

# Letters to the Editor

## Online literature database for diving and hyperbaric medicine

Many colleagues already know about the 'Rubicon Foundation' database project (<<http://archive.rubicon-foundation.org>>), a great project that provides easy access to a vast amount of relevant diving medicine literature from many sources, including articles from the *SPUMS Journal* up to 2003. This letter is to inform SPUMS members about a long-standing project that is a nice addition to this.

Because of legal restrictions, it is not easy to obtain complete articles for free without disregarding copyright. The EUBS has solved this problem for posters and presentations presented at the EUBS annual scientific meetings by allowing the German Society for Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine (GTÜM) to incorporate presentations into their literature database *GTUEMLIT* and to provide access through the members-only area of the EUBS homepage.

*GTUEMLIT* also provides information about the literature in diving medicine, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, and submarine medicine which can be found in large databases like MEDLINE, EMBASE and others. GTÜM employs a documentation specialist to keep the database up to date. In addition to these well-known sources, we have also included the so-called 'grey literature' – that not listed in the databases mentioned above. For German-speaking colleagues, we have included all articles published in the GTÜM periodical *Caisson*. In total, over 34,000 publications are now included. Also included is a search engine and all articles can be exported as text file (rtf) or xml file. In many cases these export formats allow import of publication data into one's own literature database due to 'medline compatibility'.

Until now, *GTUEMLIT* was only accessible for members of GTÜM and EUBS. Because of this restriction, it is legally possible to provide access to all articles in full length where copyright is with EUBS or GTÜM. Every article published in *Caisson* or EUBS ASM proceedings can be downloaded as a PDF file in the original format including all tables, graphs, and pictures.

We believe there is enough room in the WorldWideWeb for two diving medicine database projects with different focuses and advantages – the Rubicon Foundation Archive and *GTUEMLIT*. Our idea is to open *GTUEMLIT* to SPUMS members. SPUMS Executive Committee members recently were provided with access to our database to get a personal impression of how it works.

If SPUMS is interested, we would need to agree that:

- SPUMS will provide us with digital data of articles published in *SPUMS Journal / Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine* to integrate these data into *GTUEMLIT* and

- GTÜM in return provides *GTUEMLIT* access to all SPUMS members.

For copyright reasons, access to the *GTUEMLIT* database will be restricted to members of EUBS, GTÜM and SPUMS only. There will be no additional costs for SPUMS members, this will be covered by GTÜM. The GTÜM Executive Committee hopes you like our project and that SPUMS will join us in the near future!

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### Reply:

This matter was considered at the SPUMS Executive Committee meeting in May 2009, and received unanimous support. Since then, Professor Welslau has been provided with volumes 1–30 of the *SPUMS Journal* (to year 2000) and this will be built on further over coming months. This service for SPUMS members will become available hopefully early in 2010 via a secure link in the members-only section of the new Society website once this is launched. On behalf of SPUMS members, I would like to express our gratitude to the GTÜM for this generous offer.

*Michael Davis*  
*Editor, Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine*

### Key words

Data, underwater medicine, hyperbaric research, writing – medical, medical society, letters (to the Editor)

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## Deaths from breath-hold diving

Whilst admiring the scientific approach and methodology revealed in Schagatay's paper on competitive apnoea diving,<sup>1</sup> I am of sufficient age to remember the earlier days of recreational breath-hold and scuba diving when the diving magazines reported each fresh record depth achieved [*Editor's note: They still do!*]. Then sanity prevailed and there was an agreement that such efforts could be fatal and should not be publicised, as such only encouraged others to try to exceed the achieved depths.

In this paper, the first sentence of the abstract reads "Ever since the first deep diving competitions were organised, there has been debate about when the ultimate limits of the human apnoeic performance will be reached". As the endpoint, in the absence of extremely efficient back-up services, is death, there is argument in favour of the prohibition of such competitions and for research to be