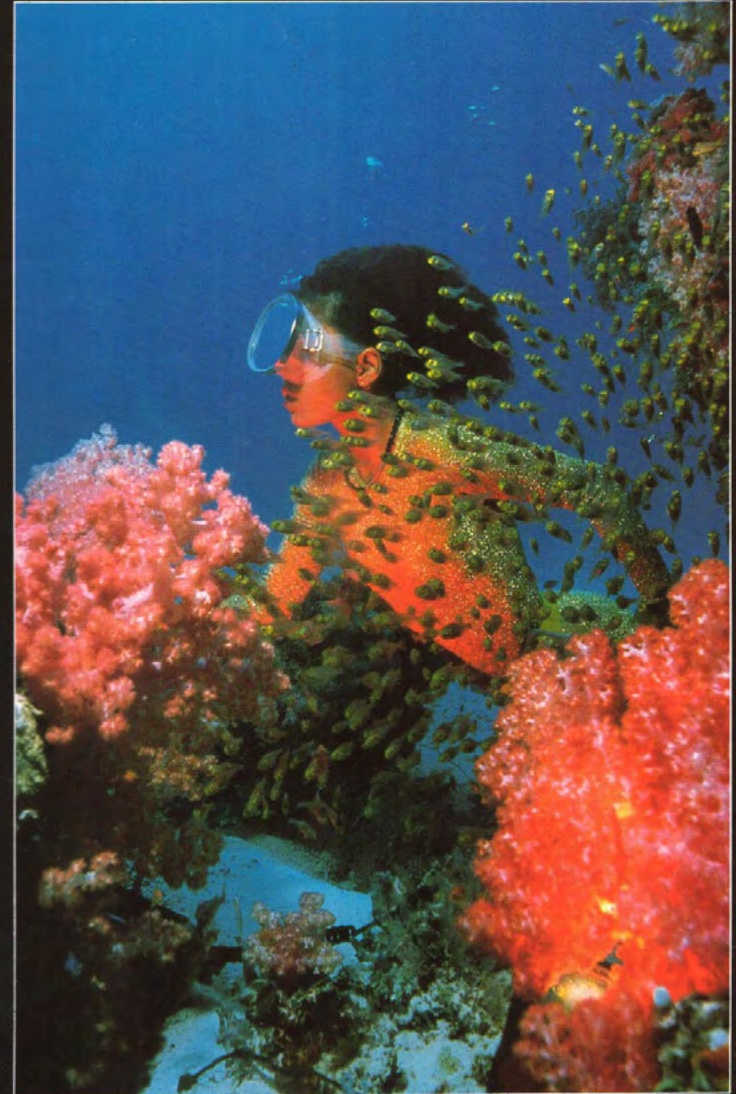


UP Supplement

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Underwater Photography



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Underwater Photography Magazine

Issue No 7
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Contents

4. Letters
6. Brighton '87. Pip Evered reports
8. Brighton '87. Brian Pitkin reports
9. Nassau Grouper Photography with Alex Kirkbride
10. New Products
11. UP Reviews Sea and Sea's JVC GR C-7 video housing
12. UP in Scotland with Dr. Mia Buehr
15. Antibes Film Festival
16. UP Overseas in Oman with Gordon MacSkimming
19. How was it done? Chris Smith explains
20. UP with the Image makers. Meet Kurt Amsler
22. Book Reviews
24. Underwater Wildlife Photographer of the Year
26. PADI European Photo College
30. Short Ends
31. Classifieds

Editorial

When David Doubilet first submitted work to the National Geographic Magazine the Editor growled "What's so special about underwater photographers? We can make any of our staff photographers into underwater photographers. I don't need you."

Three years later, that same editor was forced to accept that underwater photography is not like that. You cannot make a professional land photographer become a good underwater photographer just because he can take pictures. Underwater photography is much more than just being able to take a photograph as it requires a complex balance of physical and artistic input together with a will to work in a potentially hostile environment. And it is this which makes it one of the very few markets where the beginner can still compete equally with the professional because the choice of equipment is limited and the subjects are open to all. This lets the ideas and images become the reasons for success and not just the ability to own the most expensive camera.

Since it is these ideas and images which form the very foundation of underwater photography's future, it is important that competitions (which are the only events where underwater photographers can study the winning shots at length) should be judged by underwater photographers, perhaps with one land photographer to add a worldly balance. Judges, whether they realise it or not, have a heavy responsibility; they are choosing the shots which will influence underwater photographers and in so doing they could influence the course of underwater photography itself.

It is for this reason that major competitions like Brighton '87 are so important. The results hold so much influence that they cannot be entrusted to a panel of judges consisting of non-divers from Fleet Street and the media world with token underwater photographers, two of whom are still being hailed as "World Champions" for an award they won over 8 years ago and which they can no longer hold claim to.

No wonder, then, that its real standing in underwater photography has been eroded over the years until it has become misrepresentative of the emerging and existing talent. The direction of underwater photography should be steered by underwater photographers.

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Write UP's

Brighton '87 comments

From the editorial in Issue 6, I know your interest in comments about the Brighton Festival 87. I hope this one from Germany is welcome:

I can only agree with Stan Waterman's last words on Sunday evening when he - as the most experienced star guest of them all - confirmed that Brighton 87 provided the best program he had seen in his life.

However, this festival had other impressions beside the excellent lectures. I am talking about the most comprehensive of all underwater photographic competitions, as the organiser calls it. My measure is this pretension.

It is probably superfluous to discuss the decision of the jury concerning the different categories and their winners. In my eyes some of the winning photos were only average, rarely impressing at all. But I would like to complain about the presentation of the photos.

The organiser offered the most presumptions and arrogant person presenting the winning photos I have ever seen during comparable competitions. Berwin's only interest was obviously to show his Rolls Royces and rush back to his assignment in the Caribbean. During his joking comments - or what he thought they might be - I could watch amateur competitors sitting beside me and getting very angry. Is it so new to Berwin and the organiser that underwater photographers put their heartblood, as we say in Germany, into such a competition? And the presenting guy only shows ignorance and has no biological knowledge at all.

It is no excuse that several slides already were with Diver for printing, as Bernard Eaton added. In my opinion, the presentation of the winning slides should also be a highlight of such a Festival. Because the photographers, for which the Festival was originally created, deserve it. The choice of Mr Berwin was a shame.

Helmut Debelius, Frankfurt.

Helmut, I well remember the anger in your eyes when I met you just after Derek Berwin's presentation and the anger of so many others who asked "What can we do to stop this treatment?". "Write to UP and Diver". I said to you all and looked forward to a healthy letters page. Such venom seems to have been dissipated by the demands of everyday life and you are one of just a few who have transferred their reactions to pa-

per. Your comments and response are much appreciated and accepted.

That leaves me, through UP, with the thankless task of trying to do something. Thankless because a great many people will say "There he goes complaining and stirring again" and also thankless because most underwater photographers prefer to express themselves in their work rather than with pen and paper. That doesn't make for a coherent response.

However, I feel that your letter is similar to ones which dozens of underwater photographers would have written just after Derek Berwin's presentation. It is precisely this problem of no written response that will allow such abysmal displays to continue unabated. We must all bear responsibility when this sort of thing happens again for it is only by responding that we can affect.

More Brighton '87

Brighton '87 has already passed and what an enjoyable weekend it was. But despite all the hard work and effort in organising the events, the slide presentation was totally disappointing and, as far as I can recall from the last four Brightons I have attended, the presentation of the winning slides has always been poor but this time it was exceptionally bad.

Surely after all the hard work that photographers put into Brighton they should be entitled to a more professional presentation. The previous speakers all had plenty of time allocated but when it comes to the winning photographers' presentations there is never enough time. The prizes are rushed through and no one ever gets to see who has won what.

One could sense the frustration in the audience who had come to enjoy both the winning slides and to see the photographers who had been merited with honours, not to hear excuses of why this or that was not working. Surely this just loses everyone's enthusiasm and attention.

If I may suggest that the highly commended shots be projected with the photographers name being mentioned and then when the award winning slides are shown, they be kept on the screen while the photographer collects his/her prize. Of course this will take time but that's what the festival side of the weekend is all about. If one is thinking of cutting back on time for example they could have cut Jack McKenney's film on beginners. I'm not suggesting that I don't want to see there great cameramen, on the contrary, but if Brighton is to remain a prestigious event for

photographers then there must be a more professional attitude/balance when it comes to the final presentation.

I'm certainly looking forward to the next Brighton and shall be working extremely hard over the next three years and am hoping to be amongst the winners.

