

# SUB AQUA JOURNAL™

May, 1992 Vol. 2, No. 5

*The Forum for North Atlantic Diving*

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## USS San Diego

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## SUB AQUA JOURNAL

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## USS SAN DIEGO

It was a cold and wet morning November 20, 1988, the wind was brushing across the surface of the sea making white caps that looked like snow. This was my third attempt to get out to that wreck — the *San Diego*. We chose to go though the winds were kicking up and the air was getting colder. The captian continued onward, she knew we wanted the *San Diego*.

The water rushed into my wetsuit as the adrenaline flowed through my veins — the massive hull appeared out of the darkness. Colors were everywhere red, orange, white and blue. This was my first dive in the North Atlantic and on the *San Diego*. My log book reads:

*We were tied off at the stern. Once on the wreck we moved along a beam and dropped off to the left side and entered the ammo room through a door opening. In the room it was silty, but large, the walls were broken up. I got some bullets. We left the room and went back to the stern. Alec went up with Darryl, I stayed a few more minutes and went up on 17 minutes. The line was tight and rough. The waves had gotten rougher. At 20 feet I hung about 8 min. and 2 min. at 15 feet and then went for the boat. Getting on the boat was difficult the seas were rough and I was tired. All in all a good, deep, cold dive.*

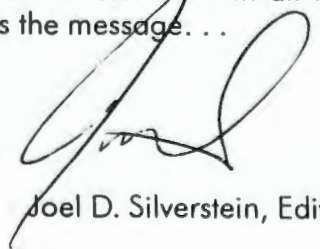
Looking back at this first dive I know why we return to her so often. The sheer size makes her an excitement forever. That cold November day was the begining of my love for the North Atlantic. I have been back to her dozens of times, each time I learn something new about myself.

In this issue Danny describes the *Diego* as his classroom. Hank Garvin shares his love affair of ten years with this "majestic warship" (by the way it was Hank who tied us in on the stern back in '88). Captain John Lachenmeyer stops by to tell us about his encounter with the Bends. Barb Lander takes us down to the little town of Brielle New Jersey where Captain George Hoffman has been diving for decades. Kirby, well, again he goes out for ice cream and comes home with lobsters.

This issue also continues our quest for safety. Responding to the *Responsible Diver Program* the Journal sponsored a program call *Safety is our Goal*. Jim tells us how sixty-five captains and crew joined for a weekend of safety education. We also begin a new column this month, one that you have all asked for — *Equipment Reviews*. I got to test out a new Dacor regulator. Where? You guessed it, on the *San Diego* of course.

Take the time to learn from this issue's stories. Each tells of the exciting things we can see and find while diving in our waters. Yet with all the excitement of diving this season there is always the message. . .

Safety is our Goal.



Joel D. Silverstein, Editor



## WRECK VALLEY

# DIVING THE DIEGO

by Don Berg

One of the most popular and dynamic shipwrecks of the East Coast lies in 110 feet of water thirteen and one half miles off Fire Island, New York. Of course, I'm referring to none other than the wreck of the *USS San Diego*, a World War I armored cruiser sunk by a German U-Boat on July 19, 1918.

Many divers are familiar with the *San Diego's* story. Articles about her history and pictures of the artifacts divers consistently recover have graced several major dive related magazines. Lately, newspapers and television have also given this wreck a lot of attention. Unfortunately, most of the news reports have dealt with diver fatalities on the wreck; hence the misconception that the *Diego* is an inherently dangerous dive site. If you take the time to learn this wreck, nothing could be further from the truth.

The *San Diego* lies upside down on a clean sand bottom. Conditions on this site vary as they do on most Atlantic wrecks but divers have learned that 30-foot visibility with a mild current is normal for the area. The top of the wreck can be reached at about 70 feet, while the deepest portion of the wreck is her stern wash out where depths have been recorded at 119 feet.

The key to safely enjoying a dive on the *Diego* is knowing how the wreck lies and understanding that each diver's ability is limited by training, experience and attitude. A proper positive mental attitude is very important when participating in any wreck dive. If an improperly trained diver were to penetrate a wreck and



long look at the underwater sketch of the *San Diego* drawn by Gary Gentile, a well-known expert on the wreck. This sketch is a great way to familiarize yourself with the wreck's layout, so when you descend for the first time, you will be able to recognize where on the vessel you have landed.

