

# SCUBANAUT

Diving Club



# Scubanaut Herald

July 2007

## Committee Dates 2007/08

23 August, 4 October, 15 November, 20 December, 10 January 2008 pre AGM, 28 January 2008 AGM

## Quarterly meetings

open to all members - 22 August, 21 November - these will take place after pool in the pub, but only if someone submits a topic to be discussed in advance

**Pete Shelton organising a day trip to Bridlington with the boat - dates to be confirmed.**

## DIVE LEADER COURSE

As announced down the pool last week Allan Laird and myself are planning to run the Dive Leader, Rescue Management scenarios course in August at the Blue Lagoon dive site (just off the A1 near Pontefract) see - [www.divebluelagoon.com](http://www.divebluelagoon.com) - admire the stunning blue water!

This is an outdoor practical session at a dive site demonstrating managing rescue scenarios. It does not involve diving underwater but does require dive kit. It is part of the dive leader course and you need to be a sports diver to take part.

The proposed dates are either Saturday 4th, 11th or 18th August.

If you would like to attend please let me know ASAP noting all dates you can attend. The date will be fixed to suit the majority. If you would like to attend but have not yet done the classroom Rescue Management theory lectures please let me know and we will arrange to run these down the pool or pub before the day of the practical session.

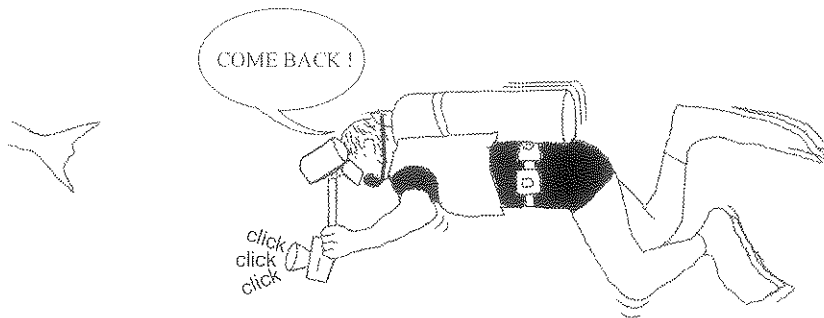
There will hopefully be the opportunity for a dive after we have done the practical course. All divers are welcome to come along for a dive.  
Nick

## ***A few thoughts that might improve your pictures***

(It would be interesting if someone that had a digital camera could write a similar article based on his or her thoughts and Ideas, *any volunteers?*)

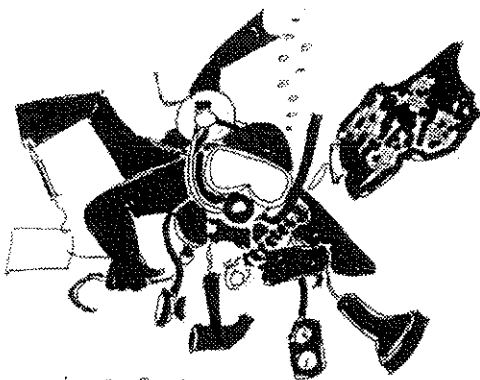
- Consider the orientation of your shot, portrait or landscape? Different subjects lend themselves to both formats, try to fill the frame with your subject and avoid large areas of nothing. If you are planning or hoping to publish, a magazine cover shot is portrait and will pay a premium (but the centrefold is landscape).
- Keep the strobe as far away from the camera as possible (to reduce back scatter) and make sure the strobe is pointing at the subject. This is obvious but due to the refraction of light (apparent distance being less than real distances) the strobe is not pointing where it appears to be. To solve this puzzle set the angle of the strobe while in air (i.e. on the boat) and don't adjust it while in the water. Or have a small torch on the strobe pointing in the same direction, when the light from the torch is on the subject it will be fully lit by the strobe.
- Fishface! If you were taking a photo of a horse or cow you would not consider a shot containing its bottom and not its head. The same applies to a fish, have the fish facing you. However as fish usually like to swim away it's easier to say than do. The eyes must be in focus, you can get away with the rest being slightly off if the eyes are good.
- When approaching your chosen subject creep up on them slowly, stalk them, make them think you are going past them and not towards them. You will get the best photos from a relaxed subject. Going headlong into a shoal of fish will send them scattering in all directions