Terry Arpino, Kingston-upon-Thames

Couldn't agree more, Terry. BSoUP has always advised the Organisers after each Brighton that the prizes should have more time allotted and that they should be awarded much earlier to allow the winners to be congratulated and have their brains picked. Yet, despite this advice, the Organisers see fit to keep on making the same basic mistakes (which could so easily be rectified) and they are surprised when they hear complaints. They think that the build up of suspense is what people like. One point you didn't touch on is from the sponsors point of view. They provide expensive prizes in return for maximum publicity. To see the prizes being rushed through like that must make future sponsors think twice about giving future prizes.

Gimmick/Surreal complaint

The magazine is very small and as yet not of great benefit to any underwater photographer who dives mostly in the waters around these islands. Creative techniques are all very well but we have in recent times been filtered and gimmicked to death to the detriment of good photography. Surrealism should be part of things but not to the exclusion of everything else.

I would like to see more articles about the practical problems involved photographing the marine environment and its flora and fauna. Where to find, how to stalk, seasonal variations etc are what most diving photographers are into in my experience. I think we have a better chance of getting photographers to take photographs than of getting photographers to dive. If this is the case then it is surely sensible to encourage all divers to bring a camera and not to try to show them how inadequate they really are with this obsession for "winner takes all" mentality which competition creates.

R. Quinlan, Dublin

We do try to achieve a balance between straightforward and manipulated images and know that there will be times when we seem to lean too much in one direction. However, I hope that over a period of 12

months, the balance will be fair. The exception is British waters diving for we have always featured a location and included British shots in every issue because we believe that crafts learnt around our shores will stand us in good stead wherever we go thereafter.

Natural shots v Gimmicks

Congratulations to Warren Williams on winning the BSOP splash in competition with an atmospheric rock pool shot. Its good to see the public voting for his natural shot rather than the photographic gimmickry of double exposure - an 'interesting' technique but now greatly overrated by those with the power to publish.

On the subject of undersubscribed UP photographic competitions, perhaps some information on the circulation figures would encourage more people to enter if they thought that the results were being seen by a wide audience.

At present the prize of Agfa film is little incentive as many people don't like it. A wider choice of film and no entry fee might work wonders. I appreciate that the main reason for the competition is to get good photos seen by a wider audience but prizes are an incentive and to enter more than one slide at £1.50 a go becomes a bit expensive. Most photographic competitions are free on the basis that both sides gain - good photos sell magazines. I don't think the 'slide clinic' problem is an issue here and I do think that a regular competition is an important feature in a magazine such as yours. I suggest you alter the rules and try again for sunburst shots - there must be lots around, even in murky UK!

Sue Hiscock, Marine Biologist, Peterborough

The power to publish is available to us all through Write UP's and at present, UP is sent to around 1200 subscribers so that should be a wide enough audience but I'm not sure AGFA would agree with you about their film which they donated to encourage entries. To have their generosity belittled with such a wide generalisation is not very productive in such a small world. It is difficult enough to attract prizes for what is a small competition. without such ungrateful comments.

I am glad, however, that you expose that you are a marine biologist for this must explain why you prefer natural shots. Strangely enough, the double exposure photo you refer to shows a reasonably rare shot of a starfish spawning and a diver has just been added to give a more dramatic and

eyecatching result. The result, I feel, is a productive image which combines informative illustration with photographic technique. Perhaps if you weren't told how the shot was taken you would have accepted it more readily?

Thanks for your comments.

Brighton 87 Competition

We were really disappointed with the pictures that were selected for prizes, particularly the slides. In an event that purports to attract the very best in the field, we felt that the final selections were very ordinary and, whilst we wish those who did win the best of luck in the future, we are sure that they are not representative of the state-of-the-art underwater photography of today.

Are the judges that out of touch? The only excuse that I can see to justify some of the winners is that the ordinariness of them all may encourage a much wider entry in the future. However, we do not think that this is what Brighton is all about.

Alex and Tamara Double

With no disrespect to Michael Wong, how a clown fish shot can win a major award is beyond me and many of the underwater photographers I spoke to over the weekend agree with your comments. It is the winning shots which influence the future and it is a great shame when such an event, which is still held in high esteem by some, judges such ordinary/simple-to-take shots as winners.

What the organisers must realise is that a great many underwater photographers come to Brighton to see the latest trends/ techniques and, even though they never have ambitions of being a Grand Master, they become confused when ordinary subjects are praised. The solution is to go right back to the judging and make sure that the chosen judges really are in touch with the direction/ required standards of underwater photography.

More Brighton comment

Sorry for not writing sooner but we have been waiting for the results as we did not attend in person. Rumour had filtered back that my missus had won a medal and I wanted confirmation before giving my views. The latest Diver Magazine reports "Bronze - Maggie Gray - Baby Squid" which is the first official news she has had!

The quote which surprised me, however, was "... the small number of entries in the British waters category, where pitifully few awards could be made and no

one named as British Underwater Photographer of the Year."

That was fairly predictable, given the rules. The "Grand Master" section did not have a UK category yet the rules also forced many of us into that section, like it or not.

My pictures have all been taken in UK waters and some have been placed in (minor) national championships. Judged against greater stars, with more skill, better equipment and clearer water...

The final straw that clinched my non-entry, though, was being expected to pay an extra fee for the prizes!

One final note is that I am pleased to say, partly thanks to the publicity in UP, the standard of entry in this year's Southfed competition is very good and the majority of slides were taken in the UK!

Colin Gray, Hants

The omission of a UK category in the Grand Master section was a major blunder as was the totally unjustifiable extra entry fee and was seen as the last straw by many underwater photographers.

Also, what the Organisers fail to realise is that the majority of competition-entering photographers have all won something at some stage in their careers so we are all in the same boat. This doesn't really solve the problem of trying to give beginners a feeling of being able to compete against the more experienced people. In fact for some, the thought of having to enter in the Grand Master section was too daunting and so became self defeating.

What do you think?

"Write UP's" is for you to express your opinions about anything to do with underwater photography.

Please write to: Underwater Photography Magazine

Don't think about it. Write about it!

Brighton '87 Pip Evered reports



(Above) David Doubilet relaxes before showing his excellent slides to a packed house.



(Above) The Ocean Optics stand was busy and saw some important visitors popping in and posing with the Ocean Optics! Underwater Photography magazine Directors. Helmut Debelius, Jane Carr, David Doubilet, Peter Rowlands and Anne Doubilet.



(Above) Benny Sutton makes sure its the trophy for Most Promising British Underwater Photographer

(Above) Kurt Amsler still in a state of shock after scooping the Grand Master Title and winning a fabulous Rolex watch worth over £2000. Bernard Eaton, Editor of Diver and Organiser of Brighton '87 presented the prizes.

All uncredited photos by John Neuschwander



(Above) Mike Valentine won the Ocean Optics Trophy for Best Audio Visual featuring Emma Crewdson (centre)



(Above) Michael Wong won the prize for Best Colour print



(Above) Benny Sutton makes sure its the trophy for Most Promising British Underwater Photographer



(Above) Laurie Emberson won the prize for Best Professional Film



(Above photo by David Nardini)
Exhibitors from the world of underwater photography and diving added extra interest to an action-packed weekend



(Above)
Jack and Sarah McKenney, Mr and Mrs Stan Waterman and Emery Kristof.



(Above)
A Sylvia Earle sandwich with Hans Fricke and Emery Kristof



(Above)
Flip Schulke admires Kurt Amsler's latest Trophy

Dolphins". Have I missed something or is 1987 the Year of the Dolphins?

Sunday morning's talks concentrated on deep water subjects with eminent speakers such as Sylvia Earle showing the use of deep water manned submersibles and their capabilities. Hans Fricke followed with a comprehensive presentation on the mysterious Coelocanth. On a shoestring budget, he certainly achieved a great deal, adding to our limited knowledge and understanding of this fascinating creature.

With all of the publicity surrounding the Titanic in recent months, Ralph White and Emery Kristoff gave a welcome discussion on the search and identification of this most famous wreck and so clarified a great many points.

From the underwater photographer's point of view, the Sunday afternoon presentation of the winning films, slides and AV's should have been the highlight of the weekend but, sadly, this was far from the case.

In the absence of Mike Portelly (hurricane battered in the Bahamas), Slim MacDonnell presented the amateur and professional films. The 8mm film category, once again, proved to be poor in quality due to the inherent capabilities of the format. Added to this the film maker's approach left a lot to be desired and as Slim pointed out, most films had no real theme. Most concentrated on telling the audience what their Red Sea holiday was like.

