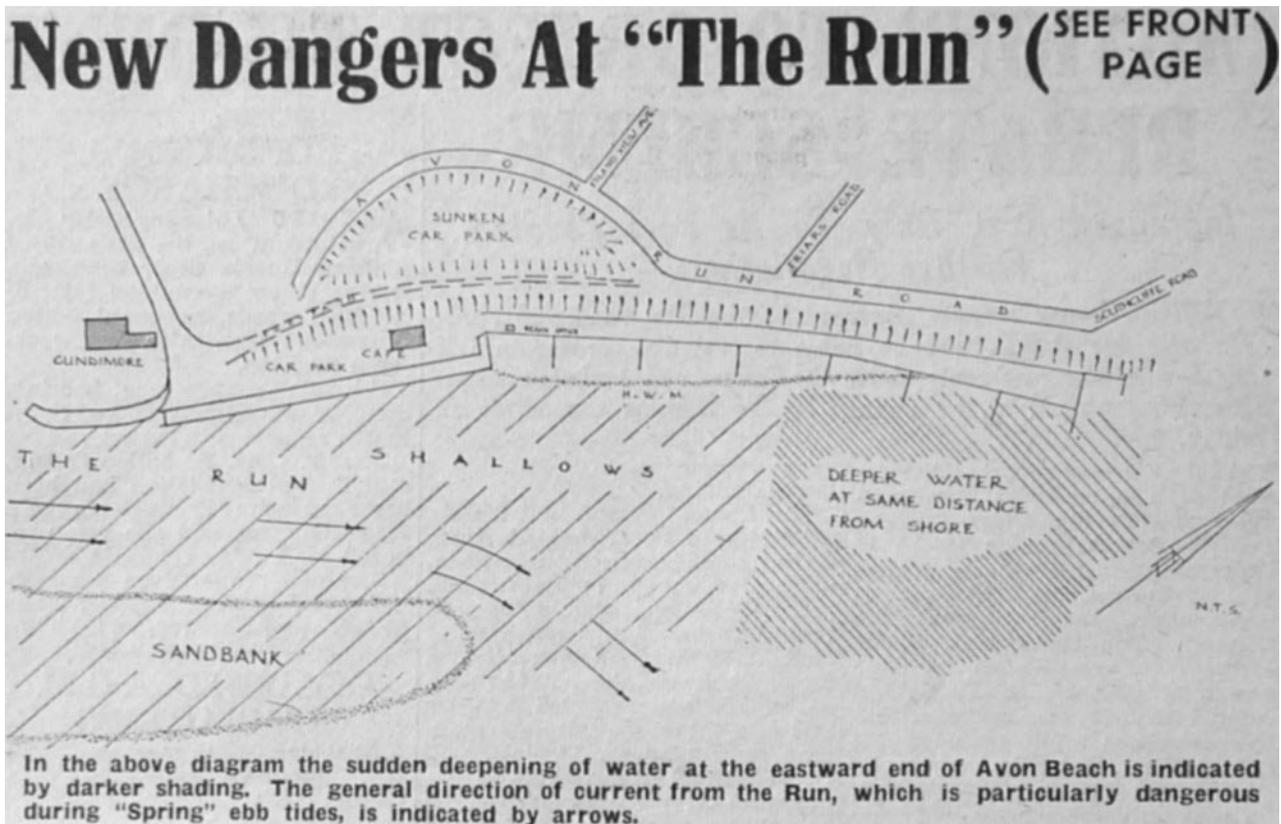


WARNING OF BATHING DANGER AT AVON BEACH

Sea Bed Changes Lead To New Dangers

C.T. May 10, 1957



SPECIAL CARE NEEDED AT SPRING TIDES

THE following communication has been received by the "Christchurch Times" from Mr. Ken Derham, director of the Avon Beach undertaking at Mundeford:—

"I would be grateful if you would make public through the Christchurch Times the recent change in the harbour entrance off Avon Beach. This will, in my opinion, make bathing dangerous at certain times and I think the public should be warned."

Signs will be erected at Avon Beach drawing attention to the danger and leaflets are being handed to beach visitors. Red flags will be flown when the danger is considered to be serious when the beach staff is on duty (at normal bathing periods). This danger period is likely to be for about two hours a day at certain states of the tide.

BUILD-UP.

It is because of a recent build-up of the Mundeford Sandspit that the "Run" current now flows off Avon Beach. Two features of the danger are indicated in the diagram.

The drop in level is not dangerous to bathers entering the water at the lower level, but could be dangerous to bathers carried unsuspectingly from the shallower to the deeper part even though swimming parallel to the shore.

The danger of being carried out to sea by the ebbing tide will be most acute when, at the "springs", the uncovered extended sandspit will give rise to a particularly fierce ebb between the Avon Beach "shallows" and the sandspit.

Spring tides (the period of danger) occur about every fortnight, i.e., at new and full moons and Mr. Derham has pointed out that, at Mundeford, special care will be needed, during Springs, in the afternoon and early evening and the corresponding hours in the early morning. Neap tides, which

accompany the first and last quarters of the moon, produce ebbs during the evening and into the night and at corresponding periods in the mornings. These tides are not so fast running as Spring tides.

"SWEPT OFF FEET"

"Children should not attempt," Mr. Derham told our reporter, "to cross from Avon Beach to the sandspit—or in the reverse direction as, if the tide happens to be ebbing strongly, they can easily be swept off their feet and carried swiftly out to sea."

WARNING SIGNALS.

As warning signals will only be flown when the beach office is manned, special care and discretion should be exercised by late evening and early morning bathers.

While the beach staff is there, every effort will be made to answer all inquiries on the spot. A post will indicate the approximate position of the change in level from West to East and bathers are asked to take care they are not carried by the general set of the tide over this "sill" and thus find themselves in deeper water than they expected.