



Established 1962

WET RAG

www.southpacificdivers.com

May | 07

MAY DIVING Flat Seas Clear Water



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 - EXPLORATION DIVES
 - EQUIPMENT ADVICE
 - DIVE REPORTS
 - CELEBRITY DIVER
- and much more!



Club President's Report



Welcome to our May edition of the Wet Rag. It's been a busy month for diving lately, probably one of the best times of the year, with calm seas and clear water. As we head into Autumn the Westerly winds are going to become more common, a time for dry lips, static electricity and smooth seas. The air and sea temperature are starting to drop but diving should remain good over the next couple of months.

As a club we're doing pretty well at the moment, people are making friends with each other and a number of different diving passions are constantly growing within the club. That's where we differ from almost any other group in the diving community – a really flat structure so that everyone co exists side-by-side rather than being bossed around. Even as a committee, our job is to help introduce people to each other so they become self-organising, rather than enforcing a vertical structure with a few strong personalities telling members what to do. And the advantage is that everyone gets involved because they 'want' to rather than 'have' to.

It's great to see so many new faces getting involved, with the mentoring spirit that I experienced in my early diving days with SPDC still being alive and well. We don't dive for money, but instead for the love of it. And it's great when new generations of divers mature and take their turn at becoming mentors.

One of the other great things that's taking place is the culture of the club is shaping up as a mix of the old and new. Modern and retro. Remembering the old pioneering diving spirit but also changing with the times, using modern technology for more interactive ways to communicate. Take for example our Google Groups list (<http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving>). A group email list that's like a club get-together every day of the week. In the past it would have taken dozens of phone calls for a large number of people to communicate with each other but now, members introduce and organise themselves at the click of a button.

On a different note, something that needs constant reinforcement is we're not only a deep diving group. We have a significant proportion of highly experienced divers - meaning a Wow factor from advanced diving, but equally a lot of members are also at new and intermediate levels as well. New and intermediate divers are our future, otherwise one day all that will be left is a bunch of grumpy old farts.

See you at the boat ramp.

John Fardoulis
President – South Pacific Divers Club
john@southpacificdivers.com

Editors Report

Wow... last months 'Women in Diving' special edition was huge! So huge in fact that I couldn't fit in all the articles and information I was sent by the women, so those I couldn't fit in last month have been included in this issue. This issue also features some 'Part 2's' of articles that were in last months issue, including more great advice for women (and men) divers from Laura Betts.

It's great to finally be receiving articles on a regular basis from club members. The Wet Rag really has become 'your' magazine with the content 'you' want because of this fact. I'd really like to thank those members who have contributed to this issue and at the same time I'd like to encourage those

who haven't yet sent something in to please, take a few moments to write about a recent dive, or a piece of equipment you own, or some other diving related issue that's close to your heart. Don't forget to send in images. The more images the less you have to write. Even a few hundred words is sufficient.

We have lots of great diving planned and with our regular monthly meeting and our google group the Wet Rag has almost become a slow means of communication so make sure you get to our monthly meeting and subscribe to the google group (<http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving>) so you don't miss out on any of the fun we have planned for the coming months.

See you in the water sometime soon,
Scott Leimroth

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SPDC Memberships April



KATIE WALSH

NEW Single Membership



D.J. NICKE

NEW Single Membership



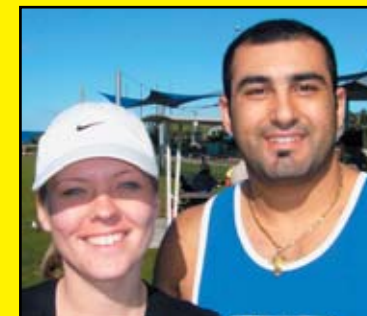
JASON FARLOW

NEW Single Membership



**NICK SPRAUEL and
KRISTINA FORSBERG**

NEW Family Membership



**CHARLIE HAKLANI and
KATE BURGETH**

NEW Family Membership

SPDC welcomes all our new members. We look forward to diving with you soon.

Membership provides many benefits. Diving and social activities are organised each month and include boat dives, shore dives and night dives. Dives range from beginners to advanced. We can cater for all skill levels and experienced divers are happy to mentor newer divers and buddy up with them to help improve skills. Boat diving is done from a range of private boats within the club as well as charter boats and organised diving trips away to destinations within Australia and abroad. You don't have to be a member to come to a meeting or join in on a dive. Contact one of the club dive organisers listed on pages 60 and 61 or fill out the membership application on the last page to join. Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the month at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Pde, Bankstown, Sydney NSW.

MAY CLUB MEETING

As usual we met in the Bistro for dinner at around 7pm and as we ate it looked like the May meeting was shaping up to be a small one. We had received apologies from about 8 regular attendees earlier in the day and then received a few more phone calls during dinner from people saying they couldn't make it. We didn't expect many people but wow were we surprised! Within 5 minutes of the meeting starting we had a great turnout with many members we didn't expect to see turning up. With all the fantastic diving weather lately we had some great dive reports given and every single person in the room was able to give a dive report. Andy gave us a report on his recent 120m dive and the things he learnt from that. John F showed some pictures of our club day at Malabar and we raffled off two nice bottles of wine. After the break we talked diving and made plans for a day at Long reef. Don't forget to subscribe to our google group <http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving> to get all the latest news and diving information.



Above: Everyone listened intently to the dive reports given at the meeting.

Exploratory Dives – South Head of Botany Bay

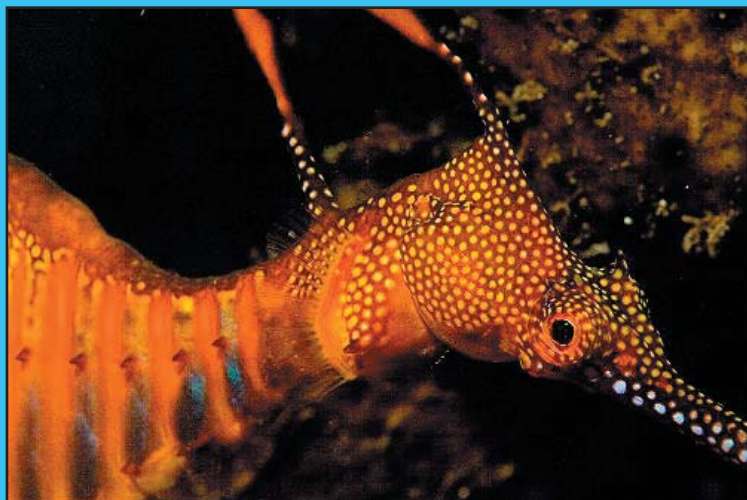
by Peter Iwaszkiewicz



Sunday looked like another perfect day for diving. With 2 divers on board (Mark Simpson and myself) and a bag full of enthusiasm we set out from Botany Bay ramp and headed for the south bank outside of the Botany Bay Heads.

The general idea was to get there and then figure out what we're going to do next. First along the way was the Anchor Reef (named I believe by Michael McFadyen). Two anchors later it was a distant and a very poor cousin of the Container Wall when it comes to anchor collecting. Want some anchors (some even with price tags on them) then go to the Container Wall and stay away from the Anchor Reef.

We found the reef and dropped our anchor at about 17 meters. Jumped in the water and headed straight down. Thanks to the sounder we landed right next to a 5 meter wall. After a quick look around we decided to follow it south. The wall continued all the way for the next 100 meters and seemed to get higher as we went further. Marine life was fantastic; no wonder it's a popular fishing spot. The entire dive fluctuated between 17 and 25 meters with a 10 meter plus visibility. The Water temperature was satisfying 21C. After some 45 minutes and we both agreed the place was worth coming back and exploring some more.



All sorts of sealife can be found on exploratory dives since these sites are often untouched.

Underwater Images by Dave Chillari



After a short lunch break we decided to head further south and do a true exploratory dive. Unfortunately my buddy developed a severe case of the headache and stayed on the boat 'following my bubbles' instead. We spotted a bunch of fishing boats and decided that, although our intentions were very different, we were after the same thing, marine life. We headed in their direction and after getting about 100 meters from them, used our sounder to find a 10 meter wall. I dropped down to about 15 meters and promptly found the ledge. Again, south seemed like the way to go so I headed in that direction keeping the wall face to my right. The scenery was great. Large rock formations with many overhangs and small swim throughs, some large boulders and about 5-10 meters of a wall next to me with plenty of growth on it.

After some 10 minutes of enjoying my dive, suddenly I felt like someone was watching me. Not the kind of feeling you want to get at 20 meters on an unfamiliar site while diving alone. For a second I thought it was my feminine side kicking in and I got a little self conscious about the size of my back side and how it looked in my dry suit. But that wasn't it. Instead I realised I was being followed by a giant cuttle fish.



Left: A quick retreat is probably the best defence. Trying to chase a cuttle fish will only tire you out. Remember, the cuttle fish wont run out of air.

Right: At this time of year it is mating season for cuttle fish and they can become quite territorial and aggressive.



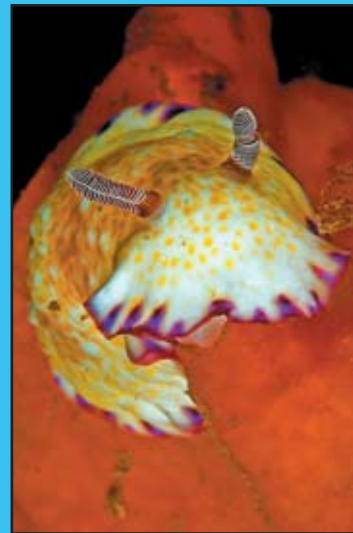
It continued to follow me so I turned back and gave it my worst evil eye I knew how. Nothing! Not only nothing, it actually seemed to have upset my yummy stalker and it proceeded to get aggressive. 'You're on beyatch!' I said in my head and charged forward. The cuttle fish almost tripped over its frilly bits when it took off. I think I actually got caught in its jet wash but stayed brave and quickly recovered my composure. Round one was mine.

I turned around and swam away feeling really good about myself. Then I looked in my reverse view mirror and could not believe it, that delicious stalker was actually back for more. So we went for it. Some 5 rounds later there was no clear winner, my calamari-to-be was still fixated on me and I was out of breath, tired and confused. I put on a fast gear and swam away. Towards the end of the dive I found a spectacular, multi-step rock formation. Three steps with about 10 meter wall each! I had no time to explore it further but promptly asked my surface crew of one to bookmark the spot on out GPS once I had surfaced. The dive was great and site definitely worth exploring.

I'll be back you mental overgrown squid.

Happy to share GPS coordinates with all club members as long as you promise to keep them away from the commercial boat operators.

Keep diving!



Above and right: Nudibranchs are just some of the exotic creatures you can see on an exploratory dive.

Images by Dave Chillari

MAY DIVE CALENDAR

When	Where	Departing From	Type of Dive	Contact	Other
Friday June 1st	Camp Cove	Camp Cove	Shore Night Dive	Dave Chillari 0425209576	Night Dive
Sunday June 3rd	Bare Island	Bare Island	Shore Dive	Ange Jeffery 0414207238	Reef Dive
Saturday June 9th	Old Mans Hat	Little Manly	Boat Dive	Dave Chillari 0425209576	Photography Group Dive
Tuesday June 15th	Shelly Beach	Manly	Shore Night Dive	Dave Chillari 0425209576	Night Dive
Sunday June 17th	Inscription Point	Kurnell	Shore Dive	Ange Jeffery 0414207238	Reef Dive
Saturday June 23rd	North Bondi	North Bondi	Shore Dive	Ange Jeffery 0414207238	Reef Dive
June 29th - July 1st	Forster	Forster	Sharks - Reef	Ange Jeffery 0414207238	Club Weekend Away
Sunday July 22nd	TBA	TBA	Boat Dive	Ange Jeffery 0414207238	Club BBQ and Boat Day
Sunday July 29th	Bass Point	Shell Harbour	Shore Dive	Ange Jeffery 0414207238	

We run regular weekly dives with sites confirmed each week.

