

Parting Clip

Welcome to a new feature in UwP aimed at showcasing short video clips from readers.

Like Parting Shot there should be a story within a story with up to 500 words.

You will need to be online to view the clip in your browser as embedding the footage into the UwP pdf file would make it too large a file for most to download.



Blackmagic 4K with Leica f2.8-f4 8-18mm zoom lens behind a Zen DP-170 dome, Nauticam NA-BMPCCII housing, two Sola Video Pro lights, shooting raw at 60fps slowed down to 30fps in camera.

Marine mammal interactions are always special and this particular one was no exception; not only in the interaction itself but also the timing of it.

My dive buddy, Joe Tezak, had just recovered from a life threatening illness. It had been many months since he was last in the sea and we were hoping for a nice calm clear day just to get his gills wet again. You know nothing brilliant, just hover around in

the underwater forest; maybe look at some fish...

We had just descended when out of the giant kelp curtain came a good sized harbor seal. It appeared to be a young male and was not in the least bit afraid of us. He swam right by me (even though I had the dome port) and proceeded to say an intimate hello to Joe. In fact, downright familiar!

Of course his intentions were probably more in line with a young

amorous male pinniped in spring but we chose to see it as a big welcome back Joe greeting. "It's good to see you again. Where have you been!?"

Joseph C. Dovala
<https://vimeo.com/jcdovala>

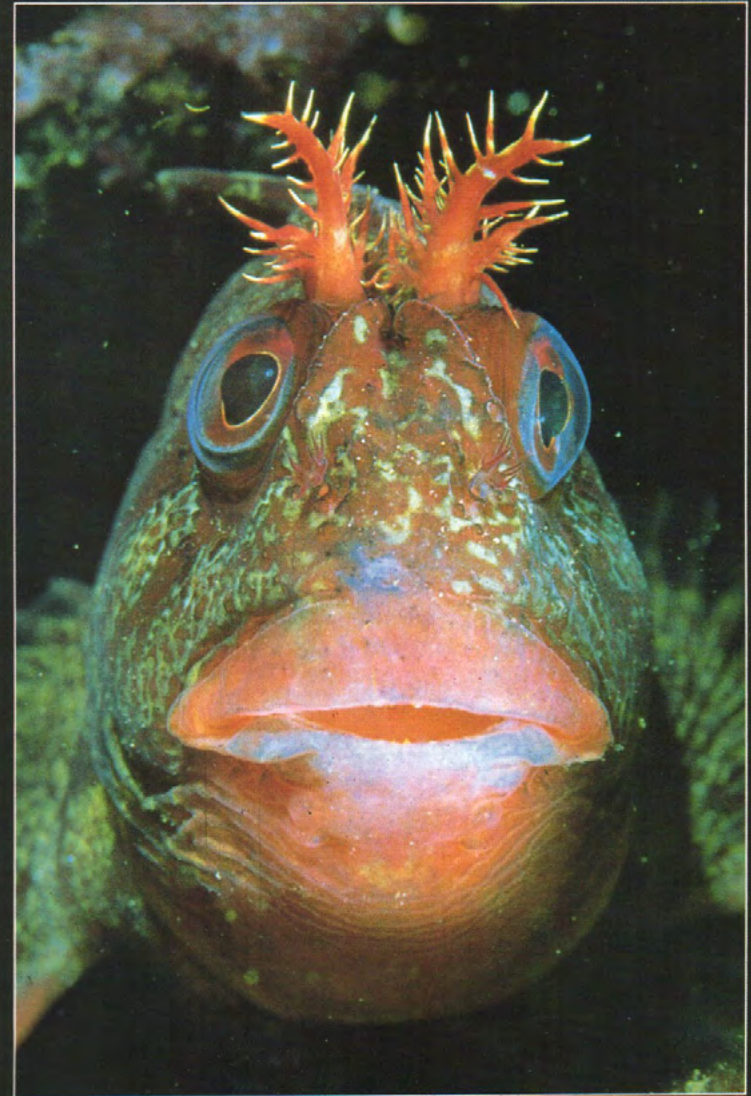
Do you have a short video clip which has a story within a story? If so e mail it with up to 500 words of text and yours could be the next Parting Clip.

peter@uwpmag.com

UP Supplement

UP4
Jun/July
1987

Underwater Photography



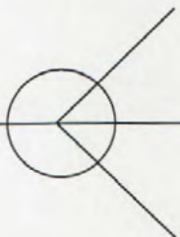
June/July 1987

MAKE MOVIES!



8mm video cameras produce top quality images. So good that some TV companies are using them for their news coverage! That same excellent quality can now be used underwater with the Nimar Video 8 housing available from Ocean Optics Ltd. This is fully reflex so you can focus and compose, the exposure is automatic and the results can be played back through the viewfinder right after your dive. Adding the 4 x 75 watt lighting array will add professional sparkle to your movies and restore the natural colour and detail. The Video 8 housing will take Sony CCD V7AF cameras and all similar makes. Contact Ocean Optics and ask for full details.

Take your dives home with you.



Ocean Optics Ltd

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Underwater Photography Magazine

Issue No 4.
June/July 1987

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Editorial

At underwater photographic competitions, it is always interesting to listen to comments made by the viewing public as they look at the winning prints. As well as the usual, "I've got a better one than that", one of the most commonly overheard comments is "I wish I could take shots like that". Its an understandable sentiment but it does raise an interesting and central point. The simple answer is that anyone can take shots like that. All they have to do is do it. Effort in equals results out but if that effort is slightly misguided, then the results must fall short. For most people with underwater cameras who dive in a club environment, they find that their dives are taken up with training or with following groups interested in covering as large an area as possible. To try and take good underwater photographs in such situations is so difficult that it would be better not to even try at all. The instant improvement comes from letting underwater photography become the sole reason for the dive. This gives you time to concentrate on the subjects and on your techniques. Diving with other underwater photographers is one of the best ways of improving your shots yet, strangely enough, there are no underwater photographic clubs as such. This lack of clubs must reflect the attitude of underwater photographers as a group of individuals who organise their own activities amongst themselves. It seems as if this situation will not change but the solution to the problem lies in the answer to "I wish I could take shots like that". The sooner you start to dive for underwater photography and with underwater photographers, the sooner you will overhear the same remark being made when they are looking at *your* prints on display in the winning enclosure.

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SLAVE FLASHGUNS

I haven't noticed a reader's page so far in UP and was wondering if you thought it would be a good idea. What I really mean is that I think it would. Or at least a question and answer feature with queries/problems from readers and answers/solutions from the UP editorial team.

There could be all sorts of topics: technical, optical, equipment, film, etc. If you got stuck and there wasn't much direct response one month, you could always make some up. I'd like to start the ball rolling with a question about how you would go about making a home made slave strobe. What sort of housing is possible/advisable, are the integral slave sensors sensitive enough or are the add-on ones better? It seems like an easy proposition but I'm sure there must be some problems. Keep "UP" the good work. It keeps us divers in the "provinces" in contact.

Keith Grant
Dundee

An excellent idea Keith and one which we would like to encourage. There are several topics/techniques which don't really warrant the full article treatment but which do provide useful information for us all. Slave flashes are a good and simple way of adding extra light into shots from a different angle to the main light source. In addition, you can give your model a slave flash to hold and this will then look like a torch when the shot is taken. This adds a good point of interest. Quite a few underwater flashguns have a slave sensor built in but, if this is your only flashgun, it isn't much use in the slave mode and you have to have another flash to trigger it! There are very few slave only underwater flashguns on the market and many people house their own. The housing can be made from tubular perspex with flat ends or box shaped with glued joints. Tensol 7 is the recommended glue for perspex for underwater use and I also use silicone rubber compound which is both an adhesive and a slightly flexible sealant. The design of your housing depends very much on the facilities which you have available. Lathes and mills allow greater accuracy but its surprising what you can do with a basic tool kit of hand files and time. With regard to the sensor unit, I have found that both a separate sensor on an existing flash and the dedicated slave

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flashguns are reasonably reliable up to about 6 feet. Over that, they tend to become erratic. The separate sensors are polarity and voltage conscious. They seem to work best with the higher trigger voltage flashguns.

SEA & SEA RESPOND

I have read your editorial comments, and unfortunately, I have to agree, that if Sea and Sea is lumped in with the smaller companies, then we can improve our instruction manuals a great deal which I think should be our first priority, and then possibly to improve the packaging, although I do not have any control whatsoever on this matter, except to pass on your comments to Sea & Sea in Japan. May I suggest that you send a copy of your magazine to Sea & Sea in Japan to show them what you are doing to help improve the UK, and to a certain extent, the European underwater photographic scene. I am sure that Masaaki Yamaguchi will appreciate your comments in the editorial column, and, as past evidence shows us, they do learn quickly from information and comments given to them. Please keep up the good work.

David Chandler, Sea & Sea UK Ltd.

Copies are on their way, David, and let's hope that we can give them the feedback to help them keep on producing ideal equipment for this specialised market.

IRISH ACCUSATIONS

Please find enclosed a cheque for £3 to cover the balance on my subscription to UP. I object most strongly, however, to being asked for this amount. Postage from the UK to Eire is exactly the same as to inland UK destinations, and I fail to see what other additional costs you could have to cover. Perhaps you would care to justify this discrimination against Irish photographers in a future issue of UP.

A. Manison
Dublin

Strong stuff, Mr Manison, but if only you had taken the trouble to ask the Post Office about the rates for sending post to Eire, you would have found that your country is classed as part of Europe as from 20th October 1986. This therefore results in the increased postal costs which are reflected in the subscription rates for Eire.

