



President's Log

The Very Air We Breathe

One of the first things I have learned in my new position as club president is that coming up with a worthwhile log may be a bit of a challenge. While reading a Scuba Board thread earlier today, I became inspired.

The thread was originated by a LDS (local dive shop) owner who posted a question that was basically, "How can I compete with the online guys for your business?" This is a question that our local shops (and sponsors) have address constantly. It is something that, as divers, we have to deal with also.

I know I felt good on Sunday, when I stopped by the LDS and made a small purchase while picking up my tanks (along with also making a small purchase on Friday when I dropped them off). Another PDC member happened to be in the shop when I came in on Sunday. I later found out that he walked out with a new tank.

I am not going to stand on a soap box and say that I purchase all my gear here in town. I have purchased a great deal of gear online and will continue to do so. I do, however, give my LDS as much of my business as I can. I know that in addition to liking the LDS staff, I NEED a LDS.

Stealing from the above mentioned thread, I see the LDS as the local Save a Dive Kit. How many of us haven't had to pick up something important and right now from the LDS? And is the online store in Texas or New York going to have your tank filled in time for tonight's dive?

As club members, let's try to remember we have a symbiotic relationship with our local shops and dive charter operators; we need each other. If we don't have them, our ability to dive is going to be difficult to say the least.

Let's remember those who keep us diving and provide us with the very air we breathe.

Brad

Illes Medes

We had great expectations as we arrived at the little resort and fishing village of L'Estartit in Southern Catalonia. The Medes Islands, Illes Medes in Catalan, or Islas Medes if you insist on speaking Spanish, the other "if you really have to" official language of the Costa Brava in Spain, are often listed among the top 50 dives in the world. They are very well known to all European divers. We seemed to be the only Americans the dive centers had seen in a long while, but they are all perfectly fluent in English, as many Brits come to enjoy the warm waters, extraordinary visibility and the fantastic dive sites. The islands are a national marine reserve, with an access fee and daily limited number of divers, so it is safer to book all your dives in advance, especially during the high summer season.

The Medes did rise up to our expectations of something extraordinary. The water was 10 degrees colder than normal, and the famed 100 feet visibility was reduced to 10! Extraordinary conditions----just our luck! Yes, indeed. We ended up being the only ones willing to still go diving (We were also the only ones having travelled 6000 miles), and the local dive center felt so bad for us that they offered to take just the three of us on the boat . We had a 22 divers' boat for the three of us, not bad. The boat had a hydraulic elevator to get us out of the water. We felt spoiled. The dive center had a room for rinsing and drying room for our wetsuits, so that you could do two dives in a day and get into your dry wetsuit just two hours after your first dive.

Once, the operator had forgotten to turn on the heaters, but when we arrived from lunch for our afternoon dive he was standing at the door with not one, but two brand new wetsuits from their shop for me to borrow, one on top of the other. The staff's kindness made up for the poor conditions, and we were rewarded for ignoring them, because the sights on each dive brought new excitement and marveling. All the sites at the Medes boast splendid Gorgonians, this is their trademark. They are omnipresent and come in several colors, covering the relief. Groupers get spotted on every dive, some of them huge. Octopi were plentiful and never shy. Our favorite dive was the Dolfi Nord, so called because of a copper dolphin bolted to a rock at the bottom. You need a guide to take you through a succession of tunnels and caves, sometimes narrow and low, all of them with magnificent lighting from lace-like walls and ceilings, and nicknamed the Cathedrals. They were the perfect hiding place for many creatures probably enjoyed the seclusion of the place, like us.

The boat ride to all the site takes only ten minutes, which is why you always return to the harbor between dives, to grab some excellent seafood (my son thinks I am a monster for devouring octopi the like of the ones in front of which I was in awe an hour earlier) and get your wetsuit heat dried.

This is not the closest destination for Californians, but the Illes Medes are worth the trip. You will experience the Southern Catalonia culture at the same time. Tip: Don't tell people you are happy to be in Spain. You are NOT. You are in Catalonia. You will be forgiven for speaking Spanish, though, because you are a foreigner.

*Practical notes: *The temperature SHOULD be 66° in May and June, rise to 75 or more in July and August.*

**We dove with La Sirena.*

There are 13 dive operators who are allowed to take divers to the islands,

but with different quotas. When booking a package make sure you ask for the islands. A fee is charged.



There are several hotels within walking distance or on the seafront and harbor. We loved the Medes II and their staff.

Valérie Lent



The large turnout at the August meeting saw the end of Mike Ring's tenure as club president and the election of new officers for the coming year. A grateful audience warmly applauded Mike for his able leadership over the past two years as club president.

Brad Lent bravely stepped forward to accept the black dive fin signifying his election as club president for the coming year. Congratulations Brad!

Other board members selected to assist Brad this year include:

Steve Senesac – Vice President
Jim Axtell – Treasurer/Membership
Rich Cirincione – Secretary
Valerie Lent – Newsletter/ Circulation
Nathan Walter – Webmaster
Kellen Tobin – Sergeant-at-arms



Congratulations to all.
Here's to a memorable and enjoyable year.

Rich Cirincione

Earth Day Clean Up

Once again, we will clean up Tajiguas Beach on Saturday Sept 25th. We meet at Refugio State Beach at 8:30 A.M for coffee, donuts and to get bags. Then we will go to Tajiguas to do the cleanup. Afterwards, we will have a BBQ and beach dive at Refugio. Bring gloves and a pickup stick if you have one.



Deco Stop

Friday October 1st at 5:30
Endless Summer Bar and Grill on
the Waterfront

Fight Breast Cancer With a New Dive Light

Now you can dive for a cause! If you want to support the fight against breast cancer, you can buy this Princeton Tec PINK dive light. \$20 of your purchase will ward this worthy cause. The flash light is pink, and I am proud to carry one!



Erwan Lent

Join the Coolest Club in Town

- * Monthly meetings with entertainment
- * Raffle prizes (we all need new dive stuff)
- * Great dive buddy pool
- * Beach and boat dives, and weekly night dives
- * Club BBQs, and other activities
- * Free air-fills and gear discounts at local dive shops
- * Right to proudly wear the official PDC T-shirt
(Nobody has a logo as cool as ours)



Meeting every last Tuesday of
the month at Sizzler: 5555
Hollister Avenue, Goleta

PDC **Thursday Night Dives!**

To find out where the group will be diving, or to be added to the night dive e-mail list, sign up at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PDC_midweek_dive, or send e-mail to PDC_midweek_dive_subscribe@yahoogroups.com



Dive Club Officers

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