It was during the screening of the winning film that things started to go wrong with it being projected at 24 frames per second rather than 18 and if it wasn't for Slim noticing it and the film maker being next to the projector it might have got worse. Perhaps the 8mm film category can now be phased out in favour of video.

I would like to report that the slides,

at least, were properly presented but, unfortunately, this couldn't be further from the truth. Derek Berwin started off by blowing his own trumpet too much with above water shots and then proceeded to get his commentary out of sequence with the slides (or vice versa) and it was left up to the audience to shout out that the projected slide was not theirs or that it was upside down. The presentation couldn't have been more chaotic and incompetent even if the organisers had tried.

As a result of this, the whole impact of the winning slides was lost and I honestly couldn't tell you who won what and with what shot. Given the money involved in entry fees not to mention the cost of photography and printing, I doubt whether any underwater photographers present felt that their efforts and financial input had been given justice.

In addition, I am surprised that sponsors weren't up in arms about the poor display of prizes and announcements about who had won what and who had donated it. They had given thousands of pounds of prizes and didn't get a fair exposure for their generosity. Such treatment makes it much harder to get prizes in the future.

Stanton Waterman was left to salvage a dwindling audience with his usual good quality American style films.

During the two days, I spoke to a number of underwater photographers regarding the winning pictures and most agreed that the judging must have been carried out by non-underwater photographers. This was evident by the prints on display with average shots winning titles and stunning ones being just highly commended. I appreciate that personal opinions differ but this view was shared by the majority of underwater photographers.

Finally, why are people allowed to enter exactly the same shot in black and white, colour print and colour slide and in one particular case a whole AV and film covering the same theme? It makes a nonsense to allow such inarticulate use of underwater images.

I hope that this article, however strong it may appear, will encourage other photographers to express their opinions for it is only by doing this that we can help to improve future festivals. Let's hope that the Organisers of Brighton will learn from their mistakes and that the farcical events surrounding the slide presentation never happen again.

Pip Evered

Brighton '87 The Friday Film Show by Brian Pitkin

Brighton '87, held at the Dome, Brighton over the weekend of October 23rd, 24th and 25th was without doubt the most important underwater photographic event this year.

The dazzling weekend started on Friday evening when invited speakers and guests gathered at the Old Ship Hotel for a pre-evening drink before going to the Royal Pavilion. There, in the magnificent banqueting hall, many of the top names in underwater exploration, conservation, cinematography, photography and other invitees were officially welcomed by the Mayor. An entertaining brief history of the Royal Pavilion by the Keeper replaced the expected tour, cancelled due to the severe damage to the roof in the recent hurricane-force winds.

Our return to the Old Ship Hotel was delayed by some joker pressing the fire alarm which left a hundred or more people standing in the road until the Fire Brigade gave the all-clear. Once inside, a splendid buffet meal was served to delegates before they moved into the ballroom for an evening of spectacular films, especially selected by American Stanton Waterman.

Stanton is one of the world's finest underwater cinematographers and he has filmed some of the sea's most exciting inhabitants from giant mantas in the Sea of Cortez, bull sharks in the Bahamas, humpback whales off Bermuda to great white sharks in Australia. He has shot and shown films all over the world and won trophies, gold medals and awards galore.

The two hour show, entitled the Waterman Collection, comprised Stanton's favourite films made by other great diving cameramen. He started with "Deep Dive", a film made by Al Giddings showing a breath-holding dive to a record 240 feet by Robert Croft. Incredibly, Croft survived this, only to die in another record attempt two years later.

Second choice for the evening was Jack McKenney's "Beneath a Sulu Sea" which included some beautiful slow motion footage of manta rays 'flying' effortlessly through the clear waters off the Philippines.

To complete the first half, Stanton showed a short section on ice diving from Al Giddings' two hour "Mysteries of the sea". A further section from the same film, showing Herwarth Voigtman feeding sharks in the Maldives started the second half. These two clips showed Al's versatility in differing extreme conditions and brought home the sparsity of our knowledge about the great oceans.

The evening was concluded with Lenora Carey's "The Muru Ami Dilemma". This superbly shot documentary showed the Muru Ami fishermen and boys living in grossly overcrowded conditions onboard a traditional fishing vessel. Nets were cast and lines of buoys, using weighted lines festooned with ribbons, drove the reef fish into them. Yet others swam down to help drive the fish up into the net as it was hauled onboard. Scarcely a fish on the reef escaped, leaving virtually nothing but the corals and other invertebrates as a sign of their passing.

The Waterman Collection was a thoroughly enjoyable, spectacular selection of films and Stanton is to be congratulated on his choice. Regrettably British divers are unlikely to see a presentation of this quality again.

Brian Pitkin

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Nassau Grouper Photography

Pictures and text by Alex Kirkbride

The Nassau Grouper is the "ham" of the Caribbean. I've watched two of them competing for my lens, seen another pull the bikini top off a model and had others mimic me in the roll over game where a diver lies in the sand and rolls over and the grouper then follows suit.

Nassau Groupers live mainly in the Bahamas and the Caribbean but have been found from Bermuda to Brazil along the Atlantic coast. They are members of the Serranidae family of fish and can grow up to four feet in length and weigh as much as fifty pounds. Remarkably, in the process they change from males to females, a fact which may account for their quirky eccentricity. On the reef, the Nassau tends to remain in the shallower regions between 20 and 50 feet. They are territorial, a highly convenient trait for the underwater photographer.

When you come across a Nassau, it's best not to approach too abruptly or to make sudden gestures. If the fish is accustomed to divers, he (or she) may come up immediately expecting the common handout. If not, click your fingers or tap your mask to arouse curiosity. If that doesn't work, get the camera set up and work in slowly. Most Nassaus will simply watch passively but if you notice their dorsal fin rising (a sign of concern) don't go any closer otherwise the fish will disappear. Wait until your subject relaxes again.

Since most groupers are friendly with divers, it is possible to use wide angle, normal and even macro lenses to photograph them. I've used the Nikons 15mm, 28mm and the Close up outfit. The 15mm works well when you are photographing divers with the fish as you can fit everything in from three feet away. With the 28mm you can be a little further away but still fill the frame. The Close Up kit provides wonderful detail but it's a 9 1/2 x 6 1/2 inch frame is awkward to handle around the fish's head. A housed camera with reflex viewing is much easier.



(Above) A rare portrait of two young groupers playing. These fish usually part before you get close enough to shoot. The dorsal fins are extended, indicating a sense of danger. Nikons 111, 28mm, Subsea 150 flash, 1/160th @ F8. Kodachrome 64 in 20 feet.

If you do get a chance to photograph these fish, it's important to treat them respectfully. petting them with your gloves on will affect their mucous layer and expose them to parasites and disease. Food not in their chain (sausage, bread etc) is harmful and should not be fed to groupers. Care, above all, should be taken not to disrupt their environment.



(Top) Groupers enjoy being held by divers as long as they are gentle. (Above) A photographer prepares to shoot a grouper in its typical location - around 30 feet above a small coral head with an opening in the wall behind it. Both shots - Nikons 111, 15mm lens, Subsea 150 flash. Fuji 50 film. 1/160 @ F5.6 in 30 feet.

The Nassau Grouper is a very special fish. Most people who have had the pleasure of playing with and photographing them proclaim after their dive that they would never eat one again. Hopefully, we will all someday be able to say the same.

Alex Kirkbride

UP Reviews

Sea and Sea's C7 housing for JVC GR-C7 video

The development of video camcorders seems to be continuing at a frantic pace with new models being announced at regular intervals. This pace causes problems for housing manufacturers as they have a limited amount of time in which to develop the product and then sell it before the camcorder is discontinued in favour of a smaller, improved model.

This situation has led to housing manufacturers being cautious as to which cameras they decide to produce for and it also affects the design of their housings. They tend to produce designs which can, with the minimum of modification, be altered to house new models. This makes economic sense and is a situation we should accept for it is better to have a universal housing than no housing at all.

The Sea and Sea C7 housing is made from extruded aluminium section sprayed yellow with polycarbonate front and rear sections. The 8mm wall thickness will withstand the roughest treatment and the 15mm end sections ensure that the design is well within the requirements of the amateur requirements. The housing is rated to 60 metres.

It is designed to house the JVC GR-C7 camcorder which uses VHS-C video cassettes. The results can be viewed through the camera's electronic viewfinder for instant reassurance or played, via an adaptor, through a domestic VHS recorder and television.

