

SPANISH RIVER COURTESY OF DON STANLEY

Janet Phipps, with Palm Beach County Resource Management, directs placement of the artificial reef.

Student project sinks to ocean floor

Biology class creates artificial reef, home for sea creatures

By LOPI CROUCH
Staff Writer

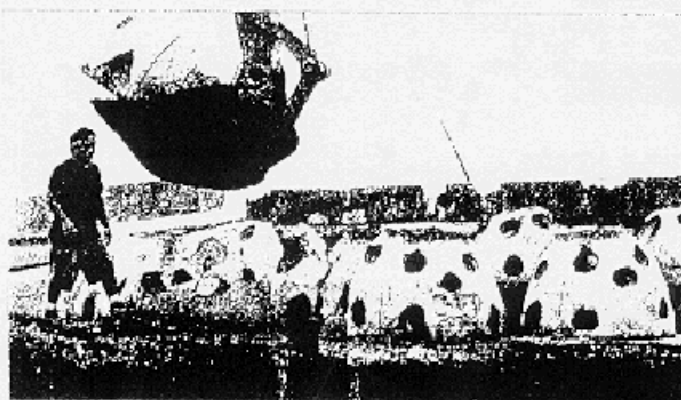
The barge crew the barge scraped up a cement ball that is 10 feet like a premarked disk, set with a fluorescent reaction and a Star Wars conception and plopped it into the water.

A cheer went up from the nearby diving boat, the *Paragon*. Cheers, snickers, claps. Applause erupted.

"Great, let her fly," said Janet Phipps, a county Department of Environmental Regulation staffer, snorkeling and giving barge workers directions.

After nine months of sweat and toil and 13 days of stormy weather, the ball, a Spanish River High School marine biology class project, was finally sinking to the ocean floor 36 feet below.

The class of 12 students created 12 such concrete reef balls, between 3



A barge worker helps unload parts of Spanish River High School's reef project off Palm Beach County shores.

feet and 5 feet high, and weighing up to a ton to provide living quarters for marine life.

The balls were sunk on Friday off the coast of Palm Beach, across from Fort St. Johns & MacArthur, and led around aboard the diving boat all day naming the artificial reef

Donald's Castles.

"These balls are built like well, you could shove into one of these things during a hurricane," said teacher Ken Wynnoff, as barge workers struggled to push one

PLEASE SEE REEF PAGE 2