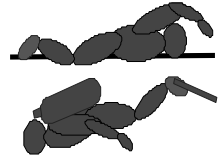




# ESTEC SWIMMING & SUB-AQUA CLUB

December 2001 Newsletter



## Editorial

Hi folks,

hey, what do you know?! This newsletter features articles by Cesare and Bryan! Where would I be without my trusted roving reporters!! Once again, thanks guys! To be fair, I actually had more input than I could deal with this time. So maybe the next newsletter will appear sooner than you expect!



In this issue:

- *A day in the North Sea* by Cesare
- News from the committee, including *Use and rules of the ESSAC Boat "SpaceDiver"*
- *"No Worries" diving in Australia* by Bryan

However, one thing I can't help but notice is that the "oldies" in the club seem to be providing all the input. Where are all the club's kids? Are there any younger club members with any hidden writing talents? Or even drawing or photographic talents? You never know, writing something for the newsletter may be the beginning of a blossoming journalism career. There are worse careers to have!

By the way, a warning to the new trainees: I will be hounding you over the next few weeks for some input, by way of introducing yourselves to the club!

Don't forget, please send any articles, information and news to my email address at home (tat.people@12move.nl) or work (Sharon.Tatman@wldelft.nl)

Enjoy the reading!

**Sharon**

## A day in the North Sea

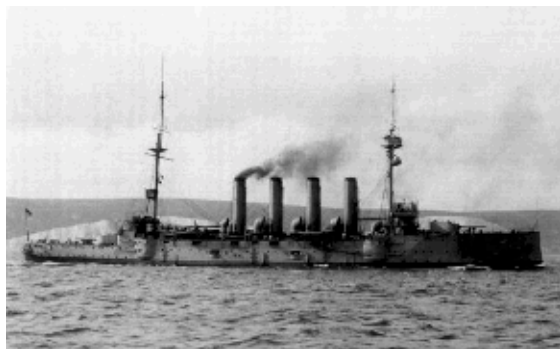
Yes, the title is indeed correct, or almost. Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup> of August, saw again the BSAC ESTEC and HARINGS branches join forces together for an expedition to the 'Broad Fourteens'. Two ribs, 7 divers and the good weather made their way to about 44 km from Scheveningen Haven to the place that was witness to one of the many tragedies of World War 1. During the early months of the war the British Royal Navy maintained a patrol of old Cressy class armoured cruisers, known as Cruiser Force C, in this area. Early on September 22nd 1914 the German submarine U9 sighted the three patrol ships, *Cressy*, *Aboukir* and *Hogue*, steaming NNE at 10 knots without zigzagging. Although the patrols were supposed to maintain 12-13 knots and zigzag, the old cruisers were unable to maintain this speed and the zigzagging order was widely ignored as there had been no submarines sighted in the area. The U9 manoeuvred to attack and at about 6.25 AM fired a single torpedo at *Aboukir*, which struck her on her port side. *Aboukir* rapidly suffered heavy flooding and despite counter flooding, developed a 20-degree list and lost engine power and was soon abandoned. At first it seemed that *Aboukir* had hit a mine so the other two cruisers were signalled to close and assist. As *Aboukir* rolled over and sank, half an hour after being attacked, U9 fired two torpedoes at HMS *Hogue* that hit her amidships and rapidly flooded her engine room. It only took *Hogue* ten minutes to sink as the U9 headed for HMS *Cressy*.

The damage to *Cressy* was not fatal but the U9 turned round and fired her last torpedo, which hit *Cressy* sinking her within a quarter of an hour. Several nearby merchant ships including the Dutch *Flora* and *Titan* and the British trawlers *JGC* and *Coriander* picked up survivors before the Harwich force of light cruisers and destroyers arrived. *Flora* returned to Holland with 286 rescued crew who were quickly returned to Britain even

though the neutral Dutch should have interned them. In all, 837 men were rescued but 1459 died, many of which were reservists or cadets.