For more information contact the Dive Organiser or log onto <http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving> and put up a post.

Print this page out and stick it on the fridge so you remember what's on this month.

Spaces on boats are limited so it's best to book in as early as possible. A minimum of at least 3 days notice is required. Be sure to confirm the dive 24 hours before as weather conditions or other circumstances may result in a change of plans. If you need to cancel please try to find a replacement and notify the dive organiser or boat owner as soon as possible.



JOIN US FOR SOME FUN



**Join South Pacific Divers Club
and be part of our ongoing club activities
including regular local club dives,
trips away and great social events.**

**Sign up now and get 13 months for the price of 12.
That's right, join SPDC now and your membership lasts until 2008!**

Fill in the membership form at the back of the Wet Rag today!

Forster Dive Weekend

Friday June 29th - Sunday July 1st

FANTASTIC DIVING AT A FANTASTIC PRICE!

South Pacific Divers Club Price
\$168.00 Per Person

Minimum number of divers: 7
Maximum number of divers: 12

**HURRY
ONLY 2 SPOTS
LEFT!**

4 boat dives (one day at Forster and one at Seal Rocks)

2nd dive tanks & all air fills

Dive master on all dives (to navigate for you!!)

2 nights accommodation at the Forster Motor Inn

BBQ on the Saturday arvo

Discounts at some of the better restaurants in Forster

CONTACT ANGE TO BOOK YOUR PLACE

Email: ange (@) southpacificdivers.com

Phone: 0414207238

HURRY SPOTS ARE LIMITED AND FILLING FAST!



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING MORE?

THEN WHY NOT JOIN ONE OF OUR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

PHOTOGRAPHY - WRECK - REBREATHING - ECOLOGY

Dives, events and projects are happening now!

Contact John (@) southpacificdivers.com to get involved

Image by Noel Taylor

Aquatic Explorers



BEYOND YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Aquatic Explorers is an SSI (Scuba Schools International) Platinum Facility offering new divers, as well as local and international scuba divers the best scuba diving training in Australia. Having Two Instructor Certifiers on full time staff enables them to provide quality training with all of their courses done 'in house'.

They are also a TDI/SDI Instructor Development Facility, providing courses using the latest training materials and teaching methods from TDI/SDI Australia.

Aquatic Explorers can help you with all your dive equipment needs. They have been Oceanic Dealer of the year 2003-2006.

SCUBA INSTRUCTION SINCE 1989

Aquatic Explorers understand the needs of Scuba Divers, whether you are just beginning or are a diving professional.

Drop in and see Lee and Steve at Aquatic Explorers for all your diving needs.

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Aquatic Explorers

Beyond your expectations



CREATURE FEATURE

Dwarf Minke Whales

by AngeJeffery Images by Dave Chillari

Scientific Name

There are 2 named species of minke whale, the Northern Minke (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) and the Southern Minke (*Balaenoptera bonaerensis*)

Description

Minke whales, in general, are one of the smallest members of the baleen whales. Their colouration can be black or steel grey with a lighter coloured underside. Dwarf Minke whales specific, complex colour patterns which distinguish them from both the Northern and the Antarctic minke whales. Dwarf Minke whales can be identified from their Northern and Antarctic cousins by a white shoulder and flipper base; a dark grey the flipper tip, and a large dark patch covering the throat area.

Northern minke whales are identified by a white band across the middle of the flipper, while the Antarctic minke lacks a white band on the flipper and has a light to dark grey shoulder.

Though the lifespan of the minke whale is unknown, it is thought that the Dwarf lives to a similar age to that of the Antarctic and Northern minke of approximately 50 – 60 years. Age is determined by counting waxy plugs that collect within the ear of the whale; each layer is thought to represent a year. The largest Minke whale identified was 7.8 metres in length.

Social Habits

They are considered very inquisitive often sighted circling sea faring vessels before moving on. While Minke's don't mind spending time alone, they are just as happy in small to large groups ranging from pods of 2-3 individuals, to the larger groups.

Minke whales produce sounds which are within human hearing range. They produce rapid pulses, followed by long trailing notes; as well as producing pig-like grunts, moans and belches.

Habitat

The Dwarf minke has been sighted around Australian waters except for the Northern Territory and Tasmania. Outside of Australia distribution global distribution includes South Africa, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, across to the east coast of South America.

December to March, sightings are more regular in sub Antarctic waters, while between March to October, sightings are more common within around the Great Barrier Reef area.

Feeding

Minke whale diet is similar to that of the other baleen whales with plankton and krill high on the menu, the Minke whale also feeds on lantern and other smaller fishes. Research from James Cook university suggests that Dwarf minke's do not feed while visiting the GBR area, but rather feed opportunistically when in the open ocean. date, time and location of the sighting.

Acknowledgement - This article was sourced primarily from the CRC Reef Research Centre (Qld). Further information about Dwarf minke whales can be found at www.reef.crc.org.au





ATTENTION BOAT OWNERS!!!

LOOKING FOR CREW?

WE CAN HELP!



The club is now at a point where we have a large pool of active divers,
ready to assist as crew on most weekends.
Many hands make light work.

Fellow club members can help!

- Launch and retrieve your boat
- Pull up the anchor
- Provide experience in diving new sites
- Mateship
- Compare notes with other boat owners
- Trips away



Above: Just some of our club boats.

Whether you haven't been taking your boat out due to lacking crew or need experienced boat handlers to help you get more out of your diving.

WE CAN HELP!

Contact john@southpacificdivers.com if you're a boat owner wanting to find out more!



Laura Betts

Does Gear Matter?

Advice for Women Divers
from Laura Betts

In some instances the industry has downplayed the importance of equipment for women.

Fins make a difference. Regulators make a difference. A lot of women are more sensitive to breathing performance than their male counterparts. A high performance regulator will make a big difference for the average female diver. Not just any high performance regulator – low inhalation resistance, the higher the cracking pressure, the more difficult it's going to be, and women tend to be real sensitive to that.

I see this all the time. It's the husband and wife, he buys himself the nice gear because he's going to dive 'more', and she's not going to dive all that much. Of course rule 101, the person who's diving every day is not going to be as affected by an equipment issue or malfunction as a person who dives once a year because their skill and comfort levels are much higher.

So you've just taken someone and set them up for failure. He bought her the least expensive regulator, didn't get her a computer. Bought her a low end BCD, and then asks, 'How come you're not diving?'

I hear this all the time from women who are having one particular issue over another. A lot of times, there's an attitude towards women, 'they're being picky', 'they're finicky', 'they're difficult', 'not comfortable enough'. A lot of times differences they're feeling are very real, and a lot of times, they're fixable. If the right piece of equipment is going to take away discomfort, that's pretty important!

I think that women tend to be better with task loading to begin with, so they're not as sensitive off the bat to a few things being off. So they let them go, then they end up with other things, and now instead of a couple of things, it's compounded to 15 or 20 things – that's a serious situation and she doesn't want to go diving. Most accidents or aborted dives are compounds of task loading. They made 10-15 mistakes before they even jumped into the water. Acknowledging and being sensitive to that is important.

Need the Right Fins & BCD

I'd say the two biggest gear mistakes for women are; wrong fins, wrong BCD.

Weight belts are much more difficult for women to dive. They either sit on your waist – which in addition to creating centre of gravity issues, hurts like hell!



Image by Darryl Torckler

Or if you wear them lower, they slip & slide and fall off. Traditional jacket style BCD's are restrictive for most women – they have a bust line.

So we realise you're more sensitive to breathing, and maybe the performance on a regulator isn't where it should be, inflating a BCD feels like a blood pressure cuff and on top of all that, your weight belt's digging into you, hmmm - aren't you having a good day!

For women, a buoyancy compensator is more important than a regulator system – it needs to fit. It needs to fit well and be comfortable. It needs to inflate and deflate properly, the average inflator hose on the market is too long.

In some cases, women's BCD's are just a modification of a men's BCD. Most women's BC's on the market were not orchestrated from the ground up for a woman. The other issue with a harness or a wing style is that it's very reasonable and very scalable. From a tech diving point of view if you need a mask pocket, you can put a mask pocket on. Need a line cutter or a certain amount of backup knives, or if your dry suit doesn't give you enough room to run a wrist computer etc. the system is scaleable. You can customise it to meet your needs.



Equipment selection is important to ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience every time you dive.



Image by Mark Spencer

Ditching Weight Belts

I personally am a major proponent of weight integrated systems for women. In general, a weight integrated system is better option for a woman for two reasons. First is comfort, she's not going to have to deal with it sitting on her hips. The second reason is that weight belts tend to force an unnatural centre of gravity because women's hips are a little bit different physiologically.

By taking that weight belt off a spot where it really isn't meant to be, or doesn't sit naturally, it solves a couple of issues.

The other thing is that just because it says it's a women's BCD, it doesn't mean it's better for women. I am a major proponent of rear buoyancy systems – which isn't to say I'm getting on the backplate and wing band wagon. I was diving a custom harness with a wing before they called them a wing. My dad took weight belt webbing and I had quick release with stainless weight belt buckles. That was the first quick release buckle!

Each shoulder strap came over, I had a buckle on each shoulder, the bottom laced into it. A belt came across the middle, and that was my harness. It was great because the entire front was open, I was able to cinch it down as tight as it needed to be. I had no issues with it fitting me in the waist. No restriction across the bust line – which women are very sensitive about. The example just mentioned is from when I was about eight years old.

A lot of BCD's are extremely restrictive. For the amount of time male BCD designers look at our chests – they should really pay better attention when they design a product!

Fins

Most women have issues with fins. I have a woman's [size] 9.5 foot. Which is not small, it's like a men's size 8. Drysuit notwithstanding, I take a small fin. There's an awful lot of women that have smaller feet than I do. A lot of times you'll see a woman have issues in taking fins off and putting them on – because the foot pocket is the wrong size for her. Her foot is so far into the fin that to get it on or off, getting working is an issue. Fins are probably one of the down played pieces of equipment. People turn around and think 'oh, I'm not going to be diving that much', and end up with a cheap fin.

You don't have to spend \$200 to get fins that work.



Things to watch...

Because women's feet tend to be a little narrower, they have to look at not only how their foot goes into the fin but also the width of the fin. How much space is on each side? Fins need to be tried on with the strap properly adjusted, none of the 'oh, when you go out diving, you'll get it right'. I'm a big proponent of spring backs. They're wonderful. You can change your environmental protection, without having to adjust every time.

Your foot needs to go into the fin far enough, without going too far. The foot pocket needs to come past the arch of a foot. If the foot pocket is ending at the arch of a foot, it's a cramp waiting to happen. That's a common thing when you start getting into the smaller sizes – because they start cutting the foot pocket short. It needs to come past the arch, but not over the back of the heel.

Same thing on the width. If the fin is too wide, you're going to get side-to-side play, which can cause your ankles to hurt. Maybe no more than an average finger extra play. Make sure the fit is in a dive position. Point your foot to simulate a swimming position. Standing up with your feet flat on the floor isn't how you're going to use your fins!

Some people like quick release buckles but women tend to have finger nails. So quick release buckles don't tend to work. That nice soft fingernail, squeezed into that little quick release buckle, in addition to being painful – can snap your nail at the end of a dive!

