



The 8th Sodwana Shootout 2007

This Document consists of two sections.

- **Section 1: General Information and Stills Photography**
- **Section 2: Shootout Video and Video Guidelines**

Note: All entrants should read the full document to see the general rules applicable to both Stills and Video.

SECTION 1

1. Introduction

GUPS and certain Sodwana Bay operators, with the generous support of committed sponsors, are holding the eighth Underwater Photographic Shootout competition.

The competition seeks, through a visual medium to:

- Stimulate underwater photography and videography in the wider diving community and attract new entrants to both underwater photography and videography
- Improve the general standard of underwater photography and videography in South Africa
- Improve the understanding, type and standard of service offered by all operators to underwater photography and videographers
- To promote an understanding and appreciation of the diversity and beauty of underwater world and the need to preserve it.

The competition, which is the largest, oldest and most prestigious underwater competition of its kind in Southern Africa, invites entries from people of all nationalities and ages and is open to amateur and professional photographers and videographers.

The images and videos entered in the competition may be featured in various media and/or exhibitions to increase awareness of the potential for underwater photography and videography, the beauty of the underwater world and the promotion of diver/photography/safety.

2. Eligibility

The competition is open to all photographers and/or videographers.

The organising committee comprises of two distinct parts:

- GUPS members who are involved in raising sponsorships and in the general organisation of the competition, and
- GUPS members who will be managing the judging of the competition

Members of the committee who are involved in raising sponsorships and in the general organisation of the competition are eligible to enter the competition. Members of the committee who are involved in the managing of the judges of the competition are not eligible to enter.

3. Format of Contest

The shootout committee has decided to introduce a new shootout format as from 2007 in order to bring the contest in line with international trends. The main differences are:

There will no longer be a distinction drawn between digital and slide; and
Different experience levels fall away to a large extent.

The photographers on slide will be provided with two rolls of slide film and are welcome to bring along extra film of their own. This film must be marked at the shootout registration on 9 May 2007. A limit of 4 rolls can be submitted to the competition for processing. Slides will be scanned and if the entrant so wishes can be manipulated in the same way as digital according to the rules stated below. If the image was originally processed in E6 then this must be indicated on the entry form. Because this is the first year we are combining the two (DSLR and SLR) there may be queries from the judges and indicating on the entry that this was an E6 process that was subsequently scanned, will simplify the procedure.

The shootout will now comprise of ten categories with the different experience levels falling away. For the entry fee paid before the shootout begins, any contestant is eligible to enter up to only two images into any of the categories stated below. Additional images to any category can be submitted at a cost of R50 per image. An additional cost of R100 will be charged to contestants who would like to enter both still and video.

4. Stills Competition Categories

4.1 Definitions

- **Traditional:-**

The "Traditional" category allows for adjustment to brightness, contrast, colour and sharpness only. Cropping, cloning and other manipulation is not allowed. These restrictions on manipulation allow those people who are not so experienced at Photoshop, **or similar**, to compete on more-or-less even ground as those with more experience. It also highlights composition and lighting skills by not allowing cropping and cloning. On submission of entries the original RAW or JPG files will be audited. Images from any camera may enter this category as well as any skill level.

- **Unrestricted:-**

In "Unrestricted" more freedom is allowed to manipulate i.e. you can use the healing brush tool. But, you should still exercise care in the decisions that you make. Images from any camera may enter this category as well as any skill level. Nothing may be added to your image.

4.2 Open Categories

These open categories below are accessible to all contestants and to any type of camera.

- **Open Macro Traditional** – Any underwater image of an 18 x13 cm or smaller picture area

- **Open Macro Unrestricted** – Any underwater image of an 18 x13 cm or smaller picture area. This category has minimal rules regarding manipulation.
- **Open Wide Angle Traditional** – Underwater images larger than an 18 x 13 cm picture area
- **Open Wide Angle Unrestricted** – Underwater images larger than an 18 x 13 cm picture area. This category has minimal rules regarding manipulation.