COMPETITION ENTRY FEES

Can I enquire as to the breakdown of the charge of £1.50 per slide for your Agfa competition? Could the low number of entries in the previous competition be more because of the high charge to prize ratio? In the April/May issue, the "Exciting Lighting" competition, charging £1.50 per slide for a prize of 10 rolls of film was over the page from another competition offering a holiday for two as first prize and with no entry charge. I understand that these two competitions are completely different in nature and I suspect that to win the Agfa Competition, the actual win and printing of the picture are more important than the rolls of film. I wonder how many people are put off by the entry charge?

E. Childs, Aberdeen

Fair comment, Mr Childs, and noted, but finances are tight and with the cost of printing each colour shot at £30 minimum, UP hasn't got the budget to get too extravagant. The fee is aimed at covering printing costs mainly but also handling, insurance and return postage of the entries. If a slide should go missing for any reason whatsoever, UP would be responsible so we have to insure your material. In addition, the fee covers the time taken to pass constructive criticism, when requested by the entrants, and, as you have requested such a service, we are replying to you about your entry under separate cover.

JULANDA DISAPPEARS

Several readers have contacted us to let us know that the Julanda at Ras Mohammed in the Red Sea has finally slipped off the reef and gone down to very deep water. It happened during a particularly strong storm which tipped the balance for the already hovering wreck. The forces involved must have been quite impressive as would have been the opportunity to have been underwater at the time to watch her go over the edge. Now that would have been something to catch on video.... The good news is that all of the shots you've taken of the wreck are now unrepeatable and there are the optimists who now hope that this will enhance their rarity value!

UP Reviews

Nimar SLR Housings

For many years, if you wanted a housing for your land camera, the choice of material was either aluminium or injection moulded polycarbonate. If you decided that the lighter polycarbonate housing was for you, then your had very little choice but to buy from Ikelite. This USA based firm have been making housings since the late 1960's and have virtually cornered the market in injection moulded housings. Their range covers most popular cameras from disc, compact, 35mm SLR to medium format and even cine and video cameras.

Their monopoly of this market has recently been opposed with the arrival of Plastmeccanica, an Italian firm specialising in injection moulding plastics, as they now produce housings for compact and 35mm SLR cameras as well as the video housings reviewed by Peter Rowlands in the last issue of UP.

Marketed under the name Nimar, their SLR housing is available in two versions which look almost identical at first glance but they are different and between them they can house virtually any SLR camera from all of the major manufacturers as well as some not covered by the Ikelite housings. One version is for cameras without winders and the other is for those with. The design of winder can stop some cameras being used so it is best to check with the suppliers before ordering. The construction of the units is very strong with a simple design based around a 1/2" wall thickness. This is a welcome overspecification and allows you to use the housings down to 120 metres so you shouldn't feel too limited when snorkelling...At last designers are beginning to realise that the underwater photography world needs very robust equipment (which costs a very small extra percentage to produce). This wall thickness should ensure no flexing at depth which has been known to cause control linkages to foul and shutter release levers not to work on Ikelite housings. Its all very well to be waterproof to 100 metres but you still want to be able to operate the camera. To load your camera for the first time, you need to attach gears onto the focusing and aperture controls of the lens. The focusing gear is large toothed and broad to accommodate almost any lens and two are supplied with different internal diameters to make sure all sizes are catered for. The aperture ring is much thinner and looks prone to breaking but experience has shown that these injection moulded



Above: The Nimar SLR housings come supplied with flat port and shade together with focus and aperture controls for two lenses. Below: Internally the controls are oversized and well spaced. The shutter release lever can be adjusted to suit any camera.



attachments are very strong and can be stretched to go over the lens and then tightened with a small screw. The aperture ring has a small cut out into which a linking control from the rear of the housing locates and allows aperture alterations to be made. The teeth on the focusing gear link into a large idling gear attached to the housing which transfers via bevel gears to the focusing control knob on the left side of the housing when viewed from behind. The ratio of the gearing is fine but, as with all housings, the long focusing travel on macro lenses results in several turns of the control knob being needed to go from infinity to minimum focus.

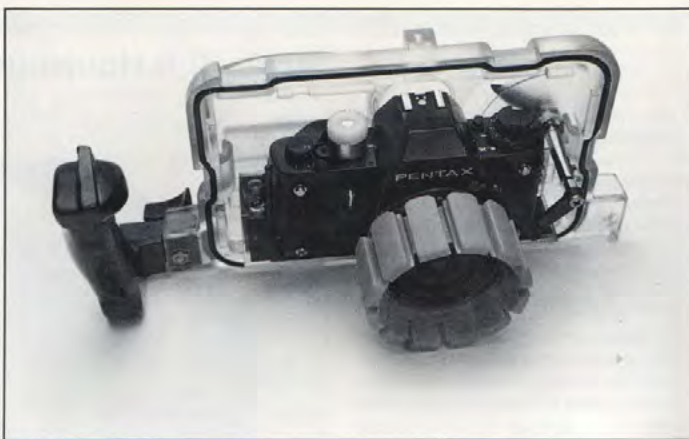
With the focus and aperture controls fitted to the camera, it is then fitted to the baseplate with a large knurled knob into the tripod socket. As the baseplate is attached to the rear of the housing, you have to remove the camera and unhook the aperture lever to change films. This is a pain to have to do and is a common problem with all polycarbonate housings and is just another design aspect we have to live with. The shutter release lever linkage is fully adjustable to accommodate various positions and can even allow Praktica cameras to be housed despite the shutter release being in an awkward position. Once all of these controls are lined up the

rear of the housing with the camera attached is slid into the front to link up with the focusing gearing. Once in position, the housing is sealed by 6 strong plastic catches which exert an even pressure over the whole of the compression O ring. The strong pressure needed to snap these catches into place ensures that they will not come undone underwater and, even if one was forced off accidentally, it wouldn't affect the seal.

Most of the controls fall easily to hand with the exception of the aperture which is at the rear of the housing and is a bit awkward but, this is not a control which needs the constant alteration of a focus control so is not too much of a problem.

The viewing port area is as close to the eyepiece as possible to give the best viewing and, not available for this test, there is an additional 'super-cyc' viewfinder to give full frame reduced size viewing. Cameras with removable prisms can be used with their waist level viewfinders fitted. This gives full frame viewing by looking down into the camera.

To fire external flashguns, a Nikonos 111/IVA/V socket is supplied as standard so if you already own a Nikonos and



Above: Focus gear and aperture linkage must be fitted to the camera before installing it into the housing. Once fitted, they needn't be removed but the camera must be removed from the baseplate to change film. The baseplate is slotted so can be positioned to suit the camera being housed.

flashgun and want a housing to use macro lenses, your existing flash will connect. A handle is provided for the right hand side and on the other there is a mounting for a flash arm. Nimar produce a neat and multi-position arm together with a housing for a Metz 30B3 flashgun which is a versatile

and not too expensive outfit. On land the housing weighs just under 3kg and underwater, with a camera installed it will be positively buoyant so if you let go, look to the surface rather than the seabed. The exact buoyancy will depend on the camera, lens and winder fitted.



Above: Designed for their housings or the Nikonos, Nimar produce a flash housing with arm and bracket for the Metz 30 flash. Other similarly shaped flashguns can be accommodated. The arm and bracket provide multi-positioning which is rigid when tightened.

Supplied with a flat port as standard, the Nimar SLR housings have 3 other ports available. The dome port will correct lenses from 20mm to 50mm (this does depend on their physical size), the macro port is for 50/55mm macro lenses and the telephoto is for longer telephotos and

100/105mm macro lenses. These ports are held in position with Philips head screws which are awkward to undo as the lens hood on the port gets in the way but fortunately, changing ports is not an activity which is needed all the time and this method of fixing is extremely secure,

if somewhat fiddly. It is when looking at the price list for these accessories that you begin to appreciate just how much less expensive the housing and extras are. The dome port, for instance, is just £36.10 in the UK and the other ports are just as good value. The lower cost of these accessories is important to the system as a whole as, in most cases, the basic housing is made much more versatile with the addition of accessory ports etc. The cost advantage is just as evident for the complete housing, for at £225, the Nimar is well over 30% cheaper than any competition and yet the quality and the solidity of the construction is high. According to Nimar, their housings will fit over 130 SLR cameras so if you already have a camera, there's a good chance there's a housing to suit.

It's good to think that we now have a choice and that the new contender has a lot of physical advantages together with a pleasant financial one.

Competition has always been the best way of keeping manufacturers on their toes so it's good to see these new products.

Jim Ward

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Competing with composition

Dr Mia Buehr reveals the secrets



Above: A static subject can be given motion and interest by introducing a strong diagonal to the picture. Here the diver's presence is enhanced by the strong diagonal lines of the marine plants. The combination is both informative and pleasing. Nikonos V with 15mm lens, fill in flash with Aqua F1 with diffuser. 1/90th @ F 5.6. Ektachrome 64 film

With a broad smile on his face, the winner of the photographic competition came down the aisle to collect his trophy, while his winning shot was projected on the screen. The competition had been a good one, with entries from some of the best photographers in the country, but everyone had to agree that this picture deserved to win. The minute it came up on the screen it held everyone's attention. The fish seemed to float, perfectly balanced in the frame and yet it gave the impression of vivid life and movement. Later, in the bar, two photographers were discussing the winning entry. "OK, so it was a picture of a fish. I've got lots of fish shots but I can never get them to look like that. What have you got to do to get that sort of shot?" The other one considered. "I suppose you've just got to have an eye for a picture. Composition and all that."

