

# The Scottish Sub Aqua Club Ltd



## AGM Minutes 2009

1500hrs, Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2008  
Logie Lecture Theatre, University of Stirling, FK9 4LA.

**DRAFT – For Approval at 2010 AGM**

**MINUTES OF THE 3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH SUB-AQUA CLUB Ltd HELD ON SATURDAY 21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2009 IN LOGIE LECTURE THEATRE, UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING**

The meeting was attended by 36 members representing 16 branches.

**Apologies were received from the following members:**

Dr Wilmot, Jim Anderson, Graeme Forsyth, Edna Ewan

**Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM:**

The adoption of the minutes of the 2008 AGM held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009 was proposed by Douglas Forman and seconded by Nigel Spike

**CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME/REPORT – Andrew Murray**

The Chairman, Andrew Murray, welcomed all those to the AGM, taking place at a new time on a Saturday afternoon.

The Chairman provided a review of the 2008 year:

- Marketing : During the year we conducted some marketing activity by advertising in supplements in the national press – in sporting or outdoors supplements. This helps raise our public profile and aims to recruit new members. Douglas Forman is leading on marketing activity, with assistance from Archie Gillies, and both have good ideas to support branches in marketing as a significant portion of new members are attracted through word of mouth, or hearing about a local club.
- Headquarters: Our lease at HQ originally expired last May, and it looked like we would be unable to renew due to our landlord's requirements. However, we managed to secure a lease for a further 1 year until May 2009 and then began exploring our options for alternative premises until our landlord made an offer of a further 3 year lease, to be signed shortly. In the long term, when our new lease expires in May 2012, we are exploring the possibility of relocating to the National Indoor Sports Arena in Glasgow's East End. No decision has been made as yet, but there are benefits to being co-located with other governing bodies of sport.
- Dive Conference: In November we returned to Oban High School for the 2008 dive conference, which was attended by over 120 delegates, and attracted names such as John Bantin and Martyn Farr. For 2009, we plan to grow the event, and are currently seeking volunteers to help organise.
- Communications: In Spring 2008 we upgraded the membership database, allowing us to provide an enhanced level of service and monitoring of membership. This included the use of regular emails to BDOs and Secretaries with branch lists, and email reminders to members at the time of renewal. In November, we launched a new website with some new content and features. Thanks to Adrian Thomas for taking on the role as webmaster and his work on the new

site. We welcome your feedback on the communications and any suggestions for future improvements.

- ScotSAC Suunto Diver Award: Early last year we teamed up with Suunto to launch a new award to recognise the contribution of volunteers. After a slow uptake, the nominations flooded in and selecting the winners was no easy task. At the conference in November I announced the deserving winners as Jenny Young, David Fuller-Shapcott, Ian Smith, Phil Rogers, Steve Younger, and Ian Kennedy, and congratulations again to them all. Each received a Suunto D6 dive computer. We're delighted to announce a repeat of this award in 2009 and invite nominations from volunteers who have made a significant contribution to the sport – in any way. This year's prize will include a Suunto D6 dive computer with PC interface, and ScotSAC Fleece.
- Volunteering: A new volunteer policy was implemented last autumn to recognise the function of volunteers within our organisation. This provides a framework for recruiting, empowering and supporting volunteers to fulfil the roles crucial to the future of ScotSAC. As part of the implementation of this policy and to support the development of our volunteers, the Board agreed to fund all instructor and safety related courses, with the exception of Nitrox. This has been received well by members and throughput continues to grow. We have a wide number of volunteering opportunities at branch, regional and national level, so if you have skills and enthusiasm then please get in touch.
- Consultations: Responding to consultations forms part of our wider remit to represent and act in the interests of the wider sport, and last year we responded to a number of consultations from the Scottish Government. Last year we responded to consultations on Glasgow 2014 legacy, Scottish Sustainable Marine Environment Initiative, Historic Scotland SHEP, Lamlash Bay "no take" zone, Scottish Marine Bill, Dormant bank accounts, Pathways into Sport, Core Paths Planning. Throughout our consultation responses, the key messages are around ACCESS, SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS, and availability of FACILITIES. A live consultation is the Argyll and Bute Core Paths Plan and 24 public consultation events will be held during March, April and May 2009 across Argyll & Bute. Any member of the public is welcome to attend. Included in the plan is to designate or improve 157 Launching Points which will give people access to water for non-motorised water sports.
- Child Protection Update: In 2007 we signed up to the 2006 Accord for the Protection of Children in Scottish Sport to demonstrate our commitment to child protection. In 2008, we developed and approved our action plan which was endorsed by Child Protection in Sport Service. Marion Brown is leading this work and the action plan is available on the website. Branches are reminded of the need to appoint a Child Protection Officer. The new PVG legislation has now been delayed by the government until 2010, and we continue to keep a watchful eye on the developments and the impact they may have. The focus has been "Check to Protect" – not 'vetting and barring'.
- Equity: We are now working towards the Equity Standard : A Framework for Sport. This provides benefits to the organisation in

