

# Paradise Dive Club

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## President's Log *The Trouble with Trifles*

Michael Ring  
President

As I sit here contemplating the next President's Log I am trying to think of something to write about. There is little time before the newsletter is due to be sent out, and I have no clue what to discuss. Then, I read an article in the June issue of Undercurrent Magazine about some research that they did concerning rinse tanks at various dive resorts, and I am piqued by it. I realize that this might be a good starting place. So, let's dive in and see what we find, shall we?

It seems that someone was interested in seeing just how sanitary the standard dive resort rinse tank is for your equipment. They went to an unidentified resort and conducted an experiment. The facility had multiple tanks, so they were able to use relatively good scientific procedures to make the evaluation. They cleaned out one tank every morning, including using bleach to kill all possible germs and then refilled the tank. Another tank was not cleaned with bleach, but the water was

drained and refilled each morning. A third tank – the regulator tank - was not cleaned nor refilled each morning. Just left as it was. They tested for contaminants each day when filled at the beginning of the day, say 7:30 a.m. then again at 8:00 a.m., then around noon, and then at the end of the day. Part of their concern was whether the local water was problematic in itself.

What they found was that there were no significant contaminants in the fresh water, so any issue had to come from the equipment. Both tanks that were cleaned each day were uncontaminated when first tested, nor when tested by 8:00. The regulator tank, which was not cleaned, was loaded with bacteria when tested at the beginning of each day.

By noon they found some bacteria, in all of the tanks. By the end of the day the levels of bacteria were very high. The findings from this study and others included conjunctivitis, as well as other possible concerns. Needless to say, the message is clear. Do not rinse your mask and regulator in communal rinse tanks. They could transmit very serious problems and ruin your vacation.

Another interesting question you hear when diving is why do you always have to pee so much? Even if you have gone right before the dive? DAN has put out an explanation that is the best I have seen. It seems that whenever the body is immersed in water that is colder than air it causes narrowing of the blood vessels in the extremities. This occurs mostly in the skin, superficial tissues of the body and in the muscles of the arms and legs. Apparently the increased volume of blood to the central organs of the body such as the heart, lungs and large internal blood vessels, is interpreted by your body as a fluid overload. This causes the kidneys to produce urine to lower the centrally circulating blood volume. Ergo you go.

Another big one, for me at least, is dealing with cramping while diving. Especially in colder water

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dives. I have always heard that to avoid cramping stay hydrated, and get a lot of potassium and electrolytes. I saw an article by Larry "Harris" Taylor, Ph.D., Diving Safety Coordinator, U of MI, in [divefitness.com](http://divefitness.com) on the topic. It said most exercise-induced cramping has to do with over-working a muscle. (Surprise, huh?!) It suggested that both strengthening and stretching have been shown to reduce the incidence of cramping over time. But it also said that research going back 30 years has repeatedly shown that neither hydration nor electrolytes influence exercise-induced cramping. It reiterated the obvious of making sure your exposure protection is appropriate to the temperature of the water.

If you have other information on dive topics such as this, we would welcome your input. We can post an article from you with your personal stories or information that you have read about. I am sure that we will all benefit from learning some new tip that will make each of our dive experiences safer and better. ■

## Virgin Islands Trip

-Gerald Sorich

We flew in to St. Thomas Virgin Islands on Sat the 16<sup>th</sup> from Miami. The hot humid air smacked us as we walked across the tarmac on this, most populated of the American Virgin Islands. The Virgin Islands are an archipelago, part of the Leeward Islands in the Caribbean Sea. The Leeward Islands are the northern islands of the Lesser Antilles, where the Caribbean Sea meets the western Atlantic Ocean. The US bought the American Virgin Islands from Denmark in 1918 for \$25 million to prevent Germany from getting it to set up a military base. It is a "Territory" and as such has US protection and US laws, money, and government. The islanders do not get to vote in US national elections. Tourism is the only industry on St. Thomas and everything on the island is geared toward the tourists. The island is only 34 sq miles with no source of fresh water. The Virgin Islands are actually the tips of mountains which are based thousands of feet below sea level. As such they are very hilly compared to the Western Caribbean Islands. The roads are narrow, windy and steep. Since they have no streams or lakes, the island itself is nowhere near as pretty



