



“DIVE LOG”

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED DIVERS
OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

April 2010

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Wildside Shore Dive

by Mark Bowers

My recent travels to Bonaire presented a handful of us a very rare opportunity. Some of us were fortunate enough to shore dive the east side of the island. I know, what is the big deal? It really was a big deal. For those unfamiliar with Bonaire, it is regularly voted the top shore diving destination in the world. The shore diving is done primarily on the western side because this is the leeward side of the island. The eastern side of the island is obviously the windward side and is seldom visited by divers, even by boat charters. This is because it is so rough people typically succumb to seasickness if not on the way out most certainly during their surface interval. The east side of the island is rarely divable from shore. I know of 3 dive spots from shore on the east side, one of which is more on the southern tip than the east side. This southern dive site can be dove on calm to mild days. The other 2 dive sites on the eastern side are only divable on the calmest of days.

This trip we had 2 ½ days of no wind. In this time the seas even layed down. This was our chance! The entire group made a break for the south. Success! We made a great dive at the Wilemstoren Lighthouse. For our surface interval our group divided. Myself, Rick Boucher, Donna & Jim Manuel, Jose Bloise, Dave Lamkin, Mike McLellan, and Matt Bernard raced north and east to a little known site, Bocca Spelonk. We arrived there to favorable conditions, very light wave action for the east side of Bonaire. I would say much like the surf on most days at Lanes Cove.

Each of us evaluated the entry and inevitable exit for ourselves. Some of our group decided to sit this one out. For the those of us that made the dive we were rewarded with a unique experience. We each chose a spot to enter the inlet we felt best. I think of the 3 buddy teams we all entered the water in 3 slightly different spots. We all met a short distance from our points of entry. I had no idea what to expect. None of us knew what to expect. I was curious, a bit anxious, I just could not wait to see what this dive would

reveal. We swam on the surface a short distance towards open water. We decided to submerge, the bottom lay 25 or 30 feet below. As we descended I could see the bottom was covered with sea fans. They were every 6 or 8 feet, they were everywhere! We followed the bottom of this inlet towards the sea. It was like swimming down a huge half pipe, much like what was seen in the recent Winter Olympics. I was wondering what we would encounter. Would it be enormous underwater creatures? Might there be a shear vertical wall descending into the abyss? Would there be current? Would the bottom be strewn with shipwrecks? One thing that was for certain, none of us knew, but we were about to find out.



Photo courtesy of Jose Bloise

As we swam towards the open ocean the excitement built. Visibility was great, I would estimate in the range of 100 plus feet. As we neared the end of inlet I could sense a current running north to south. At this point the current did not appear to be too great so we agreed to exit the inlet and head north, into the current. After exiting the inlet in about 60 feet of water and now in open water it was now apparent the current was running! It was a struggle just to make headway. I remember looking over at Jim and seeing his bubbles streaming away behind him faster than they rose above him towards the surface. With the exception of river diving there has only been one other time in the open ocean I have experienced a current **nearly** as strong. This was by far the swiftest current I have actually dove in.

It was plain to see the reef on this side of the island has been battered by the wind and waves. The only way I can describe the reef is like this; near the surface, I would estimate the top third was like that of a wall, it was vertical. The remainder of the wall or bottom two thirds was sloped, as if fallen debris had piled at the base. The reef ended cleanly at 90 feet. At 90 feet as far as the eye could see was sand. There was no variation, it was flat and devoid of life. I ventured away from the reef on the white sand bottom about 30 yards. That was as far as I dare due to the current. I could only picture myself rolling along the bottom like a tumble weed in the desert only to surface in Venezuela should my handhold fail or if the current were to increase.

As we swam we quickly found it necessary to seek relief from the current in whatever way possible. The first means of relief was obvious, a hand-hold. We all found numerous hand-holds along the way. We careful not cause any damage to the reef. The second means of seeking relief was to duck behind a coral outcropping. This actually proved to be more efficient to me. We made our way north paying close attention to our air consumption, it was going quick. Like all dives we swam out deep and returned shallow. I forget at which point, I saw what was perhaps the largest spiny lobster I have ever seen. I think Jose took a picture of it. We were quickly nearing our turn around, it surely was not because of time! We all knew it would be a quick and effortless ride back. We just needed to return to the right inlet. We passed a couple inlets that could easily have been mistaken as the one we entered. If we had surfaced in one of these other inlets the 20 to 30 foot vertical climb from the surface with or without scuba gear would have been impossible.

