



Technical Information

TRY-DIVES

T.12

Advice for Branches on running a successful event

Aims and Objectives

A Try-Dive promotion for Branches is the best way to recruit new members. Running an efficient event and promoting the Branch and BSAC in a positive way will make a big difference in the success rate of enrolment of new trainees. These notes will help Branches maximise the potential for staging a really successful event.

Publicity

To maximise response, Branches ought to publicise the event well in advance. Advertising need not cost much and a great deal of publicity can be achieved free. BSAC HQ can supply posters to display and literature to distribute. Here are just a few ideas:

- Posters - Libraries - Colleges - Hospitals - Sports Centres - Shop Windows
- Notices in dive shops (attracting divers from other agencies)
- Fix Branch contact details on a label and fix on members' past issues of DIVE – circulate to waiting areas (Doctors, Dentists, Opticians etc.)
- Send a Press Release (with a photo) to get free editorials in local papers
- Invite a local newspaper reporter to attend as a candidate and conduct training in exchange for publishing a regular report on progress?

Greeters and Mentors

Appoint Greeters/Mentors to look after visitors and direct them where to go (changing rooms - pool etc). *And always have a smile!*

Ideally, the candidates should know when and where they are supposed to be - mentors can accompany the visitor and make them feel at ease.

Dry Session

Make a brief presentation to visitors (suggest 15-20 mins. maximum)

Possible ideas:

- Show the BSAC Branch Promotional Video (freely available from BSAC HQ)
- Talk about the Branch and BSAC and outline the training programme
- Talk about all the benefits of membership
- Show video of Branch activity - training - expeditions etc. (keep it short)
- Slideshow etc (not too long)
- Introduction to Diving Course Form
Check that the form has been completed and signed, - if under 18 parent /guardian to sign

Equipment

- Ensure that there are adequate supplies of masks, fins and snorkels available
(if possible, try to get shoe sizes from candidates in advance)
- Ensure that there is a variety of sizes of aqualung sets
(Use 10 litre cylinders if possible)
- Have all the equipment ready for use in advance with full cylinders
(plus spares available if required)

Time Management

Good management of time is essential to maximise the allotted pool time. Split into two sessions if necessary, sharing equipment and allowing 15-20 minutes underwater time for each group (alternate with snorkelling).

Literature

Branches should ensure that they have informative literature:

- BSAC and Diver grade information (contact BSAC HQ for supplies)
- Branch information - with contact names, roles within the Branch and phone numbers etc.
- Consider display panels with photographs of recent expeditions and Branch activities

Costs and Course Structure

Prospective members want to know **how much? when? where?** and **how long?** Have this information ready to supply them. Perhaps included in an Attendance Pack?

Prospective members will be impressed by a Branch with an organised and structured course timetable.

Debrief

It is most important to invite the visitor down to the bar/clubhouse for a drink and chat after the session. The Branch should have printed information to pass to them detailing the costs and commitment required.

The Instructor/Mentor should chat to the visitor and introduce them to relevant Officers of the branch to talk about BS-AC training within the Branch system.

Perhaps have past copies of members' DIVE magazines to give visitors when they leave.

All visitors should leave with a positive impression of the Branch as an efficient and friendly face of the British Sub-Aqua Club.

Remember - prospective members are vital for a Branch to thrive and progress - treat them well!

Follow-Up Marketing

Visitors do not normally make a commitment straight away. Make a note to call them, maybe a week after attending, to see if they want to pursue the sport and start training with the Branch.

Things to avoid during a Try-Dive Event:

- Lack of clear direction by the organisers
- Visitors kept hanging around
- Changing too early and getting cold
- Unsuitable, or not enough, equipment
- Members not involved getting in the way
- Unprofessional attitude

Wet session

1. Reception

Welcome the visitor. Introduce yourself by name and your qualification to reassure them - be friendly and try to remember their name. Enquire about any previous experience - snorkelling or diving on holiday.

2. Instructor Requirements

The minimum qualification of a Try-Dive Instructor should be Assistant Diving Instructor. ADI status is important as good technique and communication skills learned on the IFC/ITC are essential in providing a good quality introduction to diving. The Instructor/Student ratio of the wet session should ideally be 1:1, in order for the instructor to provide the closest attention. Where ADIs are used, the session MUST be supervised by an NQI.

3. Objective

State the objective that is to give the visitor the opportunity to experience diving underwater using an aqualung in a safe pool environment. No instruction of skills other than basic technique should be provided.

4. Swim check

Don't get the visitor to do this as a formal 'test' before the try-dive, this puts pressure on them. Better to casually ask them to do a length of the pool to 'warm-up'. This checks that they can swim.

5. Equipment

Show mask and fins and explain how to fit correctly.

In the shallow end of the pool, show and explain the operation and use of the BC/aqualung and help to fit. Use weightbelt (if necessary).

6. Safety Considerations

Explain to the visitor of possible pressure on ears and mask squeeze and how to relieve the effects. Point out any other safety considerations about hazards in the pool area if appropriate.

7. Signals

Demonstrate OK - up - down - stop - watch me signals.

ENTERING WATER

Using Aqualung

Explain the breathing technique with demand valve - out of the water at first and progress to just underwater. In shallow end lie face down and demonstrate finning technique and how by using the BC we can adjust buoyancy at any depth. Conduct simple buoyancy tests in the shallow end. Help adjust visitor's initial buoyancy. Progressively increase depth, monitoring the candidate.

Aqualung Dive

Check that the visitor's buoyancy is OK, (adjust with weights if necessary) and take for swim in the pool. Progressively increase depth. Demonstrate and signal them to equalise pressure on ears and mask if necessary. Point out anything of interest, i.e. other divers training or swimmers. Monitor air regularly, use signals and invite visitor to return signals. Maintain eye contact regularly to reassure the visitor. Be mindful not to allow the visitor to get cold – 15-20 minutes pool time is often adequate.

Exit

Return to shallow end, assist with de-kitting and enquire if they have enjoyed the experience. Answer any questions that they may ask.

Debrief

Debrief the visitor using REAP.

Invite the visitor down to the bar/clubhouse for a drink and chat after the session.