually entirely made of recycled materials.

OCEAN PRO RANGE

The Ocean Pro range are a budget range of suits, boots, rash vests and snorkel gear that will suit those of you looking to save a bit of money or just get a suit for a one off or for holiday use only. They sit nicely between the cheap rubbish you get in ASDA and the more expensive dive specific gear.

LAVACORE

This is a new range of products that are designed to be used either on their own or under wetsuits. Similar to the Fourth element equipment they have a trilaminate construction which includes a windproof membrane in the middle, keeping out the cold in the strongest winds. We are waiting for this to come into the country before ordering it.

PLASTIC OCEANS PRESENTATIONS

A well as listening to presentations I was also giving them, with a presentation on Sidemount diving and one on Plastic Oceans. Both talks were well received and as a result I have a busy schedule over the next few months doing PO talks and running Sidemount courses for other dive centres

DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The big surprise of the evening was the award of dealer of the year. Oceanic gave out 2 of these, one went to Simply Scuba and we got the other for our work with promoting and selling the Hollis range of technical dive gear, in particular the sidemount harness equipment. We were very pleased but have to thank you, our customers for supporting us over the last 12 months.

CHANGES TO HOLIDAYS

MALTA/GOZO 18 - 25 JUNE 2011

The dates for the Malta trip are the same but we can confirm that we are now staying on Malta rather than Gozo - cost is the same. Flights are going up in price extremely quickly and accommodation is starting to fill up as well so if you want to join this trip we really need to know as soon as possible.

CHANGES TO THE EGYPT LIVEBOARD DATES

A large number of you expressed an interest in going on this liveboard trip to the Deep South. Unfortunately, without your deposits it was impossible to hold the boat and as a result we had to let it go. That's the bad news. The good news is that we have booked the same boat for the same trip on the following week. The dates of the trip are going to be **7th - 17th OCTOBER 2011**. The price is the same at £1199 which includes as much diving as you can fit in, all your flights, food, transfers tanks, weights and air. This trip will be awesome. The deposit has also gone down to £300, however **the cut off date for deposits is now 18 March 2011**. If you would like to join us on this trip let us have your deposits by cheque payable to Blue O2 by this date please. After this date the boat will be open to the general masses and as it is the newest and swankiest boat in the fleet it will probably fill up quite quickly.

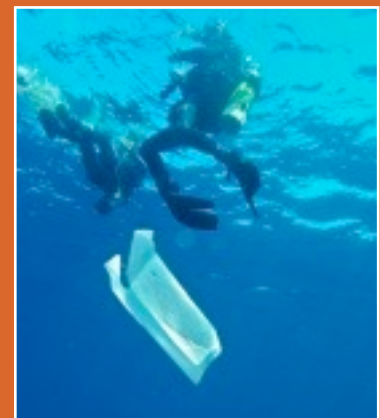
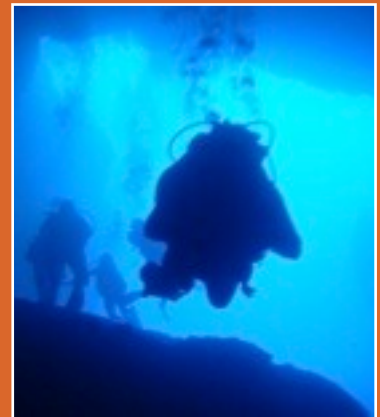
SHARK FIN CAMPAIGN MAKES THE NEWS

You may remember that in last months newsletter we told you about the success we had getting shark fin soup off the menu with 2 of the restaurants in Southsea. Well word gets around and it also got a mention in dive magazines, the News and also got a mention on the Project AWARE website.

SORRY, BUT NO MORE PLASTIC BAGS

I seem to be banging the environmental drum a bit lately and I apologise, but only slightly as I think these things are important. I have been involved with Plastic Oceans for 18 months now and I cannot sit back and watch the destruction of our Oceans through single use plastic. As a result we will no longer be giving away plastic bags at the dive centre. So you have 2 choices. Either bring a bag with you, which is the best option, or alternatively we will have biodegradable bags available which you can buy for 20p. This money will be donated to the Plastic Oceans Foundation charity. Just so you know.

Oxygen Provider Course 5th March
SPECIAL PRICE TOTALLY FREE



Oxygen Provider Course - and its FREE!

