



**Coldham's Lane TA Centre
Officers' Training Corps Lake
October 1998**

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Continuing our quest to find a UK diving experience to rival that of the Red Sea or Truk Lagoon, an intrepid bunch of divers met at the kit store on Sunday afternoon. Peter "just take along a few regs to look at while I am waiting" Huxley, Kathy "Day-glow" Gubbins, Iain "I will resign if anyone accuses me of having no sense of humour" Smith and Philip "Why am I here?" "Because you have a car you idiot" Rae swiftly put months of planning into operation and tried to find 4 cylinders with enough air in to last a gnat for more than three minutes. After scraping the bottom of a very deep barrel the car was loaded for the first of two runs to the lake. The second journey was required just to transport Peters "few regulators".

It was quickly realised that this was going to be an interesting dive when upon entry into the water Kathy and Philip sank into the silt at the bottom of the lake and then once clear could not see each other once under the water despite being only 40cm apart.

Powerful torches were brought into action and succeeded only in turning the green surrounding filth into yellow surrounding filth. With one hand holding the SMB reel and the other probing in front of your face to stop you swimming into the soft matter that defined the boundary between watery silt and silty water, divers fitted with a third hand were at a distinct advantage. Lesser mortals needed to control their buoyancy, read their gauges and clear leaking masks using power of thought.

During this first dive the shore cover, Peter and Iain, were accosted by security staff (specifically the OTC, Restraint and Arrest Instructor!!! Just as well Iain was on shore at the time!) who had called the police, after intruders had climbed the fence close by. Despite the piles of suspicious looking dismantled diving gear, the only major problem, was the only pile of dog crap in the entire area...which had somehow materialised under one of the kit piles!

Having paid his penance Philip was let off having to dive again and Kathy was brave enough to buddy Iain for a second sortie. This dive was similar to the last except that this time they were sure that they could not see the large pike that lives in the lake rather than just not being able to see the large pike that lives in the lake.

Serious diving over with, Kathy and Iain went off to try and find the fishing pole that one of the anglers had reported losing that afternoon. They failed. What was found was a nasty plastic chair, a fishing rod rest and something brown, smelly and squashy that they do not want to think about.

Philip and Iain left with the first load of kit, then returned...only to find Kathy and Peter behind triple razor-wire, having been inadvertently locked in by the caretaker. After asking several members of the Army for help (including a member of the SAS!!!), the problem was solved by the simple expedient of knocking on the caretaker's door and asking for the padlock code!

Thereafter, there was little left to do, except unload the kit, and go our separate ways, with even Iain convinced, that there was little merit in a return trip...unless anyone feels like looking for that fishing pole???

For those interested here have an exclusive underwater picture taken in the lake...



...For reasons of national security we were not able to take a photo of the lake or the moment when Peter accidentally turned round to talk to Kathy and a difficult moment in her getting changed process and well...

Dive site score on the Philip Scale...

- 10 - Diving the Red Sea in the Spring on board a luxury boat when someone else is paying.

- 0 - Diving Mr Creosote's sick bucket