Everybody realises that composition is something that's important in photography. But just what is good composition, and how do you use it to make good pictures? Once you've mastered the technical basics of focus and exposure, how do you recognise a good picture when it appears in your viewfinder? Many underwater photographers do find it

difficult to come to terms with the principles of composition. For a start, good composition doesn't follow firm rules. Many sorts of pictures can be pleasing to the eye, and you can never define good composition in terms of some simple mathematical formula. But there are a few basic guidelines to keep in mind if you want to take pictures that look good.

First, think about the space into which your picture must fit: in other words, your frame. If you were a painter you could choose the shape of your canvas. It could be square, oblong, or even round, to suit the shape of your subject. But if you're a photographer with a 35mm camera you are stuck with the rectangular shape of the 35mm frame. Whatever your subject is, whether a round anemone or an oval flatfish or a gangling diver all arms and jet fins, it must fit comfortably into that rectangle. And it has got to look well balanced there, not huddled into one corner or slipping out of one side.

So having accepted the shape of your frame, how do you go about arranging your subject in it? A good way of starting to improve your shots is to stop thinking of them as coral, basking sharks or divers and start to think of them as the simple shapes and lines that they

make in your viewfinder. A fanworm looked at from the top is a circle, but from the side it may be more of a triangle. A crab can be an oval from the top, a rectangle from the front, and maybe a triangle from the side. And a diver against a cliff can be just a collection of diagonal lines. With practice, the dominant lines and shapes of pictures become easy to pick out and, once you can see your subjects in terms of the patterns they make, you are halfway along the road to mastering the principles of good composition.

Each one of the simple lines and shapes has its own characteristic effect on a picture and you can use each one to create the effect you want. For instance, a circle (an anemone from the top) is a restful shape to look at because the eye can travel easily around it. But the trouble with circles is that they are so restful that they can become boring, and also a circle fits very uncomfortably into a rectangular frame. One way to cope with a circular subject is to get down on your stomach and shoot it from a lower viewpoint so that it becomes an oval. Ovals have got a lot going for them: They are satisfying to look at and they fit beautifully into a rectangular frame. Curving lines are generally pleasing to the eye. Such



Left:

Circles can be difficult shapes to handle imaginatively. By coming in close, the subject fills the frame and the problem is avoided.

If you have a subject with delicate details, shoot against open water to allow them to come out in the picture. In this way you eliminate the background and concentrate the eye on the subject.

Nikon F2 in an Ikelite housing with a 135mm lens and extension tube for macro work with an increased stand-off distance. The lack of probes/frames doesn't disturb this normally touchy subject.

subjects as anemone tentacles, feather star arms, or even the curving edge of a kelp frond can make a considerable contribution to a picture. Or, for guaranteed visual impact, you could try taking pictures of diagonal lines. Diagonal lines never fail to give verve and movement to a subject. Have you got a stolid subject which refuses to do anything exciting? Tilt the camera a touch so that the main lines of the subject run diagonally in the frame and see how the picture immediately perks up.

On the other hand, if you want to give a subject stability within the frame, change your viewpoint so that its lines run horizontally or vertically. Lines that parallel the sides of the frame really nail down the subject within the frame, so square or rectangular subjects have great stability. But the all-time never-fail foolproof shape for the photographer has got to be the triangle. Take a diagonal for

excitement, add a horizontal or vertical line for stability, and you have the basic triangle. And as long as you position the triangle sensibly in the rectangular frame you can't go too far wrong.

But your photograph consists of more than just your subject. Too many people forget that the background, or foreground, for the rock that the crab sits on is also a part of the picture. Ignore backgrounds at your peril: bad backgrounds have ruined more underwater photographs than just about any other element of composition.

Perhaps the simplest way to cope with background is to eliminate it entirely by shooting against open water. Your subject then appears against plain blue or black with no competition from a busy background. Or you can get so close to your subject that it entirely fills the frame, thus neatly sidestepping the whole

problem. But with care the background of a shot can be turned into an ally and used to add impact. Frame a little crab so that the kelp it sits on makes a strong diagonal and see how the picture takes on extra movement. Use a crevice or dark hole to frame a fish and the result is instant drama. Once you stop ignoring backgrounds and start looking at them, you have an extra element to use when putting together your pictures. Position a brilliant feather star in front of a grey-green rock for a startling colour contrast, or use the soft texture of a muddy bottom to emphasise the delicate patterns of brittle star arms.

Good composition is the art of putting together the various parts of a picture - shapes, lines, colours, textures to make a photograph that is both intriguing to the eye and pleasing to look at. Most people know intuitively whether a picture is good or bad, but are usually at



Left:

Both the line of the crab and the edge of the kelp describe gentle curves which run in opposite diagonal directions and make this simple portrait work well.

These curves are easy on the eye yet the photograph still conveys detail about the subject and its typical environment. It is this combination which makes a photograph both useful and attractive. Nikon F2 in an Ikelite housing with a Marlin flash. 55mm macro lens. 1/60th @ F16 with Ektachrome 64 film. Camera to subject distance approximately 18".



Above:

A subject can change its shape according to the point of view of the photographer. This view of the crab produces an oval which fits very neatly into the rectangular frame, especially when tilted a little bit on the diagonal. Crabs are particularly useful subjects for practicing techniques as they stay still and aren't too put off by probes and frames!
Nikon F2, 55mm macro lens with Marlin flash. 1/60th @ F16 with Ektachrome 64 film. Camera to subject distance approximately 18"

Competing with composition...

a loss if called upon to say just why. If you think you can recognize a good picture when you see it, start asking yourself why some pictures look good while others don't. Is it because of the way the subject is positioned in the frame? If there is a sense of movement or excitement in the picture, what makes it move, or gives the feeling of action? Do the colours contribute anything, or the textures, or the way the field is lit?

A feeling for composition can be learned but, like anything else worthwhile, it has to be worked at. Look at good pictures, whether your own or other people's, whether underwater or on land, whether photographs or paintings.

Composition is a subject you can practice without getting in the water. Look at the images in magazines and see how they use composition to enhance their subject and increase the appeal. Once you can recognize good pictures when you see them, you are within grasping distance of producing them yourself.

Text and photography by Dr Mia Buehr

Next issue, Mia continues with more hints to help you compete with composition.

Books on Marine Life

Red Sea Reef Fishes £32

Dr. John E. Randall describes in detail 325 species of Red Sea reef fishes, enhanced by the author's own colour photographs.

Divers' Guide to Red Sea Reef Fishes £20

Waterproof supplementary volume to the above, containing numerous colour photographs, with common and scientific names of each species.

Sharks of Arabia £26

Just published, this is the latest addition to our knowledge of Red Sea, Indian Ocean and Arabian Gulf Sharks. Dr. Randall has combined scientific accuracy with a presentation which is of interest to the general reader and scientist alike.

The Red Sea £24

An informative and colourful book in which the author, Dr. Peter Vine, explores all aspects of the Red Sea with emphasis on its rich marine environment.

New Titles

Red Sea Safety: £16.75

Guide to Dangerous Animals

In this book the author, Dr. Peter Vine, aims to inform divers of some of the dangers of the Red Sea's marine environment and gives advice on how to avoid accidents, or deal with them should they occur.

Red Sea Invertebrates £39.50

In this well-researched book, Dr. Vine provides an up to date description of invertebrate species found in the Red Sea, with comprehensive checklists which will be of use to amateur and professional divers alike. Ecological notes, over 270 full colour photographs and many detailed line drawings serve to make this an attractive publication for anyone with an interest in marine life.

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UP Reviews

The Aquavision Capsule 8 Video housing and reveals a tale of woe

Following my editorial in the last issue of UP, I didn't expect to have to carry out my intentions so soon. To remind you of the contents, I promised that UP's equipment reviews would be truthful, unbiased and up to date.

I regret to have to write this review for it could have been avoided, had the manufacturer not decided to perform an ostrich attitude and had tried to solve the serious problems we are encountering with all three of the housings which we, as Ocean Optics Ltd, imported for sale in the UK.

The following is therefore truthful, unbiased and up to date at the time of writing.

A customer was getting out of focus results

Having paid for the housings and been told that they were ex stock, we waited over two months for them to be sent and, in the meantime, had sold one unit to a Ministry Department. This was sent as soon as we received them and a few days later, the customer rang us to say that all of the results being produced underwater were out of focus. We were concerned to solve the problem and, using our test tank and collimating machinery, tested the other two units in our possession.

Our tests confirmed that they were producing seriously out of focus results. Adding a bright light helped sharpen the image slightly due to the increased depth of field so the point of accurate focus was incorrect. They were both producing sharp shots on land.

Incorrect rear element?

The Capsule 8 houses the Sony 8mm Handycam and has a wide angle adaptor incorporated in the housing with a front dome port. Quick optical calculations helped by trial and error indicated that the rear correction lens on the supplementary wide angle adaptor did not seem powerful enough. Increasing the power by one and a half dioptres positive produced sharp results. Another solution was to move the camera further back from the supplementary wide angle adaptor to achieve the same result.

We phoned Aquavision in Canada and spoke to Val Ranetkins, the owner. He

was helpful but expressed surprise as he insisted that he had sold over 300 similar units and hadn't had any problems. He could only conclude that we were doing something wrong as why would he not have had any complaints from other customers?

Aquavision suggest the problem is with the Sony Handycam

We agreed to repeat the tests and report back. We then telexed that our latest tests still confirmed the situation and we awaited his reply/solution.

No reply was forthcoming for a while despite several reminders and eventually Aquavision phoned to say that the problem is with the Sony Handycam camera! He advised us to remove a panel from the camera and adjust the focus to suit his housing's optics.