That's why I'm a big, big fan of spring backs. It's easy to get them on and off. There used to only be one kind but there are so many on the market now. With mine, I can stand up on the boat, take my left foot, bring it over the back of my heel and get out of my fin. Bring my foot onto the blade of my fin just to hold it down and take my foot out of the fin. And do the same thing on the opposite foot. I can take my fins off, while standing on the boat in full gear. Considering that, in general, women are going to get a lot less help, these are the things that you need to be able to do.

I've always carried my own gear. I want to act like an equal and be treated

like one. Some guys wait to see if you screw up. Or they wait to see if they can rescue you, some of it might just be chivalry. But a lot of it can be ego. Being able to take your fins off without help is important. Knowing your equipment, finding a way that works for you. I can dress my entire system without any assistance. It's nice to have help but placing yourself at a skill level where you don't need help – is going to gain a lot more respect and be a lot more independent.

About Laura Betts:

Laura has grown up around diving, her experience in the industry spans more than 20 years. Her father, Ed Betts, is a co-founder of American Nitrox Divers, Inc. ("ANDI") and her family have been involved in diving for many years. Laura did her first trimix dive at the age of 17 to a wreck in 178ft of water in low viz and a strong current. She has logged more than 1100 dives. Laura completed her first instructor rating at the age of 18, and then quickly followed that up by becoming the first female Nitrox Instructor in the world in 1991. She continued her professional education and later became one of the first female Nitrox Instructor trainers (ANDI IT #22). Since that time, Laura has dived throughout the world and has become a role model to a new generation of young female divers. Laura has been involved in the development of tech diving techniques and equipment before the term techdiving became popular. Laura is currently the owner of Island Scuba Corporation which helped pioneer the concept of online scuba service seven years ago through the 123scuba.com brand. Laura was recently named Southeast Regional Manager for ANDI and she will soon be announcing a series of technical diving training programs specifically for women. Laura can be contacted at Laura (@) 123scuba.com



Laura has been diving for many years.



Laura Betts



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123scuba.com have been providing Scuba gear, equipment and service for over 25 years. For 25 years now they have been putting scuba divers before dollars and have the following to prove it. Organizations such as Sea World, US Army, US Navy, along with police and rescue divers from around the world trust 123scuba.com with their purchases... Shouldn't you.

All of the scuba gear you order will come to you "Ready To Dive". That means that you will not have to assemble anything, just put it on and dive!

Check out their exclusive womens package at
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CLUB DIVE DAY AT MALABAR

On Saturday the 19th of May we gathered for our monthly dive day and BBQ, this time at Malabar. Two boats left at 8am to dive the wreck of the Kellloe in 51m. At 10am we had 4 boats and 20 divers gathered on the beach. We set out to explore Tupia reef around the Southern headland of Long Bay. After an interesting couple of dives we headed back to the beach for a BBQ to talk about dives and diving. The weather was great, the water was clear and the diving and company was excellent. See you all at the next dive day and BBQ.





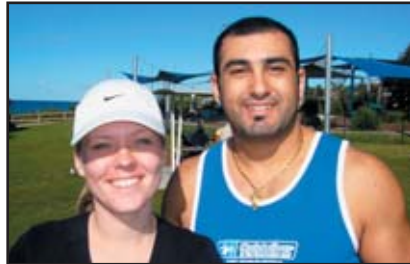
Above: (L - R) Robert, Kate, Charlie, John F, John, Karen, David, DJ, Kim , Fran, Peter, Jason, Scoob, Nick, Scott W, Jon.



Above: David in Peter's boat at Tupia Reef.



Jon Evans signals ok after another great dive.



Below: Nick, Kate, Charlie and Jason.



Above left: Club President or Black Beard?



Above: Steve checks out the vis before diving the Kelloe. Looks like carrots to me :)



Above: Peter and John at the beach.

Below: Club boats anchored at Tupia Reef.



Above: Scoob gets a feel of the Mk15 rebreather.



Above: Karen ran the BBQ with her helpers.

SPDC Club Dive – 19th May – Malabar – Tupia Point

By Fran Thai Low

Arriving at Malabar has that all too familiar feel to it. I have been to this beach so many times before but there's a whole ocean out there that still needs exploring.

Upon approaching the beach no one else was around. We were running late and it made me question if this was the right time and place! A geared up member-to-be was the only soul around. It appeared 3 other boats had already gone out for a morning dive but were on their way back.

Suddenly there were 4 boats all parked on the shallow shore, John S. Hook up, John F's inflatable and the two twins, Scott L. and Pete and I's, identical inflatable boats. Needless to say Scott and John F took full advantage of taking numerous pictures of the SPDC's club boats; I think I actually saw them drool with excitement!

Pete had researched and dived Tupia Point previously with Karen O'Neill and had raved on about this great dive site with an abundance of fish life and even some unknown wreck part. So, all four boats full to the brim of divers and boat sitters sped towards the site. The sea was deceiving today, many had commented on how calm and flat the ocean looked but despite the blue skies and hot sun, the wind was picking up, and given the amount of divers there were it took some time before we all went down.

The visibility was about 10m and the bottom consisted of rock and sand. There were indeed lots of marine life and an unknown wreck part; it definitely did not look like it naturally belonged in the ocean. With the rock formations and crevices it was a site to take your torch and have a snoop in all the dark places. There was always something hiding, sleeping or just lurking, such as an Eastern Blue Devil Fish, and the common Moari Wrausse following curiously behind divers, Leather Jackets, Red Morwong and Groppers to name a few.

In one particular sandy area, one could have mistaken the place for a golf course! There were literally dozens of golf balls congregated in the sand. It was every diver for themselves as hands were grabbing and pocketing them as though they were diamonds. I think Pete collected about 10 balls and he doesn't even play golf!

After about 45 minutes we all decided to surface. For such a large group the dive was very successful, no one got lost, everyone stuck together without knocking into each other, and we were able to enjoy lunch in the usual SPDC style.

I personally enjoyed the day and dive a lot and appreciate our boat sitter David for looking after our boat while we were diving. Even if you don't dive, or have decided not

to dive that day, divers and boat owners always appreciate anyone's participation and help. It is a great comfort knowing someone is on the surface keeping an eye out when you're down embracing the ocean.



FIRST DECO DIVE

By Robert Doust

I have been diving for a long time and have had several dives that have ended up in deco but this was the first PLANNED deco dive. After Malabar on Saturday it was arranged just at the end of the day to meet at Little Manly to dive the Annie Miller. As I was driving home a phone call changed the plan, now it was to meet at Max Gleeson's place and dive the Undola. I arrived at 7.30 am and loaded the gear onto Max's boat for the short drive to the ramp. John F, Scott W and Scoob were at the ramp and just launching their boat. Myself, Toby and Scott L went on Max's boat while the other three went on John's boat. After a bit of a bumpy ride down it took several goes to anchor on the wreck. Once anchored I geared up, entered the water and began the descent down the anchor line to the wreck below. Visibility was not great but after hitting the bottom at about 43m I started looking around. I went to the bow first then made my way back to the boiler. I saw the toilet and some sort of porcelaine shoe with a sea urchin in it. There were plenty of fish on the wreck, but sadly after 12 min bottom time I was down to 100bar so it was time to go up. I went up to 15 m for 1 min then 8 m for 4 min then finished off with 6min at 5 m. After everyone was back on board both boats we set off, stopping on the way back for some hot soup, rolls and finger buns (courtesy of Max) and some tim tams and redskins (courtesy of John). Had a great dive even with the so-so visibility and would like to thank everyone involved for a great day.



Above: Toby, Robert, Scott L, Max and Scoob



Above: Scoob and John.



Top Right: After the dive we stopped for coffee in Gunamatta Bay.



Right: John looking for more chocolate or another chicken roll under the console.

Below: Toby, Robert, Max, Scoob and Scott W.



Long Reef Diving - Wrecks and Reefs

Dive Report by Scoob

On Saturday 13th May John. F, Scott. L, David C, and Scoob met at Long Reef boat ramp at 8am to launch John's boat. A quick gear check and we were heading out wide to locate the wreck of the Coolooli. It was a painful exercise to find the wreck as we had only installed Johns new GPS and Sounder the night before, so everything was new to play with. The nerves started to kick in for me as this was my first deep wreck dive. A quick buddy check and Scott was chasing the anchor down, next to go was David and then it was show time.

John & I descended to the deep. At one stage I thought we were swimming to China as it felt like we were descending down forever. The wreck of the Coolooli finally appeared and it was more than what I had expected. Narcosis kicked in at about 42 m so I was feeling really good now. We then swam along the wreck seeing a Groper, Huge Jelly Fish and a mixture of other marine life. 13 mins had passed and we were diving to our plan so it was time to head up the anchor rope and start decompressing.

Finally, after the deco stops, we surfaced and of course I was in a good mood. Brilliant dive! We headed back to the ramp and got Johns boat out of the water while Scott went to refill our tanks.

Scott and I were booked in of the Froggy boat Omega 2 which picked us up from the beach around 12pm and we headed out to The Wall. Tillo the Captain took the boat load for a Tillo tour though the reef featuring swim thoughts, down into cutters, across walls etc. Great Dive! Saw a load of fish including a Turtle, Cuttle Fish Huge ones (it is mating season). Did a bottom time of 58mins, a great way to finish a great day of diving.



Above: L - R Scoob, Scott, John and David after the dive.

Right: Scoob on deco.

Below: Scoob and Scott head out on the Frog Dive boat for a second dive to Long Reef Wall.



This month's Celebrity Diver

Salma Hayek

Hayek was born in Coatzacoalcas, Veracruz, Mexico to Sami Hayek, a Lebanese Mexican oil company executive, and Diana Jiménez, an opera singer. Hayek's paternal grandparents were Mexicans of Lebanese Arab descent, while her mother is of Spanish descent. Reflecting her Arab heritage, her first name literally means 'peace' or 'calm' in Arabic. Raised in a wealthy, devoutly Catholic family, she was sent to the Academy of the Sacred Heart, Grand Coteau, Louisiana, at the age of 12. She was also an accomplished gymnast aspiring to compete in the Olympics but her father prevented her from being recruited by the Mexican national team.

Hayek moved to Los Angeles, California, in 1991 to study acting under Stella Adler, hoping for a career in Hollywood. Robert Rodriguez and his producer wife Elizabeth Avellan soon gave Hayek the break she needed, a starring role opposite Antonio Banderas in 1995's *Desperado*.

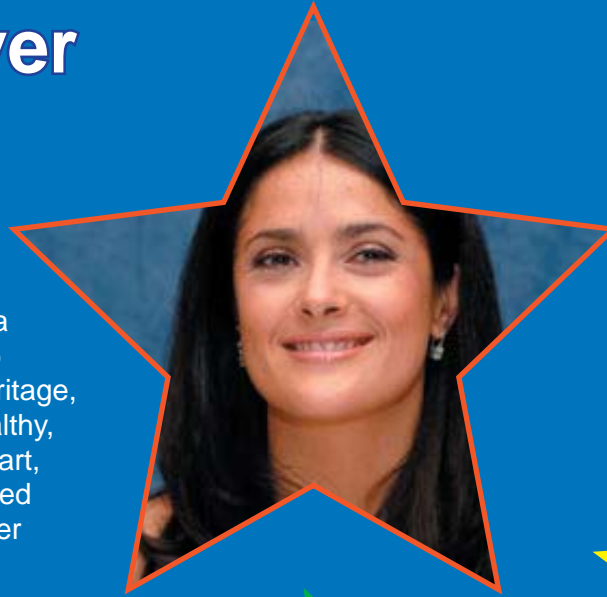
Frida, co-produced by Hayek, was released in 2002. Starring Hayek as Frida Kahlo, and Alfred Molina as her unfaithful husband, Diego Rivera. She earned a Best Actress Academy Award nomination for her performance. This made Hayek, along with Katy Jurado and Adriana Barraza, one of only three Mexican actresses to have been nominated for an Academy Award.