A typical dive plan would be to explore the wreck's stern. The section under her

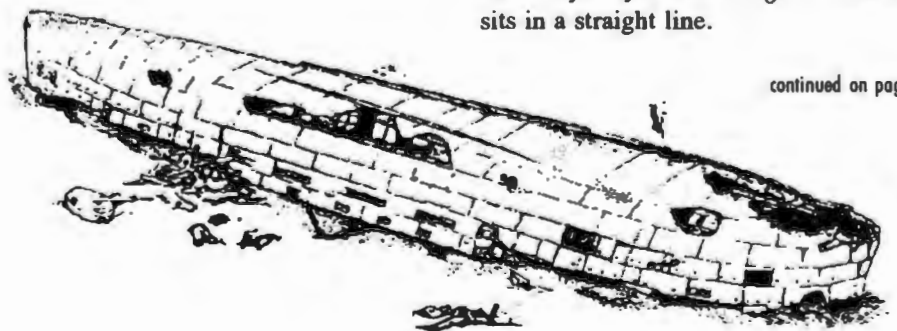
encounter darkness combined with stirred up silt, claustrophobia and stress could soon lead to panic. Never let peer pressure or the greed for an artifact lead you to do a dive beyond your own capabilities or your initial dive plan. Anyway, let's get away from the gloom and doom and concentrate on how to have fun on the *San Diego*.

Let's start with the novice diver. I would highly recommend taking a good

propeller shafts is broken down and allows divers to search for artifacts, shoot photographs and video, or just sightsee while never entering into an overhead environment. This area contains an abundant supply of small brass fittings, valves, and everything from pad locks to the occasional cage lamp. The plan would also limit depth to under 100 feet.

After a few dives in this area, you may wish to tour the wreck's exterior. This is relatively easy on the *Diego* because she sits in a straight line.

continued on page 8



Underwater sketch of the *San Diego* Courtesy Gary Gentile and Kathy Warehouse.

# B E N T

by Captain John Lachenmeyer

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The day is Sunday, September 11, 1988. We depart from Freeport, New York, to dive the G & D which lies in 120 feet of water some 15 miles south of Long Island's Jones Inlet. I am one of the Captains on board that day and the trip to the wreck is rather routine, with a north-west breeze pushing us gently along.

This is to be my day of rest. I am not planning to dive having made long working dives on the USS San Diego on Saturday, and entertained company later that night resulting in less sleep and more drinking than usual.

On reaching the wreck site a buoy is tossed, the anchor is secured, and divers proceed to systematically don their gear and then enter the water.

As luck would have it, the gentle northwest breeze changed to a stiff wind by the time divers began exiting the water from their first dive. I was the only one aboard who could dive immediately to free the anchor (without a surface decompression interval), enabling the boat to seek refuge closer to shore.

My thoughts changed from, "I shouldn't dive," to "I can't enter the water without making a normal dive." This would prove to be a self-con — a mistake — otherwise known as the "It Can't Happen To Me" syndrome.

The US Navy Tables allow a 120-foot dive for 20 minutes with a two-minute hang at 10 feet. It became my dive plan, ignoring the fatigue and residual effects of Saturday. The dive itself went well, and I freed the hook at exactly 20 minutes, but things went downhill from there.

Upon reaching the 10-foot stop, it was obvious that surface conditions had seriously degenerated to a point where hanging became difficult. Instead of adding a safety margin to the decompression, I cut it down to the bare minimum. This was a costly mistake soon to be reckoned with.

On surfacing, I quickly shed my double 80's and proceeded to the bow to assist with the anchor; the seas were giving us quite a beating by now. Returning to the cabin to get out of my Unisuit, the problems began. I was suddenly fatigued and required assistance getting out of my dive suit. Then came a horrible pain — sort of entering mid back between my shoulder blades and exiting center chest. My first thoughts were, "Is this what a heart attack feels like?" when suddenly both hands started to go numb. With relief I thought, "Thank G-d, it's ONLY THE BENDS," having lost my father at an early age to the former.

I was able to go below and sort of collapse in a bunk. Only the mate was nearby as the boat turned into the seas and began pounding its way



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way inshore. I managed a low whisper to him that I wanted aspirin which I received as he too exited the cabin. Within minutes I became paralyzed from the waist down while receiving still another excruciating pain, this time in the lower back. I laid there alone thinking and waiting. . . when, after perhaps half an hour, I suddenly felt remarkably well.

I got out of the bunk, finished dressing, and ate lunch as we arrived at our second site, the *Steel Wreck*, in the lee of land. I helped with boat operations and even considered doing an "in-water decompression" which I later elected not to do.

Hours later, upon docking, I began to experience minor difficulties. Climbing to the dock (with double tanks), then in walking to a restaurant on Woodcleft Ave. I began feeling stiff behind both knees, and both legs would swing forward more than normal — sort of a drunken goose step. I rationalized that this too would pass as I ordered dinner from the menu.

