

21st April 2003

This dive report really starts the preceding weekend, when Pete collected Uncle John from its annual servicing at Samspeed. Martin offered us an excellent second hand engine to replace our elderly Yamaha, and after some hectic phoning round, we accepted. As a result, 3 of us drove back to Samspeed on Good Friday, and collected the engine and what we hoped would be a full set of installation bits.

Back at Pete's place, a working party gathered, and the engines were swapped over by the end of the day with relatively few oaths and sweaty brows. Rewiring the console actually took longer than fitting the engine!

We had planned to dive 20th and 21st, but the weather interrupted again.....which also gave Pete the chance to finish rewiring the console. However, Monday looked reasonable, so 10 of us trekked off to QAB. As there was only one towbar between the lot of us, the only boat to go down was Uncle John. Jim was doing a 'practice marshal', so he had the job of working out how to shuttle all of us to and from the dive site, with cars and cylinders in the right places. We opted to use Bovisand as the staging post, which worked fine.

The sea turned out to be fairly lumpy, and with the untried engine, we opted to dive off the Mewstone. We were rewarded with excellent viz - 10 to 15m - and some very interesting diving. Dave and Nick came across a very large anglerfish, several pairs found cuttlefish, there were lots of dogfish and the usual crop of odds and ends from the sea bed. Sea was fairly cold still - about 10 degrees.

The new engine worked extremely well, though there are one or 2 minor things to resolve. Pete managed to get 28 knots (unloaded!), and the boat planes easily with a full complement of divers. The engine is about 20kg heavier than the old Yamaha, which does mean that with several kitted divers at the back of the boat, you do tend to ship water over the transom. This is not ideal for the battery! The GPS antenna also suffered in one heavy landing, though having it bodge-taped to the console seemed to make the GPS lock on easier!!!

A good day.