



- *SPATEX - 2022 Success*
- *Back-to-Basics Seminar Report*
- *ISPE Filtration Workshop Report*



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## NOTICE TO ALL READERS

Articles and advice in the ISPE Magazine are for guidance only. Further professional advice should always be sought before acting upon, or refraining from acting upon, a course of action. Health & Safety is of paramount importance and the correct PPE (personal protective equipment) should always be utilised before undertaking any job.

**If in doubt, ASK!**

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## Front Cover Picture Story

*The front cover image is of a recent project completed by Guncast Swimming Pools.*

One of the latest projects from luxury swimming pool specialists, Guncast, is this exceptional contemporary pool completed in 2020.

Measuring 14 by 4.5 metres, sloping depth from 1.3m to 1.5m (water depth) with 600mm x 300mm green porcelain tiles and a deck level overflow system, the pool is a prime example of the high specification, design-led pools that Guncast is known for across the industry.

The deck level design was achieved using slots in the surround stone in place of the traditional grating. This keeps the surround tiling as clean as possible and is a key element of the contemporary design.



The tile selection minimises grout joints and gives the pool a natural finish, helping the pool fit in with the surrounding mature landscaping and adjacent country manor.

Environmental considerations were important to the clients too.

The pool is heated using an air source heat pump as opposed to a fossil fuel boiler, whilst the automatic cover is fitted with solar properties, simultaneously heating the pool and preventing heat loss.

The installation process was very smooth. Guncast worked with the client's builder, who had a clear understanding of the client's vision, and supported Guncast to deliver this efficiently. Paul Kimberly of Rutrecht & Kimberley Landscape & Garden Design project managed the installation and designed the surrounding landscape, and were brilliant to work with.

The project took 6 months from first meeting to full delivery, with only slight delays caused by the lead time of the surround stone.

At the end of the project, Guncast had a very happy client, who commented, "We are so pleased with how everything turned out. Paul Kimberley has done a fantastic job with his garden design and Guncast have worked well with the team to create a fantastic area!"

Guncast delivers bespoke pools for one-off properties, high-end residential developments, spas and leisure centres.

Due to tremendous levels of new business, Guncast is actively seeking new employees to join their award-winning team, with a range of vacancies for junior and senior designers and junior project management roles.

**Find out more at: [guncast.com](http://guncast.com)**

## ISPE President, Philip Barlow, FISPE, Receives ISPE Chain of Office

Philip Barlow, FISPE, was inaugurated as the new ISPE President via an ISPE Web-Ex meeting, just prior to the Institute's 41<sup>st</sup> AGM, in the height of the pandemic and national lockdown, back in October 2020.

The plan was to hand the Institute chain of office to Philip at the next ISPE seminar, but nobody thought it would be another year or more before this took place! Unfortunately, when it did eventually take place, Philip was unable to be present at the Institute's 124<sup>th</sup> One-Day Seminar, the first ISPE Seminar since November 2019, so during SPATEX 2022, at an appropriate time, once the rush died down a bit, an impromptu inauguration ceremony was organised, with ISPE Past-President, Colin Day, FISPE, being on the ISPE stand to present the chain of office to Philip, some fifteen months later than planned!

Colin congratulated Philip and everyone wished him well for the remaining eight months of his term as Institute President.



Colin Day congratulates Philip

### Re-Presentation of ISPE Awards at the 2022 Gala Dinner

Soon after receiving his Chain of Office, being 'correctly dressed' for the occasion, Philip was able to conduct the re-presentations of the 2021 ISPE Awards, as part of the Industry Gala Dinner held on the first evening during SPATEX 2022 in Coventry.

Philip announced that the winner of the Gartside Cup for Student of the Year was Ed Hegarty from D G Pool & Leisure.

Unfortunately, the winner of the Jim Johnson Filtration Shield for the best Filtration exam was unable to be present, although this was presented to Chris McGill, from Guncast Pools, back in November at the ISPE Awards.

Philip announced a new award, the 'Bob Kent (MSI) Cup' for the best Construction exam paper, and this was also won by Ed Hegarty.



Philip with Ed Hegarty,  
winner of two cups

# Swimming Pool Scene

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# 25 years on, SPATEX proves it's still at the epicentre of water leisure



**Celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, SPATEX received a very warm welcome when it returned to a live show at Coventry Building Society Arena in early February. It was rewarded with a steady flow of high-quality visitors throughout the three days and was universally declared a massive industry success.**

Stands and aisles bustled with happy visitors and the sound of chatter filled the air – there was something tremendously comforting about SPATEX returning to its ‘normal,’ familiar formula.

It was the combined sense of joy and camaraderie of the 1,545 unique visitors, and the hundred

plus exhibiting companies, at being able to reunite under one roof once more, that made the SPATEX 2022 the BEST show to date. That almost tangible, warm feeling that comes from doing good business was in abundance from the moment the show opened, right up to the minute it closed.

## **You came, you saw and the industry conquered!**

Aside from a vibrant exhibition hall brimming with shiny new product, the two seminar arenas also welcomed a steady flow of traffic, with delegates keen to pick up valuable information and tips. Over a third of visitors sampled



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the unique, free, double seminar programme, hosted by esteemed industry associations ISPE, STA, PWTAG and more.

Responsible for curating Arena 1's Workshop programme, ISPE's General Secretary, Ross Alcock, says: "I was extremely happy with the turn-out. A total of 358 delegates attended over the three days, which is almost the same number as the last two live events. It was fabulous to get back to a live show and the ISPE stand was, at times, very busy. We welcomed a number of new members and students plus it was great to see so many ISPE Members at the show."

SPATEX organiser, Michele Bridle, says: "There was a huge pent-up demand for this 2022 show – both in terms of exhibitors wishing to showcase two years' worth of largely unseen products and visitors desperate to do business. Inspired by the vibrance, and energy, of the 2022 show, we aim to build on its impressive 25-year foundation and move into the next exciting phase. Watch this space!"