terms of identifying new opportunities for members and members will have read more on equity in issues of Scottish Diver. It is also requirement of our funding from sportscotland. Equity is about fairness and providing equal opportunity. The preliminary level focuses on establishing our current position, auditing our membership and identifying opportunities. From spring 2009, we will begin recording additional information on our membership form – namely nationality and ethnic origin and disability information. This is information already requested in other aspects of life. Copies of our equity policy and action plan are available on the website.

- Partnerships: We work in partnership with a number of other organisations. sportscotland are a major investor in our development and in addition to the core grant of £17,000, we also receive a wide range of support including access to HR experts, financial experts and legal experts, all of which have been valuable to the board this year. We also participate with the British Diving Safety Group – which consists of over 20 diving-related organisations and provides a link to the wider industry. We will continue to work with key partners for the development of our sport and organisation.
- Training Schedule review: This is a project the Board have tasked the NDC with, and are grateful to Sam Paske and her team for moving it forward.
- Staffing: Sharon McKenzie joined us last April as our new Administrator and works alongside Hazel to keep the office going.
- Master Diver Lecture materials: Nigel will also update on the new Master Diver Lecture materials, but thanks to those involved, particularly Don Lees and those who reviewed the material.
- Access: During the year, there were access issues in Loch Fyne and we have had a number of discussions with Argyll and Bute council about regaining access for divers. This is no easy challenge and but we will continue to do what we can.

2009 and beyond :

- NAS project: In April we will commence a new project with Nautical Archaeological Society to raise awareness of the marine historic environment and towards the end of 2009 we will launch new training materials for delivery at branch level.
- Access guidance: New access guidance for divers gaining access to dives sites will be published in the next issue of Scottish Diver, and on our website.
- Funding information for clubs: Thanks to Eric Rigg who has been compiling information on available funding for Branches. This information is now available on our website and I would encourage branches seeking additional funds to have a look.
- More volunteers are always welcome to help deliver tasks at regional and national level, so please get in touch shortly.
- Mission: Members were reminded of the ScotSAC mission:
  - To enable the safe enjoyment of our underwater world

- To offer the development of diver skills in a planned and progressive structure
- To make the sport more widely available
- The Chairman expressed thanks to the Staff, BDOs, Secretaries, Instructors, Board and NDC members, Dr Wilmot as well as sportscotland and other stakeholders for their respective contributions to ScotSAC.

### Questions for Chairman

(Q) Dave Simpson (Pentland): Check to Protect, is that a new check, or is it the same as before?

(A) It is not a new additional check but in future people will only require one check whether it be for work, for instance if you are a teacher, and there will be a number that other organisations will use to find out if you have already had a check, thereby saving the need for lots of checks.

