



# Turtle News

Issue 3  
November  
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## Forthcoming Trips and Holidays

- Red Sea Wreck Week November
- Red Sea New Year
- Australia , Barrier Reef January
- Red Sea, Sharm February - £448
- Maldives Liveaboard Easter
- Red Sea, Sharm May - £492
- Indonesia, Manado July 10 days
- Ireland August
- Oban September
- Shark Diving Bahamas October 9 days

## Wales ... It's The Reel Thing



It had all begun so well - Ray had decided to embark on the trip without his weight belt and his regs. It seems that his "packer" had failed him, much as Ian Woosnam's caddy cost him a Major by carrying too many clubs! Fortunately a few of us still manage to hold down full time jobs and so were around until late on Friday and therefore able to gather up the stray pieces of equipment (dam good fellows these divers). Enough drama you may think, but no! Lo and behold in a distant motorway services two more of our intrepid travellers were having

problems all of their own. A crucial component had somehow managed to self detonate, rendering their vehicle utterly useless. After making the quick-fire decision to join the AA they then remembered that they already had a perfectly adequate policy with Eagle Start Recovery. Either way, the problem was rectified and they were back on the road at last. That evening, by the time all of this high drama had been recounted, we were all shattered and it was time for bed.

The next morning after an early start and a lottery style break-

fast everyone loaded up and it was off to the boat. As usual the car park was in one county and the boat in another, linked by a 4-mile path comprising of slippery slopes, grassy verges and 400 vertical steps!! An ideal location for carrying two 15-litre tanks and a 28lb dive bag. After struggling up and down three times you realise why nobody dives with their wife - make that four 15-litre tanks and a 48lb dive bag!! Finally it's all aboard a sinking little RIB, over burdened with dives and kit. When at last we

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**DON'T MISS THE EVENT OF THE YEAR**  
**XMAS DINNER & DANCE - 14TH DEC**  
**TICKETS ON SALE NOW - £30**

*(Continued from page 1)*

reach the dive boat everything is unloaded for the third time in less than two hours!!

Fortunately it is agreed that today's first dive will be a wreck at about 30m but we will have to wait for slack at 1.00pm. I don't think anyone was going to refuse the rest so we all sat back to wait. Unfortunately having bounced our way out to sea we then bounced our way back to the bay and sat rocking up and down and side-to-side, frying in the sun, for the next 2 hours! This has several effects - the lucky ones fall asleep, the unlucky ones alternate between green and white whilst fighting the desire to lean over the side and feed the fish! On this occasion the divers who had experienced this feeling before had taken precautions but my poor little lady sat fighting bravely with her overwhelming desire to chuck. In an effort to distract her I performed a few knife tricks, including chopping the top of my thumb off whilst wiping the blade - much to the amusement of the whole boat. Now I have to beg the skipper for a plaster, which may not seem too bad but our skipper was a cross between Goliath and the Village People and only the most fearless approached. The choice however was simple, bleed to death on deck (alright it was only a nick but it was bleeding and anyone would have cried) or face the skipper. He stood up, a terrifying sight towering over 18 feet tall and all moustache, he reached downwards ... and that's all I remember until I woke up sitting on the bench with a plaster on my aching thumb. Honestly - that's how it happened, ask the others who were cowering at the back of the boat.

At last, dive time arrived. The wreck was good and plenty to see and visibility was not too bad although torches were essential as parts of the wreck were quite dark. The amount of wildlife was exceptional with an abundance of Crab, Lobster, Dogfish and an enormous Sea Cucumber thing, although of course Rob and Luke saw everything bigger, better and faster than anyone else, except the wreck - you know - the huge metal thing at the bottom of the shot line, which they apparently missed!! Just for a change Slasher Mick (as I had affectionately become known) ran out of no-deco time before running out of air, so a great and rare dive indeed!!

The late afternoon session was a drift dive along the coast and the first chance to experience some of the real speed of the currents in this region and my buddy and I were ripped along at an

exhilarating speed over some fabulous terrain full of Crab (both Spider and Edible) and a variety of plants and rock formations. As part of our Drift Diver Specialty Course, Paula and I dived this one separately and I was buddied with Lesley for this race across the bottom. Other than fighting our way through the most aggravating jungle of kelp at the beginning, the ride was good and Goliath was there to meet us all with a Hagrid style smile and a nice cup of tea.

