



SEA BRAGGIN'

St George Scuba Club Newsletter

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THE WRECK OF THE CRUSADER, GBR

The Australian Army Ship Crusader was built in Williamstown Victoria. At the time she was the largest all welded steel vessel built in Australia at 61 meters and 1500 tons. She was designed to carry men and machines for Australia during World War II, however entered service in late 1945 near the war's end.

Renamed and sold after the war, she was used as a cargo, coal and coral carrier.

The Crusader was eventually sunk as a dive wreck in 1986. She now lies upside down approximately 400 meters north of Flinders Reef, GBR.

The wreck hosts numerous species of nudibranchs, as well as providing a flat steel surface for many types of invertebrates to settle on and a pair of Queensland grouper, one of which I would guess to be in excess of 150kg (2.5 meters long).

Big Cat Reality is the only charter vessel I know of which goes out to the wreck regularly. I have dived the wreck a few times now and highly recommend it.

Dave Bizant





GREAT KEPPEL ISLAND

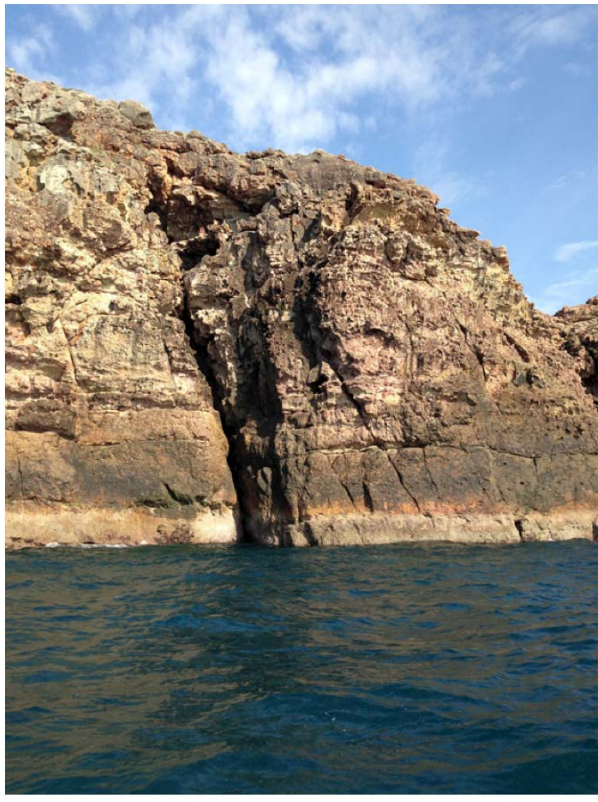
I'm only new to the club, and damn it haven't been able to get out with the group yet - but that will hopefully change.

I did some great diving up at Great Keppel Island just before xmas where my family have a holiday house, however our video camera failed and we didn't end up with any images. We discovered an amazing sea cave in a small island about 9NM east of GKI. This started at a depth of about 14m and entered into the island with several funnels reaching up to the surface and several different levels you could explore...a bit like Fish Rock, but only went about half way into the island, where you could surface with one other diver.

You could not explore the entire way through unfortunately as the cave had collapsed - but we were told you could back in the 1970s when we talked to a couple of the old local divers on the island.

There was a large black tipped reef shark hovering above the cave at the entrance, a large loggerhead turtle outside, big school of barracuda, massive Maori Wrasse and a manta ray. Amazing dive - we just had to keep going back.

Brent Vaughan



SHIPROCK NIGHT DIVE

23 January

On Thursday 23 January, 13 members did a night dive at Shiprock. It had been at least a few months since Gary and I had done a night dive so we were very keen on jumping in the water. Most of us swam straight to where the yellow anglerfish is. It was still there and after few minutes, it had to jump away from a very inquisitive numb ray! Gary and I did the bommies for few minutes before going back to the main reef. The visibility was not that great, around a few metres, but at least the water was a warm 22 degrees. We saw 5 pineapple fish underneath the overhang, many decorator crabs walking everywhere on the reef, a couple of baby cuttlefish and 4 opera nudibranchs. There was also a daphne nudibranch going for a ride on top of a moving sea star! Others saw two eels, a few catfish and a wobbegong shark. Everyone had to agree that the most "interesting" part of the dive was that the numb rays were out in numbers and were on the move. It is a miracle that no one got zapped because they were just free swimming everywhere (some of them as a couple) and they did not mind getting very close to divers!

