

SUB AQUA JOURNAL

October, 1992 Vol. 2, No. 10

The Forum for North Atlantic Diving

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Single copy \$1.95. Annual subscription \$21.95. Subscription outside of U.S. add \$10.00 postage. Paid orders U.S. funds only. Send requests to the circulation department. Postage paid at Garden City, NY (permit no. 149).

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LET'S DIVE !

October has finally arrived. The children are in school, the holidays are starting to be planned, and for some the diving season may be winding down. The kids in school part, well that's been that way forever. The holiday planning, why not get it done early? Diving season over? We think not.

Sure for some divers the chill of an early morning boat ride in sometimes lumpy seas may not seem that inviting. So I thought back to when I first started diving. Strikingly enough, it was at this time of the year! Tony, Max, and I would dive every weekend and usually two nights a week at any site we could find. It didn't make a difference if it was on a beach or off a boat, only that we were doing it.

This issue of the *Journal* takes us to some sites that we can practically walk right into. Due to recent issues, some people feel the *Journal* is only for the deep or technical diver. Contrary to that belief, the *Journal* provides a forum for all types of diving.

This month Danny takes us way out east on Long Island to Montauk where he explores the still accessible historic Revolutionary War shipwreck *H.M.S. Culloden*. Kirby sets out for the south side of Montauk shimmying down a cliff to dive the clear Atlantic waters of an area he calls the *Caswells*.

Farther north, Les Glick — who is always in search of new dive sites — shares some frustrations while discovering artifacts through perseverance. New to the *Journal's* list of contributors, although not new to the Long Island dive community, is Karen Gurian. Karen has been the woman behind the annual *Aqua—Woman Dive* for the past fourteen years, she tells about her favorite beach site, the *Ponquogue Bridge*.

With the weather getting cooler some of you may be heading south to our friends in Key West. Melissa tells her story of that famous day at *Shark Park*. An exceptional dive when you don't want the whole boat load, just a friend or two, or alone as I have. If you plan this one right, a romantic Key West sunset will be your found treasure.

Captain John Lachenmeyer spends some time telling us about how an old dog-eared diver like himself sits out some pretty hot dives even when he feels good! Barbara Lander finds time between her explorations to interview Captain Phil Galletta; one of Long Island's hottest new dive captains.

Veteran diver and instructor George Safirowski makes his debut in the *Journal* with some thoughts on diver experience. Are you an experienced diver? Find out on page seventeen.

Over the past few months there have been some pretty nasty and unfounded stories building up about the North Atlantic diver. Words like thrill seeker, fearless, foolish, stupid and the like. Most of this has been directed at those of us who choose to dive below 130 feet. Many of these stories are written by those who we're sure, have yet to don either a wet or dry suit and see what is below the surface of the North Atlantic. For if they had (instead of letting advertisers influence them) they'd be diving and learning instead of criticizing. They'd know what's out there and why we continue to go. Hank Garvin expresses his thoughts and feelings about these writers and editors, who I for one have never seen on a North Atlantic dive boat. They should know they are always welcome here too.

The *Sub Aqua Journal* has always been a forum of information about diving in our own backyard. We talk about the things that many others are too afraid to. Only with you, and the continued support of our advertisers, does the *Journal* continue to grow. Through telling the truth about what goes on in our sport we bring you the best dive sites these American waters have to offer. This month, as always, we write about diving. So let's hit the beaches or the dive boats, north or south and lets dive!

Joel D. Silverstein, Editor

WRECK VALLEY

H.M.S. CULLODEN

by Daniel Berg

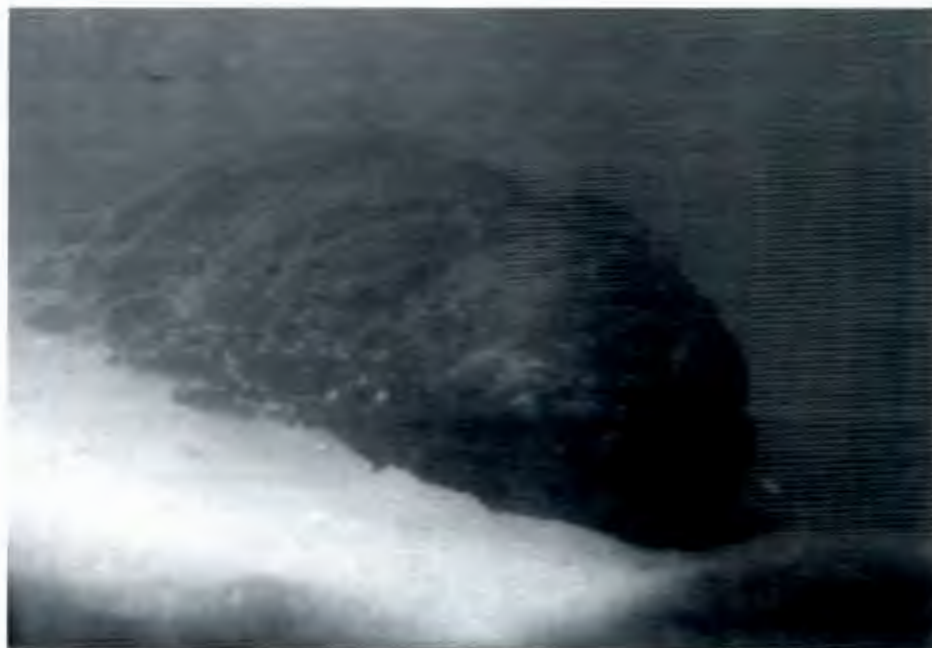
The *HMS Culloden* is one of the oldest and most historic shipwrecks that beach divers can explore off Long Island's coast. The *Culloden* was a 170 foot long by 47-foot wide English frigate that carried seventy-four guns. She was commissioned on May 18, 1776. The *Culloden* was armed with twenty-eight 32-pounders, twenty-eight 18-pounders and eighteen 9-pound cannons.

On January 22, 1781, the *Culloden* holed up in Block Island Sound, under the command of Captain Balfour, along with the vessels *America* and *Bedford*. They waited for several French warships that were reportedly about to run the British blockade. The night brought not French warships but a powerful gale. The three British ships headed for the open sea to ride out the storm. The *Culloden*, with Third Lieutenant John Cannonon at watch, was following *Bedford's* lights. At around 12:30 AM the *Bedford* came about. Captain Balfour decided to maintain course, but ordered a sounding to be taken every half hour.