Aquavision don't test their housing's optics underwater

Not accepting this as a sensible or responsible solution and wanting to try to trace the cause of the apparent problem, we enquired as to Aquavision's testing/quality control and were staggered to learn that they do not test their production housings underwater for optical accuracy. On land, the dome has no power and will not affect the focusing. It is only when the front surface of the dome is in contact with water that it alters the focus.

Another European importer has had similar problems

Having exhausted our patience and knowledge, we contacted Subatec in Switzerland who had imported some units and found that they too had experienced the same cash-with-order-long delay-in-delivery service from Aquavision. In addition, they had had similar problems with the optics which they found were due to the lens of the Handycam not being in the centre of the dome. The Aquavision designer hadn't noticed that the lens on the Handycam is about 4mm off centre. This may not sound like much but, in optical terms, it can mean the difference between sharp and blurred.

Subatec had carried out modifications to all of their housings and

advised Aquavision of the problem.

We were surprised but a little reassured to learn that Subatec had experienced similar problems as, from Aquavision's insistence that we were the only one's having such a problem, we were convinced that we must be doing something wrong. It transpired that Subatec had experienced the same denials and lack of communication when their problems were pointed out in both unreplied-to letters and telexes.

And yet Aquavision assured us that we were the only ones in the world having this problem.

We phoned a major supplier of underwater photographic equipment in the USA who said they definitely hadn't experienced such problems but that the service and dealings with Aquavision had been "downright unco-operative"

So to summarise, we have been truthful in presenting the facts, we have been unbiased because we do actually think that the housing is good (if only it would focus) and, as to the up to date position, Aquavision have proposed that we return the housings to them for testing. If they find that the housings are wrong, then they will refund our money including our shipping costs. If they test them and find that they are OK, they will still refund the price paid but less shipping costs.

We pointed out that, as a magazine publisher, we were prepared to hold our review until the problem had been solved rather than produce a negative report cataloguing the problems encountered with the units supplied. After all, if this is an isolated problem, such a report would be unrepresentative but we do think it strange that we have the only three housings with this problem.

Aquavision telexed us to say that their refund would only be sent once they had the housings back and that "We'll let you decide what to do concerning your article in Underwater Photography".

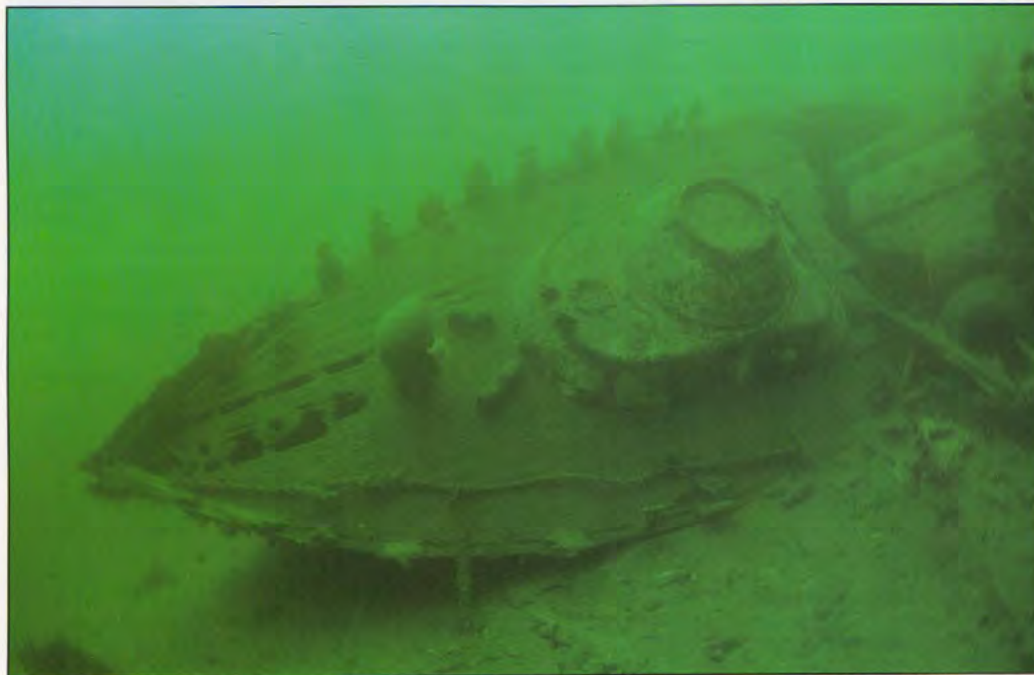
You've just read our decision and we'll keep you informed.

Until the problem is resolved, our advice is not to consider this housing as the three units we tested appear to have an optical problem in the design.

Peter Rowlands

UP in the UK

H.M.S. Royal Oak, Scapa Flow



Above: No this isn't it! This is the Admiral's Barge which was tied up alongside and was dragged down with the Oak. At 30 metres the water was clear but dark, the camera had to be held firmly on a solid piece of wreckage to make sure it didn't move during the exposure. Nikonos V with 16mm 180° lens. Auto shutter gave 2 seconds @ F4. Agfa 50 RS film processed on site.

On the night of Friday 13th 1939, a German U Boat penetrated the British Naval defences of Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands and sank HMS Royal Oak. This 600 foot battleship sank into 30 metres of cold, dark water as over 800 of her crew perished. She was declared a war grave and to this day has lain undisturbed, her location marked with the traditional green wreck buoy in the north-east corner of the Flow.

Since there are no other such British Naval wrecks in diveable waters anywhere in the world, the Royal Oak must rank as one of the ultimate wreck dives. The War Grave status prohibits any diving within a hundred yards of her and this is policed by both the Navy and the local Coastguard as well as the local inhabitants of Orkney who feel a strong responsibility towards her.

Following some unauthorised diving in the 1970's and an unproductive over-the-top BSAC filming expedition in 1979, the diving ban has been enforced with even more vigour and it was with little hope that UP wrote to the Ministry

of Defence for permission to take stills of the wreck for a soon to be published book on shipwrecks. Our request was, however, granted on the condition that we only dive when the Scotland and Northern Ireland Clearance Diving Team was in Orkney. This team is responsible for Naval ordnance around the Scottish coast. Their work is extremely varied, carried out with little notice and, as with most Government Departments, has to operate on a shrinking budget. Part of their responsibility is the Royal Oak and they dive her at least once a year to raise a battle ensign on the wreck.

That we ever got permission and then came to have such a successful trip is due entirely to Lieutenant Mike Croome-Carol and his team who provided full back up in weather conditions which proved to be far from favourable. Having dived the Royal Oak during the BSAC expedition, we knew of her physical location and characteristics. Photographically, she, like all large objects in cold dark water, was a difficult task. The natural tendency in the gloom is

to add light using electronic flash. This adds both colour and detail but does tend to destroy the atmosphere. In addition, the large scale of the subject forces you to take a further step back to get as much as possible into the frame. By moving further back you increase the flash to subject distance and so reduce its power. The solution if flash is used is to concentrate on detailed areas of the wreck and use a different technique for the larger areas.

Since most books on underwater photography and most diving magazines tend to publish glossy, fill-in flash shots with juicy colour in the foreground against rich blue backgrounds, the initial suggestion of shooting the Oak by available light might not seem the most sensible but it is, strangely enough, the most effective. The principle being that if you use long exposures and keep the camera steady, you will be amplifying the available light and so will produce shots which are in fact better than the real thing. A similar situation on land would be taking shots by moonlight.

Diving within the rules laid down



Above: This shot was taken after the BSAC expedition in 1979 and made me realise that the solution to capturing such a large subject in such dark conditions is not to add light but just to amplify what's there. With a long exposure, the film is being given more light than my eye so what you get on film is more than you can see at the time you take the shot! Mamiya RB67 with 37mm 180° lens. 2 secs @ F5.6
Below: The massive breeches of the 15" guns are almost under the ship and are very dark. The addition of a diver with an 80 watt movie light adds both colour and some detail together with a point of interest. The long exposure has resulted in a blurred diver. Nikonos V, 16mm 180° lens, 5 secs @ F4. Agfa 50RS film.



by the Navy, we could not run into decompression and this meant just two twenty minute dives a day if we were at the maximum depth of 30 metres. That only gave us 40 minutes a day each which, when you are trying to cover a 600 foot battleship, is very limiting. Such restrictions do have a benefit in that they concentrate the mind.

The six hour surface interval in between dives proved essential for getting warm again for the waters of Scapa Flow in March are a severe test for even the driest dry suit. Until we acclimatised after a few days, our hands became numb after 15 to 20 minutes and could not operate the controls of our cameras. My diving buddy of many years was Steve Birchall and together we had produced an audio visual taken behind the BSAC expedition in 1979. It turned out that it was this AV which convinced Mike Croome-Carol that we were serious underwater photographers and not just more run-of-the-mill divers trying to dive on the Oak.

The principle behind available light photography is extremely simple and in conditions like these is quite easy and certainly effective. There are no flash exposures to worry about and, for the whole week, my shutter speed dial never left A for automatic. The light levels may have been low but they were very even. I set the lens to one stop down from maximum aperture to have a little more depth of field while still letting as much light through the lens as possible. Two cameras were taken on each dive. A Nikonos V with a 16mm full frame fisheye lens in a specially made housing and a Pentax LX in a Hugyfot housing with another 16mm lens. Kodachrome 64 film was used from the third day once we had exposed and processed E6 compatible Agfachrome 50 to make sure that all the equipment and techniques were working as planned. The reassurance from taking a 500cc E6 processing kit on site which takes up no more room than a picnic cold box is both invaluable and, in unrepeatable locations such as these, must be considered essential.