Hayek is an executive producer of *Ugly Betty*, television series airing in the United States since September 2006.

In April 2007 Hayek finalized negotiations with MGM to become the CEO of her own Latin themed film production company, Ventanazul.

She is an avid scuba diver and has scuba diving since she was twelve.

Her favourite dive destinations are Mexico and Australia.



Below: Salma helping rehabilitate dolphins that were beached in Florida.



Photo by Bob Care

An underwater scene featuring a large, translucent jellyfish with a pinkish-purple bell and a long, segmented, pinkish-purple tail. Several small, dark-colored fish are swimming around the jellyfish. The background is a deep blue, suggesting the ocean depths.

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Water like Glass

Saturday the 5th of May saw some of the flattest conditions in years off Sydney. On a good day its flat in the morning for an hour or two and you can get a good dive in but then the wind usually comes up late morning or if your lucky just after lunch. Well in Saturday the 5th of May it never came up! In fact it got flatter as the day went on. The image here was taken at 1pm on the Myola wreck 5km off Long Reef. Like a swimming pool!



Gary 'Cash for Comment' Dunning surfaces after diving the Myola



We dived the SS Birchgrove Park in 51m then had a coffee on the boat while still over the wreck then motored to the SS Myola in 48m for a second dive then came back to the Harbour and dived the Catherine Adamson in 15m.



Jon Evans after diving the Myola



Gary and Max with the worlds largest fingerbun.

Diving With Kids

By Ange Jeffery



Theo Starr and his niece Rebecca Lazzar

In January 2006, I became the proud parent of two divers. After 12 years of waiting, my son (then 14yrs) and daughter (then 12 yrs - just) were allowed to do their Open Water course so they could join me on dives.

Their decision to dive was their own. As a parent, my decision to allow them to dive was based upon their maturity, ability to cope and understand the course theory, as well as get through the course in-water skills component confidently.

As the kids progressed through the course, it became apparent that although they needed to be treated as 'independent divers', there were a number of considerations I became aware of when diving with them.

This is by no means a definitive guide and is offered as points to be aware of when diving with young divers.

Provide the Right Learning Environment

Kids learn best in a supportive environment. Theo Starr, Master Scuba Diver Trainer (Frog Dive Guildford), a parent and uncle of a young divers along with the experience of teaching a number of Junior Open Waters provides some insight, "Let kids know they are not alone [when diving] and to ask for help, let them know they are not alone. When it comes to adults, regardless of whether they are divers or not, don't live your lives through your kids." Theo makes a good point here; parents should not expect nor put pressure on kids to dive. Diving is an individual decision to partake in.

Do not chastise if a young diver is unsure, take the time to demonstrate and explain in a calm and non-condescending manner.

Joining a Dive Club / Dive Group

Dive clubs provide a fantastic opportunity to dive with like minded people who share a common passion – the marine environment. When it comes to selecting a suitable dive club, choose one which promotes a kid safe and kid friendly environment.

Kid safe means that the dive club has taken steps to ensure that adults who are directly supervising kids are suitable to do so. Kid safe also takes into consideration the environment in which a child is participating in during their sport. Consider whether the sites that are dived by club members, are suitable to the level of experience and skill of a younger diver.

Kid friendly takes into consideration a dive clubs environment. Look for a dive club that actively encourages kids to contribute ideas in areas such as dive site selection and activities.

Initial questions that can be posed to a prospective club are - Does your dive club / group ...

- * support younger divers / have divers actively diving within the club under 14yrs?
- * look at ways to include younger divers without active dive parents?
- * actively plan out suitable dives for younger divers?
- * what dive sites would the club consider as suitable (get an explanation of the sites)



Jeci and Nathan Saipa'ia

Have realistic expectations. A dive club you are considering may support active younger divers in theory, but may not regularly visit suitable sites; or may not have other junior divers within their ranks. This is neither right nor wrong, but it may not suit your child diver's needs.

Don't be afraid to clarify anything you are unsure of. As the child diver's parent / guardian, you must be comfortable with your child diving with club members.

Adding an Extra Buddy

One of the risks of diving with a child diver alone is the possibility of a diving accident where a child buddy is placed in a situation of rescuing the adult.

Further to this particular scenario is the emotional and psychological impact upon the child should such a rescue fail (particularly if the adult is a parent of the child).

Adding an additional SCUBA certified adult to the buddy equation relieves some of the pressure upon a child diver in an emergency situation.

Preparing Dive Gear

Give the younger diver plenty of time to organise dive gear. If diving the next morning, have dive gear organised the afternoon before the dive. Help young divers to become familiar with essential and nice to have dive items by keeping a check list handy to check off items as s/he packs for the dive.

Buddy Checks

All divers, no matter the age should know and understand buddy check procedures and should be carried out with care to ensure that the young diver is familiar with their own and their buddy's dive equipment.

Buddy checks are best learned by correct repetition with an understanding of what is being checked and why.

Dive Brief

Dive briefings are an integral part of dive preparation and are (generally) discussed prior to entering the water. A simple dive brief includes:

- * dive site conditions
- * dive entry and exit points
- * buddy pairs (who is diving with whom)
- * dive route
- * expected depths
- * emergency / contingency plan
- * marine life / natural features (if known)
- * rip / current awareness



Rebecca Lazzar

It is important that young divers understand instructions and information provided within a dive brief. Spend a few more minutes clarifying the young divers understanding of the dive plan. This will help reinforce good dive planning habits by allowing the young diver to consider their dive plan in an unrushed or pressured situation. Assist their understanding by confirming correct responses with positive paraphrasing in a reassuring manner.

During Dive

Keep an eye on:

- * Communication: Buddy up and stay together. Keep regular eye contact with your young diver during descent (and during dive) to maintain communication
- * Equalization: Descend slowly to allow a younger diver to equalize regularly and safely.
- * Buoyancy: If you notice your young diver too heavy or too light offer to assist achieving neutral buoyancy.
- * Air consumption: Check air at the surface, upon reaching your dive depth and then during regular intervals. Checking air doesn't need to be an obvious act - sneak quick peaks when possible, or make it a habit of checking each others air levels every 10 -15 minutes. Take it a step further and develop a habit of letting each other know when you get to 100 bar (1450 psi).
- * Ascent: Ascend in a slow, controlled manner keep regular eye contact to maintain communication

Dive Exit

Keep an eye on:

- * Exit safety: Offer to assist if the exit has become washed out or is tricky; reassure and take the most appropriate and safest exit for the younger buddy.



Nathan Saino'ia



Jesse Creaser

- * Rips / Currents; May develop during dive so keep younger divers close by and reassure while using the path of least resistance. Watch for fatigue.

Post Dive - Log Book

Logbooks only need to be a simple record of the dive details and experience and provide a reference of dive site details. Include a site sketch into you log book entries, which can be as simple as a line drawing (mud map) and add in features such as:

- * Entry & exit point
- * Sponge gardens / kelp beds
- * Rock platforms
- * Marine life locations
- * Depth and distances between points
- * Natural formations



Rebecca Lazzar

Kids Aborting a Dive

Kids don't want to cause a fuss; they don't want you to worry about them and may not tell you if something is bothering them. A small thing bugging a young diver on the surface can turn into a bigger issue under water. A sore tummy, a headache, tiredness, nerves can cause a lack of confidence or motivation to do the dive.

A young diver may not let you know if they are not comfortable or confident to do a dive (funnily enough, this phenomenon also occurs with adult divers). Not speaking up can be due to a number of things:

- * Peer group pressure - Insistence / expectation that the child dives because everyone else is.
- * Shyness - Lack of confidence to speak up.
- * Guilt - Not wanting to spoil their buddies dive.

Maintain an environment where a child diver can express their concerns without fear of repercussions. Kids should not be forced or coerced to dive if they are scared, not feeling well or lacking confidence due to one reason or another.

Non Diving Parents of Diving Kids

So you're not keen on diving, but your kid is! Don't worry. There are clubs, such as South Pacific Divers who welcome kids as part of family memberships.

Some tips for non-diving parents:

- * Get involved with your kids diving, Be interested, ask questions, get them to explain equipment, procedures
- * Understand what is involved and the equipment needed to dive
- * Understand dive safety
- * Support the club i.e. shore support – help with BBQ's, setting up
- * Attend members nights and represent your child's interests and needs as a club diver
- * Snorkel with your child after their dive
- * Get as excited as your child is with their diving
- * Learn CPR and 1st Aid

Avoid

- * Micromanaging a young diver
- * Being total 'hands off'
- * Creating a competitive environment
- * Put-downs or undermining actions
- * Taking un-needed risks
- * Diving with buddies who may not consider young divers' needs

Encourage

- * Safety first in attitude and habits
- * Fun, low pressure environment
- * Build knowledge and skills
- * Include younger divers on dive brief
- * Keep the dive brief simple / Keep the dive brief – brief
- * Descend slowly - allowing for proper equalization
- * Use jargon that is understood
- * Buddy up appropriately
- * Check air prior to entering water, at site depth, during dive and prior to ascent

The Beginning of the Winter Westerlies are here.

By Barjumba

Early Winter Westerlies, 'smooth as snakes feet seas' are perfect conditions for diving and on the weekend of the 5th and 6th of May the Diving Gods bought forth excellence...!

At 10pm on Friday I got a late call from Eggers that the conditions were perfect for a dive on the Undola, South of the Port Hacking and off Garie Beach in 42 M. It has been a long long time between dives there, but it remains one of my favourite dives in Sydney, so the answer was without doubt..I'm in..!

We could have water skied to the site. Water was glassy smooth with the smallest of ground swell. The "Poo Puncher" flew down to the site. The only thing that could have stuffed up the day was if there was another boat on the wreck... and there was...! However it was a pair of divers that were up on board doing a surface interval and even better news was that they had just hooked up a permanent sub level marker buoy. It got even better when they said to just hook onto the stern of their boat! After the short chat Eggers and I were soon descending down a fresh 12 mm line. 18 metres down the line the wreck came into sight with clear water under a light layer of surface crud. Two man starburst dive technique for a 24 minute bottom time of diving bliss. Just a word to young players of "Decompression Boxes.." Eggers Cheats.. He will say with a straight face that he didn't but I'm getting in first.. Tradition being what it is we adjourned to Lady Hill for Calamari and Chips in the gutter and told war stories.

The price of the dive like that was the death of my torch which flooded. I handed it to Leo Hillier and said "Here fix.." I think he will recycle the lanyard and chuck the rest.

So having dived nirvana the pressure was on to dive again on Sunday. Same place, same time... It was a tossup between diving or the week long extreme pressure nagging I was under to completely clean up my garage..... So let me tell you about diving on Sunday....

There was just a few knots of breeze from the West and the trip down was a little lumpy but comfortable in 'Sea Puncher.' Paul Stranger tagged along for

his first deep dive. We blasted down to the Undola and not a buoy marker in site... Gone in 24 hours. Just beautiful...

The Wreck came up beautiful on the sounder and GPS but after six shots with the pick it just failed to stick. Being a boat owner I am not accustomed to this anchor pulling thing. So even though I love the Undola I suggested we try the Tuggerah because I can throw an anchor into that by smelling the water alone. We headed North and passed heaps of metre wide giant jelly fish on the surface. After a short bit of manoeuvring and one throw we were into the stern, rock solid. The wind was picking up so I geared up and blasted down to the wreck and tied the anchor in just rear of the boiler. Clear water again, with just ½ a knot of current to the south. I swam out into the sand and looked back at "Max's wide angle shot" of the hull taking in the vista before returning to swim along the hull towards the bow. Forward of the bow a school of 8-10kg snapper were just hanging in the current below the bait fish taking turns to charge them. Back over the hull then out over the sand to the fallen mast. Out there are about 6 or 8 long white fish that live in the sand in holes. I coaxed one out of its hole and surprise surprise they are about 2 metres long. (Note to self: Don't upset these fish again..) A good scrounge around the engine, propeller and back to the anchor for a 24 minute dive and then decompression.