While sitting in the restaurant I became progressively worse but refused to acknowledge the situation. "This can't happen to me," was playing through my mind! Feeling bladder pressure I went to the Men's room and found I could not urinate. I was worried but finished eating as fast as possible and drove home.

The bladder pressure intensified at home and I began bouncing off walls as I walked. Though still convinced that things would shape up, my wife was worried (as if I wasn't) and got on my case to do something, anything.

In desperation I called other divers who had "hits" and luckily one of them suggested calling DAN. The damage was done but at least from here — HELP WAS ON ITS WAY.

DAN did all the legwork, contacting Bronx Memorial (Jacobi) Hospital and the recompression chamber on City Island, New York. They arranged for me to go directly to the chamber since the incident was now some 10 hours old.

After a catheter tap to relieve my bladder and a 5-hour chamber ride, I arrived at the hospital for blood tests, cardiogram, and chest x-rays which further alleviated my heart attack fears. My motor functions and bladder control slowly began to return. Three additional one-hour chamber treatments were necessary to aid my recovery.

continued on page 6



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# BENT

continued from page 5

The lingering effects are still with me more than three years later, which other bends victims may recognize. They are: loss of strength and speed in the legs, nerve damage causing the right heel and toes to ache much of the time, stumbling when shoe tips catch the floor, poor sensitivity to rapid temperature changes in the lower body, frequent constipation, and sensitivity to dive suit pressure, especially in the groin.

Thinking back I've had "slight hits" over the years with tell-tale signs of minor numbness, slurred speech, and itchy skin. The trouble is I never put it all together to where I would absolutely refuse to dive if conditions weren't right for me, till now. I think I'm somewhat addicted to the sport.

Since the "big hit" I'm resolved to doing only one dive per day on wrecks below 180 feet then decompressing on oxygen. This may sound like a death wish to shallow divers but my body reacts better to this than to doing two shallower 130 - 150 foot dives the same day, entirely on air. Obviously time and air are the crucial factors — assuming you're in good physical shape (damn those cigarettes).

Now I dive with double tanks, a dive computer, bottom timer, and a digital timer/depth gauge for all my dives. My body requires about a 50% longer hang time than normal. Is this due to the "big hit," my age (55), or unproven dive algorithms? Probably all three.

Even though I use one, most dive computers are conservative enough on the first dive. However, if you're doing a somewhat rigorous second dive, the computers are much too forgiving on residual nitrogen. As a word of caution from my own personal experience, if you are doing decompression diving, build in substantial safety factors.

I wish to personally thank Atlantic Wreck Diver Dennis Kessler for his guidance and assistance in dealing with DAN and the chamber when I needed help most.

The 1992 Dive Season is now here, begin it as a RESPONSIBLE DIVER.

*Captain John Lachenmeyer has been diving the North Atlantic waters since the mid-sixties. His diving career has taken him around the world yet his diving home is here on Long Island. John and his partner, Capt. Frank Persico, own and operate the Sea Hawk which sails from Freeport, NY.*



# Welcome Back . . . Captain George Hoffman

by Barb Lander

**I**t was in the spring of 1991 that Captain George Hoffman, owner of the *Sea Lion*, located a mother lode of china on the cruise ship *Mohawk*. In a few weeks divers recovered 2,000 pieces of English china in a blue rose pattern.

George was not one of them; soon after his discovery, during a dive, the excitement and frenzied digging resulted in a bout of pulmonary edema. His wife Myrna describes it as "heart failure."

George's doctor was firm — surgery, and no more diving. But our Captain postponed his surgery until November, directing divers throughout the season to the blue rose china on the *Mohawk*, as well as the best spots on other wrecks. After 34 years of diving George knows where the good stuff is.

His home is filled to bursting with impeccably restored artifacts. Helms, telegraphs, bells, portholes, china, crystal stoneware, coins, knives, doorknobs, silverware, voice tubes; the list goes on.

Yet George says, "I wasted 20 years diving not looking for artifacts." It wasn't a total waste though, "I put two kids through college selling lobster," he adds.

He recalls his pre-artifact days, "Sometimes we'd have trouble getting six divers together for a charter." It was no wonder, this was the era of double-hose regulators and 3/16-inch, unlined rubber wet suits. "We'd dive the deeper wrecks in the winter," explains George. "Not the real long decompression dives like today" he elaborates, "We'd do 15 or 20 minutes on the bottom, then another 15 or 20 minutes hanging. It's all you could tolerate." Then he smiled, "I didn't know any better."