Despite a simple design, the standard of finish is very high and this seems to be a hallmark of Sea and Sea's products. The internal controls allow control over camera power, zoom and standby/record which gives you the flexibility so attractive with video. The small viewfinder on the camera is fine on land when you can get your eye right up to it but it's not so easy underwater so Sea and Sea include a built-in viewfinder magnifier to improve this situation. To increase the angle of coverage, they supply a wide angle adaptor which screws onto the front of the camera's lens.

The zooms lenses on most camcorders are not very wide at the wide angle end and the provision of this adaptor is a useful accessory but the flat front port will reduce the angle by around 1/3rd underwater and also affect the optical performance so there is a disadvantage to the advantage. To provide a domed front port which corrects the angle would be an attractive optional extra as it would improve the image quality and



give a very useful wide angle with such a wide depth of field that the focus would be virtually all embracing.

The main rear seal is a compression O ring retained by 4 overcentre catches while the front port is the same except with smaller catches. As with all underwater cameras, great care must be taken when closing the housing and this is particularly true with videos as a flood could write off over £1000 of electronic camera. The Sea and Sea C7 seals are easy to maintain and inspect.

Two handles are provided, one on each side of the housing. They are not quite in the best position to gain finger access to the controls and you will need to stretch to get to the camera power lever on the left but this is not a control which requires constant operation. Mounting shoes are fitted to the top of each handle to attach lights.

Internally, the camera is mounted onto an intermediate plate which then slides into the housing and allows quick and positive positioning of the camera in relation to the internal controls. The built-in microphone has a long enough lead to allow easy

location of the camera. The standby/record function is operated via the camera's remote socket.

The robust construction and size of the C7 housing result in a heavy package. The housing alone is 9.5kgs on land but this does include a counterbalance weight inside the housing. Underwater this almost disappears to 300gms. Add a video light to this and you have an outfit which takes up most of the baggage allowance when travelling abroad. The housing measures 350x190x180mm (14x6x7.2") excluding the handles.

It is not Sea and Sea's fault that video camcorders are such an awkward shape to house but they have produced a solid housing which allows the camera's full controls to be used. Housings of this size and capability must be heavy and there's not too much that can be done about that. Perhaps we are surprised by the weight and size because we compare them to still camera housings but what we should really do is look at 16mm cine camera housings and we would soon change our minds!

Dr Mia Buehr reports on The Firth of Lorne

Where's your diving going to be this year? The Seychelles? The Maldives? There's always the Red Sea, of course, or you could pull out all the stops and head for the Caymans or the Great Barrier Reef. There can't be an underwater photographer alive who hasn't dreamed of these places.

Tropical diving has the sun, the good weather, the clear water and above all the good subjects. But is that last point really true? Are all the most exciting subjects for a diver's camera to be found in warm water? And will you have to wait until you can take out a second mortgage before you have a hope of doing any really good photographic diving?

Of course not. British waters can give you subjects as exciting as any you'll find in the Tropics. And of all parts of Britain, few can be as inspiring to the diver with a camera as the West Coast of Scotland.

For a clue to the reason for the rich life in the area, take a close look at the charts of any of Scotland's western coasts, like the Firth of Lorne in Argyll. You'll see a multitude of rocky reefs and islands along a deeply indented coastline of sea lochs and inlets. Such varied topography provides the different habitats needed by a great variety of animals. Cliffs, boulders, sand or mud, exposed or sheltered: all will support different kinds of life.

This kind of geography means too that you'll always be able to get a dive, because no matter where the weather's coming from there will always be a lee or sheltered spot somewhere. While you might not be able to describe the water as "gin-clear", the visibility at most times of the year is as good as any in Britain and quite good enough for most photographic purposes.

So, when a group of divers from London's Holborn Branch (BSAC) wanted a week's good underwater photography at a price that wouldn't break the bank, we naturally headed for Scotland and chose the Firth of Lorne for its variety of outstanding dive sites. You can dive Scotland from an inflatable or even do without a boat altogether (there must be more good shore diving here than anywhere else in Britain. But if you want to get to the most remote and exciting spots you really need a hardboat.

We chose to dive in considerable comfort aboard MV Brendan, a 38' Aquastar based in Craobh (pronounced Crove)



(Above) Only in quiet Scottish lochs will you find the anemone *Protanthia*. Shoot it against open water to get the most impact from its delicate tentacles. Nikon F2, 55mm micro Nikkor in an Ikelite housing. Marlin flash. Ektachrome 64 film. 1/160th @ F22

Haven Marina just south of Oban and skippered by diver-photographer Bruce Howard.

A convenient shore base at the luxurious Craobh Haven Cottages gave the twelve of us an exciting week's photographic diving at a very reasonable cost. In his large dive centre, Bruce has a darkroom equipped for E6 processing and a workbench for sorting out flooded equipment and recalcitrant flashes. He is also happy to provide projection facilities for fellow underwater photographers.

Once you've found base in Scotland,

how do you find the good dive sites? If you've got a knowledgeable skipper like Bruce, all you need to do is ask his advice. Alternatively, you can use Gordon Ridley's book "Dive West Scotland" as a guide to some of the better known areas. But if you are really feeling adventurous you could try spotting likely sites yourself from the charts.

The west coast of Scotland is such a large and complex area that no-one knows all the good dive sites and you might just strike lucky and be the first to discover and dive on some exciting drop-off.



(Above) At lunchtime, the boat moors in the lee of one of Lorne's rocky reefs to let us explore some of the more remote islands

(Below) A tunicate's recurring nightmare is to wake up on a bed of brittle stars. Equipment used was identical to that for the shot on the opposite page.



So what kind of diving can you expect from the Firth of Lorne? The islands off the west coast are known for their dramatic underwater cliffs and drop-offs and it is here that most divers will want to go. Bruce took us to places where we found sheer cliffs plunging from the surface to more than 60 metres of depth, thick with colourful sponges, anemones and many other animals, browsed by nudibranchs and patrolled by shoals of fish.

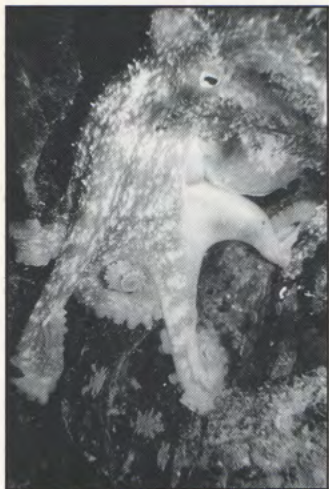
Taking a camera down on one of these drop-offs is like walking into a gourmet's free buffet: you just don't know what to try first and a 36 exposure film lasts no time at all. But dramatic as the Lorne cliffs are, they are not the only sites which will attract the underwater photographer.

Quiet sea lochs like Loch Melfort and Loch Fyne are home to a variety of animals quite different from those you'll find on the more exposed coasts. For example, here you'll find the distinctively Scottish anemone *Protanthia* and the many other animals which share its habitat. And even sites that don't look particularly promising on the charts can give quite an exciting dive for the photographer. Flat mud, for example, has a reputation for being dull. But it's on the muddy flats of some parts of Lorne that you'll find such photogenic subjects as Nephros, the large Dublin Bay prawn, or the phosphorescent sea pen *Penatula*.

With so many subjects in so many different places, you can find suitable subjects for any kind of photographic system. Wide-angle lenses are perhaps most effectively used on the spectacular scenery of the steep, rocky slopes, and the visibility here is usually clear enough to give very good results on diver and landscape shots. You can take 35mm and close up systems just about anywhere and be sure of finding suitable subjects. Some of the shallow rock faces can be very kelpy and here a macro set-up will give you access to the smaller animals like nudibranchs, shrimp and crustaceans that can make such effective pictures.

But whatever the system you use, the first principle of such an expedition is "process on site". No matter how well you know your camera, little mishaps (like perhaps a jogged shutter speed knob) can happen to anybody, and the only way you'll know that you're getting good results is actually to see them there and then. That way you can correct any mistakes before the opportunity is gone forever.

Though E6 processing can be done in very primitive conditions, it's much easier when you have a well-equipped darkroom to work in, such as the one Bruce



(Above) You don't have to go abroad for octopus shots.



(Above) Fewer divers in the area means more likelihood of finding lobsters to photograph

provides at Craobh Haven. A nightly processing session gave us our results when we needed them and, at the end of the week, beginners and experienced alike, went home not only with happy memories, but with a satisfying collection of pictures.