**And, here's what you said...**

- Superior Wellness

"We absolutely loved our return to SPATEX this year. What a fantastic three days."

- Aqua Warehouse

"Happy is an understatement! Super organisation. A real tonic in bad times. SPATEX feels like home."

- Certikin

"The best attended SPATEX for many years. Already looking forward to 2023."

- Build A Spa

"What a class time! The future looks bright. Thank you for making our first show a breeze."

- Hydros pares

"What a show SPATEX 2022 was! Overwhelmingly positive and a successful show all round."

- Mapei UK Ltd

"Three bustling days. Dozens of Mapei ducks given away and even more amazing people met and spoken to."

- Designworks Tiles

"We could genuinely not be happier. The turn-out has been incredible, the best show to date."

- Interpool

"Bloody excellent show."

- Astral

"Such a great show and really looking forward to returning next year."

- Poolstar

"This is the first time we exhibited at SPATEX and the hassle of travelling from France in Covid times has been more than worthwhile."

- Fairlocks

"2022 was the best SPATEX ever! Well done Michele and team for staging a fantastic event."

- Aquatrac

"What a busy show, such a morale booster and good to see so many new faces."

- Paragon

"Great show with fantastic leads. Definitely coming back with a bigger stand."

- GMT Spas

"Total buzz – fantastic show! We will definitely be back next year – it's sooooo good!"



- Spanet

“We’ve received tremendous feedback to our products and we hope to return with a much bigger stand in 2023.”

- Darlly Europe

“Fabulous show – one of the very best. We will be back next year, same stand, same place please!”

- O-Care

“Over the moon with the amount of interest we’ve received. We will be back next year with a bigger stand.”

- Heatstar

“Yet again the support and guidance from the SPATEX team was excellent as they went above and beyond to make sure all were taken care off.”

- Golden Coast

“The atmosphere felt positive, and we all loved it.”

- Paramount Pools

“Great show, foot traffic better than expected! Had a great response.”

### SAVE THE DATE

**The 26<sup>th</sup> edition, SPATEX 2023, returns Tuesday January 31 to Thursday February 2 at the Coventry Building Society Arena, Coventry CV6 6GE.**

**For more info, please contact  
helen@spatex.co.uk or  
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# ISPE Back-to-Basics/Revision Seminar Report

The ISPE Back-to-Basics/Revision Seminar is normally held annually, each February, just before the ISPE exams but this was prevented from taking place in 2021 for the reasons everyone knows.

Therefore, it was great to welcome around 20 ISPE students to the Hilton Hotel, Cobham, Surrey, once we were able to organise this popular event, once again, in February 2022.

The idea of this seminar (which is free-to-attend for ISPE students, but open to all members and non-members for a small charge) is to give guidance to those about to sit (or considering sitting) their ISPE Student exams (normally held in March each year).



Chris Carr, FISPE

The four ISPE tutors each look at their respective sections of the ISPE Home Study Course (Construction, Filtration, Chemicals and Heating) and provide a brief overview, tips and advice on how to approach the exams, showing in some cases how marks may be gained or lost. The day acts as an excellent refresher session for anyone in the trade, too.

A light lunch and refreshments are provided and those who attend the seminar are

provided with copies of the four presentations and receive a CPD certificate worth four CPD points.



Colin Day, FISPE

Anyone who attends is not compelled to sit the exams at the next opportunity and we find that sometimes students who are undecided are able to make a decision as to whether to sit the exams in the following month, or perhaps defer for another year to give them more time to study.



Ian Betts, FISPE

Attending the Revision seminar is not compulsory and does not guarantee a pass in all four subjects but we know from the feedback we received (and previous results) that it can certainly help. Feedback received included:

*"...the seminar was so good!! Really helped and feel a lot more confident on the tests..."*

*"Thanks for yesterday. It has helped me a lot as I learn better by hearing it and looking at the screen."*

*"Thank you very much. Yesterday was very useful."*

*"...I really enjoyed the day, I learnt loads and it was really interesting, I am glad that I decided to sign up!"*

*"...Thanks also for yesterday it was really helpful in the lead up to these exams. ..."*

Many thanks to the ISPE Tutors (Chris Carr, Ian Betts, Colin Day and John Scott) who gave their time freely to deliver their presentations and answer numerous questions on the day.

Anyone interested in attending may register their interest (without committing to be there) by emailing [ross@ispe.co.uk](mailto:ross@ispe.co.uk) or telephoning the ISPE office on 01603 499959. We will contact everyone who has expressed an interest later in the year as soon as we have a date and venue pencilled in.



John Scott, FISPE

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# UK Manufacturing remains the focus for 2022 – Plastica's 50th Year of Trading

Plastica hit a huge milestone this March as they celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> year of trading. The privately-owned business has built a reputation as one of Britain's leading independent manufacturers and distributors of swimming pool products.



Edward and Peter in the early days

It all began back in 1972, when boyhood friends and co-founders Edward Campbell-Salmon and Peter Adlington started manufacturing winter debris covers from a small workroom based in London. Business soon grew and they relocated to a larger premises in Hastings, East Sussex. This enabled them to add more products to their range including solar covers and reel systems.

Plastica currently manufactures from its 13,000 square metre factory. Located on a 6-acre site in St Leonard's in East Sussex, it is home to more than 78 staff that focus on manufacturing and exceptional customer service. Products are created using an impressive combination of state-of-

the-art factory equipment and skilled staff crafting handmade parts. Their facility produces Wooden Pools, a range of Solar, Heat Retention and Winter Debris Covers, Reels, Pool Liners, Relax Water Treatments for pools and spas and Stainless Steel and bespoke parts, such as Ladders and Handrails and in-house ABS pipework. Some of these products are sourced from different manufacturers from around the globe and many are produced in house which is generally their preference so they can control the quality.