or diverse as the Pacific Islands. They drive on the left hand side of the road and there are no shuttles from anywhere so you must rent a car (not recommended) or take taxis. I have been to the Western Caribbean, to Bonaire, Grand Cayman, Belize, Roatan and Cozumel but have never experienced as friendly a group of people as the islanders. Everyone was extremely pleasant and helpful, from the shop owners, to the taxi drivers.

Many of the beaches on St. Thomas and St. John are renowned for the snorkeling. The sand is white, the water warm and the visibility amazing....but the reefs are seriously damaged. We snorkeled at the famous Trunk Bay on St. Thomas and while they had an interested underwater park marked by plaques on an buoyed trail, the coral was

mostly dead. The same case was found at Magens Bay and Coki Beach on St. Thomas. Almost every guided trip or tour on the islands includes a snorkeling stint. This allows people who aren't really familiar with the beauty of the sea to experience it live. Listening to the comments from those around us, it is effective in raising awareness of the coral reefs, while at the same time taking its toll on the coral. Coki Beach is one of the most beautiful beaches I have ever seen. The coral is damaged but because they have set it up as a major snorkeling beach, they allow feeding of the fish and there was a real abundance of reef fish. The snorkelers there were really pumped.

I booked a two tank dive with the St. Thomas Dive Club at Bolongo Beach harbor. When I called on Weds for the Friday boat, there was only one other person booked. I looked forward to a small boat and few divers. Friday morning when I arrived there were 16 divers. The boat was crowded but adequate. The staff was friendly and helpful with carry your gear and setting you up. The dive masters chatted up the whole time but didn't ask the routine "How long have you been diving? How many dives have you done? and When was your last dive?" I didn't find this too professional. I like to know the experience level of the other divers. Also, many boats won't stick a bunch of rookies with a group of seasoned divers. We motored out to the Ledges of Little St. James, one of the myriad of small islands in the Virgin Islands. The trip was quick and relatively smooth. Visibility was greater than 100ft and water temperature was 82°. Everyone else on the boat was getting into wetsuits but as a devoted cold water diver, I

declined. The water temperature didn't seem to vary from the surface to 50ft down. This was a fairly shallow dive that maxed out at 56 ft by my computer. The reef was in fair condition and the fish life was the usual Caribbean mix of parrotfish, queen angels, etc. While the dive conditions were good with warm water, good visibility and no current, there wasn't anything unique about the site.

They moved the boat to Cow Reef and again the conditions were great. Cow reef has a lot of swim throughs and canyons. This is a bit more interesting than just swimming over flat reefs. The coral was in better condition with different colored patches all over. I have learned to look for the colored coral which is the living coral to judge the condition of the reefs. We saw many large brown tube worms, a glimpse of a large octopus tentacle and a decent sized eel. I was encouraged to see many living finger corals growing around the reef. I was thinking that we hadn't seen any large fish when I glanced up and realized that I was swimming below a school of Tarpon. I tapped the diver next to me, who was fixed on the bottom and pointed up as I started the video camera. He smiled and gave the thumbs up as he realized that he was oblivious to what was around and above him.



All in all the dives were pleasant but not outstanding by any means. Once you've dove a few times in the Caribbean, you tend to look for previously unseen (ie-photographed) fish and things. I really didn't find that much that was new. There wasn't an abundance of fish or large schools on the reef. My experience has been that the more remote the island, the healthier the reef will be and the diving will be better. The reefs closer to large populations, be it in Hawaii or the Caribbean, are definitely more damaged from over fishing, pollution and divers. ■

## GOLETA BEACH: Surprisingly Awesome

**-Ray and Stacey Janik**

Beach diving can be a mixed bag. It's great to know that we can get a dive in almost any day of the year, but that doesn't mean it'll be a *good* dive. That's why, I think, we wind up at the same spots over and over. We head to Refugio on a regular basis not because it's always thrilling, but because it's rarely—if ever—truly awful.