4.3 Compact Digital Categories

These four categories below have been included as the committee is aware that there are many entry level and intermediate photographers that have compact cameras only and so they are specifically aimed at contestants using a compact digital camera.

Only non SLR or DSLR cameras only are allowed to enter these categories. Although many great underwater images taken by compact digital cameras exist, it is often difficult for them to compete with SLR or DSLR cameras when it comes to image quality. The only image manipulation allowed in this “Traditional” category is the adjustment of brightness, contrast, colour, and sharpness. Cropping, cloning, and other digital manipulation is not allowed. These restrictions on manipulation allow those people who are not so experienced at Photoshop to compete on more–or-less even ground as those with more experience. It also highlights composition and lighting skills by not allowing cropping and cloning. On submission of entries we reserve the right to audit your original RAW or JPG files.

- **Compact Digital Camera non- macro ambient light** - No use of internal or external lights/flashes/torches allowed
- **Compact Digital Camera Wide angle ambient light** – No use of internal or external lights/flashes/torches allowed
- **Compact Digital Camera Macro with lights** - use of internal or external lights/flashes/torches allowed
- **Compact Digital Camera Wide Angle with lights** - use of internal or external lights/flashes/torches allowed

4.4 Special Categories

- **Creative digital** – This category is only for digital entries, however slides may be scanned and then entered as digital. These entries must clearly demonstrate a high degree of digital manipulation and creativity. This category is for all entrants who want to submit heavily manipulated digital images as well as creative and artistic interpretations. The image submitted must be recognisable as having been taken at Sodwana during the competition. The original source material must be from this competition.
- **The Sharklife Conservation Category** - Subject matter that addresses a marine environmental concern will receive added points. Entries in this category need not be as "pretty" as they are thought provoking. Entrants encouraged to express their message .This category is thus open to both all types of cameras and all skills levels. The judges will be looking for a good sound photo that expresses an opinion or concern rather than for a beautiful image. No reduction in points will be given if an image is thought provoking and conveys a conservation message but is not as crisp or colorful as one taken with a SLR-digital or otherwise.

4.5 Behavior of Entrants

Marine life should never be stressed or endangered for the sake of a photo. Entries will first be screened by a conservation judge. Entries exhibiting any of the following behaviors will be disqualified:

- Divers visibly damaging, touching or changing their environment or the animals in it, in order to “get the shot”, this includes feeding of animals.
- Animals with any signs of stress.

Complaints from other divers about a diver exhibiting any of the above will be seriously considered and investigated and the environmental judges’ decision on this is final.

4.6 Summary of photographic categories

Photographic Categories				
Open	Macro Traditional	Macro Unrestricted	Wide Angle Traditional	Wide Angle Unrestricted
Compact Digital with ambient light	Macro	Wide Angle		
Compact Digital with Strobe/lights/flash	Macro	Wide Angle		
Creative Digital				
Conservation Category				

5. Registration Evening (See also 13. SHOOTOUT VIDEO section)

Registration will be conducted at the competition marquee which will be situated near Leatherback’s restaurant at the Sodwana Bay lodge. Registration packs can be collected from 4 pm of Wednesday 9 May. A briefing will be held at the competition marquee at 6pm on Wednesday 9 May. It is strongly recommended the entrants attend this briefing as misinterpreting the new format will lead to disqualification.

- **Slide Entrants**

Entrants will receive 2 rolls of film, marked with the secret entry number. You may bring along two more rolls of film to registration night to be marked with you secret number,

- **Digital Entrants**

Entrants will be informed of the date to which the camera’s clock must be set. Images entered in the competition that do not conform to this date will not be eligible for a prize.

6. Handing in Entries on Saturday 12 May 2007

6.1 Digital Image Format and Filenames for submission

Entries must be saved in **jpeg format** and should be sized to **1500 pixels or more in the longest dimension**. Images should be in the sRGB colour space. Both the original image at the size it was taken and the enhanced image (the actual entry) must be submitted.

Naming your Images

Name your original files according to the following template, or see below for your customized file name list.