After the dive, we stopped for pizza and pasta at our local shop and everyone had a nice dinner and a good chat.

Photos following.

Nancy Scoleri







Jervis Bay Seal Diving Weekend

When: Friday 15 to Sunday 17 August 2014

Where: Jervis Bay

At least one dive will be with the seals, conditions permitting! The remainder will be boat dives to local dive sites.

We have done this trip the last four years running and spaces fill up lightning quick, so get in early!

The house is perfect for our group and the people at Ulladulla Dive are very accommodating.

Diving:

Ulladulla Dive Centre can cater for 12 divers <http://www.ulladulladive.com.au/crew/duckunder.html>

- ✂ Retail rates for double dives is \$110 (we'll get \$90 for 10 divers or more, plus one free of charge)
- ✂ Airfills for \$10
- ✂ No tanks provided – if you take one tank and they provide one it will be an added charge of \$10.00, or you can hire both tanks (or take 2 of your own!)

Accommodation:

I have again booked the house, “Sea haven” <http://www.stayz.com.au/11509>

House comfortably sleeps 15 people, with 3 bathrooms and 3 toilets (main bathroom with large spa bath). There is a LUG for dive gear and a BBQ we can make use of. BYO linen! Total cost for 15 people for 2 nights is \$720.

Dinner at Vincentia Golf Club (5 mins walk up the road) on Fri night, Club Mexican night at home on Sat night. Yummo.

Note that we will have Mahla with us, so if having a 9 month old in the house is not your idea of a good time, please take that into consideration when deciding whether to book on this trip.

Contact Natasha Naude
natasha@bluecucumber.com



SEA BRAGGIN'

AUSTRALIA DAY DIVE & BBQ

What an Australia Day. It was one of those days that had everything thrown into one day just to make you realise how diverse things can be. To start the day we drove to Kurnell and even had to turn the wipers on, only to find Peter F already set up for the day's events.

With 41 people turning up it looked like being a big day, so we just needed the weather to improve. Nancy and I decided that we would help with the cooking but before this we would do the "early" dive just to see what conditions awaited us in the water.

Peter B decided to get in with us while others arrived, deciding to wait for a report back before heading in. The ocean was calm with only a small rolling wave greeting us as we entered for the dive. We dropped down to discover that the outgoing tide was certainly in effect and could be a long dive if we were to get around to the beach. Dropping over the 6m ledge the visibility was not real great but improved as we hit the deeper wall to about 5m, so much improved over the night dive at Christmas. Early in the dive numb rays were spotted so it would appear they are now following divers from site to site, but it keeps the dives interesting. We followed the wall around with plenty of Nudi's to see. The highlight was a small sea spider, which during the process of setting up for the photo had to be rediscovered several times.

We exited on the beach and headed back to let others know the visibility was acceptable. In total 27 people went in, with reports of plenty of things to see and visibility ranging from 1-10m. After the dive divers were greeted with egg and bacon rolls, which were soon finished off. The weather continued to improve and as everyone sat down for lunch the sun parted the clouds giving rise to a stunning day. Lunch consisted of the usual smorgasbord of food from salads right through to the BBQ. In all it was a great day. Special thanks to Peter for organising the event and 6 others for cooking and also to everyone who supplied shade, food and cooking supplies.

Photos follow.

Gary Perkins

South West Rocks Fri 27 June – Sun 29 June 2014

A weekend trip up to South West Rocks - we have dived heaps with these guys and they are the best.

