

# Heinke Dolphin Suit

C. E. Heinke & Co. Ltd of London was an old-established manufacturer of standard diving apparatus. In 1961, Siebe Gorman took the company over and “for a short while, equipment was given ‘Siebe-Heinke’ tags but eventually the name completely disappeared” (Diving Heritage, 2000).

By the mid-1950s, Heinke had diversified into recreational underwater swimming equipment, including Hans Hass masks and fins. In the product range were two “underwater suits”, both made from rubber on a stockinet base: the Delta dry suit and the Dolphin wet suit.

## Dolphin Suit Facts

This wetsuit had two interesting features. First, it came in male and female versions, differing in length, fit, colour and mode of entry. Secondly, instead of expanded neoprene, it was made from drysuit-associated materials.



← The women’s suit on the left (Hampton, 1955, p. 119), available in four bust/hip fittings. Back entry, Medium length and white colour only.

The men’s suit on the right (Heinke, n.d.), available in four Medium, three Long and two Short chest fittings. Front entry and green colour only. →

Heinke described the Dolphin suit as “an ideal garment for all forms of water sport” (Heinke, n.d.). Made from stockinet-lined polished rubber and secured with a button or snap-fastener collar and a rust-proof zip (Kenyon, 1957, p. 25), this one-piece “glamour” suit came with short arms and legs and was very easy to put on.

The suit was “designed to allow a certain amount of water to pass inside” (Small, 1957, p. 63) which would soon warm to body temperature and insulate the wearer against further cold. “Although a wet suit, it (was) ideal for divers who feel the cold more quickly than the average and always need a covering even in temperate waters” (Kenyon, 1957, pp. 25-26).

Lillywhites, London’s premier sporting goods store, sold this “low-priced suit” for £6 6s (Lillywhites, n.d.). By way of comparison, the Siebe-Gorman Sponge Rubber Swimsuit, also with short arms and legs, retailed from £6 2s 3d to £7 5s 6d, (Small, 1957, p. 63).

**Dolphin Suit**

The Dolphin Suit is an ideal garment for all forms of water sport. It will add considerably to your pleasure and comfort whenever or wherever the water is chilly.

The suit is not designed to keep the body dry, but it does trap a layer of water which soon reaches body temperature and acts as an insulator against further cold.

Made from polished green or white rubber, proofed on to a stockinette base and fastened with a rustproof zip fastener, with front entry for men and back entry for women.

		MEN—Green Rubber.		WOMEN—White Rubber	
		SIZES.			
		S—Short	M—Medium	L—Long	
<b>MEN</b>					
Chest ... ..		34" M	36" S.M.L.	38" S.M.L.	40" M.L.
<b>WOMEN</b>					
Bust ... ..		32"	34"	36"	38"
Hips ... ..		34" M	36" M	38" M	40" M

**C. E. HEINKE & CO. LIMITED**  
87 GRANGE ROAD LONDON, S.E.1

Associated Products : STANDARD DIVING GEAR GENERAL RUBBER MECHANICALS

2525B/CP/10,000/356 Printed in England

**Dolphin Suit**  
*Heinke Underwater Suits (Heinke, n.d.)*

## References

1. Diving Heritage (2000) <http://www.divingheritage.com/>
2. T. A. Hampton (1955) *The Master Diver and Underwater Sportsman*, Southampton: Adlard Coles Limited in association with George Harrap & Co and John de Graff Inc.
3. C. E. Heinke & Co. (n.d.) *Heinke Underwater Suits*
4. Ley Kenyon (1957) *Collins Pocket Guide to the Undersea World* London: Collins
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6. Peter Small (1957) *Your Guide to Underwater Adventure*, London: Lutterworth Press.