In 1967, when the boats he had been using refused dive charters, George bought his first boat. It was a 16-foot Boston Whaler. He and a few friends



would run 12 miles out to dive the *Stolt Dagali*. Another friend with a fishing boat would mark the wreck with a buoy so George could find it. The following year, George got his Captain's license and traded in his Boston Whaler for a bigger boat to start running charters. The price: \$12 a head.

When I asked him what his favorite wreck was George didn't hesitate to say as you may have already guessed, "The *Mohawk*." It sank by accident in 1935 as a result of a collision and only about 20% of what she carried has ever been recovered. "You could dig on that wreck for the rest of your life and not find everything." The *Mohawk*, a cruise ship of the Clyde Line, now lies in 80 feet of water eight miles out of Manasquan Inlet, New Jersey. Any diver who knows how to dig — like Captain George — will find her crested china, silverware, silver dishes, as well as the usual brass ship's fixtures.

George had open heart surgery in November of 1991; another souvenir of the *Mohawk*. He returned to work in March and expects to be back on the *Sea Lion* in April, diving again in May. Welcome back, Captain.

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# DIVING THE DIEGO

continued from page 3



Dan Berg, Dick Long and John Griffiths prepare for an April 1st dive on the *San Diego*.

Simply take a mental note of where the anchor is set then start your exploration. Remember to watch your depth and bottom time. It should not be too difficult to return to the anchor, especially if you have taken the time to study the sketch.

The exterior can also be very rewarding. Divers can see several of the *Diego's* guns as they swim forward from the stern. On the port side of the wreck amidships, divers will find a large debris field which contains the broken down and scattered remains of the *Diego's* superstructure. Aside from looking for artifacts or possibly taking photos of the wreck's crow's nest, the debris field is also a productive area for lobsters and lost dive equipment.

By continuing forward, divers will find the *Diego's* huge anchor. It should be noted that it is almost impossible to completely cover the wreck's exterior in one or even a handful of dives. Note that the bow is more intact than her stern and offers fewer openings for penetration.

After logging several dives — plus earning additional advanced training — the next area divers usually progress to is the small arms ammunition room located in the stern of the wreck. This room is very popular because divers can recover ammunition clips without doing deep penetration. Years ago when I first visited this room the ammo was piled high. Now, not only have divers recovered a good por-

tion of the clips, but the floor has collapsed dropping much of the ammo to the level below. This room can still be productive but divers will have to penetrate about ten feet to get to the ammo. Remember, any penetration requires the proper training, equipment and experience. Anyone who thinks they can just swim blindly into a shipwreck this large then find their way out is not only fooling themselves, but putting their life in jeopardy.

In time, as divers' skill and knowledge increase, exploration of many areas of the wreck are possible. A few of the more popular spots include a tour through the dark side corridor, penetrating into the Admiral's quarters in her stern, amidships into her boiler room or into any of her storage rooms. The exact location of these and other intriguing areas are usually learned only after spending many hours of bottom time on the wreck.

I have always considered the *San Diego* to be an underwater class room. Those who consistently dive her are quickly educated by the real life experience. The wreck is huge, diversified and quite unique in the fact that she has something for everyone. So whether you are a novice exploring her for the first time, or a veteran *Diego* diver penetrating deep into her interior, the wreck is thrilling to explore. This is one of the few wrecks that even after hundreds of dives you will





Dick Long, President of DUI lucked out on his first dive to the *San Diego*. The man from San Diego, California found a medicine bottle.

never get tired of exploring.

I consider myself to be an undergraduate of the *Diego School of Wreck Diving*. My education was earned in a similar process as described above and that knowledge has helped me to safely enjoy diving on all types of shipwrecks. I look forward to each *San Diego* dive, not only in anticipation of finding artifacts or exploring deeper into the wreck, but to further my education as a wreck diver in an area known as Wreck Valley.

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Painting of the *San Diego* sinking by Francis Muller, 1920.

# An Affair of the Heart

by Hank Garvin

For years friends had been touting Long Island diving as outstanding. I kept thinking they were just hyping their own territory. After about 20 years of diving for fish, lobsters and bottles in Long Island Sound and New Jersey, I decided I needed a change. I went out on the dive boat *RV/ Wahoo* and dove a wreck called the *USS San Diego*. That day I watched one of the mates, Captain John Lachenmeyer, jump in, tie into wreck and come back up about an hour or so later with an ammunition canister from the *San Diego*.

My dive was rather uneventful. . . oh, except for one minor detail. . . I fell head over heels in love with what I still consider one of the most beautiful wrecks I've ever been on.