And so, almost a century after the events have taken place, we visited the remains of HMS *Cressy*. After a trip of about one and a half-hour, with a slightly rough sea and a wind force around 3 Beaufort, our ribs arrived at the site, joining a Dutch rib and a hard boat full of divers. Somewhat puzzled to find such a Red Sea crowd over the site, we released our shot line and prepared to dive. HMS *Cressy* is lying on the bottom at a depth of about 32 m., with the upper part as high as 27 m. On a previous dive last year, we only visited the upper part, where a lot of detail can still be seen (including ammunitions). Our group (Jan and myself), with Laurent and his rebreather leading, decided on a decompression dive and explore the deepest part of the wreck. Visibility was pretty good, at least for Dutch standards and we dived just when slack was over, so a slight current drifted us nicely along the wreck. The wreck is extremely well conserved and all the detail of the frame and the armour can still be seen. On the side where we dived, the belt was forming a wall, covered by sea anemones of all sizes. Here and there few apertures made it possible to see the inside of the wreck. Large shoals of fishes surrounded the wreck, which is home to an abundant variety of crustacean and invertebrates. At one point in time, Laurent pointed to what looked like a bundle of spaghetti and made a signal which, well, left us wondering and puzzled. Later on, he explained to us that it was cordite (the signal was meant to mimic an explosion, but looked more like an octopus trying to eat some spaghetti). After about half an hour we started our ascent. While Laurent and Jan were busy releasing the Delayed Surface Marker Buoy, I profited by having a last look around and discovered the biggest fish I have ever seen in Dutch waters. A nice dogfish, about 1 m. long, was sleeping

through his, I'm quite sure, well-deserved after lunch siesta. After our Pyle stops ascent (sorry, couldn't resist) we surfaced and concluded what I must consider as my best dive in Dutch waters.



Thanks to Darren Milford of WorldWar1.co.uk for the historical information and pictures.

---

## NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Jeff Noyes:	Chairman
John Ives:	Diving Officer
Barrie Henson:	Swimming Officer
Drusilla Wishart,	Club Treasurer and
assisted by Phil	the BSAC Secretary
Baker:	
John Nolan:	Training Officer
Keith Miller:	Equipment Officer
Wim van Leeuwen:	Snorkelling
	Representative
Sharon Tatman:	Social Secretary

### Equipment Officer

#### equipment recall:

All previous years' diving trainees, please take note (and anyone else this applies to)! If you still have any club equipment lying around at home or in the office, such as tanks, and you are not using it or are not eligible to use it, please can you return it to Keith as soon as possible.

Keith (Keith.Miller@esa.int)  
Tel ESTEC 3409

---

### Secretary/Treasurer

Just to remind or inform you: if you move house, change work or email address, could you please inform Drusilla and pass on any new details, so she can keep all her databases up to date!

Thanks!

Drusilla (Drusilla.Wishart@esa.int)

---

### Swimming Officer

#### The Swimming Gala

The date for the Swimming Gala has been set: **Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2002**. It will be followed by a Barbecue and dancing at The Tennis Club.

Barrie (Barrie.Henson@esa.int)

---

### Social secretary

#### New Year dinner

And another date for your diaries: the date for the annual dinner/dance!

**Saturday 19 January 2002**, 19.00-midnight at the **Gouden Leeuw** in Voorschoten.

The price will be fl 100, including all food (3-course meal), drinks and musical entertainment. Tickets will be on sale at the pool soon.

And if you have any ideas or requests for socials, please let me know.

Sharon (Sharon.Tatman@wldelft.nl)

---

## **"No Worries" diving in Australia...**

**NON DIVERS...** *It's OK this isn't all about diving and non-divers can definitely have a good time in Exmouth as well!*

Australia is big - I mean really big. With Europe and a few other places (Japan, New Zealand etc.) all fitting well within Western Australia... and they still only have 15 Million people in the whole of Australia; one million less than the Netherlands!

We were visiting "Rellies" (relatives) in Perth (bottom left hand corner of Australia) and flew North to Exmouth. We were going to drive up but apparently it's a really tedious 15 hour solid drive and not worth the effort. Exmouth is a small place which was set up a few years ago to support an American Navy radio station. The Americans have now gone but the town remains and appears to be entirely dependent on travellers/tourists and the local prawn fishery.

