

THE 2ND BRITISH SUMP RESCUE SYMPOSIUM

MAY 1988

This took place in the Castleton area of Derbyshire, during the weekend after the AGM. It was fairly well attended despite the lack of an April newsletter, which would have informed members of the details of the event. The programme for the weekend was closely geared to the requests of the CDG members and others, following feedback after the first gathering of this nature in June 1986.

On the Saturday morning a series of lectures were delivered, a summary of each being produced below. In the afternoon those attending worked their way around a circus of workshops on splints, warm air revival equipment, and the bandmask. The afternoon finished with a lecture by Bob Drake on an accident which occurred during a practise rescue at Wookey Hole (see details in NL 87). A convivial evening in the Peak Hotel followed, with very good slide shows by: Clive Westlake (recent extensions in Peak Cavern), Paul Deakin (general caving photographs) and Rob Palmer (heliox rebreathers).

On the Sunday two practical sessions were available to those attending, a series of practice sessions in a local cave, and an open water meet to test or practice with, various equipment. Unfortunately no-one opted for the former which was rather a shame in view of the excellent organisation which went into it, under the leadership of Dave Edwards. Maybe the excellent weather had something to do with this!

Those who went to the open water meet at Chatsworth Reservoir were much impressed by the potential of the 'Ducset' talking rope, demonstrated by Simon Brooks. If the best features of this are incorporated into Bob Mackins Molefone, we may have a very useful three-way communications system (i.e. diver-victim-base) in the not too distant future. The value of being able to speak with the rescuer was shown when a fault in the bandmask caused water leakage, and the person being towed was able to communicate this instantly. This particular fault showed the

inadequacies of DCRO's existing servicing arrangements, a problem which has been rectified. The new snap-fit hoses (allowing casualty bottle air to be saved until the dive actually starts, and underwater bottle changing) worked perfectly.

The weekend provided a useful forum for the interchange of ideas between cave divers, cave rescue team controllers and doctors. I am convinced that there is great value in this sort of occasional meeting, yet it provides no substitute for section members working on a local level towards better sump rescue facilities with their own cave rescue organisation. We should do this again, maybe in 1990. It would be nice if someone took on the organisation - not necessarily in Derbyshire, although this is reasonably central. The main ingredient, once again, is feedback. Please do criticise this year's gathering and make suggestions as to what form it should take next time. I'd be happy to act as contact for this information (write to: John Cordingly, Woods Moor, Oldfield Avenue, Darwen, Lancs., BB31QY, Tel: 0254 72368). Also, as the British Cave Rescue Council have asked me to act as cave diving advisor, I'd be very pleased to pass on any comments which CDG members wish to have raised at BCRC meetings. =

Finally, Dani and I would like to record our gratitude to the many people who worked in many ways to make the Sump Rescue Symposium possible. They are: Bill Whitehouse, Bob Drake, Dr Steve Reay, Martin Holroyd, Graham Proudlove, Dr Hugh Kidd, Fred Winstanley, Dr John Frankland, John Cross, Rob Palmer, Bob Mackin, Dave Gallivan, Ian Watson, Dave Edwards, John Middlemist, Clive Westlake, Paul Deakin, Barry Suddell, Rick Stanton, Ceily Bulloch, Angie Timms, Mike Jeanmaire, Paul Holwell, Mark Wright and Simon Brooks. We're also grateful to the BCRC for offering financial support, even though in the end the weekend broke even. Last, but by no means least, - a big thank you goes to those CDG members who gave up a weekend to support the gathering.

John Cordingly