The seas all around Britain are full of colourful marine life, but rarely is such a great variety of marvellous photographic subjects so readily accessible to the underwater photographer as on the west coast of Scotland.

So if the budget won't run to the Maldives this year, try the west coast of Scotland instead and be prepared for some of the best photographic opportunities of your diving career.

Dr Mia Buehr

Dive the Isles of Nether Lorn with us

LORN DIVERS

at Craobh Haven Marina, 20 miles south of Oban, Argyll

DIVING: Within one hour from base lie the Garvellach Islands, their remarkable limestone cliffs provide exciting diving to depths in excess of 40m. Further West there lie the unusual seamounts of the Firth of Lorn; whilst for the experienced diver there is the excitement of whirlwind drift dives in the strong tides of the Gulf of Corryreckan and the Grey Dogs Channel. We specialise in two-day dive trips. During the surface interval, you can usually go ashore and explore the Isles of Netherlorn. Everyone should carry sufficient air for two dives. A limited number of cylinders are available for hire. For two or more days, the dive boat *Brendan* can be stationed at Oban for Sound of Mull wrecks. Night-dives and bad weather "Whitewater Specials" can be tailored to your needs.

ACCOMMODATION: BUIDHE LODGE at Craobh Haven, 200 yards from the Dive Centre, is an attractive timber built guesthouse built during 1987, and offers four double rooms and two four berth bunk rooms all with private facilities. Accommodation and Diving package can be arranged by us. Caravan and camping site two miles distant. Self catering cottages available.

DIVE CENTRE: Reaval Compair 28 c.f.m. to 5,000 p.s.i. storage - pure air - fast! Photolab with E6 processor and enlarger, workshop, shower and lido. Some cylinders and equipment for hire. Launching facilities. We operate from Scotland's newest Marina; your boat can lie alongside for the duration of your stay.

THE BOAT: 38' Aquastar *Brendan* built 1986 for divers. 212 turbocharged Sabre diesel - full navigation package. Warm cabin with lido and galley - hot drinks all day. Stern platform for easy recovery, Zodiac chaseboat carried. Diving owner/skipper.

Write for current prices and full information package to:-
LORN DIVERS, Kames Lodge, Kilmelford.

14th International Festival of underwater photography

This annual festival is now in its 14th year and it is extremely professional in both its image and its presentation. It took place from December 2nd to 6th 1987 and attracted about 15,000 people. It is an event which appeals to divers and non-divers alike as well as the general public.

The building is a multi-capability one with a large main cinema, a smaller one and a host of smaller meeting rooms as well as large display areas and every inch of space is used. There are trade stands from most European manufacturers as well as holiday companies.

Being a regular annual event, this festival has established itself as the most important in Europe and this is not just because it is held regularly. The organisation of the whole event is a pleasure to experience and should serve as a model for others to follow.

To enter the competition side of the event costs just 100 French Francs which is about £10 and for this you get two tickets to

attend which includes access to all viewings as well as lunch and evening meal! The organisers are considering increasing this next year but even at three times the price it is still extremely good value.

The competition is very comprehensive and superbly judged by sympathetic professionals. They work very hard for the three days over the competition to establish the winners and the categories are all embracing. There are no separate categories for fish, still life etc just stills, cine and movie sections as well as TV films, audio visuals and paintings.

There are nearly 60 awards which are given at a perfectly orchestrated ceremony on Saturday afternoon which gives everyone plenty of time to view the work and talk to the winning underwater photographers.

As if this were not enough, there are sessions next day where entrants can discuss the results with the judges themselves and find out firsthand what they were look-

ing for. If there is one aspect of the festival which puts it head and shoulders above the rest it must be this feature for the information which can be gleaned by those who attend must be inestimable.

The enthusiasm for the event was made even greater when Britain's Mike Valentine won the Best 16mm film award and Mike Portelly won Best Video and Best Commercial. Linda Pitkin and Georgette Douwma both won medals in the print and slide sections and Anglia TV won the best Natural History Documentary.

The 15th Festival will take place from October 12th to 16th 1988 and is a must for all serious underwater photographers to both enter and attend.

A full report with photos from the 1987 event will be in the next issue of UP.

Peter Rowlands

**TWICKERS
WORLDWIDE
DIVING**

THE PHILLIPINES

BELIZE

Galapagos

SHARM EL SHEIK

THE SKELLIG ISLANDS

LADY JENNY V

CAYMAN ISLANDS

SUDAN

BONAIRE

TRUK LAGOON

TURKS & CAICOS

THE RED SEA

For details of dive trips to these exciting locations,
contact Len Charlton

HUMOROUS

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BRITISH SOCIETY OF

NIKONOS-FLOODERS

BELLS ANGELFISH

IT ONLY HURTS
IF YOU SURVIVE

OPTIMISTS

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Five different and amusing designs created exclusively by Rico!
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TAURUS PROMOTIONS LTD

Ex-pat Gordon MacSkimming reports and illustrates

Tax free employment in a Middle East location holds a number of advantages for the amateur underwater photographer, that is as long as your work place is not in the centre of Saudi Arabia: not the place to be if you subscribe to this magazine! One of the better locations is undoubtedly in the area of Muscat, the capital of the Sultanate of Oman, which is situated on the South East corner of the Arabian peninsula.

Muscat lies on the coast of the Gulf of Oman at a point where a rugged mountain chain meets the sea. The resultant coastline is quite dramatic both above and below the water with depths in the 30 to 40 metre range close inshore. To the South East, the rocky nature of the shoreline continues to beyond the range of a one day boat trip. A few kilometres to the West of Muscat, sand takes over from rocks and cliffs. Here the coast slowly turns North West running parallel to the mountains. The sandy beach continues virtually uninterrupted for hundreds of kilometres and, beautiful to behold though it may be, it has very little to offer in the way of good diving.

About 5 kilometres North West of Muscat and lying 2 kilometres offshore is Fahal Island, probably the most popular dive site in the area. Fahal has the appearance of a large limestone boulder rising out of the sea. It is about 500 metres across at its widest point and 95 metres high. Its sheer sides are subject to continual erosion as a dive among the 'bits' and 'big bits' that have broken off on the West side will testify. The most spectacular diving is to be found on the reef areas which lie a short distance off the island. These are rocky reefs which rise 20 to 25 metres off a 35 to 40 metre seabed, attracting all manner of encrusting and swimming marine life.

Much further to the North West of Muscat, about 45 kilometres away, lie the Daymaniyat Islands which, without doubt, offer the best diving in Northern Oman.

There are seven islands in the chain if you disregard the smaller rocky islets. The underwater topography includes sheer rocky drop offs to deep water, caves, tunnels, shallow coral reef flats and gardens of soft coral. In the summer, the Dayanisyats become the sanctuary for nesting seabirds and hence access is limited to the months of October to April inclusive. There are a few wrecks in the area but none fit the "not to be missed" category.

There are four diving clubs in the



(Above) With visibility which can suddenly worsen, you have to take your diver shots when you can. The close ups can wait. A wide angle lens enables the subject and the surface to be included to give a feeling of depth and fill in flash adds colour and detail to the foreground.

region, all of which are BSAC branches. Muscat Divers, to which I belong, usually operates on an all year round seven days a week basis with afternoon dives Saturday to Thursday and all day diving on Fridays.

Virtually all diving is carried out from hard boats allowing the underwater photographer plenty of space to store cameras away from the thrashing fins brigade.

Speaking of storage, with temperatures which peak at about 45-47°C in the summer, some form of thermal protection is advisable for camera equipment, particularly when en route to more distant locations. This requirement is well met by the medium sized polythene coolboxes manufactured by Coleman which provide excellent protection both physically and ther-



(Above) The scenery is typically Red Sea with more than average macro life and some excellent shore diving.



(Above) Turning well and surrounded by colourful corals, this Emperor Angel fish was happy to pose. (Below) Close up detail reveals an appealing face in the marine growth.



mally.

