



Weymouth
19-21 October 2001

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A New Member's View by Ian Gregory

As a BSAC diver new to CUUEG, the idea of a trip away seemed a good way to become acquainted with the club and the diving they do. Weymouth appealed in particular since I prefer wreck diving and hadn't dived the proposed sites. I didn't let the fact that I would be the only new CUUEG diver put me off! The trip began with a demonstration of Dave's unique timekeeping ability (only half an hour late). Add to this the fact that we hadn't planned to leave until after 9pm anyway, and it was very late by the time we arrived in Weymouth. Heavy rain on the way seemed to imply a very wet weekend. Stumbling into vacant bunks, we found that the harder you try not to wake people, the more noise one seems to make.

I was relieved in a sense to find that CUUEG operates pretty much in the same way as other clubs I've dived with (even down to the faffing). Apart from minor differences like using BAR instead of ABC for the buddy check, the methodology was identical. I guess this is due to the effectiveness of the BSAC branch system, but it certainly allowed me to feel comfortable during dives at the upper end of my experience (and depth!) level. The morning was unexpectedly bright, indeed the remainder of the weekend stayed dry and warm, despite the fact that Cambridge had a months worth of rain in one day! Slack water on the M2, the first dive of the day, was not until early afternoon, leaving all morning free for the aforementioned faffing.

The delay for kit assembly and checking, and then weight checks in the harbour were also very familiar. However, Iain obliged in providing some light entertainment: first in his efforts to pile on weight to try to sink twin 15s and finally by swimming head first into the pontoon ramp. I later found to my cost that by neglecting to take a twin set, I had unwittingly forfeited any right to the seats on the boat.

First impressions of the M2 were of dismay - the visibility was below a metre, and the water very dark. It served to emphasise the inhospitality of the conditions in which she sank. However, a definite 'must do again in better vis' dive, and must get as far as the hangar next time! In the afternoon was the Hood, in the entrance to Portland Harbour. Again, coping with bad vis and currents did not bring out the best of the wreck, which was undoubtedly impressive.

The next day was the Sidon, and very early (out of bed at 5am). After such an early start, signs of tiredness disappeared as the boat departed. It was really quite eery, rounding Portland Bill lighthouse in the dawn mist. However, the BSAC adage, plan the dive, dive the plan, miss the wreck applied, as we were dropped some 200m from the wreck. D'oh. A local dive in the afternoon followed, which was relaxing and fun if unspectacular.

OK, so that was Weymouth. Good accomodation, good food and good company, shame about the vis. I have learnt some new things and had some new experiences (that hardboat was the fastest I've been on!). Above all, it was an ideal group size to (sort of) start to get to know people, and get diving. Which is what it is all about!