On the way back to the Hacking we encountered a pod of 20+ Dolphins which called for a bit of bow riding. A good weekend of diving. Hopefully there will be more as the westerlies start. Lady Hill... 30 Calamari and Chips, Lemon, Tartare Sauce and drinks... where's my spot on that fence in the sun... "Hey do you remember that dive on the...."

Geoff Cook

Barjumba

Image of the Undola by Michael McFadyen
<http://www.michaelmcfadyenscuba.info>

New Diver?



Need some equipment for your next club dive?

The Club has two sets of dive gear for you to use.

Equipment consists of regs/guages, BCD, Weight Belt, Tank.

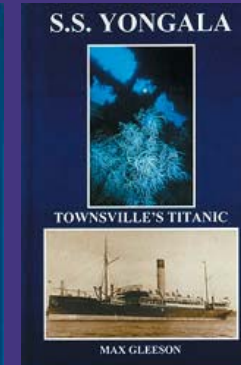
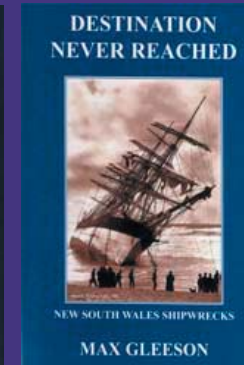
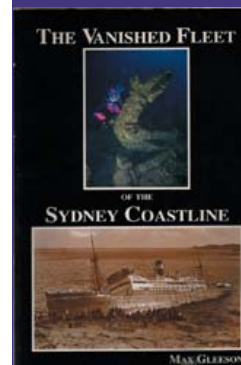
You need to provide Mask, Snorkel, Fins and Wetsuit.

Equipment is only for use by club members on club dives. It must be washed before return and the tank refilled.

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Equipment Review

The quick connect Air Buddy for the buoyancy compensator.

By Jon Evans

It isn't easy to get excited about a back up second regulator stage. After all, you don't even get to use it-you're just stuck carrying the thing in case you buddy has a problem.

Like most divers I tried moving the octopus to different locations to keep it accessible yet out of the way. After I ripped off the mouthpiece and cracked the octo case on a rough shore exit, I started to wear mine on a necklace like a cave diver. Then I discovered the "Air Buddy."

The Air Buddy is a miniature alternate air source from which all the complicated and delicate mechanisms have been removed, leaving only one moving part, the tilt valve. In a normal second stage, inhaling causes the diaphragm to move inward, pressing a lever or series of levers which activate the needle valve. The needle valve is what releases the air from the low pressure hose to enter the regulator chamber and flow into your mouth.

We replaced the needle valve with a heavy duty tilt valve in the Air Buddy. To activate the tilt valve in the Air Buddy, you simply squeeze the mouthpiece with a gentle biting movement of your mouth. That releases the air from the low pressure hose, giving you a PPAS. Positive Pressure Air Source means that your mouth will be flooded with air under a slightly higher pressure than that of the water around you, no matter what your depth may be. You stop the air by relaxing your pressure on the mouthpiece.

The BCD-Air Buddy will mount on any standard size quick connect hose on your buoyancy compensator. It swivels in any direction, and functions equally well upside down or right side up.

To get your supply of breathing air, just bite it gently with your teeth and feel the air flood your mouth.

Many companies are now making power inflators with a built in alternate air source.

All of them, except the Air Buddy have the same problems.

Because they have a diaphragm, if they breathe easily they will free flow when not in use. You can't hold the power inflator over your head to bleed air and breathe through it at the same time.

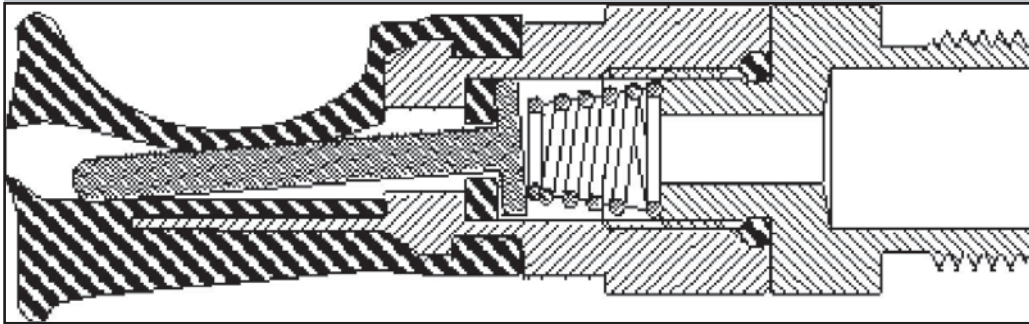


The Air Buddy may be disconnected from the power inflator during use and kept in the mouth to breathe while the power inflator is held over the head to bleed air.

I like the simplicity and reliability of the Air Buddy. It does take practice to use it comfortably. You can't just hand it off to semi-panicked diver and expect them to use it properly. Since the Air Buddy is an uncommon bit of safety equipment, I made the decision to hand off my primary regulator to an out of air diver and breathe with the Air Buddy myself. I practice using mine for a few minute during almost every dive.



You have to gently bite it to make it work. You have to exhale around it instead of through it like you do with a standard regulator. It will take only a few minutes practice until you feel comfortable with it. There is not enough water in it to require purging and you don't need to use your hands to make it work. If you are pressing it, the air from the Air Buddy will force all the water out of your mouth and will come bubbling out around your thumb. When you want to exhale, your exhaled air will also go out around your thumb.



Here's what's wrong with using an extra regulator 2nd stage as an octopus:

- It's expensive.
- It has to be cleared before you can breathe from it.
- It's used so rarely it may not work in an emergency.
- If you carry it attached to your BCD it is cumbersome and gets in the way.
- If you tuck it inside your pocket, it is a real nuisance because of its size, and it is not easy to get out in a hurry.
- If you leave it hanging behind you, it can get hung up on coral, monofilament line, nets, various underwater obstructions, and it can get filled with mud or sand.
- It is an inconvenient source of air for filling other flotation items.
- It needs periodic maintenance by a trained technician to keep it operating.

The Air Buddy solves all that because:

- It is virtually the same size as the hose on which it is mounted, or it eliminates the hose completely.
- It is a Positive Pressure Air Supply (PPAS). As soon as you bite it you are supplied with all the air you need.
- It won't get hung up on fishing line, coral, nets, anchor lines, other divers, etc.
- It does not need any more maintenance than your dive knife.
- It doesn't take up any room in your BCD pocket.
- It can be tucked into almost anyplace on your gear.
- It can be passed through a tiny opening to give an air supply to someone being rescued.
- It only takes a squeeze of your fingers to use it to fill lift bags.
- It can be used to easily put air into the BCD of a diver who is out of air.
- It can never be mistaken for the normal second stage, even in zero visibility.
- It is the safest source of emergency air now available.
- It is available on a chrome plated brass quick connect "T" mounting to clip onto any standard fitting buoyancy compensator hose.



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Grey Nurse Shark Research Presentation

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Image by Dave Chillari



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Filmed by Paul Boler

"WOMEN IN DIVING: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE"

By Hillary Viders, Ph.D.

The 1950s and 1960s: A Few Good Women

As scuba diving evolved in the 1940s and 1950s from a commercial and military exploit into a recreational sport, it was dominated by young males, and offered little incentive to female participants. There were some notable exceptions, however, such as Zale Parry, the star of Sea Hunt and a record-setting deep diver in the 1950s, Dr. Sylvia Earle, a deep sea oceanographer, Lotte Hass, one of the first underwater photographers, nicknamed, the "First Lady of Diving," Dottie Frazier, the first women scuba instructor in the U.S. in the 1950s, Dr. Eugenie Clark, a renowned marine biologist and shark expert, Valerie Taylor, a UW photographer and videographer who starred in "Blue Water White Death" and successfully tested mesh suits for shark bite protection, Fran Garr, who became the first PADI Master Instructor in the 1960s was one of the first instructors to train New York City Fire Department rescue teams, and legendary North East wreck diver, Evelyn Dudas (the first woman to dive the Andrea Doria) who could not find a wet suit made for women in the 1960s, so she designed and started to sell her own line of wet suits.



Left: Evelyn Dudas, the first woman to dive the Andrea Doria.

These "pioneer" women divers were not attempting to break barriers or make political statements. They succeeded in the "men only" world of diving because they loved what they did so much, and they did it so brilliantly. Eugenie Clark, for example, remembers the day when she first told her parents that she wanted to be an aquanaut. "I was eight years old and had just made my first visit to the Brooklyn Aquarium and I was fascinated by a film about William Beebe. My parents said, 'women can't be aquanauts. Maybe if you take up typing in high school, one day you can become a secretary to an aquanaut.' I just couldn't accept that!"

Consciously or not, the women scuba divers of the 1950s and 1960s opened a door through which many others followed. In the following decade, more and more women divers began to

successfully embrace diving as a career. The last thirty years have witnessed a steady growth of women entering scuba diving, both for recreational and professional purposes. Every year, women comprise as much as 25% to 30% of all newly certified divers. The topic of women in diving, therefore, is becoming increasingly relevant to professionals who train divers, to medical experts who evaluate and treat divers, as well as to the diving public.

The 1970s: Women's "Fitness to Dive" Takes Center Stage

In the early days of diving, a number of widely believed "disadvantages" discouraged and/or disqualified women from diving and from piloting air force craft. The issues in contention were: lesser upper body strength, less aerobic capacity, higher risk of bends, hormonal differences, particularly in the case of women taking estrogen-laden oral contraceptives, and pregnancy. In the 1970s, there were many erroneous anecdotal surveys, flawed and/or conflicting data, and not enough human studies to address these issues. Sylvia Earle, who led the all-women NOAA Tektite saturation project in the early 1970s, notes that all the women aquanauts were ordered to discontinue birth control pills at least three weeks

prior to the diving. "But, in those days, everything was different," Sylvia recalls. "Female aquanauts were referred to as 'Aqua Naughties!'"



Above: Australia's Val Taylor

Ironically, up until the 1990s, almost all the medical studies which were used to determine women's fitness to dive were conducted by men and used male subjects! This is not surprising as it may appear, since the funding for medical studies came primarily from the military and the commercial diving industries. In the last decade, offshore oil exploration greatly diminished and the Navy has increased its use of submersibles and robots for its missions. Therefore, funding for diving medical research from these entities has all but ceased. The only significant diving medical research today is that which is conducted by the Divers Alert Network, located in Durham, NC, and these

funds rely on DAN memberships and donations, thereby limiting the scope of its research. Therefore, we may never have definitive answers to all the medical issues concerning women and diving. It is, however, still incumbent, upon divers, physicians and Dive Leaders to obtain and impart as accurate and current information as possible.

Just the Facts, Ma'am!

Fortunately, most of the myths and misconceptions about women's physiological fitness to dive were laid to rest by the 1990s. Most medical experts now agree that depending on each individual woman's goals and motivation, outstanding levels of physical fitness are entirely achievable. In the twenty first century, an era in which female athletes routinely bring home Olympic gold medals and set records in Iron Man Triathlons, it would be naive to think otherwise. Although smaller women may have less upper body strength and less aerobic capacity than their large male counterparts, diving safety and performance depends more on overall fitness, proper training, well fitting equipment, and responsible diving practices. A noted commercial diver, Bunny Key, has said that, "it takes brains, not bulging biceps to move a 400 pound flange underwater!" Therefore, all divers should augment their fitness level to maximize overall diving performance and safety, and to be fully prepared

for unexpected and strenuous diving situations. An excellent program is one that combines a high energy/low fat diet, regular weight training, and cardiovascular exercise. (i.e. running, stair climbing, bicycling, swimming etc.).