Here is the deal:

- 2 night / 4 dive package including 2 nights divers lodge accommodation
- continental breakfast
- four boat dives (double boat dive each day)
- use of tanks, weights and Nitrox
- Shared room/bunk accommodation \$320 per person
- Private/twin share accommodation \$360 per person
- Full equipment hire with dive package additional \$60

Please email me back if you are interested. Just getting numbers interested at present.

**Contact Ray Moulang
rayscases@aol.com**





St George Boys' Weekend 2014

When: Friday 2 - Monday 4 May 2014

Where: Port Stephens

We will be staying at The Halifax Holiday Park in Six Units side by side to enable plenty of off gassing talk time, Costs to be \$120 per head and this enables a nearby spot for excess cars for our use.

Diving - Limited to 18 divers - Get in early - don't miss out!!

Boat Diving to be provided by Lets Go Adventures from D'Albora Marina at cost of \$104 per double boat dive.

Booked in for two each on Saturday and Sunday for 18 divers. The club has paid out the deposits for this so we need \$50 off each boy that wants to attend. Please forward \$50 to Kelly asap via Eft transaction and send an email to Kelly and myself stating you have paid.

Your early support is required and thanks in advance.

Any questions please contact me by email or at a dive or meetings.

Contact Ray on 0403 437 974 or
rayscases@aol.com



CAROL MARTIN MEMORIAL DIVE AND BBQ

A cool, refreshing morning greeted 50+ members at Bare Island for Carol's Memorial Dive and BBQ.

Carol Martin was a much loved member of the Club for over 15 years. Carol was born in Scotland and trained as a nurse. She travelled the world before settling in Sydney. After this, she still travelled the world.

Carol had done more than 1,000 dives, with most of these in Sydney. She also dived to 50 metres on the wrecks in Sydney and had dived locations like Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Red Sea and Indonesia. She had also done many trips to the Great Barrier Reef, including Osprey Reef. An extremely competent diver who used very little air and who was very active within the Club.

On 3 February 2011, during a Club night dive at Bare Island Carol died from Scuba Divers Immersion Pulmonary Oedema or IPE. The Coroner made a recommendation following Carol's death that more research needs to be conducted into IPE and its causes and that scuba divers need to be made aware of the condition.



For those of you who are unaware of IPE, it is a condition where a person who is in water (salt or fresh) that is (generally) less than 20°C suffers breathing difficulties. It can hit fully fit athletes as well as less fit people. All the available literature on the internet shows that there is no known reason for





it to affect some people some times. What is believed to happen is that when the body is submerged, some of the blood that is normally in the extremities (arms and legs) gets redistributed to the heart, lungs and brain. This appears to be somehow due to the water pressure (even just floating in water produces enough pressure for this to happen) tricking the body into sending fluid contained in the blood back to the vital organs. Then, for some unknown reason, the body decides to let this fluid to be released into the lungs. Instead of being processed by the kidneys and turned into urine and/or breathed out as water vapour, excess fluid is concentrated in the lungs, making it hard to breathe as the water blocks the uptake of oxygen. Thus, the person finds it hard to breathe. Upon surfacing, vomiting or coughing up of pink, frothy sputum occurs.

Generally, the condition is not fatal and the application of oxygen restores normal breathing. It appears that the number of cases of IPE is increasing, but it is not known why. For the proper clinical explanation read <http://www.michaelmcfadyenscuba.info/downloads/SDPE%20Fatalities%20DHM%202012.pdf> or http://archive.rubicon-foundation.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/9488/DHM_V39N4_10.pdf?sequence=1

Carol was taken from us too soon. What we can learn and all we can do is to take immediate action if you ever have problems breathing. If you are on the surface before descending, abort the dive and return to the shore or boat and breathe oxygen if possible. If underwater, you should consider ascending immediately, especially if near your boat or the shore. If a buddy indicates that they have problems breathing, again, consider ascending immediately,