Since that day, John has moved into a partnership with Captain Frank Persico on their own dive boat, the *Sea Hawk*. I've been trying to fill his fins as mate on the *Wahoo*. Over the years, I've logged a

few hundred dives on the *San Diego*. It still holds the same allure for me, and I have nothing but respect for this magnificent heavy [WW I battle] cruiser.

The *San Diego* is 501 feet long and 63 feet wide, she sits 75 feet to the top of the wreck and is 115 feet to the sand.

It is the only wreck I know of that can be done by raw beginners, all the way to the most experienced high tech divers, and she can satisfy all of them.

The visibility on the dive can vary from five to 150 feet. The average visibility is probably 20-40 ft. The hundred plus days are few but when they come I'd stack the *San Diego* up against any dive in the world.

The sight of *San Diego* resting inverted serenely on the bottom while snorkeling on the surface is quite a sight. Her beauty is overpowering. One feels like one of the many fish in the hundreds of schools drifting along in the currents running



Pete Nawrocky

around and through her.

In the beginning, you are an outsider just gazing at the awesome specter of her, imagining how she sank and rolled over. What happened to everything on her decks? Are those artifacts still here? Where did they fall?

Diving a wreck the size of the *San Diego* requires a few choices. You must decide if you are going to be a casual diver or a serious explorer.

As a casual diver, you must limit the extent of your explorations of the interior. The *San Diego* can be very unforgiving to the foolish or the unprepared!

The serious explorer must make a commitment to prepare for the task at hand. You must have a redundant air supply, at least 2 lights, a reel, two knives, various tools, bug bag, lift bag, a Jon line, and any other piece of equipment that you think will help. These items are not things you rush out and buy right away. These are pieces of equipment you build towards.

I was lucky, I dove with a group of people that were highly experienced. I watched them and talked with them and learned. If there is one thing I learned in diving with them, it was patience. I learned to take my time feeling my way along a path of knowledge of this magnificent wreck, with safety, always the prime mover.

One of my first dives on the *San Diego* was from the stern up the light side (star-

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WRECK DIVING



board) of her. I came to the two 6-inch guns long silenced by her chance encounter with a mine. One gun faces outward guarding ineffectually against the onslaught of time. I went forward another 50 to 75 feet and looked out into the debris field. There are two life boats out there — one is the ship's 50-foot launch.

You might ask why go out there anymore? "It's all picked over, there's no artifacts!" Ask Dennis Kessler, who only a year or so ago found a telephone box with the phone, intact, still in it. Ask Lisa Herrera, who just last summer followed a piece of brass chain, and dug up a beautiful brass lantern.

When you head back to the ship, stop and look. If the visibility is over 25 feet (which it is most of the time), the sight will stay with you forever. You'll get a glimpse of the awesome size of this now majestic warship. You will also get an idea of how awesome the task of exploring her is.

Now, after these many years of diving on the *San Diego*, I feel I know her quite well and yet there are still many places within her I haven't seen and many artifacts left unretrieved.

The new season is here and there are all the old places to check out again after a long storm ridden winter. What changes has Mother Nature exacted on her? How many artifacts have been lost forever to her collapsing hull? How many have been uncovered? Once again it is time to travel through the corridors of that upside down jumble of history called the *San Diego*.

I hope you all take the opportunity to visit her. Perhaps she will captivate your heart as she has mine.



Pete Nawrocky

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### BOOKS

**U.S.S. SAN DIEGO**  
The Last Armored Crusier  
by Gary Gentile 1989

**DIVE INTO HISTORY**  
Vol. 1 WARSHIPS  
Henry C. Keats and George C. Farr 1990

**WRECK VALLEY Vol. II**  
Daniel Berg 1990

David Tilzer  
Kathy Young



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# SAFETY IS OUR GOAL by Jim Cleary

Climbing up a dive boat ladder, 250 pounds of diver in full dive gear suddenly crashes down upon your head, fracturing your skull. An un-serviced pressure gauge hose explodes seriously injuring your dive partner. Helping to lift that precious artifact onto the deck a diver's gloved hand is sliced open. Coming up from a long dive

paralysis sets in from the waist down.

Sound like the dive charter from hell? These were among the "average" accidents treated during the April 10th weekend course of *SAFETY IS OUR GOAL*.

Sponsored by the *Journal* with instruction from the world-renowned staff of *Life Guard Systems*, the 3-day program took

place at the DIVE INC. training facility in Valley Stream, New York. The massive joint effort was inspired by the "I AM A RESPONSIBLE DIVER" program you've been hearing so much about. We invited dive boat operators near and far from the North Atlantic region and — with cooperation from the *Eastern Dive Boat Association*

— over sixty Captains and crew from Massachusetts down to southern New Jersey attended.