At 4:00 AM Long Island's coastline loomed directly in front of the *Culloden*. Before any action could be taken the ship went aground. After the storm had ended, every possible effort was made to refloat the *Culloden* but nothing could be done. She had been severely damaged. Captain Balfour ordered everything valuable transferred to shore.

Later he sent a boat to Gardiner's Island to report the disaster. The vessels' *William* and the *Adventure* were sent to salvage the *Culloden's* cannons, gun carriages, and anchors. The only guns left aboard her where her obsolete 32-pound iron cannons, but even these were spiked so they could not be used. After salvaging was complete the *Culloden* was burned to the water line.

Today, this once proud "Ship of the Line" rests in about 20 feet of water just off *Culloden Point* in Montauk, NY. The wreckage lies on a compass course of 330 degrees from the big rock on the beach. The wreck lies only about 150 feet offshore. If you get deeper than about 25 feet, you have passed her.



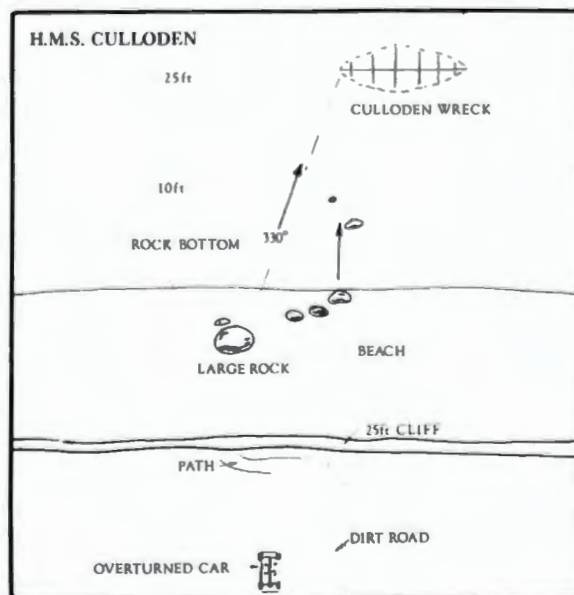
One of the *Culloden* cannons.

Once the wreck is located, divers will note that not too much wreckage remains exposed above the sand. A testimony to the constant pounding of winter storms are the wreck's scattered remains which have been buried beneath the ever-changing sand bottom. Just north of her wreckage, about ten feet from the nearest visible wood plank, are four of her steel cannons. They all face toward shore and are always almost completely covered with sand. Many divers have passed right over them thinking they were only rocks.

Inshore from her cannons and on the eastern most edge of the wreck divers can still see cannon balls. During the summer of 1992, Mike McMeekin and I located a fifth cannon on the site. This cannon is inshore and west of the main group. Again, most of the wreck is covered in sand so fanning may be necessary to recognize the cannons.

A few years back this

wreck was heavily salvaged with an air lift, but divers who are lucky enough to dive here should keep an eye out for some of the remaining cannons and cannon balls. The cannons are rumored to weigh over 10,000 pounds and have a diameter similar to a large garbage can. The *Culloden* is the only local shipwreck on the National Register of Historic





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Shipwrecks and is a protected site. Divers should take nothing but photographs and leave nothing but bubbles when exploring this historic shipwreck.

Recently there has been talk about making the *Culloden* an underwater park. The plan is to build a museum on *Culloden Point* and set up a guided underwater tour. At this point I don't know the exact plans or implications to divers but I am a little skeptical. First, I hope they don't charge divers to visit the site and second, I hope they do actually continue to allow access to the site.

Recently I was denied permission to even look at the one *Culloden* cannon that is on exhibit at the East Hampton Town Marine Museum. Although this museum is open to the public, once they found out that I was a diver the doors were slammed shut. Apparently the so called museum does not want to encourage recreational diving. Unfortunately I fear the same type of discrimination may take place with the planned underwater park. Wouldn't it be nice if local authorities considered the rights and needs of the only group of citizens currently enjoying the *Culloden Wreck*, when planning for an "underwater park?"

For divers wishing to explore the *Culloden* here are directions by car. Take the Southern State Parkway to Exit 44 East, Sunrise Highway. Stay on Sunrise to Montauk Highway. Continue on Montauk Highway past the town of Montauk, and make a left turn onto Edgemere Street which will turn into West Lake Drive. Follow this to the end and turn left onto Soundview Drive. Take Soundview until it turns into a dirt road, at which point you will continue straight ahead for .2 miles. Turn right onto another dirt road (no name) and continue to the end. There is an abandoned overturned car here which makes a good landmark. As mentioned earlier the wreck is located on a 330 degree compass course from the largest rock on the beach.

Finally for those who do want to visit this site, I would strongly recommend planning a dive here before the underwater park project is implemented. Once the local government takes hold sport divers could lose the access to this fascinating historical shipwreck in an area known as *Wreck Valley*.

FEEL GREAT? — Don't Dive!

by Captain John Lachenmeyer

In Hank Garvin's article "Patience" (SAJ, August, 1992), he states "If you don't feel right, don't dive." However, the supplement to that, "Feel great — don't dive" may be harder for some divers to accept. *I'm not about to suggest that you give up diving.* This concept applies to dives considered "beyond sport diving."

By now you might be thinking, "This guy is either crazy or a philanthropist who loves to throw money at dive boats." Actually, neither is the case. But having to pick, I'd go with the former because that's about how one feels sitting out a dive on a gorgeous calm day.

The obvious question is, *Why do it?* The answer lies in knowing your body and how it behaves under various diving conditions such as depth, activity, multiple day diving, travel fatigue, dehydration, etc. How many of you have come up from a dive feeling great only to come up from the next dive with a little skin rash, severe fatigue, slurry speech, or just an aching or dull pain in the shoulder? You re-check the charts and find you were more conservative than your buddies. "How could this have happened?"

The problem may lie in the fact that everyone's body chemistry is different and can vary from day to day. My own body tells me that age is a big factor since I don't off-gas dissolved nitrogen as fast as I did when I was younger.

Feeling great after every dive requires listening to your body's *subtle* warning signs. The next warning could leave an impressive or permanent reminder such as a severe shoulder [DCS] hit which aches every time you dive, or a central nervous system hit which effects your mobility the rest of your life.

The solution is to adopt a set of diving rules that work for your body. For me it has been the *one-dive solution*. I have dove the North Carolina wrecks and the *Andrea Doria* where every dive is between 160' and 240' but sat out the second dive (all but once) while feeling just great. Believe me, with the visibility sometimes approaching 100' and everyone else on board diving and bringing up artifacts, *it's tough*.

