

Are You Fit To Dive?

WELL HERE we are in January, having survived the excesses of Christmas and New Year but now miserable with the constant rain and grim weather. Traditionally it is a time to get on the internet or dig out the brochures to dream of our summer holiday in the sun - those exotic diving locations with stunning undersea topography and wall to wall sunshine.

Perhaps you have sent your gear off for service or perhaps you have fallen over it in the garage where you dumped it after that last trip and hadn't given a thought about it since.

Well we all have good intentions and as we would never go diving with defective kit which would be stupid. Yet the one bit of kit we often forget about is ourselves! How often have you looked at yourself before starting the annual diving season. Rarely I would venture.

Obviously there are a few hardy souls who dive through the winter (just come in myself from a dive in the loch - 6 degrees today) but many just pig out and only surface at Easter to start again. Ask most recompression chambers and they will say that Easter is their busiest time as divers go back to doing dives as if they hadn't stopped instead of building up slowly so they regain 'dive' fitness.

I'm not going to labour the weight gain over Christmas point but do remember fat is a slow releaser of nitrogen so try and shed a pound or two. If your club has pool sessions through the winter get involved, use the sessions to brush up your own water skills or to get familiar with new pieces of kit in the safety of the pool.

Think about just going for a swim (as well

as pub afterwards).

On a medical note, the 'close season' is a time perhaps to visit your GP surgery and have a health check.

Not so many years ago we all had to have regular check-ups to show we were fit to dive but with the introduction of the self certification 'medical' the only ones checked are people who tick a 'yes' on the form.

Most surgeries now have a surgery nurse. Why not go in and get your blood pressure checked, your BMI measured and a cholesterol blood test. High blood pressure can put you at risk of strokes and heart attacks and it's easily treated, and once controlled not a bar to diving.

For those on medication of any type it is worthwhile visiting your GP for a review to see if dosages are appropriate or need adjusting. This is especially true for asthmatics and diabetics where good control is very important.

I know I seem to be labouring a point but let's get Scottish diving on a healthier footing for the new year.

Next time I hope to go through some common ailments and their treatments and also some drugs which are not compatible with diving

Dive safely; keep fit.

Doctor Wilmot



Dan Fitzpatrick

IT WAS WITH the greatest sadness that on November 20, 2007 Auchenharvie Sub Aqua Club and ScotSAC lost one of its most inspirational members. Dan Fitzpatrick passed away suddenly in Crosshouse Hospital aged just 66.

Dan started diving at 54 when he joined Auchenharvie branch in 1995, he quickly became an instructor and Master Diver and logged over 700 dives. It was clear he had a great passion for diving and especially for training new members and also trying to further the training and experience of current divers.

Since Dan became an instructor some 100 trainees have passed through the branch and it is safe to say that Dan played an important role in all of their training.

In 2003 Dan was diagnosed with Cancer. He battled through illness and was told by surgeons that he would never return to diving. Despite this Dan worked towards

full fitness and in 2004 was given the all clear by doctors to return to diving.

To do this is impressive enough but Dan was in his early 60s which acts as an inspiration to all who dive and know what it takes to dive in Scottish waters. Dan was a very reliable instructor and was the one who was there every weekend rain, hail or shine to perform training and help others through their training. Dan is very much missed not only by his family and friends but by all he touched through diving.





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