Exmouth is perfectly positioned on the Ningaloo Reef. Although less well known than the Great Barrier Reef, Ningaloo has loads to offer and has the advantage of being much quieter.

Sharon had booked the entire trip over the Internet and by email which avoided any problems with time difference from here to there. We stayed at the "Pot Shot Hotel" which is joined to the Exmouth Diving Centre (or EDC) - there are of course other places to stay and other diving groups but I would recommend the EDC... read on!

We arrived in Exmouth on the afternoon flight and thanks to a few electro/mechanical problems with the bus we arrived at about 7pm at the hotel (one of the battery terminals was loose and being a 24v system to power the automatic doors, it had a fair amount of juice and melted straight through the loose terminal on

battery...). We were booked to start diving the next morning and we decided to check in with the diving centre straight away. This turned out to be a wise move as they wanted us there at the EDC at 7am the next morning.... Excuse me what time?!?!?!?

7am, Sharon and I stumbled into the EDC and presented our log books and filled in the paperwork. We were then issued with our kit (we only took mask/fins/snorkels and computers).

First point to note: although the EDC was



obviously busy and the kit was used a lot, things seemed to be in well-maintained condition and suits, jackets and regulators all clean, well-sorted and hung up. For October they recommend wearing two thin wet suits over each other. We were told that we were diving from the hard boat today and ushered in the direction of the bus and trailer. Tanks were already on the trailer and weight belts were already on the boat. After loading our full kit bags onto the trailer, we were called together for a short briefing and a roll call (everyone's names were read out and we had to acknowledge our existence!)

...so far I have to say that I had been extremely impressed. The staff (who seemed to be plentiful) were friendly, professional and had struck a very good balance between being cautious + efficient + pushy and relaxed + sloppy. I have dived with organisations which have been both of these wrong sides and for me the EDC was the first place that it was done really well.

OK so everyone onto the bus. Doors shut. Another roll call to make absolutely sure that everyone on the dive roster matched everyone on the bus (all EDC staff included in the roll call). Bus engine started and... we're off.... For about 200m and then we stop again - engine off, doors open. "Bakery Stop!" --- allllright! My kind of diving! EDC staff and a few of the divers stumble off the bus and into the bakery to order filled rolls, sticky cinnamon rolls (yummy!) and ice cold percolated coffee in a carton --- delicious - why can't we get that here?

All back on the bus, yet another roll-call and we're off to the harbour. The EDC dive shop, the busses and the boats are all equipped with radios and these were used to co-ordinate the important arrangements for the day... "Bus Bus this is Concorde" screamed the radio (Concorde turned out to be the boat and the voice turned out to be the skipper Simon). The message continued "...have you already been to the bakery?". "Fraid so mate" replied Justin and on we went.

We arrived at the harbour and carried the stuff from the trailer down to the boat.



First impression of the boat... very nice. No fancy bits and bobs from a chandlers to make it look pretty just a really nice looking well designed steel boat with loads of shade, roll up/down splash screens on both sides, everything looking in really good condition and... no it can't be...the deck has a carpet on it????? Indeed, my first impressions weren't wrong. We were asked to remove our shoes before getting onto the boat. The

boat consisted of a small cabin with a flying deck above, a toilet which really flushed; none of the marine toilet hand pump business - but it did flush directly out of the back of the boat so it was worth checking that no-one was in the water before using it! The rest of the boat was carpeted with bench seats up the middle with the tanks as your back rest (a bit hard but it was practical as this meant that you could get kitted up sitting down and then just stand up with all your gear already attached.



Once on board, the skipper (Simon was on duty on our first day), introduced himself and gave a short safety briefing about the boat, O<sub>2</sub> kit, life raft, radio etc. and even demonstrated donning a life jacket - all in all much like a pre-flight safety demonstration but with less make-up and yes - another roll-call (don't get me wrong by saying "another" - I was very impressed by their attention to detail and their persistence at including all of their own staff in all the roll calls and manifests).