To repeat, why do it? Because my body tells me to. Having had a DCS hit requiring chamber recompression and tingles and aches on other dives, I finally realized there might be a [not so] hidden message I was trying to ignore.

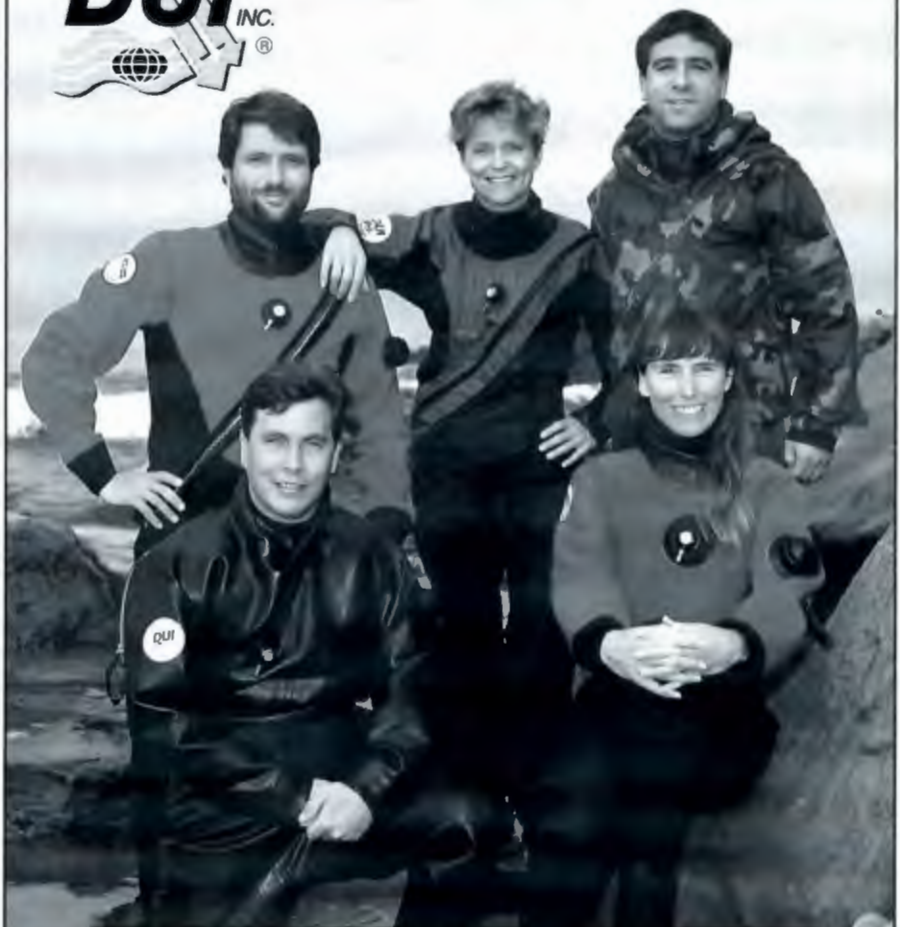
With the one-dive solution I've adopted, mainly on deeper [below 130 fsw] wrecks, I make a *slightly longer dive and take advantage of extended decompression*. I make my dive between the two dives of others on the boat. This profile provides me with a clearer dive and less congestion on the anchorline. The obvious disadvantage may be in finding a dive partner willing to make only one dive.

Another factor in doing one dive per

day, at least in my case, happened when diving the *E.M. Clark* at 235' in North Carolina. All the portholes near where we anchored came up before I hit the water. Such is life.

The choice is yours. "Feel great — don't dive" (it's hard to believe I said this) or be prepared to accept the inevitable if you've been so warned. It's important that you listen to your body. Remember, safe diving is your responsibility.

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SHARK PARK

by Melissa Orenstein

The first time I saw a shark was off the southern shore of *Fort Zachary Taylor Park*, in Key West, Florida. We'd been diving all day without incident circling back from the grass beds 50 yards south to explore the small reef of rectangular cement blocks in 15 fsw.

I remember freezing for an instant seeing two fangs emerge from a camouflage of sand-colored skin. Pinhole eyes, dorsal fin, swooshing tail and all. "Yep, that's it, a 'SHARK!'" I shrieked audibly into my regulator. Cutting a path to shore in 12:23:63 nanoseconds, leaving my buddy behind in a wake you could have water skied in.

Joel followed more slowly, laughing at my fear of the two-foot long baby nurse shark I had mistaken for *Jaws*. (A



A California cousin photographed by Phil Colla

mistake anyone could make, I'm sure.)

Fort Zachary Taylor had been a military strong-hold during the Spanish American war and later, during WW II. The Park and the old Fort are a State Historic Site but there remains a functioning Navy Base flanking each side of the beach. The newly constructed condos haven't spoiled this relatively secluded spot either.

When you drive through the gates

of Truman Annex on Southard Street you'll pay a \$3.25 a car plus \$.50 per person further on, just before entering the southwest tip that is the beach head. The waters are a little rougher here than on the public beaches near the airport, but not enough for a real surf. These churning waters mark the beginning of the Atlantic from the main channel of Key West. According to a Park Ranger, a woman recently reorted seeing an eight-foot nurse shark several yards off *Zachary Beach*. Perhaps baby's grown some.

Park your car as close to the only building you'll see in the lot. It houses the rest rooms, showers, water fountains, and a recently added concession stand. There are also several stationary grills for cook outs.

The Park is a shady clutch of pine trees, its sandy soil littered with pine cones, pine needles, and picnic tables close enough to shore to become gear stands. The sand — shipped in to create the "beach" — poses no threat. Entry is pretty easy too.

The cement block reef is just past the break towards the tip of *Fort Zachary's* tiny peninsula. When we first arrived there weren't any tropicals on the artificial reef so we went searching back towards the east. Perpendicular to the shore are grass beds down to 35 feet or so, with visibility 50 feet or more depending on the tide.

Beach dives are not as challenging as Key West's better known reefs and wrecks but sometimes the weather takes a turn and no one will go out of the channel. *Shark Park* is also the perfect place to ease in or out of a leisurely dive vacation, getting used to the warmer waters or savoring the last day of fun. You can pack light and snorkel or dive all day off the only beach with the sounds of the sea on Key West. Say hello for me.

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DIVE NEW JERSEY . . . and BEYOND

The New Jersey Council of Diving Clubs SIXTEENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM -- *DIVE NEW JERSEY AND BEYOND* will be held this November 1, at the Ocean Place Hilton Resort and Spa in Long Branch, New Jersey.

