



SHOTLINES

newsdesk

Club Complains After Hunterston Allegations

IN THE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER edition of **'Scottish DIVER'** we reported that the operators of Hunterston Power Station had written to ScotSAC warning against diving in the vicinity of the jetty at the power station.

Peter Tarren, the Station Director, claimed in his letter that two members of Cumbernauld Sub Aqua Club undertook a dive near the jetty on Monday, August 6. **'Scottish DIVER'** carried details of those claims in our 'Shotlines' article.

Following the appearance of the piece, Cumbernauld SAC wrote to Jack Morrison editor of

'Scottish DIVER'. Jack says: "Following the news item in the last issue of **'Scottish DIVER'**, about the dangers of diving near the inlet pipe of Hunterston power station, I received a letter from Cumbernauld branch. In it the branch take me to task for naming and shaming them as the culprits.

"**'Scottish DIVER'** only printed what Mr. Tarren wrote because it is an important safety issue for all divers. However Cumbernauld SAC assures me that after making enquiries none of the divers involved were from their branch.

"Cumbernauld branch is seeking a full apology from **'Scottish DIVER'** and we have no hesitation in apologising for not

checking the facts with you. And we are happy to repeat that the divers involved did not come from Cumbernauld branch.

"However, and please don't think this is intended to detract from the apology, I do think you are missing the point. What club the divers were from is not what's important here. The important thing, and I'm sure you will agree with me, is to stop divers putting their lives at risk by diving in front of the power station's intake pipe.

"I wish that we at **'Scottish DIVER'** had the resources to fully investigate all the complaints I hear about - I would not hesitate to name and shame those involved. I hope this answers the questions from Cumbernauld branch, but if not I'll be happy to give you space to air your grievances in your own words."



Deep Blue in Golf Ball Hunt



DEEP BLUE, the top dive centre in the north-east of England, took the plunge to raise hundreds of pounds for BBC TV's Children in Need Appeal. The Deep Blue team - Lewis Rana, John-Paul Gardner, Ashley Pooh and Dave Block were joined by Pudsey Bear himself as they retrieved golf balls from the bottom of one of the lakes at De Vere Slaley Hall, in Northumberland.

Golfers and members of the public were invited to guess how many golf balls the divers would find - the closest estimate winning a luxury weekend break for two at the hotel. In addition the golf club that raised the most money for Children in Need was presented with the special prize of all the golf balls the divers found in the lake.

The team from Deep Blue

faced a stern challenge for this fundraiser, as the sixth tee on the Hunting Course is notorious for the water hazard that takes up most of the 196-yard hole. The number of balls was expected to be high as the lake had not been cleared for five and half years, during which an estimated 150,000 rounds of golf have taken place.

Nicky Sherman of De Vere Slaley Hall said:

"This competition really caught the imagination of golf clubs across the region and helped us to raise hundreds of pounds for Children in Need. We are grateful that the guys from Deep Blue turned up as we didn't have too many staff willing in to step in and don the wetsuits to retrieve those golf balls."

Lochaline Upgrade



Peter Pritchard is Lochaline's resident instructor

NEW FACILITIES at Lochaline mean that Scottish divers are now even better catered for at one of the west coast's best destinations. Lochaline Dive Centre boss, Philip Robertson told **'Scottish DIVER'**:

"Exciting developments are underway at Lochaline Dive Centre and visitors from spring 2002 will find a few changes. We are converting and upgrading the Old Post Office into specifically designed accommodation. The new facilities will provide excellent accommodation for divers at an attractive price, right on the doorstep of one of the best shore dives in Scotland."

Lochaline is already well-known for providing specialist training in underwater archaeology and there are plans for expanding the range of courses on offer. Philip continued:

"We now schedule more courses and

provide a full gear hire service. Also we have accreditation with Scuba Schools International (SSI) and will be running a full range of dive training courses. What better place to take your first steps underwater than the Sound of Mull where sheltered waters with an abundance of marine life and shipwrecks abound. 20 year dive veteran Peter Pritchard is our resident instructor."

The Old Post Office accommodation will provide space for 10-12 people in three twin rooms and one four-person room. A complete bed linen service is available and lets can be for the weekend or 7 days as required. The new development extends Lochaline Dive Centre's overall capacity to 36 persons.

For full details of courses and winter promotions at Lochaline contact www.lochalinedivecentre.co.uk

Clyde Diving Centre Set Up Database



CLYDE DIVING CENTRE based at Kip Marina on the Clyde are putting together a database of divers who would like to go either hardboat or RIB diving but don't have enough people to book a boat. If you are interested in being included on the database then contact Clyde Diving Centre on 01475 521281 or email them at jim@clydedivingcentre.com. They will then include your details on their database and

when spaces become available on one of their boats they will contact you with details of the trip. With a 67' liveboard/day boat operating around the Clyde, west coast of Scotland and beyond and a 6.1 mtr RIB operating around the Clyde area they are sure that there will be trips that will interest many divers.

(pictured left is MV *Spinaway Isle*, Clyde DC's liveboard)

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Divers Help Sought For Stranded Sealife

2001 is going to see the recording of the highest number of marine animals washed-up on UK shores since 1913. The Wildlife Trusts are appealing for help from the general public, and from divers in particular, to establish the causes of marine strandings by reporting all stranded animals and enabling conservationists to address the issues adversely affecting these creatures.

Every year hundreds of dead whales, dolphins and porpoises are stranded on UK coasts. Last year 421 marine animals were reported including 45 whales, 120 dolphins and 197 porpoises. By August of this year strandings had already exceeded this figure. This significant rise is partly attributed to severe weather conditions and strong on-shore winds.

Stranding records are used to build-up a picture of why strandings occur, causes of death and what can be done to help and

reduce the numbers of marine wildlife that are marooned on our shores. Marine strandings can occur for a number of reasons, for example due to sickness, disorientation, natural mortality, extreme weather conditions or injury. Recently the main cause of death is from being accidentally caught in fishing nets - known as bycatch. Bodies often carry the characteristic marks of nets or even have pieces of rope or netting attached to them.

The more strandings are reported and analysed the greater our understanding becomes and the sooner we can lobby for changes to fishing practices and marine legislation. Anyone finding a dolphin or other sea animal washed up on a beach should report it immediately. Speed of reporting is vital to ensure that if the animal is alive it can be helped, and if dead the bodies are collected and not swept back to sea.

Reports should include: your name and number; an accurate description of where the animal is; what you think the animal is; the approximate length of the animal; its condition (freshly dead, slightly decomposed or advanced decomposed).

Sightings in Scotland can be reported on the following numbers: Live - Edinburgh (0131 339 0111), Aberdeen (01224 581236) or Inverness (01463 231191) / Dead (01463 243030).



Pictured left: Dolphin in Scottish waters (photo courtesy of Ken Farrow)

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