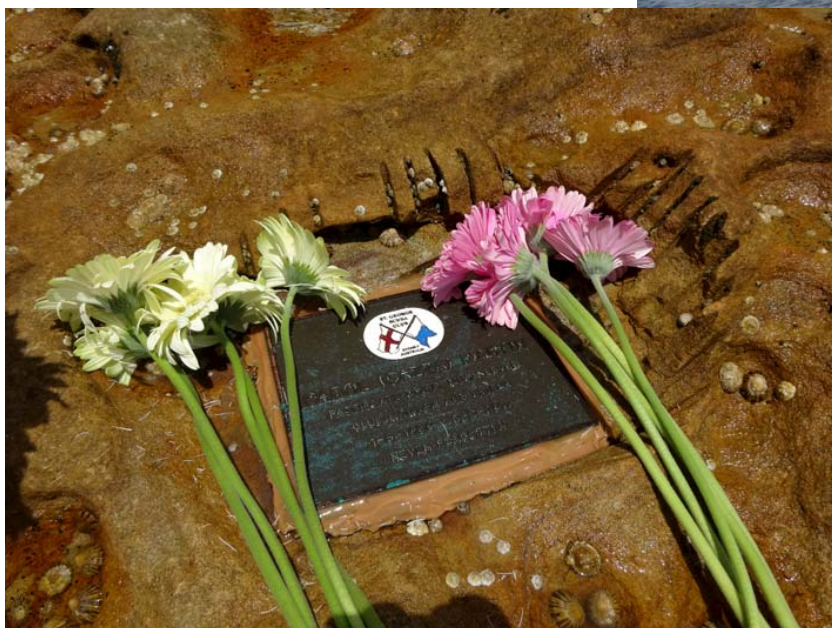
Anglerfish (both Bare Island Painted and Striped varieties), pink okenia and all the other usual nudibranchs, sea horses and lots more. By the time all the divers were getting out of the water the sun came out in full fury, making for a very warm day.

A special thank you to: Dave, Michael, Michael W and Peter F for cooking the BBQ and bringing food; Rox, Shalene, Caroline and Tricia

even if your buddy does not want to. If the person gets worse, consider using their regulator to assist them to get air into their lungs.

In memory of Carol, the Club has held an annual dive and BBQ to celebrate Carol's life. Carol loved parties and loved socializing - 'the more the merrier' she would say. So it was nice to see both new and old members attend. This year Carol's sister June and her husband Bill also joined us all the way from Scotland.

Divers reported visibility of 5-10 metres with comfortable water temperature. Divers saw



for your lovely salads; Ian R for the bread rolls; Deb for the roast chickens; Sarah, Carina, Caroline X, Caroline C, Nancy, Maxine, Jo and Graeme for the nibbles and desserts; plus Greg and Shelley, Bill P, Ken and Ron for tables, shelters and BBQs. Your help and assistance was greatly appreciated by all. Fully fed and watered, a group headed down to Carol's plaque on the waterline where June and Jo said a few words before we made a toast to Carol. May you forever have blue water and warm flat seas.

Kelly McFadyen



SDI SOLO DIVING COURSE

I just completed my SDI solo diving course on Feb 2nd with Frog dive Willoughby. Here is a little account of what was involved and a few incidents along the way!

I signed up for this course about 3 years ago!! After various interruptions along the way I was finally able to undertake it. The reason I wanted to do this was to improve my self-sufficiency skills and learn more, well anything actually, about using a Pony bottle! I was also hoping it would improve my gear configuration.

It involves reading a book of course, and one night of classroom lectures going over said book, followed by 2 dives. The first involves undertaking several skills, like having your mask removed and using your independent gas source. The second dive is essentially your 'solo dive'. It involves planning your own dive including your expected air consumption based on your SAC (surface air consumption) rate, and working out how long your dive can be... then completing your planned dive while the instructor remains close-ish by.

I guess I did think this course would be a shore dive type course, but no, for dive one off we head to Colours! We roll off into the water, which has quite the swell, and I spy my SMB has unfurled and is now wrapped around me. Signaling to Bruce (instructor), he unclips this and signals to descend.

