

ULSAC Trip Report Form

Please include on this form any details you think will help organise another trip to this area. Please include details of any problems encountered, or any particularly good things/places in the area, such as good or awful restaurants and pubs.

Logistics

Date	26-27 April 2008	Springs <input type="checkbox"/> Neaps <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Venue	Portland	
Marshal	Susie Q (Fisher)	
Overseer	Michelle Kim	
Number of People	17	
List of attendees with Diver Grade in brackets (e.g SD, DL etc)	Susie Fisher (SD)	Ali Gaudion (SD)
	Michelle Kim (AD)	Bonnie Morgan (AD)
	Al Morgan (DL)	Jim Heard (SD)
	Lyndsey Houseman (SD)	Sarah Cant (DL)
	Anjali Shah (DL)	Sarah Hamilton (OD)
	Barbara Bayford (OD)	Helen cripps (SD)
	Anthony Chaddock (DL)	Marcus Allen (FCD)
	Tom Roberts (SD)	Ernst Buyl (DL)
	Martin Greaves (AD)	
Accommodation	Argos House	
Address	Southwell, Portland	
Telephone No.	n/a	
Cost per night/per tent/per person or as appropriate	Free	
Notes	<p>This is Bonnie's family house which she very kindly lent to us for two nights. There are lots of rooms and a large kitchen/living area.</p> <p>We ate at the Mermaid pub which does OK food for between £5-8 a head. They let us book a large table and we had a large room to ourselves which was nice. It was also walkable (15 mins) distance from the accommodation so everyone could have a drink.</p>	
Launch Site (inc. cost)	<p>Castletown. You have to buy a harbour permit from Aquasports reception - £20 diving cost and £3.75 per boat per day. We were checked by the harbour master so don't forget!</p> <p>Note – the speed limit is 6 knots ANYWHERE near the edges of the harbour and you can only go faster than this right in the middle. We got told off by the Harbour Master for speeding when heading from Castletown to the exit over the Hood.</p>	
Coastguard	Portland Coastguard 01305 760439	
Chamber	Poole Hyperbaric Centre 7 Parkstone Road Poole Dorset BH15 2NN 01202 678278 24 hour Emergency No. 07770 423637	
Air Shop	Scimitar Diving. We used self filling which was much cheaper as you only pay for the air you put in rather than a full fill. We used Al's fob to pay for it. Might be worth buying one for ULSAC. Nitrox is available from the air shop	
Van Hire (inc. notes, did you breakdown, AA cover, tow bar etc.)	H and H Van Hire – van with towbar Van was a "52" registration so quite old and the gearbox was pretty done in. Issues with steering and driving up hills.	

Dives

Dive 1	
Site:	Dredger
Max depth:	11m
GPS Marks:	50 34.03N 02 25.45 W
Brief description:	<p>A nice shallow dive with lots of spider crab life. There are 2 distinct bits of the dredger about 10m apart. Perfect for the trainees/drills. Did a 6m CBL and one OD assessment.</p> <p>Is located on the outside of the breakwater opposite a crane and has a permanent buoy on it</p>
Dive 2	
Site:	Pulpit Rock
Max depth:	Site shelves down from 10m to deeper than 35. All divers dived to 30m or above
GPS Marks:	50 30'.63N 02 27'.80 W
Brief description:	<p>A scenic dive on the tip of Portland Bill. First time we'd dived this site but was really great! Lots of marine life – huge fish everywhere! Lobsters, massive crabs, brightly coloured cuckoo wrasse, big ballan wrasse, rock covered in soft coral. Great dive for allowing buddies to choose appropriate depths for progression etc.</p> <p>The best place to dive is driving out due west from Pulpit Rock (it's very obvious, it looks exactly like a pulpit with stairs leading up to it). After approx. 200m the seabed plateaus at 18m and there is then a ledge dropping off to 35+ metres. Put divers in 20-30 metres, close to the ledge, a very slight drift takes you towards the ledge.</p> <p>Note - slack is at Portland +4HW for 45 minutes only, and can only be dived on Neaps.</p> <p>SAFETY - Fixed SMB's!</p>

Dive 3	
Site:	Balaclava Bay to Grove Point Drift
Max depth:	22m (although again some divers did a shallower drift around 14m)
GPS Marks:	50 33'.46N 02 24'.92w
Brief description:	<p>A nice drift dive, parallel to the shore. Put divers in around HW Ply -5, current runs south 9 hours out of twelve. There is a pick up of speed around Grove Point but this decreases again once past the point. Lots of dogfish in this area, snakelock anemones, jewel anemones and soft coral. A fun dive due to the speed of the drift!</p> <p>SAFETY - Fixed SMB's!</p>
Dive 4	
Site:	Landing Craft
Max depth:	11 - 17m
GPS Marks:	50 35'.58N 02 26'.00W
Brief description:	<p>Found site mainly using picture in DiveDorset book. Landing Craft is close to the inside of the breakwater, with a buoy on it. Nice small wreck, some life, vis quite poor but divers saw a John Dory!</p> <p>Dive for the new Ocean Divers and Sports Divers wanting a suitable depth.</p>

Dive 5	
Site:	Bynnendyk
Max depth:	26m
GPS Marks:	Used those already in RHIBs GPS
Brief description:	<p>We dived the Bynnendyk after an unsuccessful attempt to find the Alex Van Opstal at 50'42.38N 02'16.03W. After identifying what seemed to be the wreck, an object on the seabed rising to 25m we shotted and put in boatie buddy pairs. This was not the wreck but a sandbar (watch out for this). Divers ascended (after some saw a spotted ray!) but due to intermittent GPS/echo signal due to the dense cloud cover on both boats decided rather than continue looking for the Alex we would put the remaining pairs in on the Bynnendyk which is 2nm back towards Portland. Remaining divers dived the Bynnendyk, visibility fairly poor 2-3 metres, but lots of life – tompot blennies, crabs, wrasse, big lobsters.</p>

	Wreck is very atmospheric but recommend all divers have torches as can be quite dark past 20m.
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Dive 6	
Site:	
Max depth:	
GPS Marks:	
Brief description:	Offered an afternoon (around 5pm) dive to the Countess but everyone except for one wanted to jib. So decided to head off earlyish instead.

General Details
<p>A successful weekend, very relaxed due to favourable slacks and a fantastic group of people (some were even spotted sitting in the car park with a cup of tea and the Saturday Guardian in hand). 2 new Ocean Divers qualified, some boat practice done for assistant handlers and everyone who wanted them got three dives. Weather was excellent with sun and flat seas apart from fog/threat of storms on Sunday (but still flat seas!) As first weekend of the season, depth progression was an issue which we dealt with by using split waves and multi depth sites where possible. Late slack times meant we couldn't go further afield in the afternoon dive. A nice 2nd dive would be the Black Hawk (Bow) which is around 7nm from Portland.</p> <p>Sites considered but not dived: The Countess Alex van Opstal M2 Aeolian Sky Black Hawk (Bow)</p>

Please return completed forms to the Diving Officer asap. Thanks!