The best part about the weekend was the comraderie between the different crews. They each got a chance to work

together in a common goal, learning first hand that "safety is a noncompetitive issue." Getting better at what they already do to help divers enjoy the season safely, each participant received a PADI Medic First Aid Certification and a Lifeguard Systems O<sub>2</sub> administration card.

The Lifeguard Systems team — Walt "Butch" Hendricks, Michael Emmerman, Ian Gibons and Andrea Zaferese (winner of the 1992 NOGI award at Beneath the Sea) conducted the training sessions. Throughout the weekend the Lifeguard team carefully orchestrated between simulating accidents and life-saving classroom sessions on First Aid, Oxygen Management, CPR and Neurological testing. Treatments for broken legs, heart attacks, bleeding, decompression sickness, head and eye injuries, etc. were practiced on volunteer patients and CPR mannequins. We also learned the delicate art of alleviating a victim's stress during emergency care.

To add to the fun and support of the event we raffled off Dive Alert Signaling Devices and distributed DUI deputy t-shirts to everyone. Watch for other Lifeguard System programs in our events column!

As always, *Safety is our Goal!*



Aquarian III, Butch, Deep Six, Golden Dream, Parthole, Sea Hawk, Shearwater II, Sea Hunter, and the Wahoo.



Jeanne II, Joan "M", Joint Venture, Orbit Diver II, Shearwater II, Southern Cross, Venture III and the Wreck Valley.

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## EVENTS CALENDAR

### MAY

#### 30 CURE DIVE SHOW

Center for Underwater Research & Exploration and PADI "Project Aware" are presently working with the Coast Guard and NYS to initiate an all volunteer dive group. Volunteers divers would assist the Coast Guard in the identification of pollution sources, search and recovery, mammal strandings and hull inspections. The program is open to all divers and dive clubs.

The show will feature noted speakers; Stan Waterman, Tony Maffatone, Capt. Stephen Bielenda, Pete Nawrocky and many more. Tickets are \$10

CURE 750 Knoll Street  
Lindenhurst, NY 11757  
516 / 226-7233

### JUNE

#### 2 Tom Baker - TRUK LAGOON

Rarely explored wrecks of Truk Lagoon. A visual experience.

BROADWAY DIVERS  
Club Meeting 8 PM  
1 South Central Avenue  
Valley Stream, NY  
Contact: 516/ 872-4571

### JULY

#### 5 AQUA—WOMAN 1992

The thirteenth annual AQUA—WOMAN dive is planned for a mystery wreck. To foster female diving camaraderie and fun, only women are invited.

Contact: Karen Gurian,  
516 / 798-1726, 7 - 9 PM  
for information and reservations.

### HAVE AN EVENT YOU WANT TO ANNOUNCE?

Send typewritten copy to the Journal by the 1st of the month prior to your event. Please include a phone number and contact person.

## DACOR EXTREME REGULATOR

by Joel Silverstein

Space age technology? State of the Art? Exceeds Navy Spec's? Let's dispel with cliches and put it to real North Atlantic use. First you need to know the house rules on equipment reviews. If we think it's good and we have used it rigorously in cold North Atlantic waters and it performs, we tell you about it. If it doesn't work to our satisfaction, we tell the manufacturer about it. They get an opportunity to fix it, adjust it, rebuild it, scrap it and build something better. Fair enough?

TEST SITE: USS SAN DIEGO. Date: April 1. Water Temperature: 38°. Visibility: 5 - 15 ft.

I was impressed with the EXTREME's low and high pressure swivel port designs. Each had the proper angle for streamlining hoses. Rigged properly, the hoses drope over your shoulders without the famous "spider web" pattern making it ideal for wreck diving. The first stage is of modular design made from solid brass which is then heavily chrome plated. The unit is also environmentally sealed without silicone grease. This design keeps out sand, corrosive salt water and minimizes icing in cold water. The pneumatically balanced second stage is fully user adjustable while diving. Although the first stage is heavy the second stage is extremely light.



To test it fully, I swam completely around the bottom (110 fsw) of the San Diego, both with the current and against it. This regulator performed well. As in only the finest regulators, the flow through diaphragm exhaust valve simplified exhalation. This design allows for maximum air flow with minimal CO<sub>2</sub> build up. The Extreme regulator performed exceptionally well no matter what depth I was at. I would consider the general performance of this regulator to be excellent. I plan to use it a lot this season.

