

Scottish eco-cruiser successfully salvaged

During blizzard conditions earlier this year, the wildlife cruiser *MV Alpha Beta* sank at her moorings in the sheltered and picturesque Tobermory Bay on the Isle of Mull, Scotland. It didn't take long before oil started leaking from her. With two shellfish farms located in this beautiful bay, there was particular concern for the local environment.

Fathoms, the Somerset, England-based salvage and subsea service provider, was awarded a contract to save the vessel on a standard no cure, no pay basis and deliver her to a safe haven for lifting and subsequent inspection and investigation. An initial dive was carried out to provide a full video inspection of the vessel as she lay on the seabed in 23 metres of water.

PRECISE

For the recovery, Fathoms used its multi-purpose catamaran vessel *Teal*. MPV *Teal* is equipped with a full diving spread and precise positioning as well as a large 10-ton A-frame. She was moored over the site and two lifting strops secured to *Alpha Beta*. Air bags were then secured to these strops. The



Above: *MV Alpha Beta* is raised. Below: The vessel is safely delivered to owners' representatives in Loch Creran.

vessel was raised in a double lift operation using both open and closed bags. The stricken vessel was then beached alongside *Teal* to enable pumping out to be completed.

Following the successful lift,

Fathoms' team investigated the cause of the sinking and effected temporary repairs for the necessary tow. This involved the combination of engineering skills, classic seamanship skills and diving expertise, all of which enabled *Alpha Beta* to be raised. Fathoms' diving manager, Dusty Millar, told UCI: "This was a complex task expertly undertaken in an environmentally sensitive area."

On re-floating, a tow was rigged and qualified crew embarked in *Alpha Beta* for the tow down through the scenic Sound of Mull and final delivery to owners' representatives at the Marine Resource Centre in Loch Creran.

New AUV completes GoM survey

C&C Technologies, USA, has completed a survey for Noble Energy, USA, utilising its new *C-Surveyor III* AUV.

The *C-Surveyor III* completed the 81-nautical mile (169 kilometre) survey in the Gulf of Mexico with water depths ranging from 4100 to 4700 feet (1250 to 1430 metres).

C&C's new 4500-metre depth rated vehicle includes a multi-beam echosounder, chirp sidescan sonar, chirp sub-bottom profiler and CTD system.

The customised sub-bottom profiler on board is outfitted with narrow transmit and receive beams to permit significantly deeper seabed penetration.

In addition to the sub-bottom profiler, a customised dynamically focused (DF) sidescan sonar system provides five times more resolution than traditional systems used on other AUVs, claims the company.

Sonar added to rental pool

Seatronics, the global supplier of subsea equipment, has added another dual head version of the new Reson (Denmark) SeaBat 7125 sonar to its rental pool.

Group managing director David Currie said: "With the new technology, higher resolution and deeper rates, we believe that the new SeaBat 7000 series is the future for portable multibeam systems. Seatronics has now invested in four SeaBat 7125 systems, but we expect to invest in four more systems this year."