The New Jersey Council of Diving Clubs (NJCDC) is a voluntary organization established to promote safe skin and scuba diving, provide environmental safety and public interest information to its member clubs, and to contribute to the scuba community. The NJCDC is composed of officers, committees and approximately thirty member clubs.

In the literary sense, a symposium is a collection of writings on a particular topic. For the diver, *DIVE NEW JERSEY AND BEYOND* is a collection of presentations, exhibits, films, slide shows and people related to scuba diving.

The goal of the annual symposium is to provide information about various diving topics. These topics include, technical innovations, viewpoints, recent explorations, wreck diving, diving medicine updates, marine archeology, safety, underwater phenomena, photography, new trends and local and international dive sites.

From 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM, you can stroll through the exhibit hall. There you will meet noted diving authors, dive club representatives, scuba shop representatives and dive boat captains. There will be exhibits from travel companies, magazines, equipment manufacturers and other diving champions and folks. You will see artifacts, displays, equipment, and other underwater treasurers.

During the afternoon you will see the latest work from Rod Farb, Herb Segars, Pete Nawrocky and Stan Waterman. The afternoon program will also include the presentation of; Diver of the Year, Diving Service Awards and the 1992 Photography Content winners.

Tickets are only sold at the door (\$10.00 donation). Children under 12 are free with a paid adult (no, your dive buddy does not count as a child if kneeling). There will be a special children's zoo exhibit for kids of all ages. This year

there will be a new and unique interactive exhibit. Have you ever pictured yourself as a lobster?

Throughout the day, there will be drawings of ticket stubs for many door prizes. At the conclusion of the afternoon program the 1992 Grand Prize, courtesy of Puerto Rico Board of Tourism, Carnival Airlines, Copamarine Resorts, Parg-

uera Diver and Rothchild Travel Consultants, will be drawn. You must be present to win. The Photography contest grand prize is courtesy of Dive Bequia.

For more information please call 201-839-3840 or 908-449-2051. For hotel accommodations and directions you can call the Ocean Palace Hilton in Long Branch at 908-571-4000.



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Bottom Time is now 7 minutes. The Diver is nearly full and No Dive Time has decreased to 8 minutes.

Ascend to 33 feet



Gradual ascent to 33 feet increases No Dive Time and Remaining Air Time. Note the Diver has blanked some segments.

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New Dive Sites *always an adventure!*

by Les Glick

Investigating new dive sites can be very time consuming and not always productive. Sometimes, when you think that you wasted the day and are about to give up, you stumble across a spot that is saying, "Dive me, you won't be disappointed." This happened to me and my longtime dive buddy, Bob Auteri.

We had decided to check out Shelter Island for old bottle sites. Equipped with a *Hagstroms Map of Suffolk County* [Long Island] and some nautical charts of the area to

guide us, we decided to take the South Ferry out of Greenport. Immediately we found one site close to the dock on Shelter Island. It was an abandoned building with an old pier right on the water. The only problem was the tide ripping through there. We promised ourselves to return at slack.

Driving around Shelter Island and checking any spot that took us close to the water was an all day affair. We did find a few good looking sites that were only accessible by

boat but this wasn't what we were looking for. By now it was mid afternoon, and to compound our frustration of not finding a spot to jump into, my car was acting up. It kept popping fuses and I didn't want to get stuck on the island for the night. We finally found a spot that looked half-way decent, so we suited up and jumped in. After thirty-five minutes in murky water, we aborted the dive. Disappointed, we changed and decided to take the North Ferry back.

On the way we talked about how we'd like to find a site that had some history to it *and* easy access from the shore. Arriving at the ferry, the attendant told us our round trip ticket was not valid; the two ferry companies do not honor each other's tickets. We had to purchase another ticket for the trip to Greenport. This only added to our frustration.

We were stretching our legs during the short trip from Shelter Island to the mainland when we noticed — just east of the Greenport ferry dock — a huge abandoned marina. There we saw broken down docks and all kinds of pilings in the water. There were no boats moored and the place looked like it had been closed up for years. We looked at each other and grinned. *This* was exactly what we were looking for.

We drove off the ferry, parked the car and walked to the area. It was late in the day and we didn't have enough air to do a thorough dive of the site. It still looked promising so we decided to come back the following weekend.

The following Sunday, we left at 7:00 AM and were in the water by 8:30. It was warm out for a mid October day and the water temperature was 68 degrees. Visibility was about ten to fifteen feet, with an average depth of twelve feet reaching twenty feet in certain spots. The bottom was silty and covered with all sorts of debris, mostly bottles. In one hour, we were only able to check out one fourth the area, our bug bags were overflowing with bottles.

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We made it back to our entry point and promised ourselves that next week we would bring more tanks, extra bug bags and small lift bags to float the hopefully full bags back to the beach. We dove there three more weekends before we packed it in for the season.

The following year the place was dredged. New docks were being installed and eventually it once again became an active marina. Finding the site had been sheer luck at the end of a frustrating day. We were glad to have been able to make a few yet rewarding dives at the old Greenport marina and hoped future sites would be as promising.

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Viking Diving Inc. has initiated a recall for a select number of dry suits that include all models of the Viking Sport and Pro that were purchased between October 1991 and September 1992.

The recall action was initiated by Viking's supplier of zippers. The zipper manufacturer informed the company that a malfunction may occur with a discrete number of suits.

Viking has already been able to locate a large percentage of the suits (by serial number) but there still are a few suits out there.

Viking Diving Inc. is asking anyone who has purchased a Viking Sport and/or Pro sizes 1-4 during the stated period, to contact Carl Ash at Viking immediately to determine if your suit falls within the recall category. If it does, Viking Diving Inc. will replace the zippers and pay all associated costs of shipping.

Viking is concerned about customer satisfaction and safety.

