

NUPG Annual Splash-In and Print Competition 2015

Every summer since 2000, when the Northern Underwater Photography Group (NUPG) was founded, they have organised a one day underwater photography competition which takes place anywhere in North Wales.

Anglesey has, traditionally, been the focal point for the judging of the event, and for the third year running, the society has synchronised the event to coincide with the Anglesey Scubafest. It features a splash-in competition, where competitors have to take images on the day, in the sea, and only in marine waters around the North Wales coast line. In the past, the competition has been restricted to NUPG members only, but since the linkup with scuba-fest, the event is open to all comers and is now one of the best attended splash-ins in the country.

Everyone has their own idea of where they think they can get the best pictures. Some head out on boats, others shore dive, but this year, everyone had particularly difficult conditions to deal with. Whilst the sun shone overhead, making it a lovely day to be out and about, underneath the surface, the visibility was unforgiving for photographers at less than one

metre, and many of the dives also had some annoying and vomit inducing surge. Each participant can choose to enter images into 5 categories: System Wide Angle; System Macro; Compact Wide Angle; Compact Macro and the Spirit of Scubafest. Once the dives are completed, the divers, then all rush to the Scubafest venue, where the images have to be handed in by 7:30pm, in time to be considered in the competition. The images that are submitted are not allowed to be cropped and only basic, whole image editing is allowed. The images have to be taken on the day and in order to discourage anyone from using an image taken earlier, a registration sheet is emailed out the evening before, and this has to be the first image on the memory card.

On top of the splash-in competition, there is also a print competition, with four categories to enter: Overseas Wide Angle; Overseas Macro; British Wide Angle

Spirit of Scubafest: Winner – Roz Lunn with an image of a boy playing on an inflatable shark.



Overall and System Macro: Winner - Caroline Robertson-Brown with the image of three shannies.





Compact Camera Macro: Winner – Alex Tasker with a detailed shot of an anemone.

and British Macro. Each image has to have been taken within the last 12 months by NUPG members. These are displayed around the outside of the room for all those attending, whether they took part or not, to vote for their favourite images, two from each category. It was great to see so many lovely shots in each category making it a tough choice for every vote. It was generally felt amongst the NUPG members that this year's entrants were of a particularly high standard.

The event was sponsored by 10

different companies from within the diving and underwater photography industry. This meant that each category winner, from both the splash-in and print competitions, got a trophy to take home and keep. Apeks, Frogfish Photography and Mares were on hand to give out their awards, whilst Mark Evans, Sport Diver editor, was on hand to present the rest. Many of the votes were extremely close, with only one vote in it and for 3 categories, a vote-off was required to decide the winners, and in another



System Wide Angle: Winner – Caroline Robertson-Brown with an image of the blue sky looking up through some seaweed

two cases, the runner-up. The four splash-in category winners were then voted for to decide the overall winner of the 2015 splash-in. The overall winner won a trophy to keep, but more importantly, they also collected the highly coveted NUPG Splash-In trophy (an underwater photographer made out of nuts and bolts) to keep until next year.

Once again the event was very well attended, with a high standard of images on display (especially given the splash-in conditions). Caroline,

who is the NUPG secretary, was overwhelmed at doing so well on the night. "The NUPG splash-in trophy is something I have wanted to win since joining the NUPG 8 years ago. I am extremely proud to have now done so and cannot wait to get my name engraved on the trophy alongside some of our society's previous great underwater photographers"

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