“I could only picture myself rolling along the bottom like a tumble weed in the desert only to surface in Venezuela “

We reached our turn around much earlier than any of us desired. Shortly after turning I spotted a cavern, possibly a cave at about 35 feet. The opening appeared to be made by the partial collapse of the reef, much like places I have seen on land. This is what leads me to think it was more of a cavern than a cave. I entered as far as I dare; I was low on air, I did not have my wreck reel or primary light and entering a cavern or cave was never discussed during our plan. The remainder of our return was pretty standard only faster than usual. It was a swift ride. We returned to the right inlet and I could not wait to reach the surface to talk about the dive. I actually discovered an easier way in and out just a few steps from where some of us entered. I may not be able to remember what I did thirty minutes ago but, I will remember this dive and the entry/exit point long enough to do it again!

Message from the Secretary

My sincerest apologies to the club this time around. I dropped the ball. Between exams, papers, life in general, and the month starting on a Thursday, I got confused and thought we had an extra week. Turns out, I didn't. I am also dealing with software issues since replacing my hard drive preventing me from publishing the newsletter.

Please direct all complaints to me, and only me, as I am the secretary. The other guys have nothing to do with it, so give them a break. If you wish to leave an e-mail complaint, you can send it to troufos@studnt.fsc.edu. If you wish to place a phone call, (978) 821-1725. or you can simply tell me what you think at the next meeting.

Finally, there is nothing in any secret part of the website that would require you to need a password. The site is free and open to all.

Letter from the President

Greetings!

For the majority of us dive season is upon us. The more hearty have been diving through the winter. As most of us know the rewards for diving during the winter months are worth it. This winter being an exception we usually encounter calmer seas. The most rewarding aspect of winter diving is the improved visibility. Visibility is doubled even tripled the warmer months. Regardless whether you're a year round diver or seasonal diver this time of year should remind us of one thing, our life support system. We all know our regulator is our life support system. Did you know there is more to our life support system than just a regulator? I guess we could call our entire ensemble a life support system. That might be stretching it a bit, but not really. This is not only our regulator(s) but our BC, drysuit and our dry suit inflation system as well. Whether it is air or whatever in your tanks passes through, there is inlet valve and an outlet valve. Even with good rinsing this equipment and valves need annual maintenance. If you use nitrox it is even a bit more important for proper annual maintenance. What I am driving at is don't wait until the last minute for your annual maintenance.

On a bit of a somber note the club and the board has lost a member. Steve Smith, our Membership Coordinator has moved back to Ohio. Steve began diving last year. Yes he was new to diving but his enthusiasm will be missed, both at the beach and with the club. Best of luck Steve!

I am really looking forward to our next meeting. We have a few people coming from the Cape Cod Dive club. They are going to talk about their club and the diving around the cape.

Safe Diving,

Mark

A Special Thank You

We want to thank Steve Smith for his brief tenure on the board, we greatly appreciated his enthusiasm and the life he brought to Membership Coordinator.

We're going to miss you, Steve. Safe diving in Good Luck in Ohio and as always, Safe Diving.



Come On
DOWN
And See What's
UP

Actually TEST DIVE DUI Drysuits,
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\$15 PER DAY
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for you

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- Get Fitted by DUI Factory Professionals & Expert Dealer Staff
- See All the Options Available to Design YOUR Ultimate Drysuit
- Enjoy the Camaraderie of Your Local Fellow Divers
- FREE Collectors Edition DUI Test Diver Hat
- FREE Barbecue Lunch
- Join Us Saturday Night for a Dinner & Program at Select Locations

Event Schedule

SATURDAY

9AM Registration Opens / Demo Dives Begin

11AM-2PM Barbecue Lunch

4PM Last diver in the water

5PM All Equipment is Returned

6PM Catered Dinner & Presentation
(At Select Locations)

SUNDAY

9AM Registration Opens / Demo Dives Begin

11AM-2PM Barbecue Lunch

3PM Last diver in the water

4PM All Equipment is Returned

About DUI DOG Days

When you arrive, check in at the registration desk and complete a liability form. You will need to present your certification card and leave a drivers license or credit card in exchange for the equipment. You will then present your regulator so that a drysuit hose can be fitted to it.

After getting your tank, BC, regulator, weights and all of your equipment ready to go, you will be fitted for the right size DUI ZipSeals. Then it's off to the divewear insulation system and a DUI Crew Member will help you select the appropriate style and size for you along with insulation boots. The next station are the DUI drysuits in which you will be asked if there is anything special style you would like to try. Don't worry if you're new to DUI, we'll help you all along the way. Don't worry about sizes as we have XS - 6XL. A Crew Member will help you get in your insulation and teach you about how to put on your DUI drysuit. You'll get to try DUI RockBoots, a drysuit hood and even a Weight & Trim System if you like.