Manufacturers suggested retail price: \$ 419.95

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170

200

## **KIRBY'S KORNER**

# **Lots of Life**

by Kirby Kurkomelis

Each year thousands of divers will pack up their scuba gear and fly south to dive a reef. They will spend thousands of dollars on travel, diving in some foreign country where the creature comforts are less than satisfying. Making sure to pack their cameras and flash, their secret reef map in hand, knowing by name what type of tropical fish they will immortalize on slide film. Butterflyfish, groupers, eels, triggerfish and their favorite, spider crabs.

I think it's time to let the lobster out of the bug bag. You don't have to look any further than your own back yard. The Eastern seaboard, including the shores of Long Island and New Jersey, are filled with reefs, man-made fish havens, and of course sunken ships. Some of these occurred naturally, some planned, others by accident.

The bottom composition of Long Island and New Jersey waters are mostly sand and naturally quite barren. Artificial reefs provide a habitat for marine life to establish a colony and flourish; thus the beginning of the food chain. Over the past thirty years, planned reefs have been built by the Coast Guard, Army Corps of Engineers, clubs, fishermen and marine biologists. These unique reefs consist of many things. Thousands of tires stacked in pyramid shapes, cars, barges, concrete blocks, and shipwrecks.

Just recently the 459 foot-long *USS Algol* (an auxiliary cargo attack ship) was sunk by the New Jersey Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife as a reef. Located offshore of their Shark River Inlet, the *Algol* will soon become a great attraction to marine life, fishermen and divers alike.

The amount of marine life that can inhabit these reefs is so abundant, it's like having your own fish tank. Each reef's makeup is very complex because many micro organisms in corals, shellfish and plants serve a special function in the ecosystem. They feed the lobsters, blackfish, seabass and fluke. On the deeper

reefs one can find cod and pollack.

Reefs have many different profiles. A big factor in attracting different size marine life is the height of the reef. Whether two feet high and scattered across the bottom, or a high profile sunken ship, the taller the reef, the larger the life.

Man made reefs are a photographers dream, especially for macro work. Anemone attach themselves to the nooks and crannies. Little creatures like shrimp swim around them and the sponges, which contribute to the reef building process. Small fish then feed and reproduce, all part of the food chain. They in turn enable larger marine life to grow and spawn new life.

Two of my favorite inshore man-made reefs are the *Rockaway Beach Reef* and the *Atlantic Beach Reef*, both about five miles southeast of Rockaway Inlet, New York. At the *Rockaway Reef*, we found plenty of tires with lobsters hiding in them. (I made sure to bring my spear gun along so I could take a seabass or two for dinner.)

Diving both of these local reefs can be fun for catching tropical fish. Because the reefs are in the Gulf Stream, colorful fish like butterflies, file fish, and even the occasional parrot fish and spotted eel make their way up here late in the season. Although the depth of these reefs is only about thirty-five feet, the visibility is usually a good fifteen feet at high slack tide.

Don't be surprised when you come across an Ice Cream truck or two at the *Atlantic Beach Reef*, surrounded by schools of blackfish. These, too, are an interesting part of the artificial reef system. Be careful when you stick your hand in for an ice cream pop, there may just be a large lobster there! We pulled a 17-pounder out of a door in the area next to a sunken barge filled with concrete pipes.

So the next time your buddy wants to go diving on a reef with lots of life, you can pull out your secret map . . .



# DIVE BOAT SCHEDULES

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- 7 Capt's Choice
- 13 Polling Bros.
- 14 Center Island
- 20 Pine Island
- 21 Rye/Larchmont
- 27 G. Steers
- 28 David's Is.

### **Eagle's Nest**

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

- May 2 RC Mohawk
- 3 Iberia
- 9 Schooner
- 16 USS San Diego
- 17 Lizzie D
- 23 G & D
- 24 Pinta/Bald Eagle
- 25 USS San Diego
- 30 Tarantula
- 31 Iberia
- June 6 Lizzie D
- 7 Pipe Barge
- 13 Oregon
- 14 Iberia
- 14 Lizzie D
- 20 Stold D'Agall
- 21 Pinta/Bald Eagle
- 23 Lillian
- 27 Linda
- 28 Pipe Barge
- 30 Baleana

### **Jeanne II**

Capt. Bill Reddan  
(718) 332-9574  
Brooklyn

- May 2 Lizzie D
- 3 Pinta
- 9 USN Algal
- 10 Masadonia
- 16 Lobster Wrecks
- 17 Liberty Ship
- 23 Bald Eagle
- 24 Asfalto
- 24 Local Wrecks
- 30 USN Turner
- 30 Local Lobster
- 31 RC Mohawk
- June 6 Dunlap
- 7 Martin's Misery
- 10 Nite Dive
- 13 Cindy
- 14 Gypse
- 15 Capt's Choice
- 17 Immaculata
- 17 Nite Dive
- 20 Lizzie D
- 20 Moonlite Cruise
- 21 Local Wreck