We set off towards the first dive site and it was quite windy. We kitted up and after a brief (safety stops were compulsory) and explanation of the dive site (Blizzard Ridge - so named because if a current starts, it picks up the sand and... well the rest is obvious!) - Sharon and I stepped off for our first dive in Australian water. This was going to be one of the deeper dives they do as it goes down to 14/15m .... A relative "deep" then! Down we go and...oh, is this right? Visibility less than 5m? Apparently it isn't so unusual so be warned! If you are expecting



Caribbean crystal clear water....go to the Caribbean! This was our first open water dive for 2 years and they only let us in the water directly because of our qualifications and because we dive in the pool so often. If you haven't been in the water for a while, they sensibly insist that you have a refresher lesson with them in the swimming pool of the Pot Shot Hotel...



(the photo is the pool not our first dive site!!!!)

Marine life was pretty cool and included a white tipped reef shark, a Tasselled Wobbegong (another shark that sits on the bottom and looks unimpressed with visitors), blue striped snappers, angel fish, banner fish, moon wrasse, parrot fish, a large grouper etc. We surfaced, rejoined the boat and switched our tanks over ready for the next dive before eating some of the sticky buns that I had bought in the bakery that morning and drinking some of the water plus fruit "cordial" which was provided free on the boat and which divers were actively encouraged to drink - and keep drinking as it was hot, sunny and dehydration is thought to exacerbate Decompression Illness (or DCI to it's friends).

1hour 12 mins later we were back in the water. Although the surface interval was short, the depths were shallow so safe to do. Nice dive at the "Labyrinth" with Octopus, loads of beautiful nudibranchs and a bat fish being added to the list of wildlife.

Back on the boat and the fun really began. As we sat there, leatherback turtles swam

up to the side of the boat - very pretty! We set-off home and as we did, we could see humpback whales breaching on the horizon. Suddenly someone spotted a mother and her calf swimming our way. Simon slowed down and they came right up to the boat, swam once around us and then swam off. Amazing! The hump back whales are a protected species so you aren't allowed to deliberately go into the water with them. During October they migrate north with their new calves.

On the days that followed we continued to see the whales every day and the EDC organises "Whale Watches" for non-divers to go out and spot whales from the Concorde.

Katherine also joined us diving and we continued to use both the Concorde and "The Beast". The Beast looks like a RIB but in fact it is fibre-glass. It is rumoured to be indestructible (but then wasn't that what they said about the Titanic....) and apparently the SAS drop these boats out of the back of aircraft! Suffice it to say that it is fairly rugged and goes like the wind with twin outboards on the back!



(Photo of "The Beast" courtesy of Dive Master Martin Szegedi)

One of the days we went to the "Muirion Islands" for which you pay a bit more but it includes a full lunch. Snorkellers are also very welcome on this trip.

OK well I've wittered on for far too long already.

### **A quick summary:**

Exmouth Diving Centre - very impressed. Keen to help but do be clear on what sort of diving you want - at one point they thought that they were boring us and took us to a dive site which was a bit too adventurous for the whimp that I am - it should be noted that when they saw we weren't happy with the site, they took us back to an easier site (it was very windy, choppy, strong current and with waves crashing over reef poking out of the sea... I'm a whimp - sorry EDC!). They had lots of people doing "Dive Master" courses and they acted as "staff" as well.

Water and see life - Viz was much worse than we expected. Marine life was good but Bonaire is better. But the whales were awesome! At another time of the year, you can see whalesharks which you are allowed to swim with and we also missed the manta rays (although there was one on one of the dives that we did).

Weather - it was hot but very tolerable. A little later and apparently it gets baking. It was very windy while we were there and in fact one day they cancelled the diving because of the weather.

Exmouth - clean centre with all the essential shops. Restaurants - well there aren't many. "Whalers" was very nice but book a table in advance. There is a fish and chips restaurant which is very informal but has really good grub - but it was for sale so don't bank on this. The Pot Shot Hotel has nice food but is expensive. Most restaurants (possibly with the exception of the Pot Shot?) are BYO (Bring Your Own - alcoholic drinks that is) but you can also buy wine at restaurants at a higher price.

### **What else can you do apart from diving?**

Get a hire car! A short drive from Exmouth, there is a wildlife reserve and beautiful

beaches with excellent snorkelling (Turquoise Bay for example). There can be strong currents in some of these bays so ask around if you're not sure.