The most recent medical studies have also debunked the theory that women are more susceptible to decompression illness than male divers. After several decades of animal and human research and anecdotal reports, researchers now believe that DCI, a most insidious diving malady, is the result of a complex set of physiological and environmental factors, and gender is not one of those factors. Nor are oral contraceptives, although the effects of estrogen in birth control devices and hormone replacement therapies are being studied further (in the 1970s, it was believed that estrogen caused clotting which would lead to DCI. This theory was later overturned and the only advisory now for women divers who take estrogen is if they are over 35, smoke, and have a family history of coronary disease). Currently, the only taboo for women divers is,

"no diving during pregnancy." Diving while pregnant may endanger the fetus because if excess bubbles which are not outgassed following a dive enter the fetal circulation, there may cause a fatal arterial gas embolism. So, other than not diving during pregnancy, there are, in fact, no contraindications specifically for women divers (assuming that they are fit and overall healthy).



The 1980s: COLOR WARS

In addition to the long-standing physiological myths and misconceptions, women divers have also had to navigate rough seas when it came to the logistics of diving, for example finding comfortable dive equipment. Traditionally, dive equipment was designed to be worn by hulking commercial divers or Navy Seals, i.e., large, black rubber dive gear, take it or leave it. In the 1980s, however, the growing number of women entering recreational diving as well as the age range, education, and financial status of these women divers, made it apparent to the diving industry that women comprised a substantial percentage of

their "market," and, as such, attention should be paid.

To accommodate this potentially lucrative market of women divers the 1980s saw a surge of brightly colored diving equipment and a slew of magazine and television ads in which women were portrayed as stylishly dressed to take the plunge. Small and extra small sized BCs, masks that fit even the most petite faces, wet suits designed to accommodate female contours, lightweight fins, and even smaller scuba tanks became widely available. Ironically, as the last vestige of scuba's traditional macho male image gave way to the cavalcade of neon colors, some serious women divers, i.e. wreck divers, cave divers, and cold water scuba instructors, rescue divers, etc., still preferred basic black. As it turns out, what many women divers had really wanted all these years, was not necessarily lime green and hot pink swirls, but rather just high quality equipment that fit!



Left: Equipment in important for divers like Cmdr Scholley seen here gearing up during the Monitor Expedition.

The 1990s: The Glass Ceiling Starts to Crack

Even while equipment manufacturers and training agencies were courting the growing population of women divers, women who sought professional careers in diving still had to contend with the proverbial “glass ceiling,” i.e., they did not receive equal pay and promotions compared to their male counterparts. It was during the 1990s that salary discrepancies between male and female Diving Instructors and dive guides markedly diminished. Women also found unlimited opportunities in diving medicine, scientific projects, and many other diving-related fields. Dr. Karen Van Hoesen, who works in the emergency medicine department at UCSD, remembers receiving a warm welcome when she entered the field of diving medicine in the 1980s. While attending medical school at Duke University, Karen worked with the staff at DAN, which enhanced her interest in hyperbarics and she had no trouble finding mentors and support amongst her male colleagues. “The field is still wide open for women,” Karen reports.



Left: Capt. Scholley retired after 25 years as a US Navy Diver



Left: Karen Kohanowich of the Naval Experimental Diving Unit.

Some of the best career opportunities for women divers today can be found in the military, a far cry from the 1960's, in which the term, “women diver,” was non-existent. When Donna Tobias applied for Navy diving school in 1974, she was bluntly told, “Women don't do this.” Refusing to acquiesce, Donna was eventually notified that the only possible opening was for the Navy Deep Sea (Hard Hat) Diving School, take it or leave it. Throughout her Navy deep sea diving training, Donna, a slender but wiry woman of medium height, had to handle some 200 pounds of gear, including the Mark V metal diving helmet, weighted boots, and heavy canvas suit. She dove in pitch black, icy, often turbulent water, surrounded by larger males, some of whom were supportive and many more who resented women invading their exclusive citadel. “If you ever uttered the words, ‘I quit,’ you could never take them back, and there were plenty of eyes waiting to see me fail,” Donna relates. “But that just fed my intention to finish the course. I didn't want them asking less

of women, ever, for anything.” Tobias toughed it out, and, in 1975, she became the first woman to graduate from the Navy Deep Diving School.

Thanks to pioneers like Tobias, the Navy eventually capitulated, and it now assigns pay and rank solely on merit. CAPT. Marie Knafelc, MD, PhD, for example, has advanced to become the highest ranking officer Medical Officer at the NAVY Experimental Dive Unit in Panama City in the 1990s, and CDR Karen Kohanowich was just promoted to the Ocean Resources and International Programs Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Installations and Environment. CDR Bobbie Scholley, a US Navy Diving Salvage Officer since 1983, was the Commanding Diving Officer assigned to the TWA Flight 800 search and recovery operation (1996), and the first woman to be the US Navy Supervisor of Diving. CDR Scholley is also the first woman to take command of a US Navy Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit in the Atlantic Fleet.



Above: Supermodel Lauren Hutton is an avid marine conservationist.

The Women Divers Hall of Fame: the Future is Now

Although there were many accomplishments and success stories of professional women divers throughout the 1980s and 1990s, they were, for the most part, isolated events. In 2000, however, women's global status in the diving community took a giant leap forward, with the founding of the Women Divers Hall of Fame (WDHOF). With its insignia of a women diver proudly holding up a torch, the WDHOF was the first organization dedicated to bringing public awareness to the contributions of outstanding women divers and to offering financial, mentorship, and educational support for women divers around the world. The WDHOF was jointly founded by Beneath the Sea, Inc., The Underwater Society of America, Women Underwater Ezine, Women's Scuba Association, Capt. Kathy Weydig, and Hillary Viders, Ph.D.

WDHOF became incorporated in 2001, and currently has 157 Members, hailing from 28 U.S. states and Territories and 13 countries abroad, spanning five continents. The Members of WDHOF, a multi-disciplinary Not-For-Profit organization, include pioneers, innovators, and leaders in every field of diving: arts and science, diving medicine, dive training and education, undersea exploration, marine environment and conservation, free diving, business,

media, commercial diving and military diving. WDHOFF Members include not only diving's reigning celebrities such as Sylvia Earle, Zale Parry, Genie Clark, Cathy Church, Evie Dudas, Betsy Royal (VP of Mares Corp.) and free diving world champions, Tanya Streeter and Meghan Heaney-Grier, etc., but also many lesser known heroes, such as US NAVY Captains and Commanders, and a host of women from many countries and sectors whose work has made diving safer and more enjoyable. Securing WDHOFF's reputation as a major global organization, in 2003, the Italian government awarded the WDHOFF a silver cup and plaque in recognition of WDHOFF's impact on diving throughout its country and in March, 2007, the President of the Republic of the Philippines, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was inducted as a WDHOFF Member. WDHOFF has even extended to Hollywood, where actress/model Lauren was recently selected for WDHOFF Membership because of her work as an outspoken marine conservationist and shark protection advocate.

In a nod towards the future, in March, 2002, WDHOFF launched its WDHOFF Scholarship Program, which consists of up to ten different annual scholarships. The WDHOFF Scholarship Program administers awards totaling several thousand dollars worth of cash, educational materials, internships, and training programs to men and women of

all levels of diving and marine science, particularly those who are considering careers in diving. Information about WDHOFF members, scholarships and membership applications, and WDHOFF events can be found on the WDHOFF website: www.wdhof.org. To fund the WDHOFF Scholarship Program, WDHOFF holds at least one major annual fundraiser, often in conjunction with the annual Diving Equipment and Marketing Association expo. WDHOFF's signature event is the Duck Derby, which includes duck races and painted mallard competition, and a silent and live auction. WDHOFF Duck Derby hosts have included celebrities such as Robin Leach, the television star of *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*.

Until recently, no one could have imagined such a large population of recreational and professional women divers and such camaraderie amongst them. In 2006, women comprised over one third of all new divers and that number will undoubtedly continue to grow, as will the opportunities for upper echelon diving careers for women. Thanks to advances in equipment and dive training and with the support of the Women Divers Hall of Fame, the path for future women divers will be much smoother than the rocky road their predecessors had to travel over the last sixty years.

This article was originally published in the PADI Undersea Journal.

AUTHOR BIOSKETCH

Hillary Viders is an internationally acclaimed speaker, educator and author, with an unusually extensive range of interests and expertise. She has been diving in a variety of undersea environments since 1975 and she has published over 500 articles (in 44 magazines and journals), academic papers, and video scripts, and she has contributed to numerous diving books and training materials, such as the NOAA Manual, focusing on undersea and hyperbaric physiology and medicine, marine science and conservation, dive training and safety, and historic shipwreck exploration.



Hillary Viders is a Founder of the Women Divers Hall of Fame (WDHOFF, Inc.) and has served as the WDHOFF Chairman of the Board of Trustees since its inception. Dr. Viders is also the President of the Academy of Underwater Arts and Sciences (AUAS), a Member of the Explorers Club, a Fellow of the American Society of Oceanographers and a Member of the Undersea Hyperbaric and Medical Society. She founded NAUI's Environmental Program (one of the first in the diving industry) and the NAUI Environmental Enrichment Award and she has served on the PADI Project Aware Board of Governors and Honorary Board of Governors for the last 10 years. She is a member of over 20 BODs and consults to numerous NGOs and government organizations.

In addition to Dr. Viders' many dive industry awards, which include a 2001 NOGI Award for Distinguished Service, the 2002 SEASPACE/Project AWARE Environmental Award, two National Association of Instructors Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Diving, the Beneath the Sea Medal of Excellence, the Underwater Society of America's Diver of the Year Award in 1997, the DAN / Rolex Diver of the Year Award in 1999, she was honored in by President Clinton and the U.S. Department of the Interior with the prestigious Take Pride In America Award (1993). In 2002, she was cited in *Skin Diver Magazine* ("Milestones Column") as one of the most influential women in diving.

WOMENS DIVING HALL OF FAME www.wdhof.org

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP REPORT

By Dave Chillari

Hi all and welcome to another month of underwater photography. It has been an exciting month for us with the establishment of an online gallery to showcase our fine talents in underwater imagery.

The site is www.flickr.com/groups/spdphoto and this site allows members to upload photos to share with the club, and to enter our monthly photo comp. May's photographic subject is Divers, so we look forward to some interesting pics of your buddies!!

Thursday 10th May saw the opening of the PADI Zoom InUnderwater at Bare Island underwater photographic exhibition. This competition was held at Bare Island on 15th November 2006 with 54 contestants.

The opening was held at the historic visitors house at Bare Island in conjunction with the National Parks and Wildlife Services and saw a gala evening with champagne, wines and hors d'oeuvres, and speeches by a Koori elder of the La Parouse area, NPWS, PADI marketing manager and sponsors.

On display were 30 works of the winners and other commended photos. In attendance were some of the competition winners, Kevin Deakin (and half of Dive2000) and Jayne Jenkins from Australasian ScubaDiver Magazine (Judges), the federal member for Maroubra, and other dignitaries.

So with the water cooling down, we usually see an increase in the water clarity. So put on your drysuits (if you are so lucky) and get back in the water.



Left: Best macro by Sue Newson



Best marine life by Mike Lefevre



Above: Best overall picture by David Thomas



Best wide angle by Tanya Behyr



Maritime Heritage dealt a crushing blow!



The historic wreck of the Advance (wrecked in 1908) off Catherine Hill Bay currently has a collier sitting right on top of it and the anchor is in the wreck proper, This wreck is protected under the Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976 but currently has a 20,000kg anchor chain laying across the wreck site.

