

INSULIN DEPENDANT DIABETIC DRIVER OK TO DRIVE AGAIN

"Thank you Call Sign" says delighted Ian Ross

The Editorial in the April 1999 issue of Call Sign contained the following:

"I was approached by the wife of an ex-Dial-a-Cab driver who explained why her husband, a licensed taxi driver for over thirty years, has now been thrown onto the scrap-heap seemingly by the very people who are supposed to be looking after the interests of the licensed taxi trade - the PCO.

Her husband has been a diabetic for five years and has been very successfully controlling the effects by taking daily tablets. As our bodies age, we have to change the way we do things. Diabetics are no different. In April 1998, this driver - instead of taking several amounts of pills each day - now needed one Insulin injection per day. He dutifully reported this change to the PCO only to be told to bring his badge and Bill to Scotland Yard. He did so and hasn't seen either since. He had lost his livelihood."

I considered this 'judgement' to be appalling and have since printed several articles - one, a

personal response by the Chief Officer at the PCO, Roy Ellis. Other articles have come from yet another driver and a solicitor who wrote to Call Sign for assistance (a letter later republished by several other magazines). What nobody else knew was that this solicitor was in fact representing the driver whom I wrote about in my Editorial. At that time and quite rightly, the ex Dial-a-Cab driver, Ian Ross, did not want to be seen as making too many waves, so I agreed to keep his identity a secret.

Now Ian is delighted to let everyone know that he has got his licence back. While Call Sign is naturally delighted to hear the news, we really cannot understand why the PCO put up such strong opposition to Ian and the other small band of Insulin dependant drivers getting their livelihoods back.

Ian had been out of taxi driving for almost 18 months and was finding it very difficult to make ends meet. He had tried security work and a few other small jobs, but none came close to providing the income that his own trade brought he and his family.

Following on from the news that an American Supreme Court Judgement had decided that Diabetic drivers did not classify

as disabled, the case finally came to Horseferry Road Magistrate's Court on Tuesday October 5th. The PCO admitted that in their view, no Insulin dependent driver should have a licence to drive a taxi. but they also claimed to treat every case on it's merits.

The Magistrate found in favour of Ian Ross and he has now had his badge and Bill returned to him.

Speaking exclusively to Call Sign, Ian Ross said:

"Firstly, let me thank Call Sign for all the publicity that you have given the diabetes subject and for the help you gave my solicitor. Although not daring to hope as much, we knew that we had a good case. After all, how can the PCO say they treat each case on it's merit and with the next breath forbid Insulin dependent diabetics from driving cabs?"

And how did Ian and his wife Denise feel after the verdict?

"We both burst into tears" said the delighted taxi driver.

Alan Fisher

CHRIS HUCKSTEP SAMPLES HIS LAST MOMENTS OF FREEDOM!

Westminster 'Regular Bookings' man Chris Huckstep looks pensive as he samples his last drink as a free man! Soon after this photo was taken, Chris tied the knot with the lovely Scheli and told Call Sign that he doesn't regret it in the slightest! "Mind you" said Chris, "we could have done without the wedding being double booked, but it was still a wonderful day - one that Scheli and I will always treasure." We all send Chris and Scheli the best of luck for a long and happy future together...



Pic Right:
Chris in celebratory mood before his marriage