We have extra fins if yours won't fit with a drysuit and wetsuit gloves if you need them.

After you are all ready, you will check in with the Beach Master at the water's edge. An instructor will teach you the basics on how to use the suit and take you for a dive. You will not go below 40' and you will only do what you feel comfortable doing.

After the dive, return the equipment, have some lunch and do it all again!

Food For Thought

How much do you tip your day charter? How about your live aboard? Who do you tip?

BUY SWAP SELL

For Sale: Zeagle Expedition grade Gatorskin Trilaminare drysuit. Front entry, good seals. Needs boots. \$500 Contact Rick Boucher.

April 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 BOD	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 GM	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

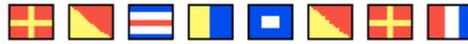
May 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6 BOD	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 GM	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					



Birthdays!!!
 Jeremy Skorinko, Ken Kadaras, Jessica Vasale, Ken Maston,
 David Lamkin, Jose Bloise

ROCKPORT



Rockport 42°40'N 070°37'W

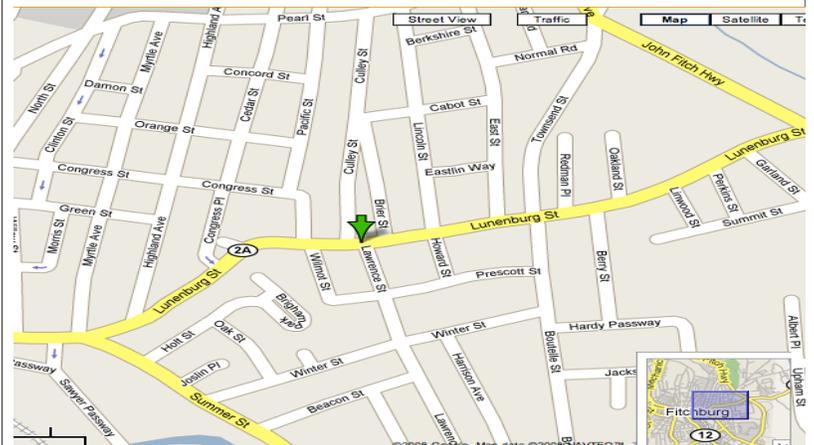
DAY	DATE	HIGH				LOW				☀️		🌙
		AM	hgt	PM	hgt	AM	hgt	PM	hgt	rise	set	moon
Tuesday	13	11:25	8.60 ft	11:34	9.16 ft	5:14	0.40 ft	5:23	0.73 ft	6:04	7:22	
Wednesday	14	12:01 PM	8.64 ft			5:50	0.13 ft	5:57	0.67 ft	6:02	7:23	🌑
Thursday	15	12:08	9.39 ft	12:38	8.64 ft	6:26	-0.07 ft	6:31	0.66 ft	6:01	7:24	
Friday	16	12:42	9.55 ft	1:16	8.59 ft	7:03	-0.20 ft	7:09	0.68 ft	5:59	7:25	
Saturday	17	1:19	9.65 ft	1:57	8.50 ft	7:43	-0.25 ft	7:49	0.75 ft	5:58	7:26	
Sunday	18	2:01	9.67 ft	2:42	8.39 ft	8:27	-0.23 ft	8:35	0.85 ft	5:56	7:27	
Monday	19	2:47	9.61 ft	3:31	8.28 ft	9:16	-0.13 ft	9:26	0.97 ft	5:54	7:29	
Tuesday	20	3:40	9.48 ft	4:27	8.22 ft	10:10	0.01 ft	10:23	1.07 ft	5:53	7:30	
Wednesday	21	4:38	9.33 ft	5:28	8.27 ft	11:09	0.12 ft	11:27	1.06 ft	5:51	7:31	
Thursday	22	5:43	9.20 ft	6:33	8.48 ft	12:12 PM	0.16 ft			5:50	7:32	
Friday	23	6:51	9.18 ft	7:37	8.88 ft	12:36	0.89 ft	1:16	0.09 ft	5:48	7:33	
Saturday	24	7:59	9.27 ft	8:37	9.38 ft	1:44	0.51 ft	2:17	-0.07 ft	5:47	7:34	
Sunday	25	9:03	9.43 ft	9:32	9.91 ft	2:49	-0.00 ft	3:14	-0.25 ft	5:45	7:35	
Monday	26	10:02	9.59 ft	10:24	10.34 ft	3:48	-0.54 ft	4:07	-0.39 ft	5:44	7:37	
Tuesday	27	10:56	9.68 ft	11:13	10.60 ft	4:43	-0.97 ft	4:58	-0.41 ft	5:42	7:38	
Wednesday	28	11:48	9.64 ft	11:59	10.66 ft	5:34	-1.22 ft	5:45	-0.31 ft	5:41	7:39	🌑
Thursday	29	12:37 PM	9.48 ft			6:23	-1.24 ft	6:32	-0.07 ft	5:39	7:40	
Friday	30	12:43	10.51 ft	1:25	9.20 ft	7:10	-1.05 ft	7:18	0.28 ft	5:38	7:41	
Saturday	01	1:30	10.20 ft	2:12	8.85 ft	7:57	-0.70 ft	8:05	0.68 ft	5:37	7:42	
Sunday	02	2:17	9.78 ft	3:01	8.49 ft	8:45	-0.25 ft	8:52	1.10 ft	5:35	7:43	
Monday	03	3:04	9.31 ft	3:50	8.15 ft	9:33	0.23 ft	9:43	1.48 ft	5:34	7:44	
