

# South Scotland REDS 2008

## Sound of Luing Drifts

*Maximilian Ruffert*

### 1 Expedition Plan

#### 1.1 Purpose

Main aim: introduce AD trainees to challenging, fast (3kt) drift dives, e.g. 'A1' and 'Grey Dogs', including showing them how to organise and manage such a trip.

#### 1.2 Backup Sites

- Secondary aim, subject to clement weather: exploratory diving around Dubh Artach, Torran Rock or other very rarely dived sites.
- Bad weather alternatives: Garvellachs, Cuen sound, Falls of Lora, Sound of Mull. These are challenging dives (tidal, slack necessary, deep air square profiles) but at regularly dived sites.

#### 1.3 Dates

The weekend 10<sup>st</sup>/11<sup>nd</sup> May. This date was agreed upon with the skipper given the availability of his hardboats. It also takes the state of tides into account.

#### 1.4 Anticipated Costs

- Charter of hardboat Peregrine or Brendan, £750.00 for the weekend.
- B&B accommodation, Lunga Estate, <http://www.lunga.com/>, £28.00 per person per night; Deposit £168.00 paid. 12 divers.
- Subsistence: lunches on two days, dinner on one day, £25.00 per person. 12 divers.
- All divers to bring their own diving equipment, so no funds applied for, for additional equipment.
- Air fills: 2 fills per day, 2 days, 12 people, £144.00
- Transport from home (eastern central belt of Scotland) to hardboat (western central belt): 6 cars, 300 miles, 10p/mile, £200.00
- Sundry, e.g. phone calls, photocopies, £50.00; tips for deckhands £30.00

**total cost: £2146.00**

#### 1.5 Land Transport

All members to provide their own transport to Lunga Estate, Croabh Haven. Car sharing will be encouraged.

## 1.6 Sea Transport

All dives are to be done off Alan Livingstone's hardboat Peregrine or Brendan,

## 1.7 Accommodation

Accommodation will be B&B, at Lunga Estate, Croabh Haven; owner Colin Lindsay-MacDougall of Lunga

## 1.8 Pre-requisites

Most divers will hold a BSAC AD grade, some with a FCD grade. A number of DL-grade divers will be present, whose diving skills are at the required standard (the standard would be of a level reflecting an experience of 300 cold-water dives). They are currently training to reach the AD diving grade and this trip can help them achieve their goal.

## 1.9 List of Participants

All the following people have indicated interest in joining the trip. The names in bold have already paid the deposit of £140 at time of printout. *I cannot vouch that all details are correct, but they reflect my best knowledge.*

#	Name	dive grade	# of dives all/UK	BSAC memb. #	branch	other duties or instruct. grades
1	<b>Max Ruffert</b>	FCD	1100/750	A696692	eDivers	DO, AI, RB, SSC
2	Neil Nutt	DL	300/300	A746787	EUSAC	DO, Nit
3	<b>Ben Panter</b>	FCD	550/500	A637120	eDivers	AI, Nit, SSC
4	<b>Alastair Lyndon</b>	AD	950/900	A600756	BSAC21	AI
5	<b>Wayne Murray</b>	AD*	650/450	A716492	CSAC	AI, DO, Tri, SSC, BH
6	Andy Browning	AD	450/400	A700947	CSAC	Nit
7	<b>Stevie Adams</b>	AD*	800/750	A719681	SQSAC	DO, AI, RB, Tri
8	<b>Mike Coull</b>	DL	450/350	A748967	CSAC	TI, Nit, Tri
9	<b>Nick Fleming</b>	DL	300/250	A749603	CSAC	OWI, Nit, Tri
10	Dave Gibson	AD	450/400	A726694	EUSAC	OWI, Nit
11	Graeme Kirk	AD	400/350	A725785	EUSAC	OWI, Nit
12	Paul Bullen	AD	500/450	A705226	EUSAC	OWI, RB, BH
13	Richard Adair	(FCD)	1250/1100	A444210	GLUG	AI, Nit, SSC
14	Warren Izzett	AD*	900/600	A704704	SQSAC	DO, AI, RB

Table 1: Dive grade: AD\* = FCD trainee. Abbreviations of branch names: EUSAC = Edinburgh University SAC, GUSAC = Glasgow University SAC, GLUG = Glasgow Underwater Group, BSAC21 = Edinburgh Divers SAC, SQSAC = South Queensferry SAC, CSAC = Cupar SAC, MSAC = Melbourne SAC (Australia), Other: Nit = Adv. Nitrox qualified, Tri = trimix qualified, SSC= area/regional coach or member of South Scotland Coaching team, RB = rebreather diver, Chair = Chairman of branch committee, OWI = open water instructor, BH = Boat Handling Instructor, Diver Cox'n Assessor ITS = ITS instructor.