ORG.CategoryAbbreviation-SecretNumber-Entry#.xxx

Name your entry files according to the following template, or see below for your customized file name list.

CategoryAbbreviation-SecretNumber-Entry#.jpg

Categories are abbreviated as follows: Open Macro Traditional (**MT**), Open Macro Unrestricted (**MU**), Open Wide Angle Traditional (**WT**), Open Wide Angle Unrestricted (**WU**), Compact Digital Camera (**CC**), and Creative (**CD**).

Examples of Macro Traditional would be for two entries

MT_12345_1.jpg
MT_12345_2.jpg

ORG.MT_12345_1.jpg
ORG.MT_12345_2.jpg

Examples of Wide Angle unrestricted would be for two entries

WU_12345_1.jpg
WU_12345_2.jpg

ORG.WU_12345_1.jpg
ORG.WU_12345_2.jpg

If you do scan a slide you need to write the words scanned slide on your entry form. Competitors should copy these files to a CD or flash disc/USB drive for submission. It is the responsibility of the competitor to ensure that the images are retrievable from their media. More than one person can put their images on a single CD, as long as the files are appropriately named. Once entries have been handed to the administrators, competitors must sign the register as evidence that they have checked that the images submitted are correctly named and submitted in accordance with the rules.

7. Prizes Allocation

Prizes will be allocated as follows

Open Photographic Category			
Overall Shootout Winner			
Macro traditional	Macro Unrestricted	WA Traditional	WA unrestricted
1 st	1 st	1 st	1 st
2 nd	2 nd	2 nd	2 nd
Compact Digital Category			
Macro Ambient	Wide Ambient	Macro Strobe	Wide Strobe
1 st	1 st	1 st	1 st
2 nd	2 nd	2 nd	2 nd
3 rd	3 rd	3 rd	3 rd
Creative Digital Category			
1 st	2 nd	3 rd	
Conservation Category			
1st			

8. Judging

Photographic judging

The judging will be organized on a salon style basis and applies to all digital, creative digital and video entries.

A formal judging session with individual scoring by each judge per image or video will then follow. This will be:

- 1 point for a poor image
- 2 points for an average image
- 3 points for a good image
- 4 points an excellent image
- 5 points for an exceptional/brilliant/amazing image

These scores (per judge) will be added by the Judge Convenor, to arrive at a total image/video score.

The scoring allocation will be unbiased. No judge will be aware who the author of the image/video is or what score a fellow judge has allocated to the image/video.

Discrepancies in scoring between judges will be called if there is a 4 point difference in point allocation (between judges) and then subjected to re-judging. If the discrepancy repeats, it will be accepted as such.

The number of judges will be uneven (3 usually) – so disputes can be settled by voting.

The judge convenor will ensure the above protocols are followed and the rules are obeyed by the judges. They may not participate or be influential in the judging process itself.

Judges are allowed to dive during the competition.

Due to the complexity of the competition and the number of boats, it is not possible to guarantee that judges and competitors will not end up on the same boat or reef.

The reason that the judges are not prevented from diving is that they are not remunerated for their efforts and one of the few perks they receive in return is free dives during the competition. Competitors may not address questions on photography or the competition directly to the judges. These may only be addressed to the convenor of the judges. Answers to questions will be given to all the entrants who attend the registration on Wednesday.

9. Objections

The Objections committee will comprise of the judges and the judge convenor. Should and competitor wish to lodge an objection the following process is to be invoked:

- A cash deposit of R500 is to be paid to the judge convenor by the person raising the objection
- Along with a written objection which is to be handed to the objections committee
- The objections committee will deliberate on and decide whether or not the objection is valid and should be upheld
- The objections committee will then inform the relevant parties and effect the decision of the committee
- The full deposit will be repaid to the person who submitted any upheld objection; and
- Deposits will be forfeited in favour of the competition if the objection is not upheld

Objections can be handed in until 8:00 on Sunday the 13 May 2007. Objections may only relate to the misuse/abuse or disregarding of these rules and entry guidelines. The decision of the objections committee will be final and no further deliberation will be entered into.

