BSAC Sports Diver Training

Sport Diving
Why become a Sports Diver?

Aim of the Course

Extend Experience and Skills
- Diving a variety of sites in varying conditions
- Considering additional equipment & gas mixes
- Extending rescue skills

Self Risk Assessment
- Knowing personal limits
Sports Diver Course

Course Content
- 6 theory lessons
- 1 sheltered water lesson
- 5 open water lessons
- 1 dry practical lesson
- Experience 5 different diving conditions

Commitment

Self study
- Student Notes
- Diving Manual
Sports Divers

! Can dive with an Ocean diver
  # In conditions already encountered by the Ocean Diver during their training, and under supervision of Dive Manager

! Can dive with another Sports Diver
  # In conditions already encountered during their training or previous experience

! Can dive with a Dive Leader or above
  # To expand experience beyond that previously encountered, under supervision of Nationally Qualified Instructor (NQI)

! Can dive to:
  # Depth initially limited to 20m but can be progressively extended under supervision of NQI

! Plan and conduct dives requiring mandatory decompression stops
Variety in Diving

Dive sites
- Reefs and walls
- Gentle drift diving
- Wrecks

Underwater conditions
- Depth
- Currents
- Restricted visibility
- Temperature

Surface conditions
- Entry and exit
- Surface cover/support
Underwater Conditions

The same site - conditions vary

Anticipation as part of planning
Depth - Tides & the Moon

- Moon’s gravity pulls ocean towards it
  - Bulge of high water
  - Bulge on opposite side of Earth

- Sun’s gravity also has an effect
- ‘Neap’ (small) tides

- ‘Spring’ (large) tides

- Tide cycle approx.. 12 hours
- Moon (Lunar) month = 28 days
Depth - Tides

Tidal range
- Low water (LW)
- High water (HW)

Depths on Dive sites may vary

Tidal Range
- HW = 25m
- LW = 21m

Tidal Range = 4m
Currents & Ground Swell

Tidal currents

! Tides: fall (ebb), rise (flood)
  # Water moves to and fro
  # Period of least water movement - slack water

Static sites

Drift diving

Ground swell

! Wind = wave action
  # May be felt on seabed
Underwater Visibility

Wind generated wave action
Plankton blooms
Currents

Local seabed conditions
! Easily disturbed by divers!

Depth
! Reduction in light penetration
Water Temperature & Salinity

Climate
- Seasonal variations

Depth
- Colder the deeper you go

Currents
- Carry warm or cold water

Thermoclines
- Changes in temperature

Salinity
- Salt concentration can affect buoyancy
Surface Conditions

Weather may affect:

! Travelling to the site
! Entry and exit

Surface visibility

! Mist or fog
! Wave height
! Glare

Other water users

! Large shipping
! Other dive boats
! Yachts, motorboats, etc.
Local Knowledge of Sites

Dive Manager/Lead Instructor

Brief includes
- Site description
- Anticipated conditions
- May give maximum dive time dependent on slack water

Dive School or Centre

- List of known dive sites
- Description of site

Cliff face - lots of marine life
Overhangs and small caves
Caution: fishing line
Large boulders and pieces of wooden wreck

SW
30m
Risk Assessment - Potential Problems

- Conditions
  - Separation
  - Cold
  - Working too hard
- Depth
  - Increases risk of DCI
  - Nitrogen narcosis
  - Incidents - further to surface
- Breathing Gas supply
  - Loss - faulty equipment
  - Depletion - increased effort
- Equipment
  - Faulty
  - New
Minimising Risk to Self and Buddy

Precautions

! Conditions
  # Suitable for level of experience

! Depth
  # Dive profile - maximum depth
  # Decompression stops
  # Check for narcosis
  # Practised rescue skills

! Breathing Gas supply
  # Sufficient for dive & decompression
  # Adequate back up supply

! Equipment
  # Serviced
  # Buddy check

DO NOT DIVE
Know your personal limits

Stay within your personal limitations

- Do the type of diving you want to do
- Avoid pressure to extend experience or depth too quickly
- Challenge of diving tempered by being prepared for the challenge
- Don’t rush - gradually consolidate experience
Summary

Outline of Sports Diver Course

Factors affecting conditions on a dive site

Anticipating conditions as an important part of dive planning

Consideration of other factors that could impact on dive safety

Knowing personal limits