

Peter Bennett. He is an excellent teacher and entertaining speaker. The theme of the conference will be

### **THE LONG TERM EFFECTS OF DIVING**

A workshop on

#### **FREE ASCENT TRAINING**

will be part of the program

Anyone wishing to present papers should contact the Convener, Dr Des Gorman, at the RNZN Hyperbaric Unit, Naval Base, Devonport, New Zealand.

Those who wish to attend should notify Allways Travel, with a deposit of \$Aust 600 per person.

For further information contact

Allways Travel  
168 High Street, Ashburton,  
Victoria 3147, Australia.

Telephone	Australia	03 885 63
	International	61-3-885 8863
	Toll Free (Australia only)	008 338 239
Fax	Australia	03-885 1164
	International	61-3-885 1164

### **FIRST ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING OF DIVING AND HYPERBARIC MEDICINE**

will be held in Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia on July 29th and 30th 1993.

The meeting is sponsored by the Hyperbaric Technicians and Nurses Association (HTNA) and the Australian and New Zealand Hyperbaric Medicine Group (ANZHMG). The AGMs of both associations will be held on July 31st.

The main topics will include, but are not limited to, wound healing, decompression illnesses, hyperbaric treatment profiles, recreational nitrox diving, new technical developments and current hyperbaric research.

### **CALL FOR ABSTRACTS**

Those wishing to present papers should forward abstracts of approximately 200 words by February 1st 1993 to

Ms Jodie Perris  
Royal Darwin Hospital Hyperbaric Unit,  
Rocklands Drive,  
Tiwi,  
Northern Territory 0810, Australia.

Further information and registration details will be mailed to all HTNA and ANZHMG members. Non-members can contact Ms Perris at the above address or by telephone (089 22 8563).

### **THE SPARK OF LIFE**

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Life Support Conference

The Hilton International, Melbourne, Australia.  
April 30th and May 1st 1993

Provisional program, abstract and registration forms available from

The Australian Resuscitation Council  
Royal Australasian College of Surgeons  
Spring Street, Melbourne,  
Victoria 3000, Australia.

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

### **SPUMS JOURNAL - FOR DOCTORS OR DIVERS?**

RMB 1359, Yinnar  
Victoria 3869  
18 October 1992

Dear Editor,

I have for the last several editions debated whether to put pen to paper regarding what I considered to be an unfortunate direction of the SPUMS Journal was taking.

I decided against on each occasion feeling that perhaps I was out of touch with where the diving industry was heading. I contemplated withdrawing my associate membership of SPUMS in silent protest. To my great pleasure I

find in the latest edition that Dr Carl Edmonds has verbalized most of my concerns. Well done Dr Edmonds, I couldn't have have put it better myself.

I have been instructing for some 15 or more years and continue to do so. I belong to an instructor agency out of necessity rather than because I want to. I do not accept the direction that the instructor agencies are leading us in the name of commercialism and business. I lament the reduced independence of the individual professional instructor that results from this agency thrust and the continual erosion of the basic scuba course.

I believe that the SPUMS Journal is for doctors and divers, but not agencies, nor is it a vector for unrefereed

propaganda material such as has appeared recently. The journal should dedicate itself to diving medicine, physiology and an on-going analysis of diving accidents. The less rigorous unscientific material should be left for the lay diving press and agency propaganda documents.

A clear uncompromised voice with no vested interest other than the safe conduct of diving for the individual divers sake is to be encouraged. Divers should be encouraged to dive together to enjoy the splendours of the undersea world safely. They should not be considered the property of the agency that trained them nor should the training agencies let business ideals interfere in any way with diver safety.

Peter Mosse

Irish Underwater Council  
The National Maritime Museum  
Haigh Terrace, Dun Laoghaire  
County Dublin  
October 1992

Dear Editor,

I have been an associate member of SPUMS for the past 8 years and think that the Journal is an extremely good publication. Your medical authors provide very useful and up to date diving medical facts and information.

Over the past years I have been surprised that you have allowed PADI to publish so many of its propaganda articles in the Journal, then I thought SPUMS was, in its own way, supporting the ideas expressed in these articles, despite adding editorial comment to some articles.

I was surprised to read Dr Gorman's editorial and Dr Carl Edmonds' letter expressing your dissatisfaction about these training agencies' articles. I agree completely with Dr Edmonds' sentiments regarding these financially orientated organizations. I would have thought that SPUMS expressed a medical opinion based on experience and knowledge and it is up to us, the divers, to accept or reject it. I would be very disappointed if SPUMS altered their point of view to facilitate a commercial organisation.

In Ireland we have annual medicals for all sports divers and you would be surprised at the number of people who are screened out. Well I am sure you know what I am talking about. We have some people who falsify the medical forms, but generally they get caught out. As a result we have a small but healthy population of divers.

I can see why training agencies do not advocate medical check ups. It would probably reduce their intake by 20% at least, so they allow the prospective client to accept all the risk by filling in their own medical form without fully understanding the implications for their safety. Then to add

to the ridiculous, a non-medical person, the instructor, assesses the medical questionnaire and the acceptability of the candidate. I presume they reckon that candidates will be with them for such a short time and with careful watching they will get through the course without any mishap. What happens after is not their problem. The candidate goes away thinking he, or she, is physically fit and has sufficient knowledge to go diving on their own which is debatable. This is my biggest objection to these agencies, their lack of proper "after care".

SPUMS should hold its ground and state the medical facts, regardless of what other agencies think. It is up to us (the diving community) to make up our own minds. You state that PADI puts through its courses more people than all the rest of the training agencies combined, this may be so. However, does it make them right in everything they say or do. It simply means that this is the best way to present information so that they can make more money. I find it very interesting that PADI tries so hard to get recognition from SPUMS for almost everything they do. I think that articles presented from any training agency should not be written in a propaganda fashion

As you may be aware, PADI are trying to get back into CMAS. They say they do not need the support of CMAS or SPUMS or such organisations, then why do they bother to try to get recognition from them!

I could go on and on. But I will finish now and just say I have no objection to the function of training agencies, i.e. to train divers. I do object though, to their propaganda and the fact that they try to infiltrate every prestigious diving organisation in order to use them to their advantage.

Gerry Stokes  
Vice-President  
Irish Underwater Council

Hyperbaric Technicians and Nurses Association  
Hyperbaric Medicine Unit, Royal Adelaide Hospital  
North Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia 5000

September 1992

Dear Editor,

The Hyperbaric Technicians and Nurses Association (HTNA) held its first AGM in Adelaide on the 28th and 29th August, 1992. As well as being attended by nurses and technicians from all the hospital based hyperbaric units in the country, there were also personnel from private hyperbaric facilities, the Royal Australian Navy, the SA Police force and the commercial diving sector.