## Slowly creep up on your chosen subject



- The aperture balancing act. Underwater there is reduced light so we need the widest possible aperture (smallest number) to let in the most light. Unfortunately at wide apertures the depth of field (the bit in focus) is very small so we want the smallest (big number) possible aperture to get the biggest depth of field and increase the chance of the fish being in focus as it swims past. We want the biggest and smallest at the same time so every photograph is a compromise between a dark and in focus or bright and out of focus picture. If the eyes of your subject are in focus you can get away with the rest being slightly out. Of course if you want to be clever you can deliberately reduce the depth of field so the main subject stands out from the background.
- Wide angle lenses have much more depth of field than standard lenses and they allow in much more light so they are a great help with the aperture balancing act. But of course there is a down side, the fish that looked enormous during the dive will look tiny when taken with a wide angle. The nearer to the lens the subject is the less pronounced the effect is. You can use this effect to produce a large picture of a small fish in the foreground with a small diver in the background. The simple rule of thumb is: use your widest angle lens and get as close as you possibly can to the subject.
- Balance the foreground and background lighting. This sounds difficult but it is not. If the background is more than a few metres away it will be lit only by available light, while the foreground will be lit by the strobe. So set the exposure so that without a strobe the photo would be slightly underexposed, and strobe (set correctly for distance) will light the foreground.
- Wind each film fully back to canister after use to prevent accidental reuse. When you are on a dive holiday you will have many films and it is inevitable that the one film you accidentally double expose would have your best shots on it.
- Switch your camera on at the start of each dive, (get into the system: check your computer, watch, camera on the surface) and switch the camera off at the end of each dive to preserve the batteries.
- Edit ruthlessly. When showing your photos a few good photos have a much better impact than thousands of mediocre slides (with a few good ones lost in the masses). Taking a film a dive is not unreasonable (if a little extravagant it depends on the dive), so after a trip you may have 600 or more slides, no-one except you wants to wade through them. Immediately throw away any out of focus, badly exposed, badly framed (e.g. subject's head chopped off). If you have two good similar shots of the same subject only keep the best in the slides you are going to show. If after this you have any left gradually prune them down so you have only the best in your show. Gradually over time your technique and standards will improve and you will despair at slides you used to think were acceptable.
- Once you have your slides in a tray ready to show paint a line of coloured spots at an angle on the top edge of the slides. So that if slides are removed they can be replaced in the same place. You can use multiple colours to identify which tray they came from.
- All the usual photographic rules of composure also apply under water, the golden ratios, don't get your fin (or finger) in the photo, horizon horizontal (or rising bubbles vertical).
- Save last few shots in the film for something good happening at the end of the dive. Imagine your frustration at the Manta that comes and winks at you just after you finish your film taking pictures of a piece of coral.

## HOW TO BE A MODEL UNDERWATER

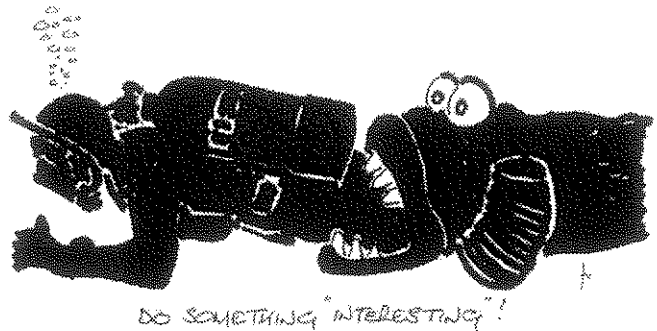


Loose Straps... Bells & Whistles  
Can look as Amateurish 'Mess'!