Off I head, only to feel a tug at a couple of metres down. I look back up to see my weight pocket has been pulled out and is trapped in the mermaid line. Very thankfully it is stuck there and hasn't hurtled off to the depths! I am easily able to reach up and retrieve it. Bruce again comes over and helps re-insert this and gives me my SMB. I am wondering now about this concept of solo diving!

OK so no biggie, next we have to fin off the floor. Not so easy with the extra weight of the steel pony bottle! About then I realize I haven't factored that in and am very over-weighted. Oh well better that way and I can push myself upwards. For the next activity

our masks are removed and I have no problem in getting the spare mask and putting that on.

Next skill is to remove your reg and insert the pony reg and then turn on the pony bottle. It is suggested to keep this turned off unless you need it, in case it is knocked and your only independent gas source is now empty. The line is charged at 200 Bar, giving you a breath while you turn it on.

OK so I get that Pony reg in fine, and all I get is water ... no air! I turn the bottle on as far as I can and again, no air, just a free flowing reg! I try once more with the same result, then think, um I actually have no air! And think forget the course get your own reg in!! Success!! Phew! I am a little panicked by this but calm down once I realise the air is now flowing.

Next thing I look into my Datamask (which I love and has a Heads Up Display in it), and it has gone blank. My main computer seems to have lost battery power! I pull out my back up wrist watch (connected to the same transmitter) to see if it is the transmitter or the mask. It appears to be working OK, but reading only 20 Bar remaining! Again a slightly anxious moment as I then reach for the backup to my backup ... the SPG. It shows a good 100 Bar and, relieved, I think oh well now I can use that. I also have another backup to the backup to the backup in the form of a BUD (a cleverly named Back Up Device) attached to the SPG, so feel this is easy from here!

Next activity is deploying the SMB, and I admit this is not my favourite activity! Last time I did this my friend Neil got stuck in it and was propelled to the surface! It was all OK in the end, but has made me quite wary of them, and I prefer to call them the not so safety sausage!

I unclip this and inflate it, then realise that I have clipped the reel to the SMB and not the line! I am being pulled up, and for one moment consider letting go of the whole thing. However, having realised what I had done, I reach up and am able to pull it down and clip the line to the SMB and unclip the reel ... relief again as it skyrockets to the surface! Happily I reel myself up.

Dive one done!

During the surface interval we calculate our SAC for the next dive and how much time we have based on the planned dive. Most of you probably know this, but I



didn't, so you use your resting SAC which we have calculated at home at rest for the course.

Mine is about 14L/min. You then add a degree of difficulty - so I choose a factor or degree of difficulty of 2.5. This is a new course, the viz is poor and I am unfamiliar with some of these activities, so perhaps my stress level is about 2.5 times normal. This gives me a new SAC of 35L/min!

You then determine the depth you want to go to. I decide no more than 18 metres. As this is 2.8 ATA, the new SAC at this depth is $35 \times 2.8 = 98$ L/min!! I have a 12 L tank at 200 Bar = 2400 L of air available. Therefore, as we are being taught in this solo diving course, to use one third of your air for the trip out, one third coming back and one third for emergencies, this means I have 1600 L available for the dive (two thirds of 2400 L). Finally, 1600 L is divided by my 98 L/min, which means a measly 16 minute dive!!!

Off we head to Old Man's Hat for our second dive, which is kind of our solo dive but within sight of the instructor. Fair enough, we are not actually qualified, and poor ol' Bruce is trying to make sure we don't kill ourselves in the process in very poor viz conditions!

In fact this dive is pretty easy. Just drifting along, and by now my Datamask has decided to re-start.

All is well until that damned SMB again.

I have pulled out the torch to look at some things along the way. Unbeknownst to me the lanyard has not retracted and has entangled itself around the reel! Arghh! So now, having descended to 23m as I am still overweighted despite removing a couple of pounds, and with 3 mins NDC time remaining, I manage to unravel the line and get the SMB free! Note to self: move torch elsewhere and keep SMB well away from lanyards!