Another category of sites is those that frequently disappoint, but occasionally reward the hopeful with really amazing dives. Goleta Beach is like that. As any PDC member who's tried to carve a pumpkin in zero viz knows, the conditions there are often what a more tactful person would call challenging. I would just say they often suck.

But, a couple of weeks ago, The World's Best Dive Buddy and I were looking to do a dive and thought about trying something a little different. Conditions had been flat and mild for quite awhile. On Friday, we

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MONTHLY MEETING

**WHEN & WHERE:** TUESDAY JULY 28<sup>TH</sup>, 6:30 AT PETRINI'S

### BOARD MEETING

**WHEN & WHERE:** TUESDAY JUNE 2<sup>ND</sup>, 7:00 AT NOAH'S

### MONTHLY DECOMPRESSION STOP

**WHEN & WHERE:** FRIDAY JULY 10, 5:30 AT ENDLESS SUMMER CAFE

### FIN DAY

**WHEN & WHERE:** SATURDAY, JULY 11<sup>TH</sup> AT AQUATICS

ALL ATTENDEES BRING THEIR FINS FOR OTHERS TO TRY AND WE'LL

HAVE IT ALONG WITH A FORCE FIN PARTY WITH BOB EVANS,

WATERMEN'S ALLIANCE SANTA BARBARA SOCIAL

**WHEN & WHERE:** 7:00PM-10:00PM THURSDAY, JULY 16<sup>TH</sup>

AT SANTA BARBARA MARITIME MUSEUM

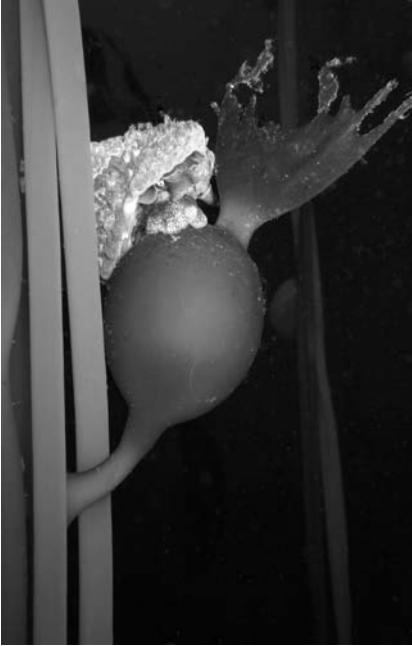
### BEACH CLEANUP

**WHEN & WHERE:** SEPTEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>

WE'LL HAVE OUR TAJIGUAS BEACH CLEANUP



happened to drive by Goleta Beach and noticed big patches of healthy-looking kelp sitting along the pipeline just offshore. On Saturday, the weather was still good: a little chilly and overcast, but no swell or waves to speak of. Even late in the morning, we had the place mostly to ourselves, aside from a few beach walkers, fishermen, and some lifeguards practicing towing each other behind a jet ski on the other side of the pier, which looked more like fun than work.



We suited up and started to swim out. The tide was slack and the kelp was sitting straight up in the water column. As we descended and swam over to the pipeline, the kelp spread out over it, creating a surprisingly dense canopy. We slipped through the fronds and into the shadows of the leaves overhead. Between the overcast sky and the thick kelp, the light was a little low, but the visibility was surprisingly good—easily 15 feet or more—and the sea life abundant. I was immediately greeted by a large lobster who obviously knew bug season was over and fearlessly stared at me from his perch on an open rock.