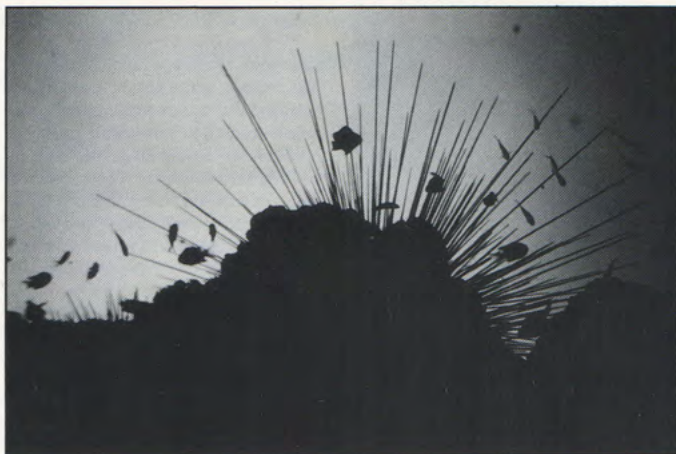
Coastal Oman is affected by frequent cold upwellings from deeper water. Nutrients are carried inshore with the cold water and they in turn trigger off plankton blooms leading to very turbid conditions indeed. In lay diving terms, the visibility can drop from 30 metres at best down to 3 metres or less in a matter of hours. Worse still, this bad visibility takes considerably longer to go away than it does to arrive! These cold water and turbid conditions also have an adverse effect on the growth of corals and, although there are many species present and often in large numbers, there are no extensive reef structures such as those found relatively close at hand in the Red Sea.

If the reef building corals are somewhat lacking, then this is surely made up for by the variety and profusion of many of the other animal groups. One method often used to gauge the quality of fish life in a specific area is the presence of large groupers. In some parts of the world such animals have been fished or hunted to near extinction but not so in Oman where a dive amongst large groupers could be arranged at the drop of a hat.

If the groupers act as an indication for the fish life then surely the abundance of black coral does the same for the invertebrates. Its bush-like anatomy is easily spotted on any dive to over 15 metres in a rocky area. Fundamentally, the region is rich in marine life and the Government policy, no doubt inspired by the conservation-minded Sultan of Oman himself, is such that it should remain so. In practical terms only licenced fisherman may remove anything from the sea.

It has been said of the more regularly dived Red Sea locations that there is very little scope for macro photography. Muscat does not share this problem since there are many subjects which will fit within the frames of a Nikonos extension tube: cowries, flame scallops, nudibranchs and the brilliant red cave corals for example. In the same size range but adding more interest to photographs are the shrimps which live on the anemones, the squat lobsters which live on the arms of crinoids, the gobies which live on the branches of black coral and many other similar combinations.

When diving with a housed camera and macro lens, the colourful reef fishes must be a prime target, they certainly were with me. When I left Oman for the last time I was quite frustrated, for even though I carried away a great number of slides featuring the reef fishes, I had only just begun to nibble at what might have been possible. For anyone who is hooked on ultra wide



Oman Cont'd...

angle work, the field is limited to some extent. Where the aim is to produce those high impact "diver in the sun, lump of red coral in the corner" or similar images, the extremely variable water conditions already mentioned are very much in control.

The actual business of taking photographs underwater does require some degree of backup and this in itself can present a few problems. For example, I know of one person in Oman who is capable of stripping and reassembling a Nikonos V or similar piece of equipment but he wouldn't thank me for putting his name in print! In other words, any major flood will almost certainly involve sending the equipment out of the country for repair. This is both expensive and time consuming so careful day to day maintenance is needed.

O rings, silicone grease and similar small spares must be imported. Consumables such as batteries and common brands of film are available. Processing can be a problem, Kodachrome has at least three weeks turn round from Switzerland, too long for anyone wishing to make an immediate assessment of their efforts.

Local processing for both slides and prints is expensive and very often poor in quality. My answer was to use E6 slide film which I developed myself using locally available and reasonably priced Kodak chemicals. With high ambient air temperatures and a 'cold' tap which ran at between 36 and 40°C, home processing was simplicity itself.

Who can visit Oman? Regretably there is a very strict control over entry to the country and you cannot go as a tourist. If you could, you might find it a bit disappointing compared to dive locations which offer clear water conditions on a year round basis. However, if you have the opportunity to visit relatives who work in Oman, to visit on a business trip or, better still, to work there for a year or two, then make sure that underwater photography figures high on your list of priorities.

All four BSAC branches will normally entertain guests in small numbers and their current details are available from BSAC HQ.

Gordon MacSkimming

How was it done? Sunday Times Photographer Chris Smith explains



As a full time sports photographer, I am constantly looking for and trying to think of new ideas for action photographs. This has seen me in some odd and sometimes alien situations but, for me, there was no more alien time than when I took this shot.

Having covered many swimming championships and produced the usual tight shots of swimmers on the surface capturing their concentrated facial expressions, I was looking for a different angle and thought that one from under the water would be worth a try. Just as with athletes, breathing is a vital part of a swimmers' timing in order to increase efficiency and I thought the exhalation would make an interestingly different and powerful shot.

The idea seemed fine but the one main snag was that I didn't know the first thing about diving or the finer points of underwater photography. Not wanting to go to great lengths (sorry about the pun) to get the shot, I persuaded a friend of mine to lend me his diving cylinder and valve to let me stay on the bottom of the pool.

Whilst covering a training session for the Olympic swimmers at Crystal Palace I asked Steve Grossman to stay on for a

while afterwards to swim over me a few times.

The midday light was bright and the light-coloured tiles helped keep the light levels high but Steve's face would be more in shadow as the light was predominantly from behind him. Despite this, I decided to keep things as simple as possible and shoot by available light using a 400 asa black and white film. I usually use either Kodak Tri-X or Ilford HP5 and rate it at 400 rather than under expose and over develop for more contrast, which some photographers do. The required contrast could be supplied by using a harder grade of paper at the printing stage but, for the time being, that was the last of my worries.

The vital ingredient of any sports photograph is timing; capturing that split second. On land, with reflex cameras and practice, it is a lot easier but underwater there was much more to control. Using a Nikonos camera with a 35mm lens, the light levels gave a reading of 1/500th @ F4. I needed the fast shutter speed to capture and freeze the movement. The aperture wasn't so important as the camera to subject distance was fixed and easily estimated.

Using the non-reflex Nikonos with

its odd shutter release and film wind action took a bit of getting used to so I got Steve to swim over me a few times to get a feel for the timing of the shot.

I used the best part of a roll of film as I wasn't sure whether the results were going to be well timed and there were many variables to affect the result.

Back in the darkroom, the processed negatives looked fine but the surface was much brighter than Steve's face so I had to "hold back" the surface and then "burn in" Steve's face to achieve a better balance. These black and white printing techniques are great for adding that balance and sparkle which competitive shots must have. A harder grade of printing paper gave the contrast and I had my first underwater shot!

I haven't ventured back underwater again since but, if I did, I would probably use a reflex camera with motordrive for ease of use but, until I think of another shot, I'll leave the underwater photography to UP readers and continue to concentrate on above water sports action!

Chris Smith

UP with the Image Makers

Kurt Amsler, World Champion and Grand Master



(Left)
Taken in a river in Florida this action shot was achieved by using a long shutter speed (1/2 second) and a roll of film. The photographer and diver are swimming with a strong current. The camera has to pan at the same speed as the diver to keep him sharp and the rest blurred. This combination of movements means that only one out of about 20 shots worked but, as the saying goes, one is enough. The Nikon F3 camera was in a Sea and Sea housing with a 16mm full frame fisheye lens and the aperture was F16 with Ektachrome 100 film.

For those who follow the international underwater photography world, there is one name which can claim to have lead the field in 1987. He is Kurt Amsler from Switzerland and it is not by chance that 1987 has been his year. He has been leading up to it. He has had a very successful year in both competitions and assignments. May saw him as the World Champion in Cadaques and then he topped it with the Grand Master Title at Brighton. To follow this, he looks set to carry on producing images which both communicate and attract; a combination which few really attain.

As with most divers from his generation (Kurt is a young 39), he was impressed by the Hans Hass adventures and can remember at the age of 9 wanting to follow a similar career. That he has been able to live so long sometimes surprises him for his early school days were spent experimenting with long snorkels and some potentially dangerous "Heath Robinson" breathing apparatus but he survived these early dips into life underwater and, after leaving school, studied photography fulltime at college. Since his father was a mountaineering photographer, he was encouraged right from the start to expand his artistic capabilities and it is this background which encourages him to make detailed sketches of the shots he wants to take underwater. He uses these to show to clients what he visualises before they commission him to do the shot.

