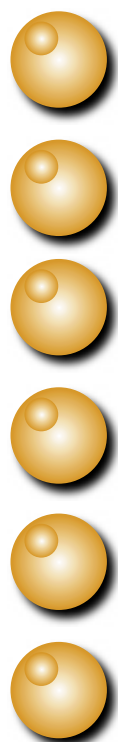




DIVER PROFILE



BSAC First Class Diver Paul Haynes first learned to dive in the Royal Marines and from there quickly developed a passion for sports diving. Paul now runs his own diving consultancy business after working for a decade for Divex specialising in military diving equipment ...

■ WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO DIVE?

● My first diving experience was at Horsea Island, Portsmouth when I served in the Royal Marines. It should have put me off diving for life because on my second dive of day one I experienced a breathing loop flood, a massive CO2 hit and caustic cocktail; being completely incapacitated I was recovered by my buddy and evacuated to medical care; I had to take the next few days off because I could not talk or eat solids due to a 'burnt' mouth and throat. Anyway the training eventually proceeded, which led to an interest in recreational diving and from there I began diving as a hobby as well as professionally.

■ WHAT TYPE OF DIVER ARE YOU?

● 'Useless' I can hear one or two of my regular buddies shout. However if I am to categorise myself, wreck diver would be most appropriate. That said I love scenic wall diving and I've been bitten by the cave diving bug these last few years.

■ WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF KIT?

● I've been very fortunate to work over the last decade for a Scottish company called Divex, the world's largest manufacturer of professional diving equipment. Divex has a range of military Closed Circuit Rebreathers under the trade name of Stealth. The latest version recently purchased by the Royal Navy for mine clearance diving operations is a delight to dive and is my favourite piece of diving equipment at present. I've also been using a two piece Weasel over the last twelve months, which has proven to be a very adaptable undersuit system in a range of environments and temperatures from Florida caves to the North Sea in mid winter.

■ FAVOURITE DIVE-SITE/ AREA?

● I'm a member of a North East coast wreck diving / research group called Stonehaven Snorkellers, as

a result of the group's efforts over the last decade or so, the NE has proved to be a fantastic area to dive, with four or five new wrecks found and dived each year.

■ BEST COUNTRY VISITED?

● For diving – Scotland, without a doubt; such variety, shore dives with walls to 100m+, the great potential for undived wrecks, the wildlife, scenery, the seclusion and peace.

■ WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GO DIVING?

● The most important thing I have learnt in my 20 years of diving is how little I know and how much there is still to learn. Diving I feel is one of those rare activities, which should you wish it to, can continually challenge you - intellectually, psychologically and physically. It's the endless possibility of expanding each of these areas that motivates me; the excitement of learning something new still thrills as much as it did as when a child. Outside of that, the excitement of touching down on an unknown undived wreck, researching it and then finally identifying it is a very rewarding experience; the chance of a few hours of peace and quite whilst underwater is wonderful too.

■ DREAM DIVE BUDDY?

● Anyone who can help expand my diving knowledge and skills.

■ DREAM DIVE DESTINATION?

● At the moment it is the cave systems of Mexico; however tomorrow, who knows.

■ BEST DIVE BOOK EVER READ?

● Mmmm, tough one, too many books to choose from. I recently read two great books that come to mind, 'The Taming of The Slough' by Sheck Exely, the story of the discovery and mapping of Peacock Springs, Florida, which is a great story of exploration; 'Deep Water' by Moya Crawford, another 'can't put down read' of wreck salvage and sheer courage and determination to succeed.

■ WHAT BUGS YOU MOST ABOUT DIVING?

● The macho 'technical diving' sub-culture and the all too often big ego that comes with it. I dislike the term 'technical diving'; diving is diving to my mind, the principle differences within recreational diving are the technologies, skills and level of planning required to get you safely back to the surface from where ever you personally wish to visit.

■ HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE DIVING TO NON-DIVERS?

● An opportunity to escape from the hustle and bustle of modern life and enter and explore an incredible world.