AG wooden pool



Bottle plant

Like many businesses in the wet leisure industry, Plastica found demand increased during the global COVID pandemic. With the substantial increase in both inflatable and acrylic hot tubs, growth has been particularly apparent in Plastica's Water Treatment department. Last September the expansion into a nearby 5000 square foot premises provided more storage space and room for an automated filling and capping machine. This has enabled Plastica to streamline their growing orders run by an experienced team of Water Treatment staff.

universal issue for many UK businesses which, over time will settle down. It may have slowed down production but hasn't stopped Plastica's manufacturing process and growth.



### Relax Splasher Water Treatment Kit

The business believes in continuous commitment, and over the years has invested heavily in its manufacturing technology and IT infrastructure. Their British-made Pool Liners, a range of Covers, Stainless Steel Reel Systems, Water Treatment and Pumps remain core business today and Plastica are confident about their future.



Argonaut pumps lined up in the pump room

Another area of increased sales continues to be Above Ground Wooden Pools, so a decision was made to extend the timber department. Manufacturing during such unprecedented times has been a challenge over the last year, but Plastica rose to the challenge. Some of their raw materials are imported and have been affected by global supply chains. Higher costs on imports have been exacerbated by the current climate. Lead times continue to be fluid to accommodate this disruption and monitored weekly by their production team to keep customers in the loop. This is a



Aerial view of Plastica

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# Can we get some standards back?

By Julian Mills, MISPE

In all food establishments across the country there are these stickers on the windows indicating how good the Food Hygiene rating is.



How would plantrooms in this country fare if we had a similar system?

**Role play time:** Let me pretend I was an inspector doing a visit to the facility that I went to last week.

“Hello, I’m from the Swimming Pool & Plant Room rating service, and I’ve come to conduct an inspection of your facility and work out a rating for you. Would you like to lead the way to the plant room or shall we start with the pool and the testing sheets? Oh, I see that you have no water in your swimming pool, did someone leave the quick fill on - had that happen to me once in a club that I was running!?”

Well, let’s have a look at your testing records for the last week then. I see that you use the traffic light system and the parameters that you are using are clearly indicated on the bottom of the sheet. In the red section on these it says that you must close the facility immediately and inform the hotel manager, but on Monday the pH reading was in the red on 3 occasions and yet the pool wasn’t closed! Then

on Tuesday a similar number of red readings were noted. On Wednesday, I see that the readings were in the red zone on 4 occasions and throughout the week pH minus has been hand-dosed into the pool to correct the readings - where was this acid added into the pool, did the method used to do so follow a written method statement which is in your PSOP?

What is a PSOP? That’s your Pool Safety Operating Procedures which explain how your pool works and runs (your Normal Operating Procedures) and then what to do in Emergencies (your Emergency Operating Procedures). Do you know where they are, as you should have been trained on these? You’ve never seen them? - ok.



Having seen these results and the actions taken, I'm going to have to deduct one off the rating for your record keeping and the lack of correct actions following these tests.

Let's have a look at the spa pool results now. On Monday the spa shows closed for the first 4 results but then 2 of the next 4 readings were in the red zone but the spa wasn't closed. On Tuesday the 08.00 & 10.00 readings were in the red zone and then the spa got backwashed and closed until later in the afternoon. Yet on Wednesday half of the tests were in the red zone and once again the spa was left open and no actions were recorded. Unfortunately, this will also mean the deduction of another rating.

Also, I notice that quite often you have recorded a reading of 5.0 on the Free Chlorine, does your photometer give you a reading over 5.0? You normally use a different one - the Palintest 25 but you have no test tubes that'll fit that one, so you're using the one that you had prior to getting the 25. Is it in calibration? Not that you know of, and I have also noted that there is no calibration sticker on it but the 25 does have one.

So, 5.0 ppm that's the highest it'll go to, so if that happens do you do a dilution test? No, you go downstairs to the plant room and take the reading off the controllers!

What's a dilution test?

Has anyone ever explained what to do if the chlorine reading is too high, was this not demonstrated to you when you did your pool plant training? You're still waiting to have some training!

Who trained you on the testing equipment? Someone who had been trained by someone else who has now left.

Shall we go into the plant room then?

Yes, it's always difficult to find the key the first time. So, the first thing that I notice upon walking into your plant room is that it is very untidy and there is a lot of water on the floor.

Let's have a look in your Respirator box that is on the floor here with a green gauntlet on top. This equipment is vitally important in protecting all of you in the team, and the hotel has supplied it to you under their responsibilities of The Health & Safety at Work Act, so you should all be using it and making sure that you are safe. Ah, I notice that on the full-face respirator the cartridge filter has expired at the end of August 2018, this must be corrected as a matter of urgency and replaced with an in-date filter. I'm not going to deduct a rating just yet as I notice that you have 2 half masks in the packaging in the box. Let's check the expiry dates on these shall we? Unfortunately, having checked these masks I'm now going to have to deduct the rating as both of these had filters that expired by March 2021!

Ok then, let's move on round and have a look at where you store your chemicals in the plant room. So, on top of this wooden pallet you have some containers of pH Minus, do you know what chemical is inside this container - you've been told that it's Acid. Well that is correct, it is an acid, it's called Sodium Bi-sulphate. I notice that you have a blue scoop on top of this acid container, is that what you use to fill up your day tank? Yes, great - could you just explain to me how you fill up the day tank? You put a green glove on, fill the tank to the top and put in 6 scoops of the acid. Do you know how big your

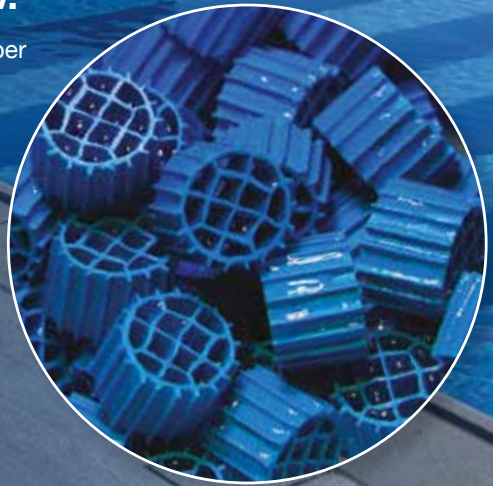


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day tank is? Well, it's a 300-litre tank and on the side of it there are 2 red stickers that tell you that you should put in 10 kilos of acid to every 100 litres of water. Your scoop has markings up to 700 grams, so when you put in 6 scoops you are only putting in 4.2 kilos of the acid – this means your mixture is too weak and this is why you have all been having to hand dose at least once a day! Can I ask who told you to only put in 6 scoops – your previous manager. Well they were wrong and have been causing you all more issues by instructing you to do this and because of the incorrect method that you have all been doing, especially with the lack of PPE, I'm going to have to deduct another rating.