Day 2 started with a deep wreck running from 30m at the top to 40m at the bottom, but being in good condition it was an excellent dive for all levels of experience. Nevertheless, it was a good advert for Nitrox as the no-deco time for air was quite short and the visibility in mid water prevented there being much to see on the way down or up! Dropping on to the forecandle we were able to descend to about 34m along the deck and walkways before time ran out and my buddy and I began our slow ascent to the surface. It's always nice to see a really intact wreck and the experienced Nitrox divers had been able to penetrate parts of the wreck before returning to the surface. Now that I was actually returning to the surface with more than 10 bar in the tank for several dives in a row the lighter 12l bottles were beginning to look quite attractive, but I think I'll struggle on with my super sized tubs for a little while yet.

The afternoon dive was along a wall just off the rocks and ran upwards towards the cliffs or outwards to limitless depths so buddy pairs could choose their route accordingly. We descended to about 20m and scoured the landscape below us, ascending slowly to 10m before beginning our ascent from there. The amount of sea life was fantastic as this was in a marine conservation area and was abundant with large Lobster and Crab as well as many smaller specimens. Some huge Scallops were dotted around, smiling at the divers unable to pluck them from their comfortable surroundings for a change. This was one of the best dives of the weekend and we enjoyed just floating around watching the crustaceans digging themselves backwards into crevices to leave just the fiercest looking claws visible to tempt divers to approach. Naturally Rob and Luke approached everything and we were not surprised to learn that both had been attached to some creature or another during their dive (much like the night before really).

The following day, after a good nights sleep it was downstairs for the usual breakfast potluck, but today was special,

it was my lovely lady Paula's birthday. This was an event that Paula didn't really want me to mention so I thought I'd tell you lot too! The buzz of birthday fever shot round the team and Lesley treated us all to a version of 'Happy Birthday' that had the house-dogs running into the garden. All the usual banter about birthdays and diving followed.

Off to the boat we went and once more weakened limbs hauled tanks across terrain that would have suited the Falklands. Dive 5 was a quick trip down to another wreck. This was a little more eventful as the shot line appeared to miss the wreck by some distance. Goliath said it was our fault for hanging on to it on the way down but I don't think Ray agreed with him on this small point as he returned promptly to the boat to discuss details. Even under the water most of us heard the exchange between the short but angry fellow and the 'missing link'. The rest of us swam around in circles and found small sections of a very broken up wreck buried deep in the silt and sand. Our final dive was planned as a descent on to a shallow wreck followed by a short swim to the East to pick up the drift. We descended slowly into a thick forest of Kelp which threatened to engulf everything and in our effort to swim free we picked up the current and were immediately whisked off into the fastest drift we have ever experienced. The ride was superb and having shot our SMB up through the murky waters we accelerated over the rocks at increasing speed. After several minutes we were passed by another buddy pair, overtaking like a F1 motorcycle sidecar team with reel up front and buddy clinging on to a D ring at the side. They weaved in front and then stopped suddenly as Andy's octopus was trapped by a rock. How his buddy Steve avoided being pinged free I will never know but I understand he now has one finger 4 inches longer than the others.

Back on the boat it was time to prepare full kit for the last lung wrenching safari back to the car and an exhausted rest on the sandy grass before changing back into warm dry clothes and then to the B&B to settle the bill with our mountain man who had turned out to be quite a friendly old bear after all, and then just the 300 mile drive home. God I love this diving lark!

*Words and pictures by  
Mick the Slasher Walsh*

## Mother's Pride

What do you do when the last month of your life has been consumed by the waking nightmare that is the Instructor Development Course? How do you recover from the endless preparation of presentations, the incessant pre-dive briefings, the tomes of PADI Standards and the constant dreams of CESA? What do you do once the nail biting stress of the Instructor Examinations is behind you? That's easy! You go diving with Mother!

As the hardboat chugged out on to an English Channel pretending to be a mill-pond, the events of the last few weeks were being evaporated by that rarest of summer commodities- sunshine! Eastbourne was swallowed into the distance behind us, while, under a cloudless blue sky, the new instructors looked forward to their first dive with freshly acquired status. What made this all the more sweet was that it was Monday morning, and while the rest of the world toiled at work, we were doing what we love to do best!