(Q) Charlie Ramage (Dumbarton): Access to the MOD site on Loch Fyne has been blocked by a local who does not actually own the land; what can branches do about this?

(A) Local Authorities have an access officer and branches should contact them and report prevention of access with details of where and when etc.

(Q) Tony Carter (Larkhall): I object to the term “stakeholder” and would like to do away with it as the people and organisations we deal with do not hold a stake in ScotSAC.

(A) Organisations like Sportscotland and Children First are our partners: we work together with; the word “stakeholder” is simply the term we use to describe this relationship; it’s just jargon.

### TREASURER’S REPORT

In the absence of the Treasurer, the Chairman presented the Treasurer’s report. The final accounts were not yet available from the accountants, hence estimate figures were reported.

Income:

Membership	£53,197
Scottish Diver	£8,019
Sportscotland (includes £7k from 2007)	£24,000
Training courses	£1,367
Other Income	£892
Bank Interest	£1,018
Total Income	£88,493

Expenditure:

Membership	£25,268
Courses	£6,231
Development	£1,024
Salaries	£16,773
Rent, rates, Insurance	£5,455

Other	£15,272
Total	£70,023

The Cash Flow and Income and Expenditure figures should reassure members that last year we managed the financial affairs properly and finished the year ahead of expectations; even when taking into account the 'one-off' £7000 payment to us from 2007

Our expenditure was slightly below budget, due to the planned relocation not taking place, and funding allocated for other projects being carried forward.

This shows an un-confirmed surplus of £18,470.

The figures in 2009 should continue in the same vein but we will have significant expenditures to deliver our planned activities including changes to our office premises, provision of free courses, development of training materials and more.

#### **Membership subscriptions:**

It is the intention of the Board to eliminate the joining fee within a 3 year period. In 2008, joining fee income amounted to £7.5k. To begin the move, from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008, ordinary membership subscription will increase by £2 per member, with other categories being adjusted by equivalent amounts.

The joining fee for ordinary members will be reduced to £18 (previously £27).

Last year we also removed the rejoining fee for lapsed members of more than 6 months. Up to 6 months we will simply backdate their membership

Overall, we seek to attract new members, and retain existing members by making membership value for money, providing a range of relevant services and benefits.

#### **Appointment of Auditors**

It was proposed that Scott-Moncrieff be appointed as our Accountants for a further 12 months; the third year of a three year period before a further tender exercise.

Proposed Douglas Forman (West Lothian), seconded Chris Lamb (Stirling).

#### **Questions on the Treasurer's Report**

(Q) Ian Smith (Musselburgh) Is membership increasing?

(A) Membership is pretty static with fluctuations throughout the year. This is reasonably good news as all sports clubs and the voluntary sector are suffering from loss of membership.

(Q) Tony Carter (Larkhall): I object to the abolition of the joining fee as it covers the cost of the joining pack.

(A) The Board have taken this decision in order to make membership more attractive and have a range of data available to them on budgets, average

duration of membership and believe this decision is in the best interests of the organisation.

(Q) Tony Carter (Larkhall): I think there will be many members who will object to this, is there any way they can have it overturned?

(A) All members are welcome to contact the Board with their concerns and suggestions and the Board will listen to and address any comments. However, this is a Board decision taken in the best interests of the organisation.

(Q) Tony Carter: What if enough members don't want this?

(A) The Board will be happy to review arrangement and the rates for 2010-11 will be decided in spring 2010. However, we are certain this will help branches attract members and will be welcomed by the vast majority of members.

### **NATIONAL DIVING OFFICER REPORT – Nigel Spike**

The NDO spoke of the Fatal Accident Inquiry (FAI) and resulting determination of Sheriff Small published in November 2008, following which a panel of Board and NDC members were appointed to review recommendations in detail and make any recommendations for changes or additions to our training and diving rules. The panel were assisted in their deliberations by engagement with the British Diving Safety Group. The decisions of the panel would be presented to the Board, after which details regarding changes to training practices will be made public.