Let's have a look at your controllers as I notice that the flow valves have been closed on a couple of the units – do you know why this has been done? That's what you were told to do if the chlorine levels get close to 5.0. Did no one explain to you that if you do this the controller won't work at all, and then you will have no control over the pH in the water? No, they didn't, well once again this has been causing you major issues in your pool water. Also, I notice that even though you have closed the valves on the controller for the pool, the controller is still operating correctly as the small silver float in your sample cell has stayed in the on position, this means that it has stuck there and the controller is still pumping both chlorine and acid into the pool, even though it shouldn't, meaning that your levels could be going very high!

Oh, you had an incident last Saturday when you had to shut the pool because the levels had gone too high and people's costumes were

being ruined. That's not good for the facility's reputation is it?

Well in that case I'm going to have to deduct the final rating, so this facility has scored zero. That's probably not going to go down too well with the people paying nearly £150 for a day spa.

We don't go into minus ratings because I would have deducted another rating for the leaking chlorine injector, which has a lovely stalactite growing from it.

In the words of Arnold – **I'll be back**, please sort these issues out."

I would like to say that this facility was in the minority, but I keep on coming across them on a too frequent basis. It comes down to the owners and operators not giving enough emphasis on making these facilities operate correctly and safely. Accidents happen, but they can be very avoidable if staff are trained to do their tasks (jobs) correctly.

How good would sites become if the rating system was introduced?

Julian Mills, MISPE delivers ISPE-Endorsed PPO training for 'Ultimate Generation' (<https://uglimited.co.uk>)

### Editor's Note

Well, what do you think? Send your comments in and we'll see how many agree with Julian.

### NEXT ISSUE

The next ISPE Magazine will be out in late June/early July. If you have a pool project you would like featured (perhaps on the front cover?), product or company news, do let us know. Articles for consideration will be required by 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

## The Class of '22' - The ISPE Filtration Workshop



In February, the Institute of Swimming Pool Engineers headed down to Plastipack in St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, for the 2022 ISPE Filtration Workshop. The Filtration Workshop is a regular feature on the ISPE events calendar which is organized by Chris Carr, FISPE and assisted by Phil Barlow, FISPE & Kim Mumford, MISPE. This workshop further enhances the Institute's avenues of education and has also proven to help those new recruits, especially students who are due to sit their exams.

The Filtration Workshop is usually run in November each year (Covid permitting!) and caters for up to 16 delegates at a time. The main concept of this workshop is that each delegate will have the opportunity to more clearly understand both the theory and the practical elements of domestic

swimming pool filtration, plant & equipment. For this session, delegates arrived from all over the country to a warm welcome from Plastipack staff, as well as Chris, Phil & Kim.

The 2022 workshop kicked off with a Powerpoint display by Chris Carr covering the theory for Domestic Filtration. From the outset, Chris advised all delegates that they would be subject to a practical trade test as well as a mini exam at the end of the day and certificates would be awarded with a pass grade for both elements being graded as: pass, merit, credit or distinction.

Chris also mentioned that the Filtration Workshop awards each delegate with 6 CPD points which can be entered into the ISPE CPD Activity Log available to anyone in the pool industry (contact the ISPE office for more details of the ISPE

CPD Scheme). The delegates listened intently and posed a few interesting questions during the morning session.

Later in the morning all delegates set off to Plastipack's workshop area for the practical trade test which was to make a pipe-work set. The pipe set test is designed to be awkward, but a good test to measure accuracy in cutting pipe, glue preparation, perfecting glued and threaded joints and general cleanliness. All delegates were monitored throughout the test and each completed item was marked against key criteria to ensure a good standard of workmanship and time taken.



Phil Barlow giving guidance - work benches and tools supplied by our sponsors

A key area of the day's events is the importance of correctly sizing the pipe-work to comply with the standards for suction and return velocities. Another important message related to the need for a dual deep drain system to avoid the risk of entrapment. The morning session went well and the hungry delegates enjoyed an excellent buffet lunch

before getting 'stuck in' to the afternoon practical session.

Delegates were split into groups for the afternoon 'hands on' session. Chris & Phil instructed the groups, covering all aspects of filter & pump 'strip down' and rebuild. Phil was able to give a great deal of advice on pump and filter servicing having worked in a 'hands-on' capacity on filtration plant for over 25 years. Thanks to generous donations from our suppliers, this year we were able to use three different types of filters with a range of different media types.

Phil had also prepared a variety of different pumps which were to be completely stripped down, with Phil and Chris giving additional guidance as to how to test and change a mechanical seal. Later in the afternoon, it was back to the classroom and all delegates sat a twenty minute, multi-choice exam paper. Whilst these exam papers were being marked by Chris and Kim, the delegates had the opportunity to have a tour of Plastipack's manufacturing facilities.

It was clear from the results that the day's events had paid off, as all delegates had more than adequately reached the minimum pass mark, and the average for all attendees was an excellent 81%!