- 24 British Corvette
- 27 Bald Eagle
- 28 Jersey Reef

### **Northern Star**

Capt. Paul Pellegrino  
(516) 366-4231

- Captree
- May 2 USS San Diego
  - 3 USS San Diego
  - 9 Hyllon Castle
  - 10 USS San Diego
  - 13 Dry Dock #4
  - 16 Kenosha
  - 17 USS San Diego
  - 20 Dry Dock #5
  - 23 USS San Diego
  - 24 Oregon
  - 25 Lizzie D
  - 27 Hyllon Castle
  - 30 R C Mohawk
  - 31 USS San Diego
  - June 6 Fran S
  - 7 USS San Diego
  - 10 Dry Dock #4
  - 13 Wolcott
  - 14 USS San Diego
  - 17 Dry Dock # 5
  - 20 Hyllon Castle
  - 21 USS San Diego
  - 24 Hyllon Castle
  - 27 Edwin Duke
  - 28 USS San Diego

### **Rebel**

Capt. Pat DeFeis  
Capt. Bill DeCoursey  
(718) 897-2885

- Brooklyn
- Two Trips Each Day
- May 2 British Corvette
  - 3 Iberia
  - 9 Fran S
  - 10 USN Algal
  - 16 British Korvette
  - 17 Lizzie D
  - 23 Releif Ship
  - 24 RC Mohawk
  - 30 Black Warrior
  - 31 USS Turner
  - June 6 USN Algal
  - 7 Sandy Hook
  - 13 Lizzie D
  - 14 Robert Snow
  - 20 RC Mohawk
  - 21 British Korvette
  - 27 Releif Ship
  - 28 Petland Firth

### **Sea Hawk**

Capt.'s Frank Persico  
& John Lachenmeyer  
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- Freeport
- May 2 Lizzie D
  - 16 F.I. Lightship
  - 24 G & D
  - 25 R/C Mohawk
  - 30 San Diego
  - 31 Lizzie D
  - June 6 Oregon
  - 10 San Diego
  - 17 G & D/IRMA C
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- Babylon
- May 3 Hyllon Castle
  - 10 USS San Diego
  - 17 Oregon
  - 24 Kenosha
  - 25 Lizzy D
  - 31 USS San Diego
  - June 6 Fran S
  - 7 Kenosha
  - 12 FI Reef
  - 14 Hyllon Castle
  - 20 USS San Diego
  - 21 Reggie
  - 26 Oregon
  - 27 USS San Diego
  - 28 Kenosha

### **Wahoo**

Capt. Steve Bielenda  
Capt. Janet Bieser  
(516) 928-3849

- Captree
- May 2 USS San Diego
  - 3 USS San Diego
  - 9 USS San Diego
  - 10 USS San Diego
  - 16 USS San Diego
  - 17 Oregon
  - 22 Lillian Deep
  - 23 Texas Tower

- 24 USS San Diego
- 25 Tarantula
- 27 USS San Diego
- 30 Oregon
- 31 USS San Diego
- June 3 USS San Diego
- 6 USS San Diego
- 7 Oregon
- 8 Hank Keatts  
Three Days
- 12 Colmbra
- 13 USS San Diego
- 14 USS San Diego
- 17 USS San Diego
- 20 USS San Diego
- 21 Oregon Charter
- 25 Andrea Doria
- 26 3 1/2 Day
- 27 Expedition
- 28 Andrea Doria
- 30 U-853

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# LOCAL HEROES:

April 1992



Beneath the Sea 1992 - what a party. Over eight thousand divers were in attendance. Can you pick yourself out?



Dr. Bill Hamilton



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY JOURNAL

Joel, Melissa & Jim celebrate the *Journal's* first birthday at Beneath the Sea.



*BEYOND Sportdiving* - author Brad Sheard and the Atlantic Wreck Divers at his book signing party at Jim Cacace's Scuba Shoppe.



Could you survive a weekend with these dummies?



Rich Siaba with valve from the clam dredge - Valerie E.



Roy Trapasa of the *Sea Hunter*.



Maxine Yee & Tom Baker at BTS.



Barb Lander on her first dive to the *San Diego* aboard the *Wahoo*.



*Wahoo*! Captain Steve Birolenda starts the season off with a new dry suit. No leaks!

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