Feeling rather limited by Swiss lake diving, Kurt decided to use his diving instruction qualifications and go to the Bahamas after leaving photo college. He soon found work in the expanding diving indus-



(Above) Taken at 7am in Crystal River, Florida, the Manatees like to scratch their underbellies on man's junk. This old signpost is ideal. A 16mm lens on a Nikon F3 in a Sea and Sea housing was used with Ektachrome 100 film. The YS150 flash was on half power and further softened with a diffuser. The red shape in the background is a very fat American woman whose frantic finning stirred up the bottom and terminated the session sooner than Kurt would have liked.

try in Grand Bahama in the early 70's. His portfolio at this time consisted of black and white prints, a medium which he still uses to capture the mood and form of the underwater world. Training new divers all week did not dampen Kurt's enthusiasm for diving on his days off and he took every opportunity to shoot film in the Caribbean to expand his image collection. It was in Bahama that Kurt met Chuck Nicklin and other leading American underwater photographers. He was encouraged to enter competitions and

soon built up an impressive list of medals.

Large format (6x6cm) cameras were still very popular at this stage but, with the advent of smaller 35mm cameras coupled with rapid developments in film emulsion technology, it was not too long before Kurt was using 35mm Nikonos equipment before moving up to a 35mm SLR camera in an aluminium housing. The 35mm camera is one which the Americans use almost exclusively, leaving the large format work for studio shots.



(Above) A double exposure done in camera in the Maldives. A whole roll was taken of the sunset and then rewound for double exposing with the model. She is tied in place at the edge of the reef with the camera looking into blue water. A 16mm lens and available light was used for the underwater shot.



(Above) Taken in a cave system in Bourg Saint Anedol in France, this is in only 9 metres of water but 390 metres in! There is no ambient light so the front diver holds a slave flash and the silhouetted diver holds a flash with a long lead back to the camera. Nikon F3, 16mm lens, Sea and Sea housing, Fuji 100 film 1/15th @ 5.6.

COVER SHOT. This is a Kurt Amsler shot taken in the Maldives off Wadoo Island with a Nikon F2 and 24mm lens in a Hydro 35 housing. Ektachrome 64 film was used at 1/60th @ F8. A slave with a slight red filter was placed behind the coral on the right.

Whilst he still has large format camera equipment, the 35mm SLR Nikon F2 and F3 cameras in Sea and Sea housings form the basis of his camera equipment. Lighting comes from a variety of flashguns from Sea and Sea and Oceanic as well as a number of specially built slave units to add extra light from different, off camera angles. His faith in these slaves is high for most situations but, when he has to guarantee they will fire, he fires standard flashes directly from the camera using long EO

leads.

It is not by chance that Kurt was chosen to be the Director of Underwater Photography at the new PADI European College. His role is to teach underwater photography to those who teach and so improve the quality of instruction. He hopes that this will take some of the stigma out of the subject for there are very few dive shops or training centres which offer underwater photography instruction and this has not encouraged the growth of the sport. With

the PADI European College courses (details of which are included later in this issue) Kurt's aim is to redress this imbalance by taking the technical mystery out of the subject and to show how easy it has now become to take good photographs underwater.

Running a dive training business in Switzerland provides Kurt with his regular income but, as his career has progressed, he finds his desire to spend more time as an underwater photojournalist becomes more and more tempting. He is a realist though and knows that it is hard to earn a living in this way and is making the transition slowly. At present, all of his photographs are used to illustrate articles which he writes and submits to magazines. On the Continent there is a much more active magazine-buying public and this supports several quality publications using photo essays on environmental issues. This suits Kurt perfectly for he is a quiet conservationist, keen to use his underwater photography skills to educate others into preserving our disappearing habitats and animals.

Two recent jobs illustrate his constructive deliveries; the first was a major photo essay on Rhine pollution after a large chemical works emptied lethal liquid into the river and killed most of the marine life and the second was a trip to Florida to film the Manatees in Crystal River Springs. These large, docile grass eating creatures are in danger of extinction due to pollution and the attentions of outboard propellers. In early 1988 he will return to Florida for a cave diving trip followed by more Manatee shots.

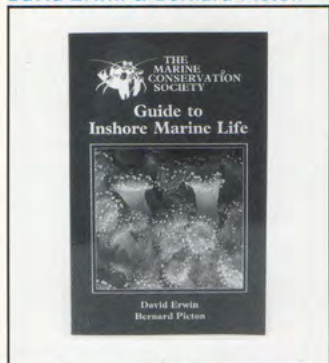
In order to expand his market, Kurt's next project is to concentrate on "stock" photographs which he will lodge with an international picture library. These are straight shots of divers underwater for which there is a steady demand throughout the world. They are not the most exacting shots but there is a demand for them and satisfying that demand is what being a professional is about.

Whilst he is primarily a stills photographer, he has made forays into moving images with a Maldives film in collaboration with Hans Hass followed by two live broadcasts; the first from a wreck and the second from a cave complex in Switzerland. Whilst he appreciates the larger commercial possibilities of cine and video, Kurt is a stills photographer and it with this medium that he feels happiest and at his most productive. I am sure that we will be featuring his work for many years to come.

Peter Rowlands

Book Reviews

Marine Conservation Society's Guide to Inshore Marine Life by David Erwin & Bernard Picton



Despite having a very varied marine life and a healthy supply of marine biologists and underwater photographers, we do not seem to have combined all of these talents to produce a book which shows off these three different but inter-related worlds.

It has taken the Marine Conservation Society (Why don't they include their address in the book?) and IMMEL Publishing together with authors David Erwin and Bernard Picton to change this situation for they have all got together to produce the very useful Guide to Inshore Marine Life.

At first glance, it looks a bit thin on detail but this 120 page full colour semi-rigid book does not claim to be the ultimate in identification and information for it's aim is to provide basic uncluttered presentations to allow the diver and rock pool investigator to identify what has been seen and to provide the beginnings of useful information. To achieve this, the book uses actual underwater photographs surrounded by attractive annotations to indicate size, habitat and depth at which they occur.

The result is a very useful publication which will provide just the right amount of information. For those who wish for more, there are other, much more boring books. All of the subjects you are most likely to see are included - fish, echinodermata, crustacea, cnidaria, mollusca, porifera, worms, bryozoa, tunicata and algae.

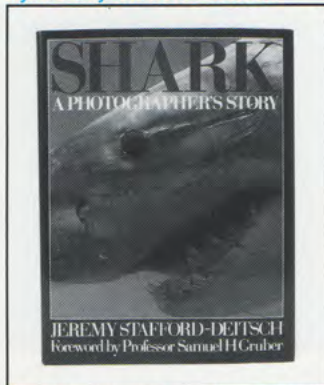
The MCS Guide to Inshore Marine Life is a celebration of the underwater world whose aim is to encourage rather than daunt the reader with too much latin.

It is available from all good bookshops, the MCS, 4 Gloucester Road, Ross-

just £9.95.

Underwater Photography Page 22

Shark - A photographer's story by Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch



It is always difficult to find a new angle to justify another book about sharks except that the general public does seem to have an almost unquenchable thirst for images and details about these magnificent creatures so, if that is the situation, who needs an excuse? The creatures will sell the book regardless.

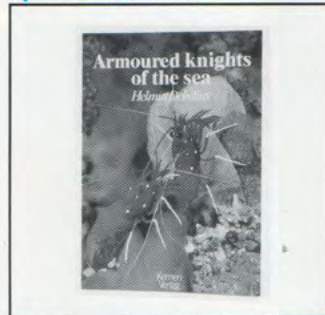
This philosophy has led to a number of books coming onto the market which are well below standard but Shark - A photographer's story does not fall an inch below the highest standards both in terms of images and presentation. In addition, the diving world has found an author who is able to express himself well both in terms of travel narrative, physical feelings and biological fact. The result is a 200 page hardback which is a very good combination: satisfying the sensation-seeker, informing the curious and entertaining the casual reader.

The photography took three years to complete in locations such as the Red Sea, Hawaii, California, Florida and the Bahamas while Jeremy's interest in sharks has been forming over a much longer period. This concentration of effort has produced a suitable finish to a well-executed project. The book builds up inevitably towards the Great White and I defy you not to jump back when you turn to page 188/9. It's the nearest you'll ever come to experiencing what it's like to be eaten by a Great White!

From an underwater photographer's point of view it would have been useful to know more about the lenses and equipment used but Jeremy's informative text makes up for this.

Shark - A photographer's Story is published by Headline books and is available from good bookshops and Ocean Optics. It costs £14.95 (+ £2.50 p&p).

Armoured knights of the sea by Helmut Debellus

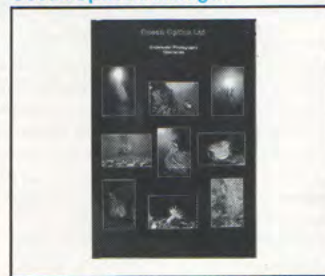


Describing crustacea as the insects of the sea, Helmut Debellus's 120 page semi-rigid book is full of colour underwater photographs of the 10 footed crustacea. This covers all of those to be found in divable waters and in home aquaria. Helmut runs IKAN, a very successful underwater photographic library in Germany.