A few feet away, Stacey came upon two octopi, also out in the open, fighting over an urchin snack. As we continued on, we spotted several species of rockfish, kelp bass, numerous nudibranchs, and more lobsters. Near the end of the pier—and the

kelp canopy—the sky lightened and the visibility really opened up, creating a large sphere of crystal-clear water.

After swimming a bit farther, we turned around and retraced our path. There were more fish and invertebrates, and we both spotted a critter we hadn't seen before—a bright white plant/critter with a little frond on top. We're still trying to ID it. We were a little chilly—even though the water was in the mid 50s, we'd been under for nearly an hour—but really happy that we'd given a spot we often pass on another chance to pleasantly surprise us. And that it had done so with flying colors. ■



## Scuba Show – Long Beach

30 to 31 May 2009 - Ann & Steve

Early Saturday morning we set out on the 2 ½ hour journey to the Long Beach Convention Center. Perhaps the hardest part of the expedition was to first find a parking spot and second, to find where, in the convention center, the scuba show was happening – confusing or non-existent signage. After half an hour of muddling around, bang! the entrance appeared out of the mists of Avalon looking very much like one would expect a scuba show to look. There were about 8 lines of booths, Equipment, Travel, Attire, and Etc. (like food, PADI, dive museum), with banners flying high and throngs of people milling around. wheels, and place them in a special compartment at the bottom of the sack/tank, and off you go for your dive.

### Equipment

We have a special interest in a product to make the beach dive adventure a bit simpler; so we headed straight to booth 359 – Beach Buddy. For \$249 one gets a sack with

detachable wheels. Your tank goes in the sack and you bungee all your stuff to it. Roll it all down to the water, put on your equipment, pop off the wheels, and place them in a special compartment at the bottom of the sack/tank, and off you go for your dive.



Along the way, we encountered another, similar product, Smart Gear – a heavy-duty hand trolley capable carrying two tanks and a ‘ton’ of other stuff for \$369. The problem is what to do with it while you do your dive? They suggested burying it in the sand or sinking it out in the water. It seemed to us to be more suitable for getting all of your gear down to the boat, rather than the beach; but was definitely sturdier than the Beach Buddy.

In a similar vein, the Diver’s Platform by CDM bills itself as “the first serious surface support float for professionals”. It is essentially a medium inner-tube in an aluminum frame with an auger to anchor it for roughly \$360. For

about another \$300, you get a kind-of ‘wine-cooler’ attachment for carrying an extra tank.

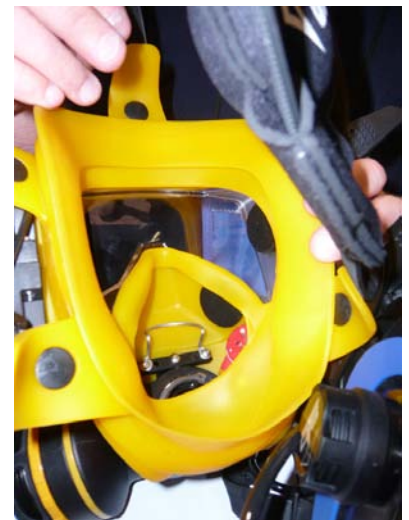


Our interest in the above is that we are currently prototyping a system that can do all of the above (and more) for about the same price as the Beach Buddy. Now if the economy will just turn around!! There were a number of ultra-tech products like re-breathers and camera systems to die for; but



being novice divers and relatively poor, we stumbled by these; but they sure looked cool!

One interesting, not incredibly expensive, techie-device was an underwater communication system based on ultra-sound. It utilizes a full mask which includes the regulator so you can speak inside your mask. It also seemed like the ideal mask for those of you who enjoy ice-diving as it seals against your hood – no frozen lips, etc. A basic, two-comm system was in the \$2,000 range – Ocean Technology Systems.