10. Operators / Spotters

All operators will be encouraged to provide additional services and or individualised service for photography as part of contributing to photography as a whole. Photographers may hire or use their own boats and crew.

11. Copyright

In submitting an entry the owner grants the Sodwana Shootout Competition the right to use such photographs and video for a period of two years for promotion of the competition, underwater photography or diver safety in printed, slide show, video and webpage formats and non-profit educational purposes. Finalists and winning entries may be published on DVD or CD by SeaCam Films. All copyrights will be retained by the entrant and recognition will be given to the photographer / videographers. Model releases will be the responsibility of the person retaining copyright. GUPS and GUPS members officiating at the competition cannot be held responsible for loss or damage of an entry before or after the competition.

12. General Rules

We are adopting the Conservation Rules established by EPIC®. Marine life should never be stressed or endangered for the sake of a photo or video. Conservation rules will apply to all entries, and decisions will be final. Entries suspected of exhibiting the following behaviour will be disqualified:

- Divers visibly damaging the environment (e.g. gear dragging or kicking up sand).
- Animals with signs of stress (e.g. puffed puffers, inking octopus).
- Animals moved to an unnatural environment or risky location.

- Animals being fed (especially with artificial food from divers).
- Marine life being touched.
- Divers exhibiting poor buoyancy control.

Only paid up competitors who have registered, are allowed to enter the competition.

All photographs, images and video footage are to be taken within a 15 km radius of Jesser point lighthouse (“the Sodwana dive area”)

All photographs and images are to be taken underwater in the Sodwana dive area, with the exception that over/under images are allowed.

All photographs and videography must be carried out on either Thursday 10 May or Friday 11 May or both. The exception is that videographers may video on Wednesday 9 May.

No photography of any kind may be taken for the competition outside of the above mentioned dates.

Pool, river and lagoon images will not be accepted, this does not apply to video footage provided such footage fall within the stipulated 20% mentioned above.

The same image may not be entered into more than one category. However two different images may be submitted in the same category.

Photography, videography, editing and image manipulation for creative digital entries must have been performed by the entrant.

In the event that an award winning entry is later found to have violated any rule, the entrant will be disqualified, and officials of this competition reserve the right to recall prizes or request reimbursement of fair market value if non-returnable

The judge’s decision is final

12.1 Additional Rules for Images Entries

- Professional photographers may not submit entries into the Compact Digital Camera Category. The definition of “professional photographer” shall be determined subjectively on a case-by-case basis by the judges but is in essence anyone who receives 40% of his/her income from the business of underwater photography.
- With exception of the Compact Digital Camera Category, entries may have been taken from any camera, film (as scanned slides) or digital. Entries in the Compact Digital Camera category must have been taken with a non-DSLR digital camera with or without external light sources.
- Should there not be enough entries in a specific category the shootout committee has the right to merge similar categories

SECTION 2

13. Video Section

CATEGORIES:

Both SD (Standard Definition 4:3 aspect) and HD (High Definition 16:9 aspect) entries will be accepted. However, judging will be made on the production quality of the entry over and above the quality difference between SD and HD during this transition period. There will be separate categories in future competitions.

Entry Level (for first time entrants)

1. Basic underwater shooting cut to music.

Duration: 1,5 to 2 minutes

Open – three sections:

1. Underwater montage cut to music.
2. Music or fun video (similar to the entries of 2006).
3. 'Professional look' video or mini documentary.

Duration: 2 minutes

Duration: 2 minutes

Duration: 2 to 3 minutes

13.1 Registration

As from 18:00 on Tuesday, 8 May 2007 at the Shootout Marquee.

13.2 Video Tapes & Entry Submission

Entrants must provide their own video tapes as from this year (see Guidelines)

Entries must be submitted between 17:30 and 18:30 on Friday, 11 May 2007.

Entries must be submitted on MiniDV cassette video tape.

SD 4:3 or HD 16:9 (HDV) format will be accepted.