- Courses in the preceding year were, on the whole, well received; the Nitrox course continued to have administrative problems, now being addressed under the direction of Joe Campbell. All courses are benefitting from having lead members to “drive” them; reviews in the light of feedback should ensure that courses remain “fresh” and relevant. One valuable initiative came in the new RI course, led by Graeme Forsyth, our National Coach: having a mentoring system that pairs experienced instructors with RI candidates has already paid dividends, with more coming forward for assessment at the appropriate stage of their development.
- Of note in the recent calendar was the innovative Instructor Development weekend, led by Don Lees and Murray MacCallum at the Tea Rooms in Loch Fyne. A thoroughly professional event, it generated a plethora of new BIs, RIs – and no fewer than four new Examiners.
- Master Diver lectures are in disc form, having been “trialled” at several locations and reviewed by selected volunteers; in the light of feedback on coverage, accuracy and appropriateness of delivery the steering members of the project (Don Lees, Iona Murray, Andy Murray) would produce a final version to be copied and distributed.
- A new Snorkel course is to be generated and monitored by Kevin Miller; such a course could be “rolled out” to other organisations – local authorities, for instance.
- A new NDC email loop has been created in order that NDC members can continue to develop projects and review progress between formal meetings.

- Incident monitoring is now in the capable hands of Gordon Young; all members are reminded to use the form (on our website) to enable us to learn from accidents – and contribute to national statistical information-gathering. In this regard, case studies from the MCA for the previous year highlighted issues such as the importance of buoyancy control for avoiding incidents. According to the report, “The greatest single incident type remains Decompression Illness...”; it added that, “deployment of delayed marker buoys at depth is also a significant cause of the loss of buoyancy control, as is the loss of buoyancy control when using a dry suit.”
- Risk assessment is now an accepted part of dive training; a new culture in this regard is being spearheaded by the new generation of Instructors. In order to help Branches with their endeavours in this area the Board has supported the idea of a dive slate to be produced for distribution to Branches.
- The new Training Awards scheme is nearing completion after extensive review by the NDC; the project has been guided by Sam Paske with massive input from Marion Brown and Gordon Young. After a process of consultation and feedback it will be passed to the NDC and Board for ratification, with due regard to the implications for cost, format, risk assessment... – and roll-out timetable.
- The NDO finished by expressing heart-felt thanks to “this happy band...” of (very) willing volunteers, who continue to put in hours and hours of work to further the interests of the organisation. He stressed the need for more people to come forward to share the load. A positive partnership with the Board also is helping to produce positive results. Above all, the members contribute greatly to the success of the NDC’s efforts - despite the odd occasion when paperwork seems to have been neglected by some Branch members...

### **Questions for National Diving Officer**

(Q) Dave Simpson (Pentland): Can a branch instructor help in a branch other than his own?

(A) The short answer is, no.

(Q) Dave Simpson: Why not? Surely it is the same skills that are required?

(A) The idea behind this is the instructor will be more aware of the strengths and weaknesses of trainees in their own branch through regular contact with them. Moving to another branch the BI might ask a trainee to carry out a task beyond their ability. However, we would welcome and encourage any BI who wants to help to come on a Regional Instructor Course which is now, of course, free.

### **PROPOSALS FOR ADOPTION**

#### **Proposal 1 – Change to the latest AGM Date**

To change Byelaw 3.1.1 to read “The Annual General Meeting of the Company shall be held prior to 31<sup>st</sup> October each year, at which the quorum shall be ten voting Members.”

The number of postal votes: FOR: 165 AGAINST: 7

Number of votes from members present: FOR: 21 AGAINST: 1  
The total votes are: FOR 186 and AGAINST 8

The Proposal was therefore adopted with immediate effect.