The photo above shows the coal ship SHIN SANYO MARU currently sitting above this wreck site with one anchor pulled showing signs of both fish traps used in the area of the wreck and remnants of the wreck dangling from it, its other anchor lays atop of this site. It remains to be seen what actions will be taken by the heritage department. We should hope they will move quickly to protect the wreck and ensure this does not happen again.

For more information go to:

<http://www.petitionspot.com/petitions/SaveOurWrecks> or
www.newcastlefishing.com

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From the January/February 1999 issue of Alert Diver

DAN Explores Fitness and Diving Issues for Women - Continued from April Edition.

By Donna M. Uguccioni, M.S.,
DAN Associate Medical Director
Dr. Richard Moon, and Dr. Maida
Beth Taylor

RETURN TO DIVING AFTER GIVING BIRTH

The Condition: Diving, like any other sport, requires a certain degree of conditioning and fitness. Divers who want to return to diving postpartum (after having a child) should follow the guidelines suggested for other sports and activities.

Fitness and Diving Issues: After a vaginal delivery, women can usually resume light to moderate activity within one to three weeks. This depends of several factors: prior level of conditioning; exercise and conditioning during pregnancy; pregnancy-related complications; postpartum fatigue; and anemia, if any. Women who have exercise regimens

prior to pregnancy and birth generally resume exercise programs and sports participation in earnest at three to four weeks after giving birth.

Obstetricians generally recommend avoiding sexual intercourse and immersion for 21 days postpartum. This allows the cervix to close, decreasing the risk of introducing infection into the genital tract. A good rule of thumb is to wait four weeks after delivery before returning to diving.

After a cesarean delivery (often called a C-section, made via a surgical incision through the walls of the abdomen and uterus), wound-healing has to be included in the equation. Most obstetricians advise waiting at least four to six weeks after this kind of delivery before resuming full activity. Given the need to regain some measure of lost conditioning, coupled with wound healing, and the significant weight-bearing load of carrying dive gear, it's advisable to wait at least eight weeks after a C-section before returning to diving.

Any moderate or severe medical complication of pregnancy - such as twins, pre-term labor, hypertension or diabetes - may further delay return to

diving. Prolonged bed rest in these cases may have led to profound deconditioning and loss of aerobic capacity and muscle mass. For women who have had deliveries with medical complications, a medical screening and clearance are advisable before they return to diving.

Additional Information: Caring for a newborn may interfere with a woman's attempts to recover her strength and stamina. Newborn care, characterized by poor sleep and fatigue, is a rigorous and demanding time in life.

BREAST-FEEDING

The Condition: A mother may choose to breast-feed her infant while maintaining an otherwise active life. This may continue for weeks or months, depending on the mother's preference.

Fitness and Diving Issues: Is it safe to scuba dive while breast-feeding?

From the standpoint of the child, the mother's breast milk is not unduly affected. The nitrogen absorbed into the body tissues is a component of breathing compressed air or other gas mixes containing nitrogen. This form of nitrogen is an inert gas and plays no role in body metabolism. Although nitrogen accumulates in all of the tissues and fluids of the body, washout after a dive occurs quickly. Insignificant amounts of this nitrogen would be present in the mother's breast milk; there is, however, no risk of the infant accumulating this nitrogen.

From the mother's standpoint, there is no reason for a woman who is breast-feeding her child to avoid diving, provided there is no infection or inflammation of the breast.



Image by Gary Bell

ENDOMETRIOSIS

The Condition: With endometriosis, the tissue containing typical endometrial cells occurs abnormally in various locations outside the uterus. During menstruation this abnormally occurring endometrial tissue, like the lining of the uterus, undergoes cyclic bleeding. The blood in this endometrial tissue has no means of draining to the outside of the body. As a result, blood collects in the surrounding tissue, causing pain and discomfort.

Fitness and Diving Issues: Because endometriosis can cause increased bleeding, cramping, amount and duration of menstrual flow, diving may not be in a woman's best interest when she experiences severe symptoms. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that a woman with endometriosis diving at other times is at any greater risk of diving-related disease than a person without this condition.



Image by Michael Cufer

HYSTERECTOMY

The Condition: This is a surgical procedure in which the entire uterus is removed through the abdominal wall or through the vagina.

All that has been said about diving after a cesarean section (see "Return to Diving After Giving Birth," above) applies to diving after general surgery, including a hysterectomy.

Women may resume diving after a hysterectomy, but they should wait until they have recovered general strength and fitness before they take the plunge - usually six to eight weeks, and sometimes longer.

Fitness and Diving Issues: As far as it relates to scuba diving, a hysterectomy is considered major surgery. It is recommended that anyone undergoing an abdominal surgery allow six to eight weeks of recovery before resuming diving.

If the procedure is complicated in any way, by infection, anemia or other serious issues, it may be wise to further delay diving.

These recommendations apply to all types of hysterectomy:

1. Removing the uterus abdominally (total abdominal hysterectomy);
2. Removing the uterus vaginally (vaginal hysterectomy);
3. Removing the uterus plus the tubes and ovaries (hysterectomy plus salpingo-oophorectomy);
4. Removing the top of the uterus, but leaving the cervix intact (subtotal hysterectomy).

BREAST IMPLANTS

The Condition: Silicone and saline implants are used for cosmetic enhancement or augmentation of the normal breast size and shape of reconstruction, particularly after radical breast surgery for cancer or trauma.

In one study, by Dr. Richard Vann, Vice President of Research at DAN, mammary (breast) implants were placed in the Duke University Medical Center hyperbaric chamber. The study did not simulate the implant in human tissue. Three types were tested: silicone-, saline-, and silicone-saline-filled. In this experiment, the researchers simulated various depth / time profiles of recreational scuba diving.

Here's what they found: There was an insignificant increase in bubble size (1 to 4 percent) in both saline and silicone gel implants, depending on the depth and duration of the dive. The least volume change occurred in the saline-filled implant, because nitrogen is less soluble in saline than silicone.

The silicone-saline-filled type showed the greatest volume change. Bubble formation in implants led to a small volume increase, which is not likely to damage the implants or surrounding tissue. If gas bubbles do form in the implant, they resolve over time.

Fitness and Diving Issues: Once sufficient time has passed after surgery, when the diver has resumed normal activities and there is no danger of infection, she may begin scuba diving.

Breast implants do not pose a problem to diving from the standpoint of gas absorption or changes in size and are not a contraindication for participation in recreational scuba diving.

Avoid buoyancy compensators with constrictive chest straps, which can put undue pressure on the seams and contribute to risk of rupture.

Additional Considerations: Breast implants filled with saline are neutrally buoyant. Silicone implants are heavier than water, however, and they may alter buoyancy and attitude (trim) in the water, particularly if the implants are large.



Image by Gary Bell

Appropriate training and appropriate adjustment of weights help overcome these difficulties.

MENSTRUATION DURING DIVING ACTIVITIES

The Condition: Menstruation is the cyclic, physiologic discharge through the vagina of blood and mucosal tissues from the non-pregnant uterus. The cycle is controlled hormonally and usually occurs at approximately four-week intervals.

Symptoms may include pain, fluid retention, abdominal cramping and backache.

Fitness and Diving Issues: Are women at greater risk of experiencing decompression illness (DCI) while menstruating? Theoretically, it is possible that, because of fluid retention and tissue swelling, women are less able to get rid of dissolved nitrogen. This is, however, not definitively proven.

One recent retrospective review of women divers (956 divers) with DCI found 38 percent were menstruating at the time of their injury. Additionally, 85 percent of those taking oral contraceptives were menstruating at the time of the accident. This suggests, but does not prove, that

women taking oral contraceptives are at increased risk of decompression illness during menstruation. Therefore, it may be advisable for menstruating women to dive more conservatively, particularly if they are taking oral contraceptives. This could involve making fewer dives, shorter and shallower dives and making longer safety stops. Four other studies have provided evidence that women are at higher risk of DCI, and in one study of altitude bends, menses also appeared to be a risk factor for bends.

Are women at an increased risk of shark attacks during menstruation? There are few reported shark attacks on women, and there are no data to support the belief that menstruating females are at an increased risk for shark attacks. The average blood lost during menstruation is small and occurs over several days. Also, it is known that many shark species are not attracted to the blood and other debris found in menstrual flow.

In general, diving while menstruating does not seem to be a problem as long as normal, vigorous exercise does not increase the menstrual symptoms. As long as the menstrual cycle poses no other symptoms or discomforts that affect her health, there is no reason that a menstruating female should not dive. However, based upon available data, it may be prudent for women taking oral contraceptives, particularly if they are menstruating, to reduce their dive exposure (depth, bottom time or number

of dives per day).

PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME

The Condition: Premenstrual Syndrome, or PMS, is a group of poorly understood and poorly defined psychophysiological symptoms experienced by many women (25-50 percent of women) at the end of the menstrual cycle, just prior to the menstrual flow.

PMS symptoms include mood swings, irritability, decreased mental alertness, tension, fatigue, depression, headaches, bloating, swelling, breast tenderness, joint pain and food cravings. Severe premenstrual syndrome has been found to exacerbate underlying emotional disorders. Although progesterone is used in some cases, no consistent, simple treatments are available.

Fitness and Diving Issues: Research has shown that accidents in general are more common among women during PMS. If women suffer from premenstrual syndrome, it may be wise to dive conservatively during this time. There is no scientific evidence, however, that they are more susceptible to decompression illness or dive injuries / accidents.

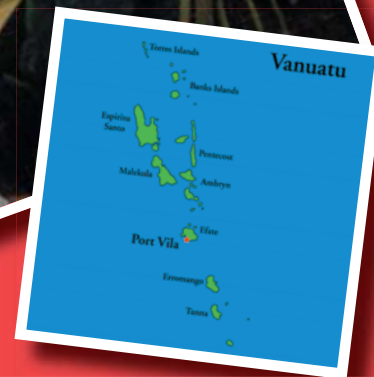
Also, individuals with evidence of depression or antisocial tendencies should be evaluated for their fitness to participate in diving: they may pose a risk to themselves or a dive buddy.

Underwater or Under the Weather? Michael McFadyen's Bucks Night

Saturday 12th May saw a who's who of diving assembled at the Jets Club in Tempe to help celebrate Diving Icon Michael McFadyen's Bucks night. Most attending made use of the bistro and everyone made good use of the bar. It was great to catch up with so many old faces. Usually it's a quick nod across the waves as boats pass or a brief chat at the boat ramp but it was good to sit down and talk. The alcohol flowed and the conversation improved as it did....at least what I can remember of it.

We eventually moved on to the Irish Pub up the road. Michael's eyebrows were intact but his speech was getting a slight slur in it by the time I left around midnight. Rumour has it the hat was passed around and the bar maid did some table dancing but I was also told by that stage Michael was a little unsteady on his feet so he may have missed the show altogether. As they say, what happens on the bucks night stays on the bucks night so that's all you'll hear from me on the matter.

Best Wishes from all at SPDC to Michael and Kelly for their upcoming wedding!