## 1.10 Application Procedure

The participants will be a mix of the most senior divers in the BSAC branches in and around Edinburgh. In a first call I have contacted them by email. I anticipate that about half of the divers participating in the trip will have either participated on my previous trips or know about it from the Regional Meetings (REDS). The other half are divers

applying after I have more publicly advertised the trip on branch mailing lists and the BSAC expedition website. Several of the Advanced Divers who joined the trip last year achieved their FCD grade, while others are still in the process. I hope they will benefit from the expedition this year as well. I will pay particular attention to the DLs to help them gain the AD grade they are currently working towards.

### **1.11 Personal Equipment**

Given that the divers are of highest standard and very experienced, I will refrain from prescribing any specific items. If they do not know what they need, they should not be on this trip. I strongly discourage the use of rebreathers for the fast drifts, because e.g. for the 'A1' a rapid descent is required. Also due to the nature of drift diving, ascents might temporarily be faster than what is prudent for rebreathers (see also risk assessment). For the exploratory portion of the trip, rebreathers are appropriate and would add to the experience of the trip as a whole.

### **1.12 Equipment Provided**

I will bring along additional charts acquired for a similar trip a couple of years ago.

### **1.13 Example Timetable**

*Friday evening:* Arrival at the accommodation. Judge weather.

*Saturday:*

8:30 Meet skipper at Croabh Haven  
10:00 1<sup>st</sup> dive: drift A1 in Sound of Luing  
15:00 2<sup>nd</sup> dive: Garvellachs on slack  
17:00 Return to Croabh Haven

*Sunday:*

8:30 Meet skipper at Croabh Haven  
10:00 1<sup>st</sup> dive: Gray Dogs, (1h earlier than HW!) slack & drift  
14:00 2<sup>nd</sup> dive: Cuen Sound drift  
16:00 Return to Croabh Haven

If the weather is clement on one of the days, we will explore offshore pinnacles instead.

### **1.14 Tidal Information**

Oban tides. Tidal range: approx. 2m. All times *BST*.

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May: HW 9:48, LW 16:05

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May: HW 10:44, LW 17:03

Seil Sound times are approx. 20min before Oban.

Loch Beag times are approx. 40min before Oban.

Carsaig Bay times are approx. 50min before Oban.

Even on neaps, the A1 drift in Sound of Luing could run at more than 2kt. Several other possible drift sites are available as slower-running backups.

## 2 Risk Assessment

Standard and generic diving-related risks will not be addressed here. They can be found in detail on the BSAC webpages on risk assessment. However, there are specific risks related to *drift* diving. These are listed below, together with procedures for avoidance and containment.

type of hazard	who	frequency	severity	risk evaluation	control	reduction of consequences
diver separation	all	frequent	fatal	high	use of lights and strobes; diving technique to include physical connection	self-sufficiency of divers; redundant air sources and equipment DSMB, computers, flag.
separation from surface cover	all	occasional	fatal	high	plan agreed with cox'n, followed by all divers	divers to have redundant personal location devices, e.g. DSMB, EPIRB, flag, whistle, strobe.
fast ascents	all	occasional	major injury	medium	appropriate weighting, knowledge about currents, on-site observations, appropriate kit configuration	carry O <sub>2</sub> aboard for immediate first-aid, use DSMB as depth datum
fast descents	all	occasional	fatal	high	appropriate weighting, knowledge about topography (max depth), local knowledge, appropriate kit configuration	carry O <sub>2</sub> aboard for immediate first-aid; spare stage bottle

### 3 Commentary on Criteria

The numbers refer to the section numbers in the grant form.

- (3.1.) The dives are planned to be challenging for DLs, and interesting for ADs. I expect the divers to be of AD-level experience, i.e. confident to dive challenging unknown sites. If the actual diver's grade is DL, the number of dives should indicate sufficient experience. A number of First Class trainees will take part as well.
- (3.2) The skipper's hardboat license allows a maximum of 12 divers and I intend to fill all places.
- (3.3),(3.4),(3.5) See table 1 - short answer: 7 branches, 100%.
- (3.6),(3.7) Improvement of ADs and DLs: 3 current FCD trainees, 3 AD trainees, at least 6 divers at AD level.
- (3.8) The duration of the expedition is one weekend.
- (3.9) Responsibility for hardboat skippering and safety of passengers will remain with the skipper at all times. We will rely on the skipper for transport to the dive sites. The decision of choice of sites and diver suitability will remain mainly with the trip manager in negotiation and agreement with the skipper.
- (3.10) See first section of this expedition plan.
- (3.11) Several trip members are Adv. Nitrox qualified and might use Nitrox. The divers who normally use rebreathers will most probably dive on open circuit because of risk of fast ascents and descents. Many sites will allow dives to depths beyond 30m.
- (3.12) Wrecks: part of backup plan. Extended range: available. Drift: is part of aim. Wall: is within main aim. Offshore diving: if weather permits.
- (3.13) Report: Basic REDS report. Probably also branch internet site.

*Maximilian Ruffert, December 6, 2007.*