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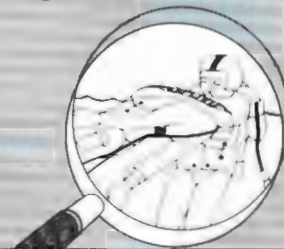
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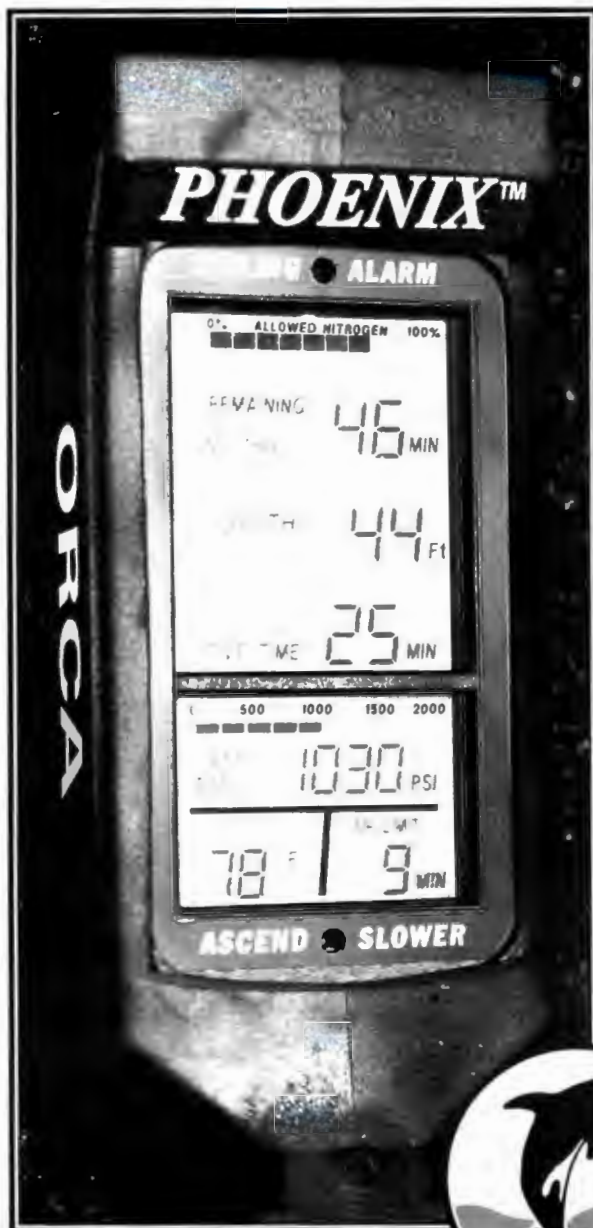
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Glass Houses

by Hank Garvin

It's been about three weeks since I first read the first attack on deep diving in the September issue of Skin Diver Magazine (SDM). I must say that I was less than pleased with the approach taken by Mr. Gleason, SDM editor. In fact, I was furious about it.

We are going through the most amazing time in our sport since Gagan and Cousteau put together the first modern regulator. Indeed there have been many improvements but the basic concepts and equipment have remained the same during the past twenty years.

Way in the beginning, due to numerous deaths and accidents in diving to depths below 130 fsw, the sport was in danger of being legislated by the government. It was up to the shops, manufacturers, and the leading magazine of the time (SDM) to spearhead the way in the development of the educational agencies.

It took a great deal of controversy and effort for the training agencies to be created. They have done an outstanding job in training millions of divers in recreational diving. It is a shame that the broad-minded attitudes that were present years ago have disappeared with regard to new growth.

Now the sport is at a turning point, there have been tremendous developments in the field of technical diving. There are pioneers, like Gary Gentile, Captain Billy Deans, Brett Gilliam, Captain Steve Bielenda, Bill Hamilton and a host of others. Some are scientists, others are just divers. In going through my old issues of SDM, Mr. Gleason, in his October 1990 editorial, praised the efforts of these "Tekies." In fact Mr. Gleason stated, "Skin Diver deeply defends the rights of individuals to pursue what makes them happy. If it's a 200 foot jump or the *Andrea Doria*, go ahead." But now, two years later they've stepped back into the bushes to hide.

The recreational dive community must not hide from technical diving. It is

a natural progression; as infants we learn to crawl, walk and run, then we learn sports. Recreational diving and advanced diving have gotten us to the running stage, now it's time to play ball. Not all people have the desire to develop the ability to compete. Not all divers want to

"A venturesome minority will always be eager to get off on their own and no obstacles should be placed in their path; let them take risks, for God sake, let them get lost, sunburned, stranded, drowned, eaten by bears, buried alive under avalanches -- that is the right and privilege of any free American."

Judge Dolan
Gentile vs. NOAA

or should dive deep or technical.

What would have happened to humanity if we never developed the combustion engine after developing the wheel and all its functions? If the recreational diving community continues to attack deep diving and high tech diving then they will divide the industry. They don't seem to realize that there are government agencies that would like nothing better than to regulate this field. Think of all the ways they could tax us to fund themselves. The most important thing to realize is that government will never just regulate one little piece of the pie (especially the smallest piece).

The problem with injuries and death are quite real, and I for one don't want to

minimize the catastrophe of them. There are people getting involved in high tech diving for many reasons. Some are moving along too quickly. These are people with a great deal of money to spend and they do. They *buy* their certifications and don't have the experience to cope with the emergencies that crop up.

Incidentally, this is a problem that runs rampant through the entire industry. When a diver can move from basic diver to instructor in well under a year, something has gone wrong here. There are too many who can teach yet very few that can do.

SDM and the training agencies should not be throwing stones (they may hit their own glass walls), they should be helping to create a whole sister industry beyond recreational diving. They should be actively promoting safer educational programs.

These organizations brought diving out of the dark ages. It's time for them to be part of bringing diving into the 21st century. Nitrox, trimix, rebreathers and the rest of the deep diving techniques are here to stay. What we can learn from the pioneers of this new generation of divers will enhance the safety of the recreational diver. We need to regulate ourselves to keep this sport as safe as it has become.

Editors Note:

Deep and technical diving been targeted by many organizations and editors as the bad stuff divers don't need to know. The position of the *Sub Aqua Journal* has always been that we bring a level of information to divers that others won't or can't.

Our stories will always include a concern for safety. Deep is not for everyone, this issue of the *Journal* explores that. Yet we find it difficult to understand that editors and publications change their tune when some dive beyond the norm.

SAJ is actively involved with disseminating the information of the pioneers. On October 10th, at the NAUI International Conference on Education, *SAJ* will be hosting a workshop with some of the top names in deep and tech diving on the panel. The goal; how to make our dreams safer. More about that in the next issue.

HOT NEWS

DCIEM TABLES

The 1992 DCIEM Diving Manual (Commercial Version) is now in publication. The manual combines the full man-validated DCIEM Air Tables and Procedures with the newly developed and validated Heli-

um-Oxygen Tables and Procedures. Additionally, table I(N) has been added to complement the air tables — providing Nitrogen-Oxygen (Nitrox) Equivalent Air Depths / Oxygen Partial Pressures for standard mixtures of 40,36 and 32 percent oxygen.