The highest combined score went to: Alistair Allen 88.5%  
 2<sup>nd</sup> place went to:  
 Blaine Tanner 86%%  
 3<sup>rd</sup> place (joint) went to:  
 Matt Calvert 84.5%  
 and  
 Lewis Salvage 84.5%



Plastipack's MD – Peter Adlington FISPE (left) with top of the class, Alistair Allen

Chris, Phil and Kim would like to say very well done to all delegates, especially Alistair!

The Institute wishes to formally thank Plastipack for allowing the Institute to use their facilities for this event, once again, and Plastica for their pipe-work donations and continued support. Also, many thanks to Plastipack staff including, in particular, Tim Fielder for all his help.

The next ISPE Filtration Workshop will be held in early November (subject to change depending on Government advice), so be sure to contact Ross (at ISPE office) for more details and to get your name on the list as this has become a very popular event, and is on a first-come-first-served basis.

We would also like to sincerely thank all our other suppliers and sponsors: Waterco - Printed materials; MSI - Zeoclere & Jolly Gel (and the lunch); CPC - For supplying goodie bags; Golden Coast - For supplying the winner's champagne.

*Editor's Note:*

A big thank-you too, to Chris, Phil and Kim who made the whole day possible.

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## New Members and Students

We extend a very warm welcome to all those who have recently joined or re-joined the Institute. If you have a colleague who would like more information on the ISPE and its activities, please email [ross@ispe.co.uk](mailto:ross@ispe.co.uk) or telephone 01603 499959 for more details.

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Tostevin, D.	Lotus Pools Ltd.
Turley, L.	Aquascape Swimming Pools Ltd.
Vargem, C.	Jarbas Ltd.
Vaughan, B.	B. Vaughan
Webber, T.	Thomas Webber
Wood, N.	The Small Pool Company

## Competition - Win £50

Thanks to ISPE Member, John Taylor, for sending this and offering the prize.

**Word Search - find 20 words or initials related to ISPE and Swimming Pools.**

O	C	A	R	R	Y	E	F	F	A	G
R	A	C	E	A	O	R	E	V	O	C
E	L	I	O	P	X	B	T	S	Z	W
T	O	T	O	S	S	E	L	X	O	Y
L	R	S	S	D	L	I	T	L	E	G
I	E	A	S	L	N	C	R	A	H	S
F	X	L	O	G	Y	A	D	M	P	P
A	B	P	R	C	B	D	D	B	E	S
A	L	L	E	N	O	I	G	E	L	F

John is offering **£50** to the person who **posts** the first correct answer to him at: 60 Windy Arbour, Kenilworth CV8 2BB. (All queries to John, please, not ISPE!)

## Company News - Golden Coast

### Golden Coast extends support as sauna sales heat up

Leading industry distributor Golden Coast has welcomed a new member to its sales team as part of a host of initiatives designed to support the trade amid the ever-increasing demand for saunas and steam rooms.

New addition Caroline Foster joined the Golden Coast technical sales team of Tylö specialists at the start of the year.



Caroline Foster

As the exclusive UK distributor for world-renowned sauna manufacturer Tylö, Golden Coast works with customers and stockists to provide in-depth product knowledge, sales advice and technical support.

“Demand for Tylö products is through the roof, and I certainly hit the ground running,” said Caroline. “But I love working on the sauna and steam room products. I enjoy how fast-paced it is. My role

involves guiding customers on configurations and pricing. I have been building great customer relationships already. It’s all about offering the right service and going that extra mile.

“I recently attended SPATEX 2022 with some of the Golden Coast team. It was great getting to know customers and sharing expertise on the latest Golden Coast products, including the Tylö range.”

Sales for Tylö saunas and steam rooms rocketed at the start of the pandemic — and remained steadily high ever since — as more and more customers began to make home improvements.

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To support Tylö stockists in meeting ongoing demand, Golden Coast will be running a series of training sessions at its Barnstaple premises. “Our Tylö sales team will be holding workshops with distributors to share information about product features and installations, which they can apply when speaking with their customers,” said Caroline.

“A key part of the workshops is showing distributors how to use our online Tylö Harmony sauna configuration tool. Distributors can sit down with their customers and use the tool to build a specification of a sauna, including size, wood type, finish, and more. It creates 3D visuals and is a great sales tool.

“Golden Coast has also planned some trips to the Tylö manufacturing premises in Sweden, where we show distributors how the products are made to enhance their

understanding of what makes these saunas and steam rooms so special. There is a lot happening within the world of Tylö right now. It’s exciting to be a part of it.”

Adam Clark, Sales Director at Golden Coast added, “Tylö saunas and steam rooms are extremely popular due to their high-quality build and luxury finish, so it’s no wonder sales are so high. We are committed to maintaining our exceptional levels of service, and we’re pleased to welcome Caroline on board as we strengthen the support for our Tylö customers and distributors. Caroline has already proven to be an excellent addition to the team.”

For more information on Tylö saunas and steam rooms, contact a member of the sales team on 01271 378100, send an email to [swimmer@goldenc.com](mailto:swimmer@goldenc.com) or visit [www.goldenc.com](http://www.goldenc.com).

## Late Editorial

I always finish putting together an ISPE Magazine, announcing “hooray” as I head for the pub, adding, “I’ve got nothing for the next one!”. This has become a bit of a tradition but it’s true in that whilst you might imagine there would be a file full of items from members and companies, eager to get their news, projects and products in front of 800+ ISPE members and other readers, I have to do a fair amount of pleading, requesting, cajoling and even moaning sometimes (no, really!) to get the items to fill these pages.

About three weeks ago I had virtually nothing but thanks to a

number of excellent contributions, I find myself typing this, two thirds of the way through this issue!

Please keep your articles coming though, the next issue is only a few weeks away in June!

Everyone was fed up with Brexit monopolising the news a couple of years ago, wishing something else would happen. Well, it did, the Covid pandemic, followed by Prince Andrew, and now we have the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Let’s hope for a quick resolve and better news soon.

In the meantime, I wish you all a busy Spring. Keep busy!