13.3 Prizes will be allocated accordingly:

Entry Level

- basic value prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd places

Open

- u/w montage – lower value prizes 1st & 2nd
- music video – medium value prizes 1st & 2nd
- "pro look" mini documentary – top value prizes 1st & 2nd
- Commendations will be made where applicable.

13.4 Judging

All entries will be judged according to all round production value. Judging will be made on the entrant's application to all skills involved in video production. This includes the technical and creative areas of shooting, editing, selection and use of music and sound, scripting and writing of commentary. In the case of a 'serious' music video edit, creative license in all areas will be allowed and assessed.

13.5 General Conditions

- 20% of video footage may be taken above the water as long as it is relevant to the underwater experience and the theme.
- Photography, videography, editing and image manipulation must have been performed by the entrant at the Shootout Venue.

13.6 Video Guidelines

The overall idea is to encourage entrants to understand the principles of video production and to include these elements in their entries. It is up to the individual entrant to determine what makes a suitable product capable of winning an award.

13.7 Video Tapes

As from 2007, entrants will be required to provide their own video tapes for use in the competition. In the past, and in line with 35mm entrants receiving free film, video tapes were supplied. With the rapid move to digital photography, stills entrants are required to provide their own memory cards, and therefore the same will now apply to video tape. For the past two years the Shootout has purchased the tapes for entrants. This is no longer possible. However, a supply of Maxell Professional ME DV/HDV tapes will be available and entrants may purchase a maximum of two each at registration. Price will be R35.00 per tape.

Entry Level: Pay attention to

- White Balance settings
- Focus – try to avoid using auto focus by selecting manual focus and shooting everything on a wide angle shot with the focus set at about 1-1,5m
- Composition or framing of your shots
- Smooth camera operation
- Clean editing and a conclusive ending to your edit

Open: As with Entry Level as well as

- Choose a theme and name it in the opening title
- Take the trouble to ensure a high level of attention to focus, white balance, framing, operation, etc. Entries will be marked up or down according to the standard of these elements
- The same will apply to editing. Be sure to familiarize yourself with your editing program in both visual and sound elements and make use of it in a constructive way. A skilled “pro” look to the editing will attract higher attention from the judges

Please direct any questions by email on shark@seacamfilms.com

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO JUDGES PROFILES

Photography Judges



Fiona Ayerst Judge

Fiona is a professional underwater photographer based in Johannesburg. Fiona turned pro a year ago but has been taking pics underwater for 6 years. Fiona owns a business specifically aimed at underwater photography -Liquipix (www.liquipix.co.za) and she teaches underwater photography. Fiona won the advanced section of the Sodwana shootout in 2002 and 2005. Fiona won the prestigious FUJI wildlife photographer of the year title with an underwater image in 2003. Fiona is a practising Attorney, a committee member of GUPS and a director of Sharklife.



Anthony Grote
Judge

Anthony is a semi-professional photographer based in Durban. He has been taking photographs for about 16 years, but only about 8 years underwater. He owns and runs a number of businesses in Durban, and in his spare time freelances for a number of magazines including Submerge, Getaway, SA Paddler as well as being published in a number of magazines overseas. Anthony worked as a professional underwater photographer/videographer in the Cayman Islands for 2 years. Upon returning to South Africa in 2004, he entered the Shootout for the first time and came first in the Intermediate digital category. Success was again achieved in 2005 with first place in the Creative Digital category and third place in the Advanced Digital category. He was once again successful in 2006 with first place in the Advanced Digital, Advanced Video as well as winning the Overall Best Picture prize.



Peter Pinnock
Judge

Peter Pinnock started his diving career 23 years ago. His interest in photography and love for the ocean soon prompted him to buy his first underwater camera and his career in underwater photography was launched. What started as a hobby soon went out of control. Over the years Peter has accumulated an impressive number of awards and his pictures of the underwater world have appeared in numerous magazines and glossy coffee table books. He continues to travel to distant locations to capture the ocean realm on film. Peter lives in Durban, South Africa, where he dreams of exotic locations, clear water and has easy access to the best diving in Southern Africa.