This time though, the SMB will not inflate despite several attempts and Bruce appears again to help. In the end a manual inflation gets it moving, and it sails happily away to the surface, as do I as I slowly reel myself up and out to freedom!

Dive two done!

The final activity for the course is a 200 m swim in all the gear to the beach. I am sure that it was much further than 200m guys!! Anyhow I reach the shore and drag myself huffing in a dry suit in the 30+ deg heat and plonk myself exhaustedly on the bench ... We are all now declared officially qualified Solo divers (although somewhat like getting my medical degree, I suspect it will be quite a while before I consider myself qualified)!

I think the course taught me a lot about how to prepare for diving solo, but real life taught me even more. (I note no one else had the same issues as I did.) In adverse outcomes there is usually more than one factor that contributes to things, and the several things that occurred forced me to think calmly and carefully in trouble shooting the issues, although it kinda helped having the instructor nearby! I think it might be better ran in a shallow shore dive environment, but it has given me a chance to rethink equipment configurations and what I should have with me. From now on a pair of trauma scissors, which I noticed John at Froggies carries, will always be with me as this is the only thing that cuts through lanyards!

Meanwhile Shelley beach at Manly, with its challenging 5m depth is sounding like an awesome place to start!

Janine Gregson





SUNFISH ON THE SS TUGGERAH

On Wednesday 22 January I took Argonaut out to the wreck of the SS Tuggerah, which is located about 2 kilometres off the Royal National Park near Marley. On board was fellow club member Peter Tibbitts and well known Sydney divers Peter Fields and Merv “Nipper” Maher. The seas, whilst not large, were sloppy and made for a slower than normal trip. We were quite close to just going back for a coffee.



The water looked blueish and promising. I went down first to secure the anchor and on descent around the 35m mark I saw a very large shape off to my left and in the distance, probably 15+ metres away. I couldn't tell what it was, only that it was very big and I was pretty sure it wasn't a seal. My descent rate increased!

The viz was pretty good at about 12-15. After securing the anchor I started to swim around and after swimming around the stern and up to the boiler I saw the Sunfish just positioning itself over the boiler and almost pointing itself straight up. There were a lot of smaller fish all around it and they seemed to be picking off the parasites of the Sunfish, which may explain why many Sunfish sightings are on wrecks. They may be cleaning stations for them. Just guessing.

I had about ten minutes with the Sunfish while he just hovered over the boiler area of the wreck and at times I was within 1 metre of it. For most part I was just kneeling on top of the boiler and it seemed like he thought I was just part of the wreck. It was nice to have that amount of time as I just didn't watch it from behind a camera viewing screen but had time to have a good look at it. The attached photos are a bit average as they have been extracted from the video of my GoPro (version 1). I didn't take the 3+ as I'm going away on a trip and didn't want to risk damaging it. Kicking myself.

I've been lucky enough to have encountered sunfish on a number of occasions and each time it is a real thrill.