The "Alaunia" was a Cunard liner, sunk in October 1916 when she struck a mine laid by UC-16. Fortunately she had disembarked troops the day before, and was en route to Portsmouth to collect supplies destined for the front in France. Today she lies in 36m, standing 12m proud, and as the biggest wreck in East Sussex waters, is an outstanding wreck dive. As we kitted up, it almost seemed a pity to be leaving the glorious summer day behind, but as we sank into the green depths, we were filled with anticipation for the dive ahead. Finding the shot on the sloping deck, we finned through a shifting cloud of bib that hung like a shroud over the once proud liner. Dropping on to her port side, we approached the seabed, hugging close in to her bow. As the "Alaunia" lists to port, we found ourselves in a huge overhang, gazing up at the remarkable sight of the 6m tall anchor, hanging free in its hawse pipe. This impression is etched indelibly in my memory, and is definitely one of my diving highlights of all time.

Moving on to the broken hull, we swam across a row of intact port-holes. Wafting away the years of silt, we were amazed to find the glass still in place on several of these round windows. One was even hanging on its hinges! Some tremendous swim throughs provided under-



The Spence Brothers Catch Crabs Whilst Diving With Mother

water entertainment, while large cod shadowed our movements. Reaching one of the liner's huge boilers, we shone our torches into the dark, beckoning recesses beyond. Mother and I looked at each other, knowing that we desperately wanted to swim into this inviting metal cave, but time and gas limits were against us. Returning to the bow we found the massive winding gear, cogs all still locked together, frozen in time. One of the hull plates is detached here, and we were able to swim into a cathedral-like archway. At the deepest point of this penetration, ambient light actually disappeared, only to sneak out of the gloom again as a faint glimmer ahead. Mother's framed silhouette looked like one of those photographs you'd expect to see on the cover of a dive magazine. All too soon one of the shortest 45 minute dives I can remember was drawing to an end, and we were on our way back up the line, to the delight of staged stops at 9, 6 and 3m.

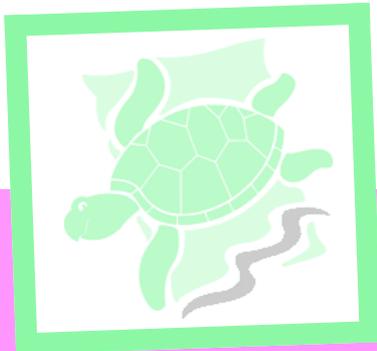


Three New Instructor Go Diving With Mother

By now the tide had turned, and on our return to the marina we were dropped on to the Royal Sovereign Shoal. This pleasant drift proved to be one of the finest naturalist dives I've had in England. Huge mussel beds lay beneath us, and starfish and velvet swimming crabs were seen in abundance. As mussels gave way to gravel, we found a cuttlefish and an enormous lobster that waved its claws at us threateningly. A pair of lesser spotted dogfish slept peacefully on the sand, and rocky outcrops sheltered resting plaice. All around us, ballan wrasse and goldsinnyes milled in and out of the visibility. What dive would be complete without a sighting of the splendid male cuckoo wrasse? As the shoal gave way to the low ledges typical of Channel banks, Russell the Walrus spotted a conger eel twisting in and out of the nooks and crannies. By now Luke and James were locked in combat with giant edible crabs, the latter protesting vigorously at their fate on the dinner table!

Luke, Russell and I all agree that this was a most auspicious start to our careers as OWIS and we would like to take this opportunity to thank both Lesley and Ray for the time and effort they invested in us to ensure that we emerged triumphant from the trials of the IE. As for the rest of you, what are you waiting for? Come and discover Diving with Mother for yourselves!

Words by Ant Collins  
Pictures by Mother



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## Society News

Needless to say its been another incredibly busy year for Adventure Divers but as things finally start to quieten down we can look forward to a well earned rest ... okay, maybe not! First thing on the agenda is of course the Christmas Dinner and Dance, which this year takes place on Saturday 14th December at the Enfield Town House, as always. Last year's party was a huge success and we are hoping for bigger and better things this year. Tickets, which are priced at £30, are already selling fast. If you want to come along please give us a call at the shop or stick a cheque in the post, but please hurry as space will be limited.