Anne d'Oliveira
Judge Convener

I held a camera in my hand for the first time when I was about eight years old. My grandmother had a box-brownie which she gave me as I had shown an interest in taking photographs. Well I photographed anything and everything from family to friends to the family pets and when on holiday took lots and lots of photographs. For my 17th birthday my dad bought me my first 35mm camera. It was a DIAX. Not many people have ever heard of this make and I suspect that its source has some dark and devious background for I found out years later it was purchased on the black market. But it did take very nice photographs.

There was no autofocus and no light meter like the modern cameras and at that stage I did not even know what the F-stops on the camera were. By "playing" around with the F-stops I found I was getting different results to my photographs and it took some while to work out

	<p>the process. I had no formal photographic training and as there were no avid photographers in our family or circle of friends I had no help on the subject. When I started earning my own salary one of the first things I did was to go out and buy a photography book for beginners and so my keen interest in photography began. Up to then the family thought that I took great pictures (but maybe they were just all being very polite and encouraging).</p> <p>Later I bought my first SLR, a Minolta with Sigma lenses - 28mm to 110mm and 70mm to 300mm. By now my photography had started to improve dramatically and I found that I was getting much joy out of photography as a hobby. I traded the Minolta for Canon equipment with Canon lenses. First the EOS 1N and then the EOS1V. Then I joined the Camera Club of Johannesburg and realised the difference between taking really good snap shots or record shots to engaging in the art of photography, as there is a great distinction between the two. It put me onto a totally different plane. I have just recently bought the Canon 30D and moved into the next stage of technology. Since joining the camera club I have progressed from 2 to 5 Star and have also judged at a number of photographic clubs in the Gauteng area. I am currently the President, Chairperson Slide/Digital Section and Secretary of CCJ and presently the Regional Director of PSSA (Photographic Society of Southern Africa) for the Central Gauteng Region.</p> <p>I am not unfamiliar with the underwater world as I did scuba diving for about 10 years, although that was quite a way back. Nowadays I snorkel whenever I am in one of the more exotic locations. In the past five years I have been dabbling in another "under" world hobby - searching for and exploring wild caves. Both underwater and underground are very unique realms</p>
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Video Judges

	<p>Alethea Lindsay Judge</p> <p>Alethea Lindsay was born a year after TV in SA officially went on air. But it was only after a botched attempt at an acting career in London that she entered the TV industry here. She was hungry. Working her way up from researcher, to editor and then finally director with various companies, Alethea started her own Production Company, Goldfish Films, last year. Her specialization is the documentary genre and she's made a number of these for SABC 2 & 3. She's also currently producing a children's wildlife series for SABC 3, and is a 50/50 producer/presenter.</p>
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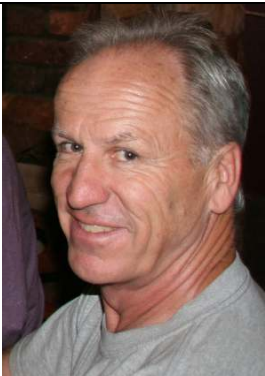
**Pierre Minnie
Judge**

Pierre Minnie was born at a very early age. He has been working in the Film and TV industry since the early 80s as mainly as a cameraman, specializing in the documentary and news feature fields. Pierre dabbled in a small amount of underwater camerawork in the mid 80s working with Gordon Hiles. Currently, Pierre divides his professional time between shooting and lecturing in TV and video training.



**Mike Wood
Judge**

Mike has been involved in the TV industry for almost 5 years, working as a video journalist and cameraman. He has filmed throughout Europe and Africa, and has produced a variety of programmes on both land and underwater. As an experienced diver and freediver, Mike's camera skills extend to a strong specialisation in underwater camerawork, which includes instruction through an internationally accredited training program.



**Gordon Hiles
Video Organizer & Convener**

Gordon Hiles has worked in the TV and Film industry for 34 years. Working mainly as a cameraman, Gordon has also been producing documentary films for the past few years. In 1984 he began shooting underwater and has maintained this aspect of his career up till today.