**Ross Alcock, March 2022**



# 50 Years and Counting

By Yanek Kowal, MISPE

50 years ago, on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1972, I started my career in the Leisure Industry as a Trainee Manager at the Mill House Baths, (now the Leisure Centre) Hartlepool. I cannot believe the time has passed by so quickly! My Mum & Dad had bought me my first suit for my first day and the building was still being constructed. My boss gave me my first job - to clean the toilets! All part of the learning curve. Back then I wondered what I had got into!

Now all these years later I am still working, involved in the same industry and still enjoying it. The industry has changed immensely, some things for the better some for the worse.

Back in the 1970s leisure was very much provided by Local Authorities but now the Private Sector operate the majority of facilities and the nature of swimming has changed.

Hartlepool Swimming Club, whom I was a member of, had produced several Olympic and Commonwealth swimmers over the years. Now, 13 Olympic Games later, Team GB are still doing very well.

Over the last 50 years we have seen swimming pools change out of all recognition. Back in the early 1970s their use was very much for the serious swimmers or for those wishing to keep healthy. Most pools were built as competitive pools. We now enjoy a variety of types of pools i.e. leisure pools, Olympic pools, hydrotherapy pools, health club pools and outdoor pools, and wild

swimming in open water has seen a resurgence. It has been a privilege to be involved with each of these types of provision.

Technology has changed. I remember learning about Lancashire Boilers at the South East London Technical College in 1974. This type of boiler was very popular in swimming pools as they could 'raise steam' to service Turkish and Russian Baths.

I cannot remember seeing such equipment again until 2017 whilst working in Manchester when I used my spare time to visit the Manchester Science and Industrial Museum.



*(Picture Courtesy of The Manchester Science and Industrial Museum.)*

This type of equipment has long gone and we have seen the evolution of Economic Condensing Boilers and it is great to see the use of Heat Pumps providing the energy required to heat pools.

My prediction for the future; the advent of Green Hydrogen power!

Water technology has also changed over the last 50 years. Back in the 1970s, as part of my original training with The Institute of Baths Management, their recommended pH for pool water was:

*'the range within which the pH should be controlled is 7.2 to 7.8, but it is desirable to keep as near to the midpoint of this range as possible'.*

(IBM Students Manual p. 15).

We now know the benefits of a lower pH and try to keep the level between 7.2 and 7.4, or even as low as 7.0. Along with the late Allen Wilson, I have been advocating this for some twenty years. If there is a lesson to be learnt from the Covid-19 epidemic we have got to make the chlorine more effective!

My prediction for the future is that most pools will be treated with a non-residual disinfection system i.e. ultraviolet light or ozone with minimal use of chlorine!

I am saddened to learn that: *'Almost 2,000 swimming pools in England could be closed by 2030 without urgent government action, a Swim England report has suggested'.* (Swim England, BBC Sport 22.09.21).

The fact is, a lot of pools were built in the late 1960s or the 1970s and are now reaching the end of their working lives. Without a doubt, the Covid 19 pandemic shut downs have not helped and some of these pools possibly were not decommissioned or looked after throughout correctly.

I am sure leisure providers and designers looking to replace older buildings will look to the future and ensure the way the next generation

of pools built will be a lot more environmentally friendly, i.e. less use of chlorine, heat-saving devices, alternative ways of heating, etc.

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Fusion energy record demonstrates powerplant future - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) (accessed 13.02.22).

Over the last 25 years I have had the privilege of working with some great Awarding Organisations which are well placed to face the challenges of the post-Covid era. The workforce is a lot more 'fluent' now and young entrants to the industry are at a premium. Gone are the days when people had a job for life, those entering the profession will undoubtedly have many employers.

I have been fortunate to have had a number of excellent employers and mentors over the years including John Leigh, John Estell, Bert Sharples, Vic Evans and Allen Wilson.

The Leisure Industry provides great life experiences for those involved and it has been a pleasure to teach hundreds of pool lifeguards, responders, first aiders, pool plant operatives and tutors.

Over the last 50 years there have been several highlights to my

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career including, in 1992, being awarded with the Royal Life Saving Society U.K. Area Organiser of the Year Trophy and in 2006 being awarded the Swimming Teachers Association Henry Pike Trophy for services to the STA.

One of the more recent highlights was being presented with a Royal Humane Society Bronze Medallion by Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, the Hon. Lady Ogilvy, KG GCVO at a Ceremony in London, in 2021.



*Photo provided by The Royal Humane Society courtesy of Buckingham Palace*

*'for having on 1 August 2019 at very great personal risk, gone to the aid of two young men who were swimming and got into difficulties in Ullswater, Cumbria. As he swam towards them, one disappeared under the water, but he reached the second man. A young women joined him in the rescue, but the man's frantic struggles took them all below*

*the surface. Yanek Kowal was able to free himself and bring both the man and young girl to a pontoon. His gallant actions saved the lives of the man and the young girl'.*

(Royal Humane Society Citation 2021).

Unfortunately I could not save the young man's older brother who drowned that day and the young lady has since died of unrelated matters. The experience still haunts me today and will remain with me for ever.

If I was asked if I would follow the same career path again, my answer would be a resounding yes but probably in the private rather than the public sector.

Here's looking forward to the next 50 years!

**Yanek Kowal FCIMSPA, DTLLS, MISPE, IAM Cert., ASTA.**

### **Editor's Note**

Many thanks to Yanek for sharing his story with us. It should be noted that back in November 2019, at the 124<sup>th</sup> ISPE One-Day Seminar in Clevedon, North Somerset, Allen Wilson presented Yanek with a commemorative clock and a certificate from the ISPE in acknowledgement of his life-saving event described above.



*Allen Wilson with Yanek Kowal*

# Vinyl Pool Liners

Will Dando, FISPE, Plastica Ltd.

Will Dando, FISPE, gave a presentation about vinyl pool liners at our 124<sup>th</sup> One-Day Seminar in November 2021, looking at the options for lining swimming pools and as a guide for pool engineers to troubleshoot any problems before and after a liner has been fitted.