We have also been busy lining up plenty of diving for next year, both in the UK and abroad. The RIB, which has now been treated to a new engine, will be making regular journeys down to the South coast. We have a full schedule of weekends when the RIB will be running, please give us a call at the Dive Centre if you would like a list of those dates, alternatively you will find them posted on our web site. Space on the RIB will be allocated on a first come first served basis. RIB diving is open to divers of all levels but Open Water and novice divers are especially welcome.

For the more experienced divers we have another full calendar of mid week Diving With Mother. After the popularity of last seasons dives we have added a few extra dates with some "big-boys" diving

down at Weymouth. These dates coincide nicely with weekends that the RIB is running out of Weymouth or Swanage so why not hang around for a few more dives. Again, dates are available from the Dive Centre or on our web site.

For those looking for something a little warmer and less strenuous we have plenty on offer. Ever popular, the Red Sea remains a great place to get those last few Speciality courses completed for your Master Scuba Diver. For something further a field, we are planning holidays to Indonesia and the Bahamas. Both trips offer excellent value for money and are ideal for all levels, as well as non-divers.

On the training front, we have a full programme of courses already scheduled for next year. In addition, we are one of the first centres in the UK to be able to offer PADI's new Emergency First Response course. Replacing the old Medic First Aid, EFR is bang up to date and utilises some excellent training materials. As well as the usual CPR and First Aid training, the course also covers use of defibrillators and oxygen. A great course for divers and non-divers alike, we will be running the EFR programme throughout the winter and next season. Finally, we would like to thank Luke for all of his hard work and wish him well on his travels. A BIG WELCOME to Daren, our fantastic new store manager. Why not give him a call and say hello.

*See you all at the Dinner & Dancell*

## Courses

<b>Advanced Open Water</b>	- Orientation 3rd April - Open Water 5th & 6th April - Orientation 1st May - Open Water 3rd & 4th May
<b>Dry Suit Specialty</b>	- Orientation 31st March - Open Water 5th April - Orientation 28th April - Open Water 3rd May
<b>Enriched Air Nitrox</b>	- Academics 3rd April & 1st May - Open Water 6th April & 4th May
<b>Emergency First Response</b>	- 8th December
<b>Rescue Diver &amp; Emergency First Response</b>	- Academics 21st, 22nd & 27th March - Pool 20th, 22nd & 24th March - Open Water 23rd, 29th & 30th March
<b>Divemaster</b>	- Commencing April
<b>Assistant Instructor &amp; Instructor Development</b>	- By Arrangement ... At any time !!

**TO BOOK ON ANY OF THESE COURSES OR FOR ALTERNATIVE DATES, PLEASE CALL RAY, LESLEY OR DAREN AT THE DIVE CENTRE.**

## Congratulations

### Open Water

Peter Best, Natasha King, Antonio Croydon, Victoria Soloviev, Julie Carslake, Russell Cotman, Pia Whitney, Danny Lowe, Lisa Palmer, Jamie Mickelburgh, Paul Chessum, John Hart, Lisa Martin, Jean Pearce, Augusta Winstone, David Felton, Andy Aston, Angela Downer, Yvonne Cowan, Kim Lord, Steve Plummer, Simon Pyne

### Advanced Open Water

Dennis Godley, Joe Roe, Dean Boosey, Robert Eaton, Steve Howard, Pai Whitney, Dave White, Jan Pringle, Mark Ayling, Kirk Maxwell, Tyrone Davies

### Rescue & MFA

Wayne Morris, David Norton, Ben Foster, Joseph Richardson, David Mingay, Paul Jeffrey-Read, Gemma Williams

### Dry Suit Specialty

Steve Howard, Anne Thompson, Daren Davies, Tyrone Davies, Phil Whittaker, Richard Hill, Debbie Crush, Chris Adams, Rebecca Harrop, Kim Lord

### Enriched Air Nitrox

Chris Adams, Rebecca Harrop, Chris Edwards, Cathy Williams, Gemma Williams, Daren Davies, Steve Collier