The book illustrates Helmut's obvious love of the subject which is backed up by his wealth of both scientific and behavioural knowledge. It is one of the first books to combine diving information as well as detail for the home aquarium. This is not a combination which conflicts but it does tend to lean towards the smaller crustacea.

Armoured knights of the sea provides a fascinating insight into the world of these complicated characters and is very well illustrated with hundreds of colour plates. It costs just £8 (+ £1 p&p) from

Ocean Optics Catalogue



The latest catalogue from Ocean Optics has just been published and, although it's not a book, it does have sections of advice on all aspects of underwater photography together with shots to illustrate the capability of equipment.

The A4, 44 page colour catalogue costs £2 in the UK, £3 Europe and £4 Overseas. They are sent by 1st class or air mail.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year Underwater winner - Kim Westerkov



The underwater section of the Prudential Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition received more entries than ever before and the results were announced at a buffet lunch on November 26th at the Natural History Museum.

Kim Westerkov is from New Zealand and has a Ph.D in Marine Sciences (marine biology) from Otago University, New Zealand. This winning shot was taken with a Nikonos 11 camera with a Sea and

Sea 18mm wide angle lens and a Sea and Sea YS 150 flash/strobe. The Kodak Ektachrome 64 Professional film was rated at 100 asa and pushed half a stop in the processing. Kim says that the settings were probably 1/60th at F 5.6 and that no filters were used.

The subject is *Macrocystis kelp*, the world's fastest growing plant which can grow up to 50 cm a day. It is common in southern New Zealand and this particular

dive was in a forest 20 feet tall. This, however, is chicken feed to the dive Kim once had off subantarctic Campbell Island where the kelp was 95 feet tall!

As the kelp gets older it becomes tatty but this example is young with lovely golden-brown fronds which dance in the current and provide shelter for the small blue moki fish, a common sight in southern New Zealand.

2nd - Michael Wong

In second place was Britain's Michael Wong who is no stranger to BSOP members for he has just won the award for Best Colour Print at Brighton '87. Michael is a dental surgeon by profession with a passion for underwater photography and the underwater world.

His shot was taken at Hurgada in the Red Sea in 1986 with a Nikonos 11, 15mm lens and Fuji 50 slide film. A Sea and Sea YS 150 flash added extra light. It shows a shoal of butterfly fish in 30 feet of water and is not a common sight. Usually these shoals are far smaller but this one hung around to let Michael take a roll of film of which about 3 were pleasing compositions as the shoal was moving constantly and could not easily be herded into a suitable formation.



Underwater Photography Page 24

Specially commended - Kim Westerkov



As well as receiving the 1st prize, Kim Westerkov also received a special commendation for this shot of a New Zealand fur seal taken in 20 feet of water at Cape Saunders, Otago Peninsula, New Zealand.

These seals became perilously close to extinction in the mid-nineteenth century

as its thick chestnut-coloured underfur was a prime target for sealers. However, with recent protection, their numbers have gradually increased until latest estimates put their population at between 50,000 and 80,000.

The freezing action of a still camera

makes the subject appear motionless but the reality is that this subject was moving at high speed and capturing it in just the right position with the sunburst required split second timing.

Kim Westerkov confesses that its hard to differentiate between split second timing and luck as being the reason for a good shot. He's happy to accept either as long as the shots is achieved. He acknowledges that most of the other shots were misses as the action was so quick but you only need one good shot and he got it!

Kim used the same equipment and film as for the winning shot but the shutter speed was probably 1/250th to halt the action.

The Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition is sponsored by Prudential in association with BBC Wildlife Magazine, The Fauna and Flora Preservation Society and the Natural History Museum, London.

The Competition is held annually and full details of the next one will appear in UP as soon as they are available.

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PADI Underwater Photo College

It must be the dream of most divers to earn a living from their sport and so combine pleasure with income. The diving trade too is always looking for competent personnel but has to cope with a very varied level of competence due to limited and unco-ordinated training. That situation now looks set to change for the better for, in response to the increasing demand for well trained personnel in the diving world, PADI, the Professional Association of Diving Instructors, have established a European College in Cannes which is providing an unprecedented facility. As well as courses for diving and divers, there is a special underwater photographic facility to train divers to take and teach underwater photography.

The College is situated on the French Riviera in La Bocca, just outside Cannes. It is built in the grounds of Villa Belle Rive, a spacious and beautiful French villa, built before the turn of the century in Moroccan architecture. The outdoor facilities include a 15 x 8.5 metre swimming pool specially designed for teaching scuba diving and the blue Mediterranean is only metres away.

There are three spacious classrooms and a model dive shop aimed at teaching would-be dive store owners how to present themselves and their service to the best and most profitable effect.

For divers, there are courses aimed at teaching existing divers how to become instructors. There are several levels ending up with the premier title of PADI Open Water Instructor. The qualifications gained will enable those who attend to apply for diving jobs with an added advantage and will show potential employers that the applicants are of sufficient standard. All courses are available in any commonly spoken language.

For underwater photographers, the PADI College offers facilities which have never before been available and which could be set to alter the way in which underwater photography is taught throughout the world.

The PADI Photo College can bring a new dimension to the teaching program of the diving instructor. By offering special courses in this field to students, dive shop owners and dive club members, he can add new life to his school and so make more profit. For the dive shops, the selling and renting of underwater photographic equipment means more turnover and keeps customers diving.

Until PADI opened the Photo Col-



(Above) The PADI European College on the French Riviera is built in the grounds of a spacious French villa. It has a large pool, classrooms and a model dive shop. Courses are available on underwater photography, both how to take shots and how to teach others.

lege, no other such facility existed and the course of underwater photography has been left to a few individuals but now things look set to change.

The PADI Photo College provides courses for divers from all existing diving organisations. The Training Director is Kurt Amsler, a world famous Swiss underwater photographer who recently won the Grand Master Title at Brighton '87 and also the individual trophy at the 2nd World Championships of underwater photography in May 1987.

All the camera and flash equipment is supplied and this consists mainly of Nikonos V cameras and Sea and Sea flashguns as well as a range of accessory and prime lenses. There is a darkroom for processing results on site so that those at-

tending will not only see their results instantly but be able to see how comparatively simple it is to process slide film and achieve excellent results. There are 5 courses aimed at the underwater photographer.

The 5 day photo course teaches novices how to take underwater photographs and shows experienced members how to perfect their knowledge. All courses use the latest TTL cameras, flashguns, wide angle and macro lenses. This keeps the technicalities as simple and as automatic as possible for speedy progress.

The 3 day Photo Instructor Course follows on from the 5 day course and shows how to run successful photo courses yourself. This is aimed specifically at the dive instructor who wants to expand business by

(Right) The well equipped darkroom enables E6 films to be processed quickly and shows how easy the process really is.

offering underwater photography courses to those already trained.

Finally there are three 1 day courses in Underwater photography for promotion and advertising, Setting up a business in underwater photography and finally Underwater Modelling.

This comprehensive range of facilities and courses looks set to provide a good introduction to the business of underwater photography which should introduce new talent into the business field and so expand the horizons still further.

Underwater photography is one area of the diver training business which remains largely untapped but the PADI Photo College should be the start of a reversal in this trend.

In the past, underwater photography has been seen as a technically complicated



activity which many feel unsure about, especially when it comes to teaching the subject. This has resulted in there being very few, if any, good courses offering tuition. Individuals have organised one-off courses and Fort Bovisand runs a few weekend events but there has been no consistent facility in existence.

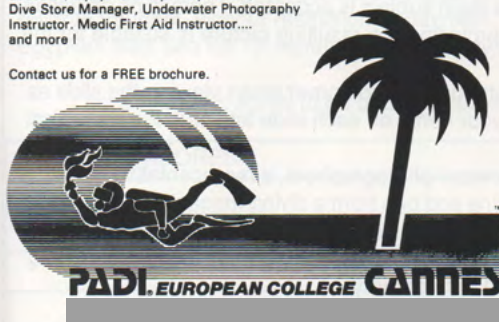
PADI looks set to force the pace and further details together with costs are available from PADI European College, 95 Ave Du Dr Pacaud, 06150 Cannes La Bocca, France. Tel 93 47 04 82.

Peter Rowlands

"THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG..." THE REST IS UNDER WATER I

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