The full Air Tables consist of standard air decompression, in water [not recommended] and surface decompression, repetitive factors / surface intervals and depth corrections for altitude diving. Instructions for multiple repetitive dives and multilevel-diving are also provided

The Helium-Oxygen Tables are designed for oxygen mixtures from 16% to 20%, extend depth capabilities to 330 fsw [that's real deep] and provide procedures for decompression and emergency abort tables.

The DCIEM Diving Manual, 1992 supersedes all previous published versions with the exception of the DCIEM Sport Diving Tables, plastic card format. The DCIEM Tables have been internationally recognized by military, civil, commercial, scientific, medical and recreational training organizations for their safety, reliability and simplicity.

The Sport version of the air tables has been adopted by numerous agencies including; NAUI, NASCD, PDIC, World Underwater Federation (CMAS), DAN, Australian Federation of Underwater Instructors, the United States Underwater Federation and the Underwater Society of America.

The DCIEM Air, Nitrox and Helium-Oxygen Tables, will be supplied in feet and meters. The publication, in commercial format can be obtained through Lifeguard Systems Inc. (914) 331-3383

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

Divers John Pfisterer and Carole Chouraqui explore one of the many Long Island beach sites. BC's, regulators and computers courtesy of OCEAN EDGE. Photo by Joel Silverstein using a Canon T-90, 100 mm f 2.8 lens and Plus-X film.

Captain Phil Galletta

FROM GUAM TO NEW YORK

by Barbara Lander



When Phil Galletta was offered early retirement from his job as a computer programmer, he seized the opportunity to make a dream come true. He and his wife Barbara entered the dive business full-time with their charter boat the *Southern Cross* out of Babylon, NY.

The Coast Guard certified their dive boat for eighteen, but you will never find more than ten divers plus crew aboard. This philosophy of diver comfort and safety characterizes Captain Phil's operation of the *Southern Cross*.

Although they have only been in the charter business for two years, Captain Phil and Barbara have developed a loyal following. Frequently, they have to refer divers to other area dive boats because the *Southern Cross* is booked up.

Captain Phil frequents the wrecks off Long Island like the *G & D*, *Kenosha*, *Lizzie D* and, of course, the *San Diego*. He explains, "We get a mixed crowd."

Although Phil now avows, "I like the wreck dives," he began his diving while in the Navy in Guam. That was in the late 60's. He recalls diving and Guam were a lot different then, "it was not too developed."

"We did mostly lagoon diving, playing around, looking at the reefs," Phil explains. And he smiles, "Nobody knew

what BC's were back then."

When Phil returned to the states he did some diving in fresh water lakes, and some local beach dives. It was 1986 when he discovered wreck diving. By 1988 he had entered the field as a professional and two short years later was running his own boat.

A PADI instructor, Phil is able to help many of his customers become more comfortable in the water. He tries to coach new divers into dropping some of the lead. Phil is serious when he says, "They seem to enjoy their dive a lot more when they are not bulked down by excessive weight." The instructor in Phil likes to, "take students on *San Diego* type dives because they get so excited when they see something they can recognize."

Phil is also happy to share his expertise on another favorite subject — marine life. "Most divers don't know about the different things that live on the bottom." "There are tube worms, sponges and fish like the flounder, fluke, sea bass, blackfish, ling, cod, sea robbin and the strange widemouth goose fish." The sight of a massive school of silversides hanging off the side of the *San Diego* with a school of tuna swooping in to feed counts as one of Phil's most vivid diving memories.

Don't get the idea that Captain Phil is just a tourist wreck diver; the lobster should be shaking in their shells when Phil hits the water. "I never get tired of eating it," Phil laughs. When asked how to catch a lobster he says, "Just grab it and hope it doesn't get your finger."

Students and customers aside, where does Phil head when he can dive for himself? "I like the mystique of the *Oregon*, it is like going into another time. You can find people artifacts like dinner plates and personal belongings. You feel like you're in another time and dimension; you don't feel like you're on the same planet." He adds, "It's not collecting the artifacts that's the most fun, I just love the feeling of seeing them." Glad you're in New York, Captain Phil!

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PONQUOGUE BRIDGE

by Karen Gurian

In 1976 I had my first encounter with the world of scuba diving. We were in Cozumel and I fell in love. It took me three years to convince my husband Lance to become certified. He kept asking, "What do you expect to see up here?" Our second and third days of open water training were spent at the *Ponquogue Bridge*, Long Island. After the first day he stopped asking that question and became as enthusiastic as I was.

This is an old wooden draw bridge located in the town of Hampton Bays, New York. When the town built the new bridge we were worried that the old one would be torn down, but they only removed the center portion. The remaining parts both — north and south — were left as fishing piers. You can dive both areas but the south side is the one I prefer.

As a beach dive the *Ponquogue Bridge* has to rank as one of the best on Long Island for marine life. There are blackfish, bluefish, flounder, fluke, sea robins, eels, striped bass, trigger fish and sometimes even tropical fish. You'll find all kinds of crabs, starfish, anemone, and if you're lucky — a lobster. There are mussels on the pilings and you may spot a scallop or two. At night you'll find a whole new world of marine life. The crabs and eels become more aggressive and the fish sleep. If the lobster are around they will come out to feed.

This is an easy access beach dive that must be done on the slack tide, preferably the high slack. There is a very strong current under the bridge, so proper timing is crucial. I can spend well over an hour down there exploring under the bridge and the rocks along the wall heading back to the beach.

Navigation is easy if you stay under the bridge and within the pilings. If the current starts to run and

you get caught, don't panic. Go with the flow. You'll come out in the bay. There are sand bars out there to land on and you can walk back to the beach. Because of boat traffic, I strongly recommend that you stay under the bridge.

The maximum depth I have registered is 20 feet on high slack. The visibility can be anywhere from just seeing the hand in front of your face to 20 plus feet. This depends on high or low slack — high usually being better — the algae bloom and the weather. Most of the time you can expect 10-20 feet.

Getting to the bridge is easy. Go through town to the new bridge and cross over it going south. Make a left turn, then another left turn, then go straight to the beach. Park on the beach, gear up and walk right into the water.

I recently read an article in *Underwater U.S.A.* about the *Ponquogue Bridge*. It stated, "Advanced certification or open water with 10-15 dives logged is recommend." I disagree. I've seen many beginners do the bridge without any problems, I was one of them. Just plan your dive and dive your plan. Be prepared for one of the most enjoyable and relaxed dives on Long Island. Oh, yes! Bring a dive flag. Dive safe and enjoy.

