

British Underwater Photography Championship 2012

by Brian Pitkin

Underwater Photography is not an Olympic event and never will be. Diving does however require skill and photography is an art. The combination presents a real challenge. Each year the British Society of Underwater Photographers (BSoUP) holds the British Underwater Photography Championship. This year the event was held as usual at Mount Batten, Plymouth, Devon on Saturday 14th July. Underwater Photographers from all over the UK were invited to participate.

On the Friday evening before the event 38 photographers registered to compete by photographing a registration sheet with a unique number and their name on the first frame of their camera's memory card. They had from midnight until 6.00pm. on Saturday to capture images underwater before selecting one image to enter in each of three main categories Marine Life, Mankind in the Sea and this year's Theme Crustaceans. They could, if they chose, also enter one image in the Humorous category. Compact camera users competing in the three main

categories were also eligible for the Best and Runner-up Compact shots.

Following an evening buffet at the Hotel Mount Batten all submitted entries were projected at the Mount Batten Centre. Judging of the three main categories was carried out by Paul Ives, Senior lecturer Marine & Natural History Photography at University College Falmouth, Mark Webster, Photo-journalist, Author and Award winning underwater photographer and Linda Pitkin, Photo-journalist, Author and Award winning underwater photographer.

Judging of the Humorous category was carried out by the audience present.

Congratulations to Tim Priest who was the Overall winner .

A couple of weeks before the event Tim lost his own camera when it was accidentally dropped during transfer from one boat to another into several hundred metres of water. Undaunted Tim bought a new camera and housing for the competition and took the winning image of a spider crab lighting his subject with a Solar torch.



Tim Priest was the Overall winner and the winner of the Marine Life category with his shot of a spider crab.

Tim, won a 7-day luxury liveaboard holiday for two in the Maldives (exclusive of flights and taxes) courtesy of Maldives Scuba Tours, a ScubaCool dive cylinder cover and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy.

Tim also won the Marine Life category with the same image and winning the new Underwater Visions Trophy, a £250 Voucher from Underwater Visions, a ScubaCool dive cylinder cover + canvas print of entry and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy.

As Tim had retired to bed, Gordon Brown accepted the trophies and prizes on his behalf from Paul Ives, a senior lecturer at University College Falmouth and one of the three competition judges.

The runner-up in the Marine Life category was Joss Woolf with an image of a cuttlefish.

Joss won a BSoUP photobook – Images Taken in British Waters, the book Beneath Cornish Seas by Mark Webster, ScubaCool dive cylinder cover and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy. She was



Rob White was the winner of the Theme category - Crustaceans with an image of a hermit crab.

presented with her awards by Paul Ives

Charles Erb was the winner of the Mankind in the Sea category with a self-portrait.

Charles won the Sport Diver Trophy, a £200 voucher from Sea & Sea, a ScubaCool dive cylinder cover + canvas print of entry and an individual engraved glass BSoUP Trophy.

Charles was presented with his trophies and prizes by Mark Webster

The runner-up in the Mankind in the Sea category was Dan Bolt with

an image of a John Dory and diver.

Dan won a BSoUP photobook – Images Taken in British Waters, the book Beneath Cornish Seas by Mark Webster, ScubaCool dive cylinder cover and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy.

Dan was presented with his trophies and prizes by Mark Webster, one of the three judges.

Rob White was the winner of the Theme category - Crustaceans with an image of a hermit crab.

Rob won the BSoUP Trophy, £150 Voucher from Subaquatic



Charles Erb was the winner of the Mankind in the Sea category with a self-portrait.

Art, ScubaCool dive cylinder cover + canvas print of his entry and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy.

Rob was presented with his trophies and prizes by Linda Pitkin, one of the three judges.

The runner-up in the Theme category was Bob Soames with an image of a spider crab.

Bob won a BSoUP photobook – Images Taken in British Waters, the book Beneath Cornish Seas by Mark Webster, ScubaCool dive cylinder cover and an individual engraved

glass BSoUP trophy.

Bob was presented with his trophies and prizes by Linda Pitkin, one of the three judges.

Martin Davies took the best Humorous image as judged by the audience present

Martin won the AP Valves Trophy, a Buddy BCD donated by AP Valves, ScubaCool dive cylinder cover + canvas print of entry and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy.

Martin's trophy and prizes were presented to him by new BSoUP

The Best Compact Camera image was taken by Paula Bailey.

Committee Member Sarah White
The Best Compact Camera image was taken by Paula Bailey.

Paula won the new Ocean Visions Trophy, a free place on a one-day course run by Maria Munn courtesy of Maria, a copy of Maria's DIVER Award-winning book 'Underwater Photography for Compact Camera Users' by Maria Munn, ScubaCool dive cylinder cover + canvas print of entry, Ocean Visions, donated by Wiley Nautical and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy.

Paula's trophy and prizes were presented to her by Maria, who commented 'I don't think there is much I can teach you'.

The runner-up was Gabi Beeny with an image of a spider crab.

Gabi won a copy of Maria's DIVER Award-winning book 'Underwater Photography for Compact Camera Users' by Maria Munn, Ocean Visions, donated by Wiley Nautical and an individual engraved glass BSoUP trophy which were presented to her by Maria Munn.

BSoUP is grateful to Paul Ives, Linda Pitkin and Mark Webster for judging the competition and presenting the awards; to all or



sponsors Maldives Scuba Tours, Underwater Visions, AP Valves, Ocean Visions, Sea & Sea, ScubaCool, Sport Diver, Subaquatic Art and Wiley Nautical, without whom no prizes and trophies would have been presented; and to all BSoUP Members who worked so hard both behind the scenes in advance and on the day to make the event such a success.

Next year's event will take place on Saturday 6th July 2013 at Mount Batten. We hope to see you there.

Brian Pitkin

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