- 1) You must be a competent diver with complete mastery of your buoyancy. The last thing a photographer wants is for you to crash to the bottom stirring up clouds of silt or even worse to stay off the bottom by finning.
- 2) Be aware that the photographer may stop to photo something or swim off in a random direction chasing an octopus. Also he may be looking at his camera as you swim off in a different direction, if you change direction make sure your buddy knows. I would advise that both buddies use pony cylinders to avoid being separated becoming a danger to life.
- 3) A neat colour co-ordinated set of equipment vastly improves a photo and loose straps, hoses, clips bells and whistles can look like an amateurish mess. Dayglow equipment reflects too much light and can burn out a photo. When abroad choose the tank that looks good, not the one with scratches and peeling paint.

4) Pictures of your fins and tank as you swim away are useless, try and arrange to be swimming toward the camera, if you are in mid water don't stop finning, even if this means gently finning back and forth, because as soon as you stop your legs and fins will become gawky and unnatural.

- 5) If your buddy is taking a photo of something quite large and docile (e.g. fan coral, jellyfish or a pike) circle round behind and swim toward the camera. The idea being that you are a point of interest in the background. Also you may like to arrange that fast swimming fish swim between you and your buddy to achieve the same effect.
- 6) Remember to breathe. An added point of interest in an underwater photo is some bubbles. If the photo is taken a second or so after you breathe out there will be an interesting cloud of bubbles above your head. If you are in a pose and your buddy is holding his camera up to his mask ready but not taking a photo he is waiting for you to breathe out. You might like to anticipate when to breathe out, for example point 5 above breathe out just before the fish comes between you so that the photo would consist of fish in the foreground, diver in the background with a cloud of bubbles overhead. (If you breathe out too late the cloud of bubbles obscures your face).
- 7) Do something interesting. A picture of you swimming along may be of interest to your mum, but no-one else. You must be involved in doing something and make use of any opportunity that presents itself. e.g. swim through a hatchway/doorway (see point 4), stick your head through a porthole, shine your torch into a hole, dance with an octopus, let the seal bite your fin..... the list is endless. What you need to achieve is some interaction between you and the marine environment.
- 8) Eye contact is important. If you are the main subject of the photo then you could look at the camera, if you are a secondary point of interest (point 5 above) you could look either at the main point or the camera. If you are doing something (e.g. shining your torch into a hole) look at what you are doing (into the hole) to lead the viewer into the point of interest. Also eye contact with fish can be good e.g. face to face with a conger eel or shark!
- 9) Discuss with your buddy before the dive what type of photos he is looking for. He may be using a macro lens (e.g. subjects up to 2in) in which case you can pose all you like but you will never be photographed, your time would be better spent helping to look for suitable subjects. You also may want to decide on a series of special signals with meanings like 'swim around to the behind of the fish' or 'swim away and then back toward the camera' or 'put your face very close to this urchin/coral/starfish.
- 10) Photographers tend to make better models than non photographers because they understand picture composition and will position themselves where they would want a model to be, saving you the trouble of directing them into position.
- 11) It is more difficult if you both have a camera, but you can still achieve good results either getting the main subject (e.g. jellyfish) between you and photographing each other or by taking turns at being a model. When you are model switch your strobe to slave mode and pretend to photograph a subject (take care not to cause burn out and don't point the strobe directly at the other camera).
- 12) Two photographers diving together often end up playing the game of trying to out flank each other to be in a background of each others shot.



Steve Williams

## AIR INTEGRATED DIVE COMPUTER - SUUNTO EON LUX WITH COMPASS

Attaches to cylinder via the first stage to display cylinder pressure and remaining air time based on how much air you are using at the time!

Has personal adjustment settings including change of altitude.

The logbook Memory holds last 25 hours of diving and has both visual and audible alarms for when air is getting low - or you have done something wrong ...

There is a clock/calendar to record accurately times/dates of dives - and you can adjust it for those trips abroad. It also tells you the maximum depth ever reached, accumulated dive time and number of dives.

There is a backlight for all those fabulous night dives ...or Stoney!

Not used since serviced and battery replacement last year. The battery is expected to last 2000 hours.

There is a PC interface capability (though software not part of this deal) **£50**

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UNUSED! Strong wide blade with vents Strong, easily adjusted, quick release side buckles

Small size **£20** See Fran Lloyd or call Tel: 9818583