**Absolute Must Do:** Neil McLeod's Ningaloo Safari. A one day trip around the local area. A stop for coffee and Neil's Mum's home made boiled fruit cake, lunch, views, snorkelling (Neil provides snorkel equipment for those who don't have any) and a trip up Yardy Creek (a short but dramatic gully which you go up in Neil's boat). Loads of photo opportunities and a good day out.



**Other Snorkelling info:** If you haven't got kit with you, you can rent snorkel equipment from the EDC. You can also go out on the boat but check with the EDC before you travel to ensure a space on the boat.

**Other Diving info:** The Exmouth Diving Centre is the only place around which offers Nitrox fills for those who want this. Re-breathers can also be rented but these need to be organised well in advance as they only get the re-breathers in on special request (sorry I can't remember if they said they were Drager semi-closed or AP Valves yellow closed systems - send EDC an email if you want more info; ): [ningaloo@bigpond.com](mailto:ningaloo@bigpond.com)



(as far as I know all these busses and trailers etc. belonged to the EDC including the Beast on the trailer behind the Toyota Land Cruiser on the right hand side of the picture)



---

## **Use of the ESSAC Boat - SpaceDiver.**

Almost a year ago, the Club invested in a new boat, a 5.4 meter Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) with a 90 HP outboard engine. While the main reason for the purchase was to have a suitable boat to support the Club's diving activities, it is intended that the boat should be available for use, on an equal basis, by non-diving members of the Club.

Such a boat is a significant investment. It is also a dangerous 'toy', capable of speeds in excess of 30 knots (50 km/hr). Therefore, its utilisation has to be carefully controlled. The following 'rules' define the basis under which the Club Boat is to be used.

Experience may well identify the need for some tailoring of these rules. The Committee will consider any recommendations that it receives.

Members holding suitable qualifications / experience who wish to be put on the list of Approved Borrowers should make their wish known to the Club's Chairman.

The Committee is looking into ways to support, in particular, non-diving-members in gaining suitable qualifications to be able to use the boat.

We wish you safe and enjoyable use of the boat.

*ESSAC Committee*

### **This document defines:**

- The general principles regarding the use of the Club boat.
- The items that are considered to be part of the Club boat as made available in connection with its use.

- The main terms of the Club's insurance for the boat.
- The qualifications to be held by a person borrowing the boat.
- The responsibilities of the person borrowing the boat.
- The procedure for booking the boat.

### **General Principles of Use:**

- The boat will be made available for use under the responsibility of a single person who is responsible for the safe and proper use of the boat and its equipment during the period that the boat is under his responsibility.
- The boat is primarily for the use of Club members.
- The Committee will maintain a list of Approved Borrowers. The boat will only be made available to members who are on the Approved Borrowers list.
- Use of the boat is to be self-financing (i.e. at no cost to the Club) in terms of consumables (e.g. fuel, 2-stroke oil, launching fees) and replacement/repair of lost/damaged items having a value of less than the amount to be paid by the Club in respect of any claim on the Club's boat insurance (excess clause, see below) Responsibility for the replacement / repair of more costly items will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Club will cover the cost of maintenance of the boat and engine with regard to normal wear and tear.

### **Items being part of the Club boat:**

- Tornado Viking 5.4 m RIB with 90 HP Mercury outboard engine, equipped with:
  - 2 boat boxes containing spare engine parts, flares and first-aid kit.
  - Anchor, chain and 35 m warp.
  - Air pump for inflating boat tubes.
  - Console-mounted compass.
  - Console-mounted VHF radio.

- Console-mounted Echo-sounder.
- Shot weights, lines and buoys.
- 10 life vests of 3 different sizes.
- Hallmark RC braked trailer, with lights/number plate assembly, wheel-clamp and spare wheel.

#### **The Club's boat insurance covers:**

- The loss/theft of or accidental damage to the items listed above, with the Club liable to the first £200 (excess clause), provided that:
  - The wheel clamp made available with the boat and the ball-hitch-lock integral to the trailer are in use at all times when the trailer is unattended.
  - The boat is not used in excess of 15 Nautical Miles from the coast.
- Third party claims up to £1,000,000, provided that the boat is not used to tow Sleds, Rings, Biscuits or the like.