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Steve Barsky

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- 1 **Dive New Jersey ... And Beyond**
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- 14 **Long Island Divers Assoc. 10th ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL**
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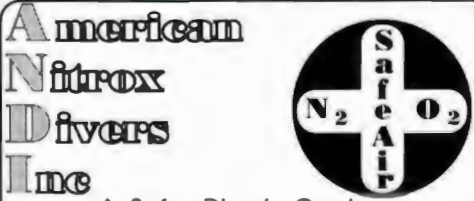
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Yeah, I did my two check out dives in a quarry, got my "C" card and the following weekend went diving on one of the North Atlantic wrecks. That was some time ago and as I recall, it was dark, cold and scary, and I survived. But that was a different era.

Today I am diving all over the world in varied conditions. Some as demanding as Lake Baikal in Russian Siberia, and I am well to tell about it. Nowadays it's a slightly different story.

Certification courses are not as vigorous as they were years ago, and physical conditioning requirements are not as demanding. Six or eight dives after certification and perhaps a few dives on North Atlantic wrecks and divers are considering themselves experienced. But are they really experienced and ready, or did they just barely survive the dives?

How do we measure experience? Who do we take out? Is fifty dives, one hundred, five hundred enough? How many is enough to be ready for a North Atlantic dive? It is spectacular diving here, but the need for physical conditioning, familiarity with equipment, environmental considerations and many other factors are not exactly those of Cayman or Bonaire.

The way I see it, if dive #100 is a copy is dive #1 — and things are not going very well in the beginning — 99 dives later a diver might be an *expert* at doing things wrong, and be ignorantly confident. All it could mean is that nothing has happened during the prior experience, and that diver is again on board ready to take another chance at survival.

I sympathize with boat captains, mates and dive organizers who are responsible for these divers. How does one select who is going out? A "C" card may not be a valid indicator of experience. A dive

log shows only that the diver has been there, but it does not indicate ability.

I myself am not taking anyone diving under my personal supervision and for whom I am responsible, unless they went through the ranks with me. Unless I had an opportunity to evaluate their readiness. At best, I will accept a diver on a recommendation from a trainer whom I completely trust. Maybe this is a small part of some big complex answer, but I sleep nights.

It may be only a beginning, but there is hope. With boat captains and dive leaders becoming more selective about who is going out, our North Atlantic would prevent a rapidly growing unjust and undeserved reputation. [A reputation of deep dark and dangerous.]

I know that for some boats and shops it is a source of income and it keeps the doors open. But putting divers who are not qualified to be on the open ocean creates not only a hazard for the diver but a bad rep for our beautiful ocean.

There have been discussions over the years of regional training, recertification. Those are ambitious and daring projects, and maybe not the only answers but we must do something to protect ourselves before higher authorities begin to dictate our conduct. Why not just train divers right to begin with?

It's not the wrecks, it's some of the divers that are not safe. Choose carefully and have a good night's sleep.

George Safirowski has been diving and teaching divers for over twenty years. He is a NAUI Instructor Trainer / Course Director and the Head Sport Rescue Trainer for Life Guard Systems .

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Cliff Notes

by Kirby Kurkomelis

It was 3 AM when I got into the car with my dive buddy Elliot. Our destination was *Caswell Point* in Montauk, NY. We were very excited about this new dive location. With steep cliffs, fast currents and violent waves, it reminded us of our past trip to the California coast. It sounded like fun, for experienced divers. In late September the visibility is usually great in the Atlantic ocean.

Caswell Point, on the southeast shore of Montauk Point, is between Cottage Point and the U.S. Air base. Cliffs that reach up and touch the sky with a 45-degree angle go down to the water. Arctic stones pave the way with waves crashing down on the shoreline and unsuspecting souls that wander by.

Pulling off route 27, just after East Lake Drive, we followed a dirt road for a mile to a large open field. Stopping at the cliffs we decided to catch some zzz's before the sun came up. The sunrise broke the morning dew, ever so lightly touching its domain. In the distance an owl ducking for cover from the sun's rays as though he was a vampire afraid of the light.

Looking down the slope, watching the waves crashing down on a loose gravel-like surface I thought, "This could be very tricky." Discussing my idea with Elliot, we would tie a rope to a nearby tree and throw it down to the water's edge. This would help us go down the slippery path with our equipment on.

The waves were rolling in at 15 second intervals. Looking out east a fog seemed to be coming in, there goes the day. But I was determined. I shouted, "Let's go!" With one last compass reading we were off between the waves of the incoming tide. Slipping on a loose stone I fell into the water just missing a giant rock covered by white water. I glimpsed at Elliot. He had a gleam in his eye knowing we both had made a successful entry into the water.

The water was alive. A school of bluefish chased small porgies into the shallows while nervous blackfish hid behind giant boulders. Blue crabs reached out with their claws, protecting their piece of sand. The visibility was 25 feet in all directions, fish were swimming and enjoying the rough surf. Then my buddy

signaled me, look to the right! A rock swimming? No, it can't be. A 300 pound skate with no tail swimming. (Where's my camera?) I needed to push away our friendly jellyfish who seemed to be my constant companion. The hard sand bottom makes a great home for a colony of hermit crabs. A lone starfish went for his early morning walk, sucking the sand for micro-organisms for breakfast.

The current began to pick up, we were only in 22 fsw. I navigated through long branches of waving kelp resembling tall trees that reach up to the sky. Making sure to remain calm, I pulled the leaves aside while swimming past them. Down at the bottom between two rocks, a very large lobster made his way under some kelp. With the speed of lightening I managed to overcome this wild beast. At this point Elliot was in pursuit of his third lobster.

Looking up through the water for the sun, it seemed to disappear behind some clouds. Signaling to Elliot, we headed toward the surface. "Where's the beach?" The sun had vanished. Elliot gasped, surrounded by fog, waves breaking over our heads, our vests inflated, which way was home? I wasn't worried. Remember that compass reading from our entry point?

Now the adventure begins, heading north with a 10 minute surface swim back to shore. I could hear the waves pounding the beach. Seaweed thrown onto my mask blocked my vision. The beach. Boy, was I happy. The only problem, it was a few hundred yards away. If it wasn't for my basic compass training, we would have wound up somewhere in the Nantucket traffic lanes.

The swim back to the beach was tough. I swallowed a lot of water. Within 50 yards of the beach we headed back underwater, swimming was easier. The bottom was churned up and I could hear the waves crashing down on top. We rode the waves into the beach.