The pool engineer's job is to survey the pool, specify a product, order the liner, fit the liner and handover, with running and care and maintenance instructions.

Before problems occur, it is best to nip it in the bud. The sort of issues a pool engineer could be faced with might include post-fitting creases, a post-fitting leak or a pattern fault. The liner might develop "patches" on the floor, weld lines, marks on the beading, dark patches, a fast/slow leak, waterline marks, creases or the wrong liner might have been fitted!

These situations can be divided into three main groups, liner fit, leaks – small or large, and the material having aesthetics problems.

Customer expectations might not be realistic and need to be addressed with good communication, explaining what liners are capable of. What are they trying to achieve? What is their budget? Decisions should be confirmed in writing. If a liner pool has been chosen, explain what a PVC liner is, and is not, capable of. It's a 'Pac-a-Mac', not a Barbour jacket, and is perfectly adequate for domestic, but not commercial use. If the customer knows this, the difference between liner, tile and commercial, they won't

be expecting something you can't get.

## Liner composition

Made for purpose, for domestic bathing, a liner should last for 5-15 years in a pool kept to SPATA standards. It is typically 0.40-0.80mm thick, and has a temperature limit of 29°C/84°F.

**60% of the liner is PVC (poly-vinyl chloride)**, a strong, rigid plastic, that can be melted and processed into different shapes (sheets, tubes, etc.)

**35% of the liner is plasticizer**, which is used to make PVC a flexible, though tough, product. This is a mineral oil that is synthesized out of petrochemicals.

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**5% of the liner is additives,** pigments for colouring the product, fungicides to avoid staining by bacteria and moulds, processing aids and lubricants to improve surface smoothness of the finished product, UV-stabilisers to protect the product from degrading by sunlight exposure, and heat-stabilisers to avoid the plastic degrading when heated during processing and welding.

### **Limitations**

There are limitations for thin liners used for pools. They are not suitable for higher water temperatures or non-domestic bathing load. Steps, dividing walls and other such features push limitations of a pre-fabricated liner. Old concrete pools with swept joints, large coves and bowl-like hoppers are not built for a liner to be fitted with the necessary even tension and so can be problematical.

When undertaking a pool shell survey, look at all dimensions and also complications, weird anomalies, the condition of the pool shell itself. Take accurate dimensions to one centimetre for pool and to the nearest millimetre for steps. Communication between pool engineer and liner manufacturer is particularly important if anything is outside of the norm.

The liner design process itself involves a computerised system taking the 3D layout of the pool, then it is reduced, sliced and flattened. This new flat shape can be divided into material sheet widths ready to be cut. Outside effects are the temperature, handling and finishing. This is a skilled job!

### **Manufacture**

All manufacturers use an automated system. All being well,

this procedure produces the same liner time after time, if starting with the same dimensions.

Welding must be undertaken with the correct settings and alignment and tension during the weld. Tests are carried out to ensure a good weld. Causes of weld failure could be contamination – failure to weld together, even if it looks perfect, if the material is not welded in between, it could fail under pressure. This is very rare as material is not open to contamination, but it is not impossible. A flash-out that blows a hole the size of a 10p piece can be caused by a conductive foreign object getting trapped under the weld bar, but this is very obvious if it does ever occur.

### **Packing and shipping and unpacking**

In the factory there is a visual and physical check, and a strict folding and boxing procedure is followed. This is all devised to ensure the liner is never marked or damaged in any way. The liner should be folded so that it will be easily unfolded and wrapped in protective material which may be of a different pattern, then boxed and sent out. If you receive a damaged box, report it, as any damage to the box could have gone through to the liner. Also alert the manufacture immediately.

### **Fitting**

On site, handle the liner with care. Thoroughly clean and disinfect the area. Fit the liner methodically – starting with any steps or special features first. Hold in place and check with a vacuum and refit it if you're not 100% happy. Now start to fill the pool. Ensure you have the full final tension before any cutting.

## Use and Care of the pool

A correct handover to the pool owner is vital. The customer needs to know their type of water, and also the limitations of their liner. Maximum observation, minimum intervention being the best practice, but dirt left at the waterline should be removed immediately. Customers should be told not to be afraid to ask questions of the experts who can sort out any issues (at a cost).

However, this is not always the end of the job, as problems can arise during later use of the pool.

### Creasing

Liner material is an inanimate object and cannot move for no reason. It will require a force acting on it to move, for instance if there is badly uneven tension being tight in length with no tension in width, then it will try to draw into the middle

causing creasing, unless it is held by sufficient water pressure. Heat and water absorption due to low pH will also cause the material to naturally grow slightly. Flotation will give the circumstances for liner to move, as all water pressure is relieved. The water table should have been dealt with at the beginning. Just a few gallons between liner and shell can cause float in a liner from condensation caused by natural water migration and cold pool panels.

It is a good idea to let a liner settle for a few months with a special eye kept on the temperature, bathing load and pool chemistry. This is especially good in avoiding 'Liner tramp' creases. These are crescent shaped creases appearing on sloping areas. Peoples' feet move the liner fractionally especially if not

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under sufficient tension caused by expansion. If spotted in time, the solution is to immediately drain and re-vacuum to deal with the creased areas, possibly using hot water and a good vacuum. Pruning of the liner is the sign of an expanding liner in the deepest part of a pool, caused by a high level of chlorine that has concentrated there.

### Staining and bleaching

Staining is usually caused by one of three things: metals or minerals, organic/nitrogenous natural staining, such as algae, or petroleum/oil-based products, such as cosmetic products.

Metal or mineral based can be dissolved using acid, mild using spirit vinegar, or strong using 30-40% hydrochloric acid.

Organic/nitrogenous natural staining can be bleached out/affected by chlorine. Topping up the pool above the stain, checking and balancing the water, then shock dosing is a good course of action, but only once the cause has been determined.