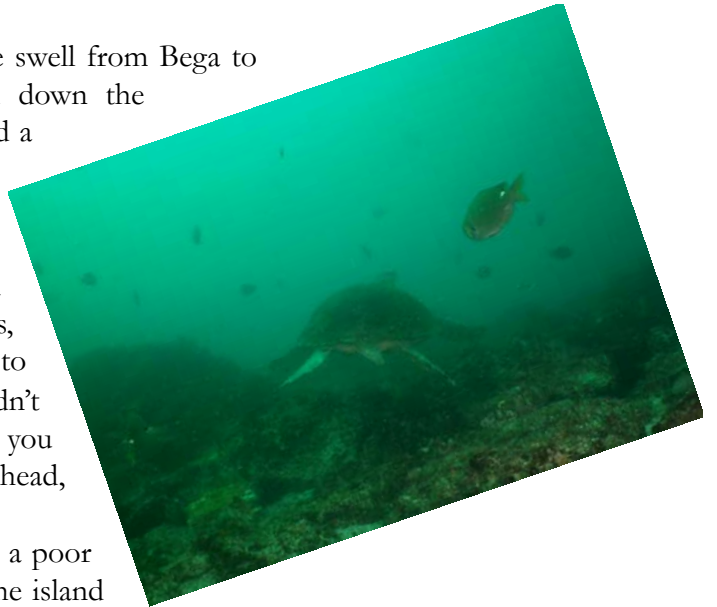
Phil Short



SOUTH WEST ROCKS

Australia Day long weekend

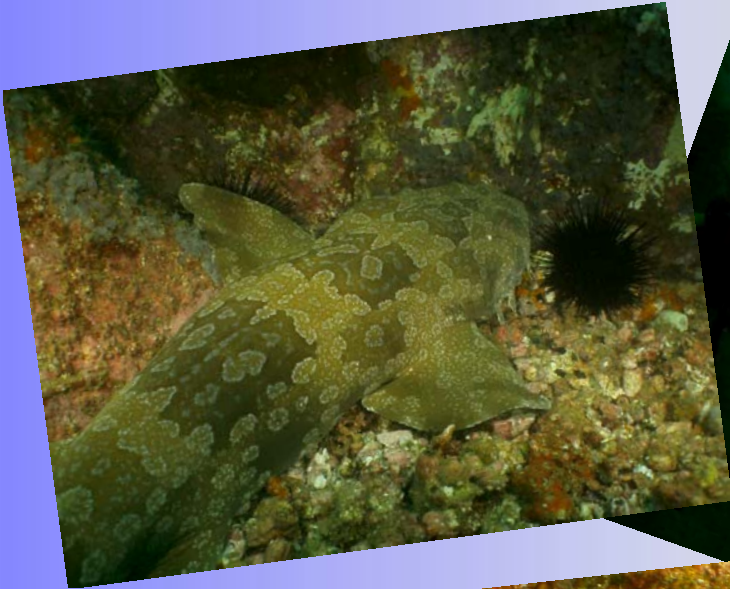
Miserable conditions hit the East coast, with a 2 to 4 metre swell from Bega to Ballina and beyond. Dives cancelled on Sunday up and down the Eastern sea board. By Monday though, conditions had eased a little and boats were leaving for Fish Rock on an overcast morning. The swell was running at 2 metres with no wind. So the first dive option was The Pinnacle, Located North Eastern side of Fish Rock. This dive is unbelievable, a photographer's dream. Wall to wall marine life, Nudibranchs, soft corals, and everything from eels to rays, and sponges to sharks. This was one of those dives where you wish you didn't have to surface, as the marine life was endless. But when you have 40 bar left and a safety stop for 3 minutes ahead, unfortunately you must surface.



For the second dive it was decided to do the cave. What a poor choice. The current ripping through the southern side of the island was near 25 knots. It was a kamikaze dive. I was last to enter the water and overshot the mooring line, and I soon realised I was on my way to the mainland, diving alone. It wasn't till I hit the 25 metre mark that the current eased up, with no way of catching the rest of the divers. I could hear boats above me in search, but I figured I was on my own with camera in hand, looking at a huge turtle and listening to the boat engine. I soon decided to forget the boat, it would always be there, and the turtle wouldn't be. So me and the turtle struggled together against a no win current. The photos were the best I could get under the conditions. 40 minutes later I surfaced a few hundred metres away, having had a dive that will stay in my memory as amongst the top 5 I have done. The rest of the divers didn't get to the cave due to conditions and had to crawl hand over hand, hanging onto the rocks, back to the mooring. Nevertheless, they saw plenty of the usual fish life from Fish Rock – wobbegongs, clown fish, eels, octopus, and a blue groper hanging around for food. It was an aborted dive really, disappointing for this group in one way, but still worth doing and learning what the current can be around the Rock. In the meantime, I had a smile on my face for the 30 minute boat ride back to the wharf, looking forward to the next long weekend to do it all again.