The visibility was surprisingly clear with up to 50 feet sometimes. March was chosen as suitable because the plankton had not arrived and cold calm spells could produce settled water. Being British waters, the colour cast of the water is very green and our initial shots were taken using a CC60 Magenta filter behind the lens. This reduced the green cast and replaced it with a bluer hue but the extra two stops exposure needed became impractical if sharp, movement free exposures were to be achieved. They were then removed and we reverted to good old

green shots which are much more real and, in this particular case suit the mood of the wreck. There are times when the text books are not always right.

The problem of keeping the camera still during the exposure was the biggest headache. Tripods were used on the first few dives but they took so much time to set up that they were impractical. The only alternative was to use the solid structures of the wreck to brace the camera against and so produce sharp results. This was the most efficient technique but it did restrict the composition somewhat as you were limited to the pieces of solid wreckage. Attempts to hover in midwater proved disastrous as exposure times on the seabed tended to be anything from 1 to 5 seconds.

With such a time restriction in force, using up both films in each camera was not possible so both were still taken but only one used. In the end it was the Nikons which became the only camera as the reflex camera was very difficult to focus in such dark conditions and was also much bulkier for wedging onto wreckage. The small package of the Nikons V proved ideal for this job.

The Royal Oak lies on her side, keel up, at an angle of about 45° and so is not particularly well positioned but what is visible is very impressive. The upturned deck starts at 20 metres with the seabed 10 metres lower. The most interesting section is amidships where the main bridge and superstructure lies crushed and mangled. The gangways, now upside down, make attractive props and the side armament of 4 and 6 inch guns make fairly unique subjects but it is on the seabed that the real subjects lie.

As the ship turned over, the reverse weight forced the massive 15" gun breaches to fall away from the ship with the barrels buried deep into the sand. There are 8 such guns in four pairs and their breaches are about 8 feet in diameter. They lie almost under the wreck so the light levels are poor. Typical exposures were around 5 seconds @ F4. Adding a diver gave scale to the shots but he was blurred during the exposure and looked like a science fiction visitor.

Also on the seabed is the main spotting top and flying bridge. They broke during the sinking and now lie horizontally, partly buckled but still highly recognisable. To the stern of this there is the remains of an Admirals Barge or Pinnace which was tied alongside and got pulled down. This 30 foot vessel was crushed amidships as the Royal Oak's superstructure bore down on her leaving her timber bows intact.

Since diving on her in 1979, we



Above: The 6" side armament is in 20 metres of water so light levels are higher but you still have to hold the camera very steady. Below: The spotting top lies on the seabed at 30 metres but by looking slightly up a shorter exposure was achieved which records the subject almost in silhouette to emphasise the shapes. Nikons V, 16mm lens. 1/8th @ F4. Kodachrome 64 film.



were interested to see how much further she had deteriorated and there have been some marked changes. Half ton winches which were firmly bolted to the deck 8 years ago have broken loose and plummeted to the seabed. Diving anywhere under the wreck was avoided as our bubbles could just have been the final push needed to release another piece of weighty machinery on its potentially fatal trip to the seabed.

With just six days available for diving, the weather played an important role and started off flat calm but built up to some 100 mph winds towards the end. This cancelled one and a half days but gave us some spectacular land shots as compensation.

There can never be enough time available to dive a wreck like the Royal Oak. Each dive reveals something new and

sees you researching more detail about these Dreadnought battleships which were built on such a scale and with such quality that they will never be built again. She is a unique reminder of a by-gone era.

As a final note to all those who are contemplating writing to the Ministry of Defence for another special permission to dive on the Oak, we have been informed by those directly involved that no such permissions will be granted. However, for keen wreck divers, Scapa Flow has some of the scuttled German Fleet from the 1st World War and these attract large numbers of divers from all over the world. Local dive boats and hotels provide facilities and the area is well worth a visit if only for the stark scenery and historical background.

**Text and photography
by Peter Rowlands**

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UP

UP Overseas 'On Safari'

Paul Langley shows and tells all



Above: The vibrant life on a shallow coral reef is the first sight which awaits you in the Red Sea. The fish retreat at the sound of exhaled bubbles only to reappear seconds later. A very slight addition of fill-in flash has given subtle sparkle. Nikonos V, 17mm 180° lens, Aqua F1, 1/190th @ F11. Kodachrome 64 film.

With the end of February looming up, the last thing on my mind was diving, let alone underwater photography. Being a confirmed British waters diver, the thought of floating in warm(ish), clear water seemed but a fantasy until one day during a conversation in the UP magazine editorial suite, an assignment for a weeks diving in the Red Sea was offered my way. First question?What's the catch!! -

The assignment consisted of a six day "Safari", travelling down the Eastern coast of the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, diving as we go. Doesn't sound too bad, I thought, so arrangements were made and seeing that I haven't actually dived in the famed Red Sea before, the prospect seemed an opportunity not to be missed. Was it worth it? Read on as I give you a first-timers impression of diving and underwater photography in the Red Sea.

Firstly, what to take. Equipment-wise, try to cover yourself by taking compatible back-ups for all major pieces of equipment, i.e. camera, flashgun, lenses, etc. Try for compatibility so that each flash will work with each camera and so on. Sand and O-rings don't mix, as the obituary of our trip testifies :- two Nikonos III's, one Sea & Sea 35mm

Camera and one Oceanic 2000 flooded, one Nikonos II with broken rewind, one automarine flashgun with broken switch (due to four-wheel drive journey) and one leaking housing. Between twelve photographers that's not too bad. So take a page out of the Boy Scouts book and "BE PREPARED".

The dive sites that you will first encounter, such as The Lighthouse and The Canyon at Dahab, I found very suitable for close-up work rather than wide-angle as the scenery is not as spectacular as that which is encountered further down the coast, at Ras Mohammed for example. A housed camera with a 50mm Macro lens fitted comes into it's own in this situation, allowing accurate framing over a wide variety of sized subjects without the probes or frames associated with the Nikonos system which can upset or distract the fish.

Upon entering the water for the first time at the Lighthouse I was confronted by a massive population of various tropical fish whose sole purpose in life was to proceed in my opposite direction at maximum speed. My assumption on Red Sea photography was that all fish had been trained to stay stationary or at least to swim towards the

lens until in correct focus/composition, opening their mouths to indicate when to push the shutter release and giving advice on suitable F-stops! - Don't be disheartened by this, as I was, because by waiting in a relaxed manner the fish decided that you are not a serious threat to them and will eventually swim into your field of view. Try not to fall into the trap that I did. On my first roll of film for that dive I have a roll of a single Clown fish in every conceivable pose, facing left then right, up then down. I had contracted the condition known as "Machine-gunners finger". Time should be taken over each shot and not panicked by the first subject you find, there are plenty of others and each one is better than the last.

As additional extras, two boat trips were laid on at \$30 per person per trip. This seemed rather extravagant at the time but the diving we received in return made it very worthwhile. These boats allow you to gain access to some of the best sites in the Red Sea (our trips were to Ras Mohammed and Jacksons Reef, Tiran Islands) which were suitable for the wider work. A full-frame fisheye lens in this situation worked very well as would any lens with an angle of view of over 80°



Above: The extreme wide angle of a 17mm full frame fisheye lens enables self portraits to be taken with plenty of background details. My left arm is holding the camera towards me so composition is guesswork. Nikonos V, 17mm lens, Aqua F1 diffused, 1/190th @ F16. Kodachrome 64. Below: The fish started to become easier when I stayed in one place and waited for them to approach me. This territorial coral trout cooperated once I settled down and didn't make sudden movements. Pentax LX in Hugyfot housing, 50mm macro lens, Aqua F1, 1/75th @ F16. Kodachrome 64 film.



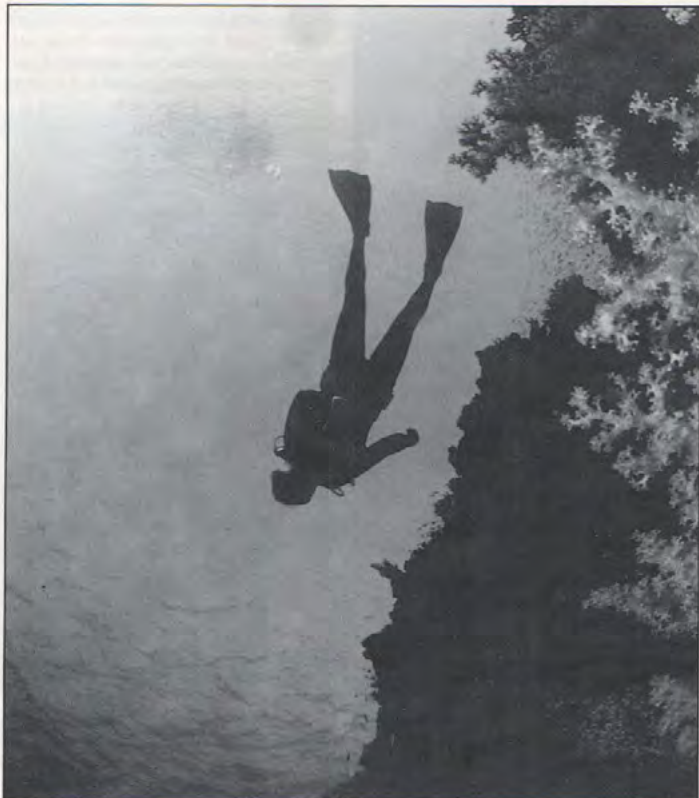
One problem here was that if you did not want to go on the boats, shore diving was not readily available (one member of our group did not want to go and had to argue for a good half an hour to be allowed to dive with another group). Not everyone likes boats and although the boat trips are well worth the effort, some arrangements should be made for the person who prefers to stay behind. Whilst on the subject of surcharges, be prepared for the following expenditure, in US dollars - \$30 for each boat dive, \$7 dive insurance, \$14 Israel/Egypt border crossing and approx \$5 tip for the Bedouin taxi-drivers who seemed to appear from nowhere.