Petroleum/oil-based can possibly be removed using detergent but may need a solvent. Try a mild detergent – household cleaners or, if stronger, bio washing powder or mild solvent - Isopropanol alcohol. Stronger still would be solvents like Tetrahydrofuran (THF), but, **warning, stronger solvents will eat into the vinyl, removing the protective layer and/or pattern.**

Dirt floats on the surface and can leave a mark or tide line, which needs to be cleaned off. Unless it is petrol or metal based, in which case it can be too compatible with liner and stain instantly and permanently. With common waterline marks,

normally a regular clean after each use is sufficient.

Bleaching – pattern may be removed under the water line, with a lightened pattern all the way round, this is definitely caused by a high level chlorine as nothing else will do this.

Dark stains – look for clues, light coloured bands on seams and slight darkness either side, if there is a slight void under liner, floor algae can live. This can be algae if on top of liner, or algae under the liner, the algae could give off stain.

Find out if it is algae or mineral staining you are looking at, by cleaning a small area, metal minerals use a mild acid, lemon juice, vinegar. If that affects the area then you know it's metal minerals, not algae, which will be affected by treating with chlorine.

If it is affected by chlorine, possible course of action is to bring pool water level above stain, balance water and shock dose.

Greases or oils require detergent like washing powder or solvent. Solvents can only be used on plain material as it will remove the pattern if too much is used.

It is recommended to do a very small patch test first (a couple of cm wide, in an inconspicuous area), starting with the mildest product in each of the three categories, to find out what you are dealing with.

### Leaks

If there are sudden changes in losses, and you know the pool but don't know the reason, then this needs to be investigated. The questions to be answered are: Is the pool actually leaking? Is it the pool shell, plant or liner that is leaking?



Why might it be leaking? Have there been any sudden changes in losses? Where is it leaking? Can it be easily repaired?

The first procedures are: do a bucket test. Check loss with the circulation on and off.

To do a bucket test, turn off the auto-top-up. Fill a bucket or other suitable container with pool water and suspend it in the pool water. Mark the level of water on both the pool wall and the bucket/container. Ideally, over a period of several days the water level in the pool and bucket is carefully examined and noted down. In extreme cases of water loss, it might need to be checked every 6 or 12 hours. Regular time periods and making written notes are essential.

Circulation on and off – turn off the auto top-up. Run the pool for exactly 24 hours with the circulation running exactly as normal. Note any water loss. Leave the pool for exactly 24 hours with the circulation system

off. Note any water loss. If it's greater on, the leak is on the pressure side, between the pump and pool. If it's greater off, the leak is on the suction side, between the pool and the pump. If they are identical, the leak is in the pool shell, and is not affected by pressure of pipework.

Note, a slow leak could be natural evaporation. A rapid leak can be left to drop and monitored carefully. At some point it will stop and the leak will be exactly level with this point somewhere! Never allow the water to drop below the lowest wall fitting as this may mean the liner moves and will have to be refitted.

In conclusion, please remember that the majority of liner pools provide years of pleasure with no issues. We just need to catch, recognise, stop and address any issues before they become major problems.

**With thanks to Will Dando, FISPE  
[www.plasticpools.net](http://www.plasticpools.net)**

## Situations Vacant

*A summary of the latest vacancies taken from the ISPE website. For the full adverts please see the situations vacant section of the ISPE website ([www.ispe.co.uk](http://www.ispe.co.uk)) or contact the ISPE office. **Also see page 32.***

**Cheshire Wellness**  
**Technical Design Manager**  
Based in Neston, Cheshire.

**Guncast Pools & Wellness**  
**Project Manager and CAD**  
**Design Technician and Design**  
**Office Manager**  
Based in Petworth, West Sussex

**Fairlocks Pool Products**  
**Installation Engineer for pool**  
**covers and associated items.**  
UK National, based in Oxfordshire.

**London Swimming Pool Co.**  
**Swimming Pool and Spa Service**  
**Engineers and Swimming Pool**  
**Installation Engineers**  
Based in New Malden, Surrey.

**Aqua Platinum Servicing Ltd.**  
**Swimming Pool Service Engineer**  
London and the surrounding areas

**Fowler Swimming Pools**  
**Swimming Pool Engineers**  
Based in Horsham, West Sussex.

# Obituary

## Rodney Underwood, MISPE 30/3/1945–23/1/2022

Rodney sadly passed away in January. He was best known in the pool trade for his shop, 'Are You Swimming' in Park Gate, Southampton.



In his early career, he worked in a toy shop in Fareham which sold above ground pools and

this gave him the taste for the pool industry.

Rodney moved to Cranleigh Clarke in Reading and even helped them set up a shop in South Africa for six months before moving to James White Pools in Theale, before starting 'RU Swimming' in Park Gate.

He was a keen member of ISPE and SPATA, and the business was very successful for 26 years, building all types of pools; it became a go-to place for obsolete parts and spares for retail and trade customers.

The business was sold about 10 years ago and he went into a sort of Rodney-retirement!

Rodney was a very good guy who always had a smile on his face and he was a total one-off, a sad loss to the pool industry and all his friends and family .

**Simon Hallet, MISPE.**

## (STOP PRESS) Situations Vacant

Due to continued growth, **DG Pool & Leisure**, Partridge Green, West Sussex are looking for additional Engineers to join their dynamic team. They currently have a position for an electrically biased Engineer with experience of Saunas, Steam Rooms & Automatic Dosing, plus positions for general Swimming Pool Service Engineers. Excellent rates of pay and benefits. Candidates can be based remotely in the South East. For further details, please contact Alex Mannion on 01403-711581 or email [alexandra.mannion@dgpools.co.uk](mailto:alexandra.mannion@dgpools.co.uk)

**Editor's Note:** Please note that this magazine is put together around three weeks before it is published and in that time some vacancies may be filled. Do check the ISPE website for the latest adverts and contact the company concerned quickly if something appeals to you.

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