It wasn't over yet. We were exhausted. The incline of the beach, plus high tide made it almost impossible to climb out of the water. So we rested in the wave zone, like two water rats. I looked at Elliot. Thank god we can swim. Where's the rope...?

DIVE BOAT SCHEDULES

CALIFORNIA

America II

Capt. Rich Cassens
(619) 584-0742
Kelp Forests, Wrecks
Shark Diving
San Diego

CONNECTICUT

Orbit Diver II*

Capt. Noel Voroba
(302) 333-DIVE
Bridgeport

FLORIDA KEYS

Key West Diver*

Capt. Bill Deans
"High Tech" Dive Center
(800) 873-4837
Dive Year Round
Key West

Looker Diving

Capt. Tim Taylor
Daily Gulf Wreck Charters
(800) 245-2249
Dive Year Round
Key West

MASSACHUSETTS

Grey Eagle*

Capt. Erik Takakijan
(508) 362-6501
Bourne Marina
Yarmouthport

Oct	3	Cowin & Cowin
	4	Yankee & Yankee
	9	Catherine Marie
	11	Endicot
	16	June K
	17	Catherine Marie
	18	Plane & Target Ship
	24	Cowin & Yankee
	25	Cowin & Cowin

Nov 1 Catherine Marie

Scuba Charters*

Capt. Butch Amaral
(508) 822-5639
Sub Specialist, 6 Pac
Taunton

NEW JERSEY

Blue Fathoms*

Capt. Tony Donetz
(908) 369-2260
Doily, Weekends & Evenings
Point Pleasant

Deep Adventures III*

Capt. John Larsen
(908)270-8888
Weekend & Night Dives
78' A/C and Heat
Point Pleasant

Porthole*

Capt. Duane Clouse
(908) 985-4887
Wednesday Nite Dives
Monasquan Inlet, 6 Pac

Sea Lion*

Capt. George Hoffman
Capt. Kevin Brennan
(908) 528-6298
Weekday Nite & Weekend
Brielle

Venture III*

Capt. Poul Hepler
(908) 928-4519
Shark River Inlet

NEW YORK

Apache*

Capt. Dom Cerbone
(212) 885-0843
City Island

Defiance*

Capt. Mike Carew
(212) 885-1588
Dive the L.I. Sound
City Island

Eagle's Nest*

Capt. Howard Klein
(516) 735-2254
Point Lookout

Oct	3	Yarkee
	4	USS San Diego
	10	RC Mohawk
	11	Iberia
	17	USS San Diego
	18	Luzie D
	24	Stoli Dagali
	25	USS San Diego
	31	RC Mohawk

Nov 1 USS San Diego

Jeanne II*

Capt. Bill Reddan
(718) 332-9574
Call for afternoon and Nite dives.
Heated Cabin & Hot Soup
Brooklyn

Oct	3	Steamship
	4	RC Mohawk
	10	Pink
	11	Keagon
	11	Turner
	17	Lizzie D
	18	Bald Eagle
	24	Asfalto
	25	Harvey's Woody
	31	Captains Choice

Nov Open boat every weekend. Call for reservations and destinations.

Northern Star*

Capt. Paul Pellegrino
(516) 366-4231
Captree

Rebel*

Capt. Pat DeFeis
Capt. Bill DeCoursey
(718) 897-2885
Brooklyn
Two Trips Each Day

Oct	3	Engine Wreck
	4	Relief Ship
	10	Mistletoe
	11	Iberia
	17	RC Mohawk
	18	British Korvette
	24	Lizzie D
	25	Relief Ship

Sea Hawk*

Capt.'s Frank Persico
& John Lachenmeyer
(718) 279-1345
Freeport

Oct	3	RC Mohawk
	4	Macedonia
	10	Capt. Choice
	17	Capt. Choice
	18	Iberia
	24	RC Mohawk
	25	G & D

Shearwater II*

Capt. Jim McKoy
Capt. Tom Conlon
(516) 242-0529
Fishing & Diving Charters
Captree

Southern Cross*

Capt. Phil Galletta
(516) 587-3625
Babylon

Oct	4	USS San Diego
	11	Hylon Castle
	12	USS San Diego
	18	Fran 5
	25	USS San Diego

Wahoo*

Capt. Steve Bielenda
Capt. Janet Bieser
(516) 928-3849
Heated Cabin & Hot Soup
Captree

Oct	4	Oregon
	8	Oregon Special
	10	USS San Diego
	11	USS San Diego
	17	USS San Diego
	18	USS San Diego
	24	USS San Diego
	25	Oregon
	31	Oregon

Nov	1	USS San Diego
	8	USS San Diego
	15	USS San Diego
	22	USS San Diego
	29	USS San Diego

WINTER DIVING

Many of the boats listed in the Sub Aqua Journal will run all winter long. Weather permitting of course. Please contact your favorite boat and ask about availability.

NORTH CAROLINA

Margie II*

Capt. Art Kirchner
(919) 986-2835
Cope Hatteras

Scuba South I & II

Capt. Wayne Strickland
(919) 457-5201
Year Round Diving
Where the water is warm!
Southport

Oct	9	City of Houston
	10	City of Houston
	11	Civil War Wreck
	24	City of Houston
	31	Rosin Wreck

Nov	1	City of Houston
	14	City of Houston
	15	Civil War Wreck
	21	Rosin Wreck
	22	City of Houston

1993 SCHEDULES

The 1993 Dive Boat Schedules will be available shortly. The captains are diligently preparing an exciting 1993 season for you.

Beginning with the December issue we will be listing the *Specialty Trips*. These are the trips that book up fast, so early reservations are recommended.

Call For Reservations
Certification Cards
Required

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LOCAL HEROES:

September 1992



Lobster Day aboard the R/V Wahoo. Divers from; Martini's Scuba, Dive Inc., the Journal and Aqua Crazy Harvey all came home with dinner from the Oregon!



Veteran diver, Sally Wharman proudly displays her first ever Oregon porthole.



Jim Cleary, Tom Cetta Jr, Joel & Charles Silverstein start off a morning of new Open Water Diver training at Rockaway, NY.



Di Dieter director of Undersea Odyssey, Ltd.



Bob Studen & Di O'Brien Divemasters in Training.



John Kiser displays a 5 pound spiny lobster taken from the City of Houston aboard the Scuba South II.



Maurice and Ziad from Scuba Network.



Capt. Billy "Bubbles" DiMarigny shows young Charles what size means in a local lobster. Check these out!



Tom Tucker dives the Oregon on SafeAir off the R/V Wahoo.

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