Things that I highly recommend you take are - A sturdy pair of diving boots, as most access to the dive-sites involves a trek over sharp coral containing all sorts of sharp objects. The Egyptians will confiscate any diving knife found when you pass through the border, so if they don't actually find it they can't take it (as we encountered quite a few discarded nets..... if you get my meaning)

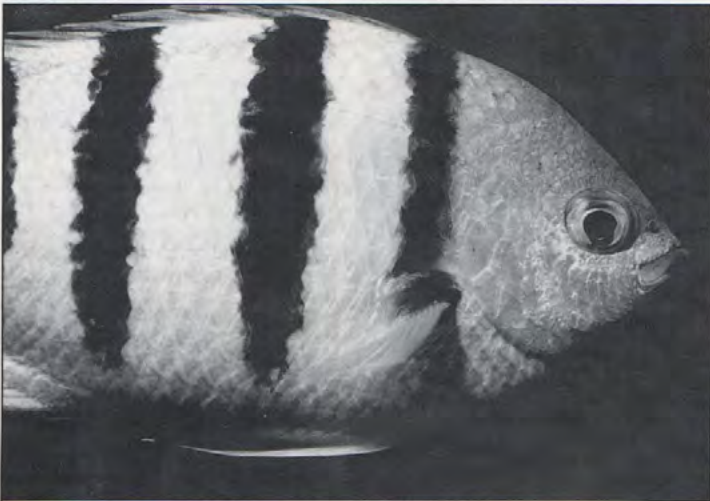
A good torch (non-rechargeable with a plentiful supply of batteries) as it gets dark early out there and you are bound to have at least one night dive. Don't take rechargeable anything out because once they are dead they will stay that way. No charging facilities were available throughout the Safari, so take alkalines and plenty of them. During your first stay over in Eilat also purchase three bottles of Mineral water before the trip as the water provided did not instill confidence, and a severe dose of "Pharaohs revenge" is not very pleasant or convenient in a wetsuit. Talking of which, I took a two piece 6mm suit with long john and hood and still felt slightly chilled during a couple of the longer dives.

The itinerary for our trip was an afternoon departure from Gatwick for a five hour flight to Ovdia, followed by a forty minute coach journey to Eilat, staying the night in the Caravan Club hotel. Arrangements for the trip were made, and we retired to our beds. After an early start for the border and a one and a half hour trip through the border formalities, we were in Egypt and on our way down the coast to Dahab. Just a quick note, remember that your gear will be in the back of a pick up truck so make sure all camera equipment is well packed in a very sturdy case and preferably at the bottom without any cylinders crashing down on it. It is a very bumpy drive with both vehicles being very "open air" so take sunglasses and hold onto your hats.

Arrived at The Lighthouse and dived there. Once out we ate (those who recognised what we had in front of us as



Above: The water clarity and sun penetration make an ideal combination for shots that would be hard to achieve in British waters. Fill-in flash has brought detail into the foreground coral and given added depth to the result. Nikonos V, 17mm lens, Aqua F1 diffused. 1/90th @ F11. Kodachrome 64 film copied 1:1 onto b&w Pan X.



Above: Not a perfect fish portrait as the tail is missing but these Sargeant Major fish aren't easy. They dart around all the time. Pentax LX, Hugafo Aqua F1, 1/75th @ F22.

On Safari.....

food) and then moved on to the Eel Garden for a evening/night dive. Slept under the stars and arose early next morning(if you survived the wild dogs and bedouin children who don't beg for money, but pens!) and dived at the Canyon (Wide-angle caves everywhere) and then moved down the coast to the Island out from Dahab for our second dive. Don't let the dive leaders rush you after the dive as all that you do is drive back to the campsite and sit around for hours. A night trip to Sharm-el-Sheikh allowed us to board our boat for Ras Mohammed early in the morning for a fantastic day's diving.

Same routine for the next day. On both evenings at Sharm, take the opportunity of washing your cameras in the diving centres fresh(ish) water tank. Beer is also available here as is recognisable food. Camping at Sharm consisted of finding a beach, unrolling your sleeping bag and going to sleep. Everyone is expected to help with the food and if you don't help, you don't eat. These safaris are intended to be an experience in living requirements and help you compare your home-based lifestyle.

For our next dive it was off to Ras Um Sid, for a very enjoyable, if German-ful dive followed by an afternoon dive at The Tower (if anyone finds a weight belt at around 32 metres, it's mine!). Again we slept under the stars, realising by now to wear a tracksuit to bed because it can get cold at night. Sleeping bags were provided with our group but check before going. Take a sturdy cushion or pillow. We spent our final diving day at Ras Nusrani where several people took the opportunity of diving several times (one person recording seven dives). Another night under the stars followed by an easier return trip through the border to stay at the hotel until picked up by the coach for the return trip to Onda airport and eventually to civilisation.

In short, Speedwing's Red Sea Safari is as much an experience as a holiday with the diving more than compensating for any land-based shortcomings. The cost of the week's safari was £479 and includes all transport and diving. Take spending money, check O-rings very thoroughly for sand and don't use excessive silicone grease, take your own mineral water and plenty of snacks. Experience it. Sleep under the stars, at the waters edge and dive the Red Sea. Experiences and memories are made of this. I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

**Text and photos by
Paul Langley**

Lady Jenny V sails south

In August this year, Lady Jenny will up anchor and sail on a Voyage of Discovery down the Red Sea from Hurgada to Port Sudan, stopping en route to dive on some rarely visited reefs.

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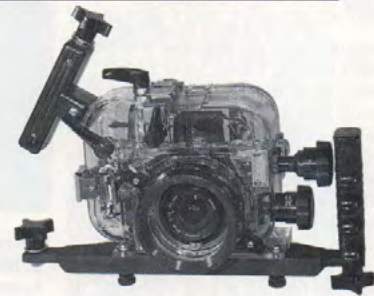


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.....UP

Developing creative images

American Steve Rosenberg reports

Underwater photography competitions are getting a lot of attention as the number of underwater photographers steadily increases. New competitions, from dive club level to international events, are popping up everywhere. Competitions provide a good outlet for underwater photographers to test their abilities against that of their peers, and let's face it, its exciting and very satisfying to receive recognition for your accomplishments. With the quality of equipment improving rapidly, the sheer volume of excellent shots being produced and entered is making it more difficult to win awards.

Most competitions include a creative/special effects category to challenge the ingenuity of the photographer. Producing quality creative imagery from the underwater world is not only challenging but it presents a wide open field in which to experiment. Even though early work has produced some outstanding results, we have only just begun to scratch the surface and it is surprisingly easy to get started.

This article will describe a few relatively simple techniques for creating and using high contrast images which will not only provide an excellent foundation for developing your own creative ideas but will also allow you to immediately produce your own creative slides and prints.

Obviously most creative effects are produced in the darkroom. If you don't have a working knowledge of basic darkroom techniques, it might be a good idea to have a quickie course in black and white photography, developing and printing. Of course, anyone can pick up the basics on their own but this simple course will unravel the mysteries of the darkroom and give you the confidence to experiment with your own ideas.

When you expose regular black and white film and process it normally, the result will be a negative with a continuous range of tones from light to dark. The darkest parts of a scene will appear almost clear on a negative while the brightest parts of the same scene will reproduce dark. Parts of the scene with intermediate brightness will reproduce as "midtones". Any image that has a continuous range of tones from light to dark is called a continuous-tone image.

High contrast negatives, or "liths" are simply negatives which produce as black or clear. The midtones are virtually non-existent. The amount of exposure



Above: This shot of a lion fish is not particularly stunning but its graphic simplicity means it will convert well to lith film.

Below: Copying the above shot onto lith film reduces all the tones to either black or white. The increased contrast simplifies the graphic image and readies it for further copying with coloured filters.



determines which midtones will reproduce as black and which will be clear. The longer the exposure, the greater the amount of midtones which will become black when developed. After development, the midtone areas that have not received enough light during exposure to turn black will be clear.

Lith images from either 'continuous tone' slides are fun to make and fun to work with in creating special effect slides and prints. You process lith film like b&w paper so the basic techniques that you use to expose, develop and print lith films are similar to those used in developing b&w prints. With practice, it becomes easy to convert

continuous tone pictures into lith images.

This of course gives you an enormous range of possible subjects. You can use your entire collection of colour slides as potential subjects. Even some images that are not particularly great as continuous tone pictures may convert to spectacular high contrast images.

When you begin to work with high contrast lith film, sort through your stack of slides concentrating on simplicity, good contrast, strong graphic lines and identifiable shapes and subjects. It is far easier to make a good high contrast image from a picture with one primary subject which has a contrasting solid background, than from a picture which is busy and less



Above: When copied onto slide film with a coloured filter partly over the lens, the lith shot gains simple colours. The scope is unlimited in terms of colours and effects.

Below: Using 5"x4" lith film makes it easier to copy onto 35mm film. Here a light is shone onto a perspex sheet and the lith film copied from the other side.



contrasty. For example, start with a picture which has a brightly coloured fish against a dark blue or black background or a dark subject against a light background.

CONVERTING A SLIDE TO A LITH IMAGE

There are two ways to convert a continuous tone picture into a high contrast one. One approach is to make a contact print, which is done in the same way you would contact print a set of negatives onto print paper. In other words you simply sandwich the slide on top of the lith film and expose the lith film using an enlarger as your light source. The light from the enlarger will pass through the

light areas of the slide, exposing those areas onto the lith film underneath.