The Instructors Rescue workshop highlighted a few gaps in knowledge that had crept in over the years with a few people so we are running some Oxygen training to bring everyone up to speed. This will be basic and advanced O2 admin, which will include the use of demand valve and constant flow equipment, O2 enriched resuscitation, as well as the use of Bag Valve Masks and Manually triggered ventilators. So, much more than the usual everyday O2 speciality. The cost of the course is zero. Yep, nothing, zilch, zero pennies. The programme is open to everyone who is a Rescue diver or above. If you would like the speciality ticket at the end of the training you can do so for a small fee.



mmm,
where does this
hose go I wonder,
let's try there

It's a Wrap!

If you have not been past the dive centre in a few weeks you might get a bit of a surprise next time you do. We have had a wrap fitted. As one of PADI's top dive centres we were asked if we would like to participate in one of their new initiatives which is to design a "wrap" for suitable centres. The regional manager popped along to take some measurements and a few days later a design came through by email. There were a few problems with it, firstly it was sent as a full size image and there was not a computer in the centre (or at the printers that could open it, and it also had a few too many "american" pictures. However it was a start and after including other watersports and changing some pictures it was ready. Doug Nash and James Little from PADI HQ came to watch it being put up and it has since featured on PADI websites



Plastic Oceans at the Big Scuba Show

Plastic Oceans were given a stand at the Big Scuba Show in Olympia over the 19/20 Feb. To be honest it wasn't that big and the Royal Marines took up more space than most of the stands but it was still a great opportunity to spread the word. As well as talking about the charity and giving presentations in the "Knowledge Chamber" we were also selling raffle tickets to raise funds. Prizes include a holiday for 2 with Blue O2 on one of their liveboards, a Scubapro Mk25 S600 regulator set, Ocenic Probe BCD, Holiday voucher with Oonas Divers worth £350 and a Suunto Zoop computer. We have plenty of tickets (£1 each) on sale at the centre so why not buy a couple - you are helping a great cause and you never know, you might be lucky!



LONDON INTERNATIONAL DIVE SHOW 26-27 MAR

DIVE SHOWS are starting to get a bit like buses anyway, the reason I am telling you about the dive show at the EXCEL Centre is two fold.

SIDEMOUNTS FOR RECREATIONAL AND TEC DIVING

First of all I will be giving presentations on Sidemounts at the Tek conference and the main LIS show. The LIDS one is mainly talking about recreational diving (and I have given this talk before). The Tek 2011 Show talk will be slightly different and will be looking at different configuration options as well as the ins and outs of diving sidemounts with stage cylinders and how they fit into the DSAT Tec Rec range of courses. So, if you are a tec diver or a Sidemount diver or you just want to come along for a giggle, then pop along and see the talks at LIDS

PLASTIC OCEANS - I NEED YOUR HELP!!!!!!

Diver magazine have also given the Plastic Oceans charity a stand at the show where we will be selling raffle tickets, explaining what its all about and handing out leaflets. I will also be giving presentations on both days of the show. **I need volunteers to help me run the stands.** The more people we have the bigger the impact so if you are able to help out it would be brilliant. I can't pay you, but I can give you free entry to the show if you do a half day for me. Anyone who feels like they would like to help out for a whole day can also have a ticket to the Show party on the Saturday night. Although it is quite hard work, it is great fun as well so if you want to help out please let me know.

NEXT MONTH - BLUE WHALES!

Next month's newsletter will be a bit special as amongst the usual banter and snippets, hopefully I will be bringing back a report on the Pygmy Blue Whales. I am leaving on Sunday to film them as part of the Plastic Oceans documentary. The whales migrate from Australia to Sri Lanka every year going through the Indian Ocean "Gyre" a swirling current that accumulates plastic and other waste. The whales are losing weight, possibly because they are eating plastic rather than plankton and I am lucky enough to be on a trip to document their behaviour. So all being well there might be some interesting stuff on this subject. Also next month we will have a report from the next sidemount course and LIDS as well as the latest spec on that new camera from FUJI. Plenty to look forward to.

WEB SITE CHANGES and finally we have made a few changes to the website recently. First of all we have added an environmental section. This will be developed over the next few months to include video clips and links to environmental agencies and charities. There will also be a corner of the dive centre dedicated to this. We have also included a few images and descriptions about the centre on the "about us" section, and for those of you who have asked for it to be put back on the site, the blog will be returning with general comments, ramblings, satire, humour and photos. **AND COMING SOON**, we are nearly ready to launch a shop area onto the Triton website to compliment the Direct Dive Gear site .. its all happening, watch this space.

