

Editorial

The widening gap

In the old days (here we go again!) whenever there were competitions, there was always requests for categories for those who couldn't afford/justify the latest bells and whistles. The answer then was always "It's not the equipment, it's the finger on the trigger" but now I'm not so sure.

In the days of film you had very little control over the final image. Correct aperture, shutter speed and focus were about it. The artistic side was up to the operator so the have and have nots argument was not really justifiable.

Fast forward 25 years (which is the comparatively short space of time since the birth of digital photography underwater) and we have a totally new, unprecedented level of capability.

25 frames per second RAW plus 1 second pre record buffer means that, if you can afford it, you have no excuse for not getting the shot (assuming your strobes can keep up) so you can understand why someone with a slower system would feel aggrieved.

I always remember the words of the very funny Andy Blackford who

used to write for Diver magazine in its heyday - "If God had meant me to be an underwater photographer, he would have given me a thousand pounds." Now that was in the early 70's and good old AI reliably informs me that - "£1,000 in 1970 is worth approximately £19,000 to over £20,000 in 2024/2026, according to official inflation data."

So it turns out he wasn't far wrong because it is not unusual for today's underwater photographer to be going into the water with that kind of investment. The really big difference is that that kind of money really does give you a big advantage competitively.

So I guess the old adage still stands - You've got to be in it to win it. Enjoy.

150

150 continuous issues of UwP since 2001 makes it 25 years which, to my Libran outlook, is nice round numbers to complete the circle and call it a day.

Personally, the physicality of diving, tedious/expensive travel and, more importantly, the high standard

of today's underwater imagery have exposed my capabilities and horizons so it's a good time to hang up the quill and retire.

The website will stay open until the end of 2026 to give you plenty of time to download any issues you don't already have and keep them for posterity, reference and hopefully enjoyment and entertainment.

Today's fast developing world offers so many ways to absorb information and entertainment; traditionally imparted by the written word supplemented by images but now overtaken by more exciting, immediate things like podcasts and video influencers funded, in the main, by commercial enterprises. That, as they say, is progress.

I have thoroughly enjoyed compiling each and every issue of UwP; working with up and coming and established underwater photographers alike and there are too many of you to thank for your contributions but please take it as read, all of you.

The advertisers were the glue which held it together and without their continued support nothing would have been justifiable or possible. I never wanted UwP to

be too advertiser heavy and it was great working with the small band of generous companies, many of whom were there right from the start. Please continue to support them as they have supported the magazine and helped it to be a part of this small and enthusiastic community.

Finally, never forget that the images you produce play a vital role in educating the general public about the beauty of our world but also it's precarious nature for, as always, it is this people power which brings pressure for change. There are positive signs and things will only get better if your images keep reminding them how important and worthwhile our underwater world is.

May your pixels keep popping and, above all, enjoy.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

PS My e mail address from the end of 2026 is already set up and, no joking, is,

peterrowlandsRetired@gmail.com