The second method is by enlarging. Most special effects techniques are best done with sheet size lith film rather than 35mm. The large size is easier to handle and retouch. I have found that 5"x4" or 5"x7" sheets are best. To make enlarged images, place your continuous tone slide in the slide/negative tray of the enlarger. Focus onto a scrap of lith film using a grain magnifier for accuracy. Turn off the lights and turn on the red safelight used in conventional black and white paper printing. A print easel makes accurate positioning much easier and more repeatable.

The lith film should be placed emulsion side up and held flat with a sheet of plate glass. Make a test strip to test the exposure. A suggested starting figure would be 10 seconds @ F8. As the effects vary with exposure, there is no fixed timing so experiment and make notes so that you can repeat the shots which please you. To begin with, make several different exposures and see how they affect the results.

MIXING DEVELOPERS AND PROCESSING SHEET FILM

The exposed sheet of lith film does not produce an image until it's developed. With most lith developers, you combine equal parts of A and B stock just before use. Part A contains developing agents and Part B is a chemical accelerator. Both parts keep well before mixing but once they are mixed they begin to react with oxygen and deteriorate rapidly.

Available in both powder and liquid form, lith chemicals are available from most of the major film manufacturers including Kodak and Agfa.

Standard paper dishes are ideal for processing lith sheet film. Three are needed - developer, stop bath and fixer. 3/4" depth of chemicals is sufficient. The stop bath is the same as for b&w paper but should be 2 to 3 times as strong, and the fixer should be the same strength as for b&w films. Also, it is helpful in preventing streaks on the film to add wetting agent to the final water rinse.

Place the film emulsion side down and then flip it over. Agitate the chemicals constantly by rocking the tray. The instructions with the film/chemicals will give exact developing times but it is usually 2.75 minutes. Slight variations from this will still produce good results.

Lift the film with print tongs at the corner of the film and let the chemicals drain off for a few seconds. Then transfer it to the stop bath for 15 seconds, drain it again and place it in the fixer. As soon as the unexposed parts of the film start to clear you can turn the lights on. Leave the film fixing for 3 minutes and then wash it for 10 minutes, the last rinse being with wetting agent. Hang the film up to dry but if you are in a hurry, you can use a hair drier to speed up the process.

REVERSING THE IMAGE

After you make a high contrast image, you may want to use it in that form or you may want to reverse the image. Your original slide has been turned into a negative lith image but you may want it as a positive. This is simply achieved by repeating the contact printing process and sandwiching a fresh sheet of



Above: It is difficult to know which shots will convert well to lith. This cuttlefish wasn't thought to be suitable but when converted and then contact printed, the skin textures became a good focal point.

lith film with the one just processed and making another reversed copy. You will then have a positive image of the original slide.

CREATIVE PRINTS AND SLIDES.

Once you have made your high

contrast lith image, you can use it to produce dramatic b&w prints, colour prints or slides. The simplest way is to copy the lith shot onto conventional slide film. Filters can be added during this process to alter the colours and the sky is the limit in terms of colour variations.

To copy a sheet of lith film, place it on a light source such as a light box and put a coloured filter behind it. Exposure and colour variations will depend on the light source but, as a general guide, take a light reading of the light source without the lith over it, open up by 3 stops and then bracket one stop either side. You then have your creative image on the 35mm format.

More fancy work can be done by producing two liths and placing them slightly out of register when copying them onto slide film. The results can be seen before you expose film and the variations are enormous and potentially very exciting. The only limit is the amount of time you have available!

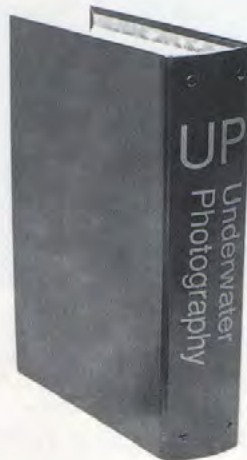
Obviously, the procedures described above cover only a few of the avenues for beginning to get into the area of creative imagery but these techniques are sufficient to allow you to produce beautiful creations from your own original slides.

Text and photography by Steve Rosenberg

Next issue, UP will reveal how to make your shots glow like neon lights

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How was it done?

Jim Greenfield's front cover Tompot Blenny

For me, the star performers underwater are the creatures that live there naturally. Their form, colour and diversity are tremendous and my interest therefore largely centres around the natural history-type of picture.

I am quite prepared to spend my dives in places where many people would consider to be a waste of their time. Such a dive took place at Fort Bovisand about three years ago - a beautifully sunny, calm day with a "high" stretching from the Azores to Iceland.

Just about everybody seemed to be taking the opportunity to tear out to the Eddystone. Not for me however. These were ideal conditions for one of my favourite photographic sites - just off the rocks in front of the Fort! I am sure I got some pitying looks as I scrambled over the rocks to get into about four or five metres of water. A wasted opportunity you might think, but there are some excellent rock faces in a series of surge gullies. Such gullies, because of the tide and wave action, provide a tremendous variety and profusion of marine life. One added advantage is that because of the depth, dive times can



extend up to one and a half hours!

On this occasion visibility was not particularly good as the last of the May plankton bloom was still in evidence. I was prepared for this and was kitted up for close-ups with my usual outfit of a Nikon F3, Vivitar 55mm macro and twin flashguns. I spent a lot of time initially trying to get the whole of a beautifully extended cownie into sharp focus at something approaching 1:1 reproduction; a virtually impossible task that once again defeated me, resulting in several wasted frames. Then I made my way to a small cave which I knew sometimes attracted shoals of Poor Cod.

Sure enough, they were in residence and, as frequently seems to be the case in such situations, the visibility in the cave was better than elsewhere. I was able to get my camera and head inside the cave effectively blocking the entrance. Here the trusty old twin hose demand valve proved its worth once again - no exhaust bubbles to frighten the fish and so several pleasing frames resulted.

Moving on, I had, on a previous dive, seen some narrow holes occupied by Tompot Blennies. I wanted to see if I could attract them out of their holes and get a real close-up showing the bulbous eyes and

comical looking horns. Sure enough, one was in residence and he was a really large specimen. Knowing from previous dealings with Tompots that they are greedy little blighters, I had brought along some bits of fish to try and tempt them. I racked my lens well out and adjusted the aperture as I knew any picture would have to be a bit of a "grab shot". A bit of fish down the hole was quickly snapped up and things started to look encouraging. I placed a morsel just outside the hole, focussed on it, and waited. Not for long - out he shot, swallowed the fish and obligingly sat on the ledge for a few seconds looking enquiringly for more. It was enough and I obtained one quick picture before he disappeared.

I didn't really give the incident much more thought as with many of these golden, never to be repeated, opportunities, I usually find 'sod's law' has intervened to muck up the picture in some way. However, once the film was back from the processors, I was more than pleased with the result.

Jim Greenfield

Back to Basics

Which film is best?

The film in our camera is the final link in the underwater photographic chain. We've decided upon the camera, the lens (we'll talk about lenses next issue) and arranged the subject. Now all we have to do is expose the film to capture the image.

But just as there are several types of cameras and different lenses, so too are there various films, all capable of recording subjects, but each will give different results from the same scene. Before discussing the various types, there is one feature they all have in common.

FILM SPEED

All films have a designated 'speed' usually quoted in ASA. The higher the ASA number, the faster the film will react to light. The advantage of a faster film is at the expense of image sharpness and contrast. The faster the film the grainier will be the results and there will be a loss in contrast. Modern emulsions are producing excellent images from faster and faster films and making our job underwater much easier.

There are three main categories of film speed. Slow is from 25 to 64 ASA, medium is from 100 to 200 ASA and fast is from 400 to 1600ASA and higher. For underwater use, the most widely used films are those of 100 ASA where they are slow enough to give excellent quality but not so slow that you have to use a tripod. For ultra critical close up work with electronic flash, you can use the really slow 25 ASA films as small flash to subject distances give small apertures. For deeper work, faster films allow shots at depth and the resulting slight loss in quality is just a minor disadvantage.

There are four main types of film in popular use underwater - instant film, black and white negative, colour negative and colour slides. As the majority of us use 35mm cameras, we will concentrate on this format of film.

POLAROID INSTANT FILM



This film is available in two forms, one which produces prints and the other which gives slides (transparencies). From the underwater point of view, the print films are not relevant as they are usually for cameras specially designed to use this film. Also, each frame has to be removed from the camera after each exposure and a covering layer then peeled off to produce a print. Having to surface each time you take a shot is out of the question so we can forget this film.

The instant slide film, however, does have an application for it is available in 35mm, 12 and 36 exposure rolls and can be exposed like conventional film. Once exposed, the film is loaded into a special small developing machine together with some 'dry' chemicals and the slides are processed in about two minutes! Such speed is gained at the expense of quality but if you need to know if your exposure is on target or if the equipment is working OK then this film is ideal. It is expensive (about £8 for a 12 and £12 for a 36 exposure roll) and the processing machine is around £100 so it has to earn its keep or be bought by a group.

Once you have assured yourself that all is well you can then use conventional film, safe in the knowledge that you are producing correct results.

BLACK & WHITE NEGATIVE



Rapidly losing popularity for underwater use, this film, when exposed and processed, gives negatives with reversed tones. When the negative is projected/enlarged onto light sensitive printing paper, the image is reversed again to give normal black and white tones.

Even on land, this type of film has faded away as the attraction and lower cost of colour films has appealed to the mass market. The purists still quote black and white as being the only photographic medium and in a way they are right for it is a good film for translating mood and shape; the eye is not distracted by colour.