### **Proposal 2 – Change to Minimum Qualifications of Branch Diving Officers**

To change 7.3.2 to read *“The Branch Diving Officer shall hold at least the Branch Instructor award. Exception to this rule may be made with the approval of the NDC and under the guidance of the Regional Coach. Such persons will be recognised as Acting Branch Diving Officers until such time as they attain Branch Instructor Award.”*

The number of postal votes: FOR: 157 AGAINST: 15  
Number of votes from members present: FOR: 20 AGAINST: 2  
The total votes are: FOR 177 and AGAINST 17

The Proposal was therefore adopted with immediate effect.

### **Proposal 3: Buddy Breathing Ascents**

***This change was communicated to all members in May 2008 following a proposal from the NDC to the Board under section 7.4.3 of the Byelaws and is now subject to final ratification by the Membership.***

To remove the requirement for buddy breathing ascents from both Sport Diver and Master Diver training. Specifically in the current version of the Training Schedule in the ScotSAC Qualification Record Book, the assessments should now read as follows:

- Sport Diver level, Open Water Assessment 9:
  - *“From a depth of 15m, conduct assisted ascents using an alternative air source, once as donor and once as recipient. Candidates should perform a suitable safety stop before proceeding to surface. Care must be taken not to exceed 10m/min on ascent.”*
  
- Master Diver Level, Open Water Assessment 10:
  - *“From a depth of 20m, conduct assisted ascents using an alternative air source, once as donor and once as recipient. Candidates should perform a safety stop(s) before proceeding to surface. Care must be taken not to exceed 10m/min on ascent. Partner must be of at least Sport Diver level.”*
  
- Master Diver Level, Open Water Assessment 11:
  - *“From a depth of 30m, conduct assisted ascents using an alternative air source, once as donor and once as recipient. Candidates should perform suitable safety stop(s) before proceeding to surface. Care must be taken not to exceed 10m/min on ascent. Partner must be of at least Sport Diver level.”*

The elements of assessment 12 of Sport Diver confined water training will remain as present, and open water exercise 6 will also remain as a static buddy breathing exercise.

## DRAFT FOR APPROVAL AT 2010 AGM

In addition, the carrying of an alternative air source or equivalent to be mandatory for all Members from the date of the AGM (21<sup>st</sup> March 2009).

The number of postal votes: FOR: 165 AGAINST: 8

Number of votes from members present: FOR: 16 AGAINST: 3

The total votes are: FOR 181 and AGAINST 11

The Proposal was therefore adopted with immediate effect.

### **ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS 2010**

In accordance with the nomination procedure, the following Members were appointed to the Board.

#### **Board:**

In accordance with the rules for nominations, the following have been elected to the Board unopposed:

- National Diving Officer      Nigel Spike                      2009 - 2010
- Director                              Adrian Thomas                      2009 - 2011
- Director                              Iain Graham                          2009 - 2012
- Director                              Douglas Forman                      2009 - 2012

There were no nominations for the post of Secretary

The following Directors continue to hold posts during their elected term:

- Chairperson                          Andrew Murray                      2008 - 2011
- Treasurer                              Jim Anderson                          2008 - 2011
- Director                                  Archie Gillies                          2007 - 2010
- Director                                  Jack Morrison                          2008 - 2010

#### **National Diving Council:**

The following Members have been elected to the National Diving Council unopposed:

Graeme Forsyth (Johnstone)  
Marion Brown (Forth Valley)  
Gordon Young (West Lothian)  
Sam Paske (Bo'ness)

#### **A.O.C.B.**

(Q) Steve McGlaughlin (West Lothian) - I notice from a recent email the NDC have made the depth limits recommendations rather than rules, how does this affect my travel dive insurance which states I can dive to whatever depth allowed at my level of qualification?

(A) The depths are the recommended depths for your qualification and are the limits to which you have received training. Therefore, for the purpose of your travel insurance, this is the limit of your diving.

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked all those for attending and the meeting ended at 1645hrs.