Tim Kennedy and John Crawford







LOST DIVER FOUND BY FISHERMAN

We were on a club boat dive to Marley Point, but not all boats got to Marley. Most boats stopped at Barren's Hut claiming 15m visibility, while we had only 5 at Marley. We anchored 15m from the cave and ventured in. A lot of fish in there. Out again and then west into the shallows, where schools of Bullseyes and Pike entertained us. A lone Blue Groper hung around for a feed, which he didn't get. The highlight of Marley was a giant Bull Ray, which swam over the top of Fiona then around and past all of us.

After a 90 surface interval at Jibbon with 4 boats, we decided to see if Barren's had the 15m viz, but we only found 10. This is where a real story unfolded.

We dropped the anchor in our normal spot. It must have landed on the top of the eastern bank of the split and then dragged along the bottom, where it hooked into a rock 15m North East of the cave. I descended first to make sure it was secure and to attach the strobe and lift bag. Fiona, Leo and Rudy followed soon after.

We swam over to the cave, in and out the other side where a large Cuttlefish was hanging around. Up over the reef and through the tunnel and around to the entrance of the cave. Past the cave to the chimney. Through the chimney and out the top where Rudy was taking photos. We swam along to the cave again. During all this time there was a slight current from North to South.

At this time Leo signalled to Rudy that his air was low and he was going to ascend. Rudy pointed in the direction of the anchor and Leo swam over. A couple of minutes later we all headed to the anchor, and could not see Leo. We were thinking he must be on the drop line. Rudy wrote on his slate that maybe he swam past the anchor. I swam north for about 25 to 30m and could not see him, so assumed he was up on the line.

Heading up the anchor it was obvious that Leo had missed it and must be doing a blue water ascent. I cut my safety stop to 2 minutes and ascended, and Fiona and Rudy followed shortly after. I stood up on the gunwale looking around and could not see Leo anywhere. We pulled in the drop line and anchor and out of the side of my eye I saw a boat and a person on board diving into the water. I quickly signalled to Rudy that Leo must be near that boat.

We headed over to find Leo hanging off the back of the boat exhausted from keeping afloat. We threw a mermaid line in and Leo swam over to it. After climbing the ladder I asked him about his deco time. He informed me that he ran out of air with 6 minutes of deco still left. I immediately grabbed the oxygen. Leo's colour started to return quickly.

After 25 minutes on oxygen and a slow run into Port Hacking we discussed what happened. A couple of lessons learned here:

- 🕒 On a blue water ascent, always send a safety sausage up.
- 🕒 On the surface make sure your BCD is fully inflated.
- 🕒 Don't try and swim against any current.
- 🕒 Always have oxygen on the boat.
- 🕒 Always make sure everyone in the water knows where the anchor is.
- 🕒 For divers not familiar with the dive site escort them right back to the anchor.

Wayne Heming



SEA BRAGGIN'

WHAT'S COMING UP?

WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT
Wed 19 Feb	Club Meeting Rowers on Cook Club	Gary Perkins perkinsdive@gmail.com	Fri 28 Feb - Sun 2 Mar	Ladies Weekend Port Stephens	Nancy Scoleri nancyscoleri@yahoo.com.au
Sat 1 Mar	Shore Dive Shiprock	Paul Pacey paul.pacey@iinet.net.au	Sun 2 Mar	Shore Dive The Leap	Ken Ridley kenridley49@gmail.com
Sat 8 Mar	Boat Dive Barrens Hut	Ron Walsh rondwalsh@gmail.com	Sun 9 Feb	Shore Dive Bare Island	Carole Harris carole_underwater@yahoo.com.au
Sat 15 Mar	Shore Dive Shiprock	Eddie Ivers eddieivers@ipri-mus.com.au	Sun 16 Mar	Boat Dive Bypass Reef	Shelley Brueseker shellsb@bigpond.net.au

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