Tuesday	04	3:54	8.85 ft	4:42	7.89 ft	10:24	0.68 ft	10:36	1.78 ft	5:33	7:46	
Wednesday	05	4:47	8.45 ft	5:35	7.74 ft	11:16	1.05 ft	11:33	1.96 ft	5:31	7:46	
Thursday	06	5:43	8.14 ft	6:29	7.73 ft	12:10 PM	1.31 ft			5:30	7:48	
Friday	07	6:41	7.94 ft	7:22	7.86 ft	12:32	1.98 ft	1:03	1.44 ft	5:29	7:49	
Saturday	08	7:38	7.87 ft	8:11	8.10 ft	1:30	1.85 ft	1:53	1.47 ft	5:28	7:50	
Sunday	09	8:32	7.90 ft	8:56	8.41 ft	2:24	1.58 ft	2:40	1.43 ft	5:26	7:51	
Monday	10	9:22	8.00 ft	9:38	8.76 ft	3:13	1.23 ft	3:23	1.32 ft	5:25	7:52	
Tuesday	11	10:07	8.14 ft	10:17	9.11 ft	3:57	0.84 ft	4:03	1.19 ft	5:24	7:53	
Wednesday	12	10:50	8.29 ft	10:56	9.44 ft	4:39	0.46 ft	4:42	1.05 ft	5:23	7:54	
Thursday	13	11:31	8.43 ft	11:34	9.72 ft	5:19	0.10 ft	5:21	0.91 ft	5:22	7:55	
Friday	14	12:13 PM	8.54 ft			5:59	-0.20 ft	6:02	0.79 ft	5:21	7:56	🌑
Saturday	15	12:14	9.95 ft	12:55	8.62 ft	6:41	-0.42 ft	6:45	0.71 ft	5:20	7:57	
Sunday	16	12:57	10.09 ft	1:40	8.67 ft	7:25	-0.54 ft	7:31	0.68 ft	5:19	7:58	
Monday	17	1:44	10.12 ft	2:29	8.70 ft	8:13	-0.57 ft	8:21	0.69 ft	5:18	8:00	
Tuesday	18	2:34	10.05 ft	3:21	8.74 ft	9:03	-0.51 ft	9:15	0.73 ft	5:17	8:01	
Wednesday	19	3:29	9.87 ft	4:17	8.80 ft	9:57	-0.38 ft	10:14	0.76 ft	5:16	8:02	
Thursday	20	4:28	9.63 ft	5:16	8.94 ft	10:54	-0.22 ft	11:18	0.73 ft	5:15	8:03	

Meeting Time and Location

The United Divers meet once a month on the third Thursday of the month at Slattery's located at 106 Lunenburg Street, Fitchburg, MA. There is ample parking provided in the rear of the building. The meeting will be taking place in the event room near the back right of the restaurant. The meeting will begin at 7:00p.m. with a social hour beginning at 6:30p.m. If you should have any questions please feel free to contact any of the board members.



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Fitchburg, MA 01420-4042
(978) 343-6330



Dive Log

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www.uniteddivers.org

Email: For newsletter correspondence
please contact Tom at:
troufos@student.fsc.edu



The Purpose of the United Divers of Central Massachusetts

The purpose of the United Divers of Central Massachusetts is to promote the sportsmanship and sport of SCUBA diving by stimulating our members to achieve the highest standards of safety and proficiency in SCUBA diving. To promote friendship and wholesome social activity among its membership. To promote educational programs that will provide fundamental knowledge supported by actual hands-on experience in a variety of areas including: safe diving practices, conservation of marine ecosystems, first aid and handling diving related emergencies, to organize group SCUBA diving trips, educational and social events that will allow our membership to accomplish all of the above.



United Divers of Central Massachusetts
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