Note: This insurance, nor any other held by the Club, provides cover for the persons in the boat: Persons travelling in the boat therefore do so at their own risk.

#### **Qualifications required to become an Approved Borrower:**

- To have attended a BSAC Boat Handling Course or to provide evidence of having equivalent experience,
- And to hold a certificate of competence accepted by the Dutch authorities for use of the boat on inland waters (e.g. Dutch Vaarbewijs, UK RYA level 3).

#### **Responsibilities of the Borrower:**

- To ensure that the boat is towed to and from the launch site according to safety standards (e.g. maximum towing weight of the towing vehicle) and road traffic regulations (e.g. 80 km/hr maximum speed limit).

- The weight of the basic boat and equipment, on its trailer, is approximately 600 kg.
- The person towing the boat is to hold a driving licence and to have an insurance that covers him for towing a trailer.
- To ensure that the conditions of the boat insurance are adhered to (e.g. that the provided wheel-clamp and ball-hitch lock are used on the trailer at all times when the trailer is unattended; the boat is not used in excess of 15 NM from the shore; the boat is not used to tow Sleds, Rings, Biscuits or the like).
- To take all reasonable steps to prevent theft of the boat or items belonging to it, e.g.:
  - To store the boat on its trailer overnight.
  - To remove all loose items when the boat is unattended.
  - Not to leave the boat unattended while moored.
- To restrict passengers to an age of 8 and above.
- To ensure that the maximum load capacity of the boat is not exceeded (... passengers or ... kg).
- To be familiar with the speed limits (harbour speed limits, inland water speed limits) applicable in the planned area of use and to ensure that these limits are adhered to.
- To be familiar with the use of safety features of the boat (flares, anchor, life jackets, etc.).
- To ensure that the fuel tank and the 2-stroke oil reservoir are full at the time of taking over the boat and are full at the time that the boat is returned. The cost of replenishing these consumables shall be covered by the Borrower, e.g. via collection of contributions from the passengers.
- The Borrower is responsible for the consequences (fines, confiscation of boat and/or equipment) resulting from infringements of laws during the towing of the boat and its use on the water.

- To prevent the use of the boat's VHF radio (except in emergency) unless either the Borrower or another person on the boat holds a licence for the use of a VHF radio. The Borrower is responsible for ensuring that the VHF radio is not inappropriately used. In the case that none of the passengers holds a licence to use the VHF radio, a mobile telephone shall be carried on the boat which shall be switched on at all times.
  - To ensure that all passengers wear at all times while on the boat a buoyancy device. A wet-suit, or a dry-suit with zip(s) closed, are considered to provide an adequate alternative to a life jacket.
  - To ensure that all necessary papers (e.g. boat licence, cox'n's "driving" licence, VHF radio operators licence, divers' Zeeland permits) are carried on the boat during its use.
  - To ensure that, during use in connection with diving activities in Zeeland, no net bags are carried on board.
  - The Borrower may leave the boat while "at sea" (e.g. for the Borrower to dive) only when it is possible for him to temporarily delegate his responsibilities to one of the passengers who must be an Approved Borrower or have attended a BSAC Boat Handling Course.
  - To wash off the boat/trailer and to run the engine with fresh water before putting the boat back in its storage place.
  - To report to the Club's Equipment/Boat Officer at the earliest possible time any damage or problems encountered with the boat.
- weekend (Friday after work to Sunday evening). The boat shall be collected and returned to its storage place within the period reserved. Exceptionally, longer reservations can be made by an individual Club member, but such reservations require approval of the Committee.
- It is not permitted for any individual Club member to hold more than one reservation at the same time.
  - Reservations are to be made through the Club's Equipment/Boat Officer.
  - The person making a reservation must be an Approved Borrower.
  - Reservations by individual Club members will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis.
  - The keys for the boat shall be collected from and returned to the Club's Equipment/Boat Officer.

#### **Procedure for reserving the boat:**

- Use of the boat on Club Activities (i.e. activities organised with the knowledge and agreement of the Committee) has priority over use by individual Club members.
- The maximum period for which the boat can normally be reserved by an individual Club member, per reservation, is one