However, despite its qualities,

black and white film is too rarely used underwater and some competitions do not even include it in their categories because of previous poor entries.

COLOUR NEGATIVE FILM



This is the same as black and white in that a negative is produced after exposure and processing which then becomes a positive when it is printed onto colour paper.

It is not a widely used film underwater which is strange for it has a lot going for it. It's main feature is being tolerant to incorrect exposure which could be a major advantage! You could be up to two stops over and one stop under-exposed and still get a perfect result. This is because the variations in exposure on the negative can be compensated during the printing. If you have underexposed the film, you overexpose the printing paper to get a perfect result. Modern laboratory machinery will do this automatically with amazing accuracy and at a price which makes colour negative film very attractive.

Other advantages are that, if you do your own printing, you can enhance the colours to improve the results. Strong colour casts can be reduced during the printing. You can ask your processor to do this if you don't do your own printing but this can only be done if the prints are done by hand rather than with a machine. The cost of this is higher but it can be well worth it.

You can even make slides from negative if you want. Film labs can do this or you can by copying the negative onto 'print' film which comes out as slides. In this way, you can have the best of both worlds. A top quality print for competitions and a good slide for giving slide shows. This advantage is only available if you have the time for it is yet another process to go through.

Most people decide that they want either slides or prints and then stick to it but, as you get more choosy, you may want a print from a slide and vice versa.

COLOUR SLIDE FILM



This is by far and away the most widely used film underwater. The processed film is a positive image which can be viewed through an eyeglass or projected onto a screen. The end result is sharper and the colours are more saturated as there has been only one process to produce the final image and it is probably this which appeals to the underwater photographer.

Slide film is far less tolerant to exposure inaccuracies. A stop either way will make a significant difference and such intolerance makes us 'bracket' our shots. This technique is designed to guarantee a correct result by taking one exposure at the estimated correct settings and the one at one stop less and another at one stop over. With so many variables underwater, using this technique is not an admission of defeat but is a sensible method in our time-

limited situation.

Another reason for its popularity is that magazines prefer to use slides and, as most of us start with wild ideas of being photo-journalists, we tend to use the film to fit this purpose. The fact that magazines can work well (and even better) from colour prints is just another indication as to the level of photographic knowledge which most magazines have. However, we seem to be controlled by such bodies so most of us abide by the 'rules'.

Granted that prints are easier to look at but slides have the advantage of being much more impressive when they are projected onto a screen and can be seen in much more detail. This benefit seems to outweigh the hassle in setting up the projector and darkening the room for optimum viewing.

Slide film is sometimes available in two forms - amateur and professional. Unless you are extremely critical and can store the films in a fridge until just before exposure and process them right away, the professional films are a waste of the extra expense. In many ways, the amateur films are better suited to underwater photography as they are designed to age slowly and still give optimum results. There should be no improvement in image quality with



professional film, the main advantage being controlled colour balance but seeing as we are operating in a medium where the colour of the water varies from hour to hour, there seems little point in using professional film.

Whatever you decide as being the most suitable film for you, practical advice says stick to one speed of film to ensure consistency. Once you have mastered the exposure you can then consider another speed or another type of film. If, when starting, you keep changing films, you will never get used to one in particular and your results are sure to be erratic.

Peter Rowlands

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Red Sea Adventures Ltd intend to produce a high quality calendar for 1988, planned to be available at the Brighton Festival October 24th/25th. It will feature 12 underwater photographs taken by British divers in the Red Sea during the last 5 years.

Entries must be received not later than 30th June 1987.

Selection of the 12 winning entries will be made by Sir Peter Scott.

Prizes will be 12 vouchers of £400 each towards a holiday on Lady Jenny V to be taken by December 1988.

For full details send a stamped addressed envelope to:



The competition is open to all British divers who are members of either the BSAC or Sub Aqua Association.

Photographs must have been taken in the Red Sea and during the last 5 years. Original transparencies to be entered, these will be returned after the selections have been made. However whilst every care will be taken Red Sea Adventures Ltd., Twickers World or Speedwing cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage.

2 transparencies only may be entered, clearly marked on the frame with name, date and location. Please also give name of travel agency you booked the holiday with and boat or hotel where you stayed.

Entries must be submitted by 30th June 1987.

Winners will be announced by 1st October 1987.

— TEAR OFF ENTRY FORM —

Name.....
Address.....
.....
.....
Date of holiday.....
Tour Operator.....
Name of Boat/Hotel.....

Tel: (Home).....
Tel: (Work).....
Location of entry
No.1.....
No.2.....
Name of the subject
No.1.....
No.2.....

I hereby agree to the rules of this competition and accept that neither Red Sea Adventures, Twickers World or Speedwing will be held responsible for loss or damage to my entries. Furthermore I agree that Red Sea Adventures will have the right if they so wish to the publishing rights of the above entries whether in the event my entry is successful or not.

Signed..... Print Name.....

AGFA COMPETITION

"Exciting Lighting"

Win 10 rolls of Agfa 50RS film

Martyn Farr of Crickhowell in Wales wins this issue's prize with a shot taken in an old silica mine in Glyn Neath, South Wales.

An experienced cave diver, Martyn used a Nikonos 111 and 28mm with 200 asa Ektachrome. Bulb flashes were used for all of the lighting, one fired from the camera and the other triggered with a slave sensor placed behind the diver.

A four man team was needed - one to hold the flash behind the subject, one holding the flash on camera, the photographer and the model.

The slave sensors were made by a buddy diver specifically for these sort of shots.



E. Childs of Aberdeen sent this pleasant shot of water-dappled light.

It shows a good use of natural light to produce an out of the ordinary result and is one which should be possible in most waters with a basic camera.

Diving towards sundown can achieve some dramatic shots as the obliquely angled light is broken up by the surface into a series of patterns and colours. Converted to black and white, the shot still works as it is more about pattern and mood rather than colour.



Next issue's subject: Sunburst shots in the UK

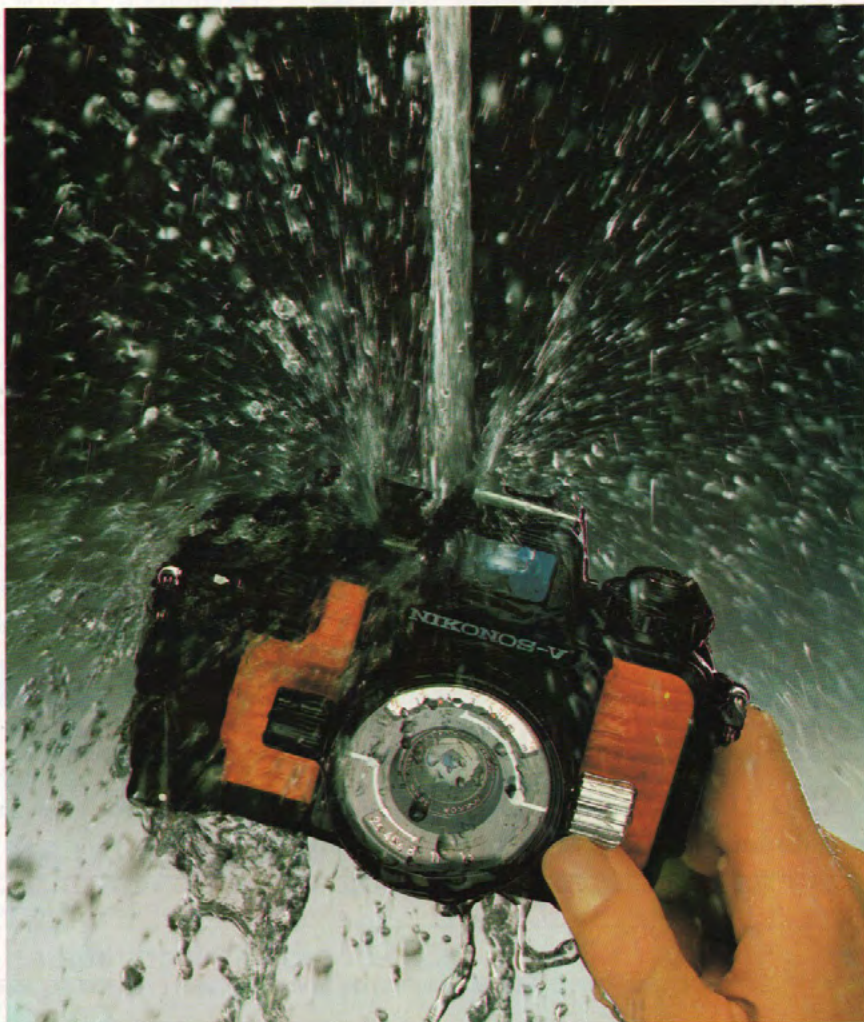
There's no better way to add sparkle to your shots than with a sunburst. Even in the UK, this simple technique can be achieved despite our sometimes limited visibility. A straight sunburst shot isn't what we're after. We want a subject in there too such as marine life or a diver.

Entries must arrive by July 1st and be 35mm colour slides. Please pack them extremely well and include some details of where they were taken and with what equipment. The number of entries coming in so far is not high so get digging in your libraries and you stand a good chance of winning of seeing your shots in print. The more entries, the more colour will be used. (That's why we've printed two in black and white only this issue). Do it now and you could win 10 rolls of AGFA slide film.

Competitions worldwide. Brighton '87.

It's on again! One of the most established underwater photography festivals in the world is taking place on October 24th and 25th in Brighton. Top international speakers are lined up to present up to the minute papers and all of the winning competition entries will be on display throughout the weekend. Its a chance not to be missed.

The event is being organised by Diver Magazine,



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