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Diving Equipment

Shipwrecks, Storms and Scuba Warehouse



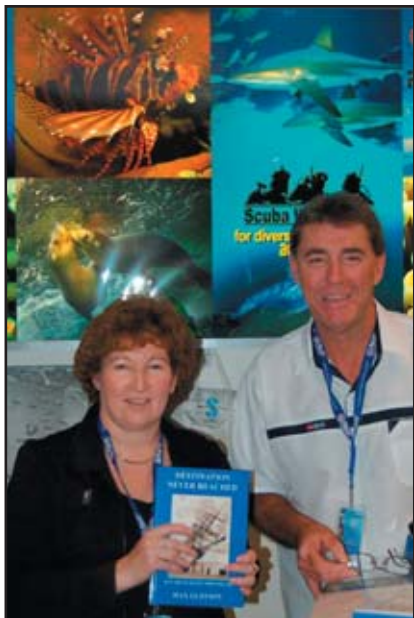
On Thursday 10th May I joined club member Max Gleeson at Scuba Warehouse in Parramatta where he was presenting a talk and audiovisual presentation on his series of books about shipwrecks in NSW and Australia. This was the Scuba Warehouse club meeting and also graduation night for divers who had recently completed courses so there was a good turnout of around 40+ people. The store is probably one of the best stocked dive stores I have seen. They carry everything from rebreathers, to drysuits, to a huge range of masks and wetsuits and even a dedicated childrens section and probably the best quality spearguns I've seen in a dive shop for many years. After some snacks and drinks in the shop and watching Max's video footage on their flatscreen tv there, they presented their graduating divers with a range of awards and certifications. We then moved a few doors up to the restaurant for a celebratory dinner followed by Max's slide show and presentation.

The Suba Warehouse staff and divers are a friendly bunch and are all keen divers with a range of abilities from open water students right through to members of the Sydney Project with experience diving the Bega wreck. It was great to meet up with them all and they really appreciated and enjoyed Max's presentation and talk.



Left: Henry Iannitti (L) and Graham Miles (R) Graham is one of the dedicated instructors at Scuba Warehouse.

Below: The graduates. Various awards and certifications were recieved from open water to rescue diver to enriched air.



Above: Chris Jacob and Ingrid Andrew

Left: Judith McDonald with Max and a copy of his book *Destination Never Reached*.





Left: Terry Smith of Scuba Warehouse explains the finer points of a full face mask to Max.



Left: (L-R) Jamie Loftus, Laura Grassi and Tasha Chard were planning their Heli-Diver dives.

Below: Conversation and a good meal followed the presentation of awards.



Left: Scott Martin and Linda Mougeot



Below: Rob Beaty receives his Enriched Air Certification



SPDC MEMBER PROFILE

Angela Jeffery



What's your nickname?

Ange to most, or angry (if you've known me long enough), 'aj' I get at work, or 'saijef' online.

How long have you been a club member?

Too long! About 8 enjoyable months so far

What sort of diving do you enjoy most?

Plod along, unrushed dives where there's time to take a good look around; dives where the kids are diving well; dives with good/familiar buddies; buddying up with newer divers and seeing things for the first time again; any dive that works on my deeper diving skills or pushes me a little more to be a better diver.

What is the most common misconception that people have about you?

That I'm a bitch, I'm not really; I just have a short fuse for inconsiderate people.

What kind of music are you into?

Most things bluesy, otherwise anything that gets my toes tapping.

Any phobias?

Sharks, failure to get assignments in on time and busting up my shoulder again and that would require another reconstruction; and having my photo taken.

What temptations are you powerless to resist?

Chocolate and offering my opinion (esp. to JF)

What do you like to do in your spare time when you're not diving?

I used to read for relaxation, now everything I pick up is either a uni text for my marine science degree, the wet rag or some other dive-related magazine. I love to horse ride; I own an Arab mare, Silque, and when time permits I get out and ride (not happening lot lately though).

What's your favourite dive site and why?

I really haven't found it yet. I could spend a month, covering 10m2 a day, day after day at Julian rocks and or similarly Nelson Bay. But really each dive and dive site offers something different; you just need to open your eyes and look for the unusual on each dive.

What's your most treasured piece of dive equipment?

My cressi titanium regs, they make breathing under water easier then it probably should be.

What's the most annoying thing someone could do to you on a dive?

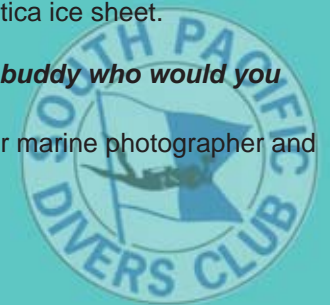
Place themselves or their buddy in a dangerous situation, commandoes, anyone throwing crap in the ocean (or anywhere else) or annoying marine life. (These are things that I'll offer my opinion about as well)

If you could go anywhere on the planet to dive where would you go and why?

Antarctica - I want the blue hues, crazy ice fish and other weird critters, sunbeams through ice cracks. It's a strange thing because, I dive with chaps who want bullion, trinkets and wrecks, and here I am wishing for ice diving and eventually Antarctica. And, not quite diving, but near enough, deep submersible diving, again for crazy critters. Imagine.....being in a submersible, diving the mid-Atlantic ridge (eventually) or diving alongside an enormous iceberg or under an Antarctica ice sheet.

If you could have a 'celebrity' dive buddy who would you choose?

I need two, Jean-Michael Cousteau or marine photographer and filmmaker Norbert Wu.





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Boat Owners & Dive Organisers



BOAT OWNERS

John Fardoulis

Email: john (@) southpacificdivers.com

Phone: 0400 888 888

Location: Lilyfield

Boat Type: RIB, 5 shallow, 4 deep + 7.5m half cabin,
6 shallow, 6 deep

Favourite type of diving: Helping novices



Bob May

Email: bobmay (@) hotkey.net.au

Phone: 0428 295 516 or 02 4579 1053

Location: Windsor

Boat Type: 6.5m Marlin Broadbill, 8 shallow, 7 deep
Favourite type of diving: Reef & Photography



Scott Leimroth

Email: scott (@) southpacificdivers.com

Phone: 0413 717170

Location: Cronulla

Boat Type: Inflatable, 3 shallow, 3 deep

Favourite type of diving: Wrecks



Peter Iwaszkiewicz

Email: pf_plate (@) tpg.com.au

Phone: 0424 812 483

Boat Type: 4.3m inflatable - 3 divers

Favourite type of diving: Various



Scott Egginton

Email: pennynscott (@) optusnet.com.au

Phone: 0406 049 449

Location: Milperra

Boat Type: 5m, 4 shallow, 3 deep

Favourite type of diving: Wrecks and Deep



John Shidiak

Email: john (@) pulset.com

Phone: 9756 5000

Boat Type: 5.5m Half cabin - 4 divers



Martin Kandilas

Email: mdk (@) speednet.com.au

Phone: 0415 400 403

Boat Type: 5.5m, 5 shallow, 4 deep

Favourite type of diving: Wrecks



Max Gleeson

Email: maxglee (@) optusnet.com.au

Phone: 0416 041 021

Location: Caringbah

Boat Type: Marlin Broadbill, 4 deep

Favourite type of diving: Wrecks



Boat Owners & Dive Organisers



BOAT OWNERS

Michel Kisso

Email: michel (@) engravingking.com.au

Phone: 9436 0999

Boat Type: 4.9m Quintrex - 4 divers



Scott Willan

Email: swillan (@) thomascoffey.com.au

Phone: 95437095

Location: Bangor

Boat Type: Runabout, 4 shallow, 3 deep + Yacht

Favourite type of diving: Fun Dives



Geoff Cook

Email: geoff (@) southpacificdivers.com

Phone: 0404 554 554

Location: Barden Ridge

Boat Type: Shark Cat, 5 shallow, 4 deep

Favourite type of diving: Wrecks



Contact a dive organiser if you would like help organising a dive or subscribe to our diving and events email list at:

<http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving>

and post the details of your dive. We currently have around fifty active members on that list and one or two dives a week are organised via the email list.

Please remember that our club boats are not charter boats and therefore you may be required to pitch in and help during launching and retrieval of the boat. Introduce yourself to a boat owner and see what you can do to help. Respect the requests of the boat owner/captain at all times and treat the boat with care.

DIVE ORGANISERS

Dave Chillari

Email: davidchillari (@) yahoo.com.au

Phone: 0425 209576

Location:

Favourite type of diving: Night dives, shore dives



Peter Iwaszkiewicz

Email: pf_plate (@) tpg.com.au

Phone: 0424 812 483

Boat Type: 4.3m inflatable - 3 divers

Favourite type of diving: Various



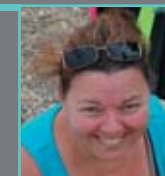
Ange Jeffery

Email: ange (@) southpacificdivers.com

Phone: 0414207238

Location: Central Coast

Favourite type of diving: All types.



Jeff Drury (Scoob)

Email: jeff (@) dplayground.com

Phone: 0433142685

Favourite type of diving: All types



Jon Evans

Email: fishdiver (@) gmail.com

Phone: 0299684381

Favourite type of diving: Midweek, Boat.





BUNYIP ON THE PROWL

Which club member has set a new record for Sydney wreck diving? In his first two weeks of wreck diving he has dived 6 of Sydney's deep wrecks including a few that most divers never get to visit.

Which committee member has featured in advertisements in the major Sydney newspapers this past month? He didn't tell anyone he was doing a bit of modelling on the side.

Which two divers turned up to a dive unannounced expecting to get a place on a boat and were sadly disappointed? Please guys you know you have to book onto dives in advance.

WEBSITE STATISTICS

The Website, in particular the Wet Rag, is being accessed by a huge number of people online. Last month we cracked double figures with over 10,000 downloads. We have had steady growth over the past few months and expect it to continue for some time yet.

The increased downloads could be due to the fact that many club members are also now active online, particularly with MySpace. Have a look for our myspace group at <http://groups.myspace.com/spdc>

If you're not on myspace yet it's a great way to meet divers and diving friends from all over the world.

Don't forget to subscribe to
<http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving>
for all the latest dive organising and diving information.

Join Us



Like to join the South Pacific Divers Club?
Membership has many benefits including:

- **Like minded people** to dive with.
- **Mentoring** - Learn more about diving. Increase your diving skills by diving with others. Experienced members are keen to help you learn more. Group organised education such as first aid and boat handling courses.
- **Adventure** - New places to dive. New things to see.
- **Boat Dives** - Charter boats at discount rates and a number of members boats are available to dive from. Not for profit diving with new friends.
- **Develop Special Interests** - Rebreather, Photography, Ecology, Wrecks, Exploration.
- **Free Independent Advice** - Equipment, sites to dive, trips away, etc.
- **Social Activities** - BBQs, Barefoot Bowls, Wine Tasting, Movies, Charity events, Paintball, and much more.
- **Life long friendships** and contacts in the diving industry - Not just a club, it's a way of life.

To **join** simply fill in the form on the next page and post to
P.O. Box 823, Bankstown, NSW, 2200.

Better yet, come along to one of our **club meetings** held every
3rd Monday of the month at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Parade, Bankstown. Email
john@southpacificdivers.com for more information.



ESTABLISHED
1962

Join the Club.

Membership Application Form

Complete this form and post to: **South Pacific Divers Club, P.O. Box 823 Bankstown NSW 2200**

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

☐ I wish to apply for 1 year's membership.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Post Code: _____

Phone: _____

Work: _____

Home: _____

Mobile: _____

E-Mail: _____

Diving Certification: _____

Certification Number: _____

Are You a Boat Owner: ☐ yes ☐ No

If yes, type of boat: _____

Join now and membership lasts until end financial year 2008

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Single \$50.00 Family \$75.00

Please Note that Membership for 2006-07 has been increased to cover Insurance

DIVING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I/We _____ hereby apply to join South Pacific Divers Club Inc. I/We understand the Club is non-profit, non-affiliated with any training organisation and is for certified divers. South Pacific Divers Club Inc does not offer instruction, advice or supervise its members' divers. It is a condition of Club membership that members exercise their own judgement in accordance with their training in deciding whether and/or how to participate in any particular dive, the technique used, or choice of equipment and that any clarification in regard to these matters should be referred to a qualified instructor or my/our certifying agency.

I/We have read the above conditions and accept same as a condition of membership.

Signed _____

DATE _____