

Siebe-Heinke Dip Suit

In 1961, Siebe-Gorman and Company took over C. E. Heinke & Co. Ltd., submarine engineers. "For a short while, equipment was given 'Siebe-Heinke' tags but eventually the name completely disappeared" (Diving Heritage, 2000).

Siebe-Gorman moved in 1975 from Chessington in Surrey to Cwmbran in Gwent, later specialising in breathing equipment for firefighters. Siebe-Gorman and Heinke manufactured standard diving dress until the mid-1950s, when they diversified into stockinet-lined rubber suits for commercial and recreational underwater swimmers.

Historical

Diving

Suits

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Siebe-Heinke Dip Suit



Siebe-Heinke Dip Suit (Dry)
For use by divers, swimmers, water skiers and yachtsmen. Trousers only for fishermen. A seamless two-piece in black with yellow cummerbund. A dry suit with neck seal and booted trousers, and a yellow separate hood is available if desired. All parts of the suit are manufactured from dipped Latex specially glazed on both sides to provide slip-on dressing whilst having maximum flexibility. The Latex has a very high tear resistance and is impervious to ozone and sunlight. Available in small, medium and large sizes.
Suit, jacket, trousers, cummerbund
£18.13.9 inc. 14/4 P.T.
Hood £1.14.3 .. 2/- P.T.
Trousers £4.19.9 .. 7/2 P.T.
Reinforced over-bootees £1.15.0 .. 3/- P.T.

**Siebe-Heinke Dip Suit
in Lillywhites' 1964 underwater catalogue**

Siebe-Heinke Dip Suit Facts

- The Siebe-Heinke Dip Suit (Dry) appeared on the second page of Lillywhites' 1964 underwater catalogue, reproduced left. The entire outfit cost £14 3s 0d. By way of comparison, one imported nylon-lined neoprene wetsuit cost £37 10s 0d.
- Although a diving manual published two years later recommends the suit (Kenyon & DeHaas, 1966), it is missing from the June 1966 product list of the sole distributors of the Siebe-Heinke range (Collins & Chambers, 1966).
- The suit was designed not only for diving but also for swimming, water-skiing, yachting and even fishing, where only the trousers were worn.
- The basic dry seamless two-piece suit consisted of a jacket with neck seal and booted trousers. A waist-seal cummerbund came as standard.
- A separate hood and over-bootees with reinforced soles to protect the feet were available as optional extras.
- The jacket, trousers and over-bootees were black, while the hood and cummerbund were high-visibility yellow.
- All suit parts were made from dipped latex "specially glazed on both sides to provide slip-on dressing whilst having maximum flexibility."
- The material had "a very high tear resistance" and was "impervious to ozone and sunlight."
- The suit was available in three sizes: **Small, Medium and Large.**
- The basic suit, comprising jacket, trousers and cummerbund, cost £10 13s 9d, including 14s 4d Purchase Tax. (PT).
- **Hood** (£1 14s 3d, incl. 2s PT), **trousers** (£4 19s 9d, incl. 7s 2d PT) and **over-bootees** (£1 15s 0d, incl. 3s PT) could be bought separately.

References

1. Collins & Chambers Ltd (June 1966) *The Siebe Heinke range of underwater swimming equipment*, London: Collins & Chambers.
2. Diving Heritage (2000) <http://www.divingheritage.com/>
3. Lee Kenyon & Werner DeHaas (1966) *Tauch mit!*, Rüschnikon-Zürich, Stuttgart, Wien: Albert Müller Verlag.
4. Lillywhites Ltd (1964) *Underwater Catalogue 1964*, London: Lillywhites.
5. Siebe-Gorman (n.d.) *Aqualung equipment*, Chessington: Siebe Gorman & Co. Ltd