A photographic product that caught our eye was the video mask, from Dive Cam Central, for \$250, that takes either High Definition video (30fps@720p) or 5 Mpixel stills. While definitely not the camera for creating Discovery Channel documentaries or National Geographic layouts, it could create a quite acceptable and convenient documentation of what you saw on your dive.

We were surprised at the relatively low prices of the Sea-Doo sea scooters - until we

realized that the really inexpensive ones were severely limited in depth and that one had to pony-up \$300 for one with a 100 ft depth rating – a lot for what is basically a waterproof, battery-operated table fan.

More impressive, and costly, was the Sea Lion, a towable or self-contained underwater motorcycle-like device capable of 6 knots for 1.5 hours for only \$4,000. There were, of course, lots of regulators, masks, fins, dive compasses, wet and dry suits, and tanks.



An off-the-wall product, that we liked so much that we bought it, was Rescue Tape. Self-Fusing,

permanent seal, resists 500 deg F, 700 psi strength, waterproof, air-tight – and it sticks under water! They gave us a couple for our raffle so some of you can soon give your own testimonials. Note: it sticks to itself but not so well to other things. Think of repairing hoses, pipes, tennis racquet grips, marking your tank...



### Dive Destinations

In accepting our economic realities, we passed by the tables from

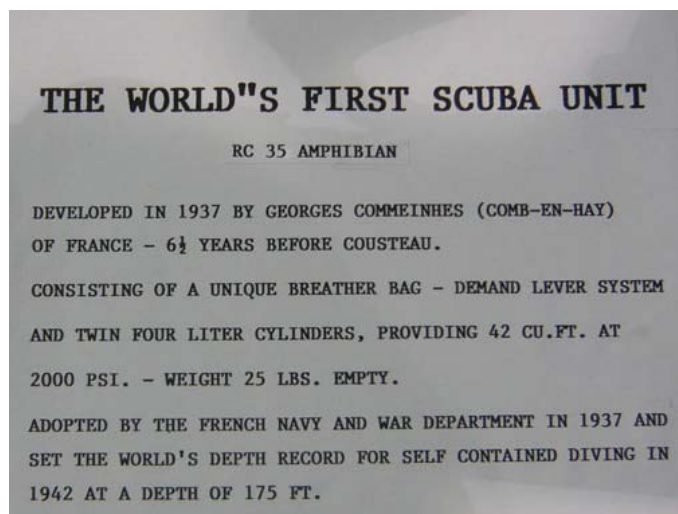
Tahiti, Indonesia, and points far away. We stopped briefly at our favorite, out-of-Santa Barbara dive shop, Lahaina Divers – Maui, entered their raffle (did not win) and grazed over the Mexican array of sites. (Hey, buy low, sell dear) Luisa Cadaval, Deputy Director of the Los Angeles branch Mexican Tourism Board (310-282-9112 x202) was very friendly and helpful. We were surprised at the array of dive sites around both coasts – (maybe a VW van and spend a year traveling from one to the next?....)

Fernando Aguilar of Club Cantamar has several live-a-board options around La Paz in the range of \$1600 to \$2650 for 5 days @ 3 dives/day (including Great Whites) and several land-based packages from 3 nights, 2 days diving \$453 to 7 nights, 5 days diving \$1034 with pickup and drop at the La Paz airport. He gave us their DVD for our perusal – some very beautiful underwater footage. They do offer the pay for 9, get 1 free deal. There were also several Caribbean dive



locations. One that captured our fantasy was Turneffe Island Resort off the coast of Belize. It is a private island on the world's second largest barrier reef. [www.turnefferesort.com](http://www.turnefferesort.com)

### ETC. – Dive museum



### Places of Interest in the Neighborhood

Upon leaving the show, we were hungry and saw the Long Beach Café across the street– a retro-looking diner with a window advertisement for Greek food. It turned out to be a 1950's kind of place - in good repair, with a friendly homey atmosphere, good food, in large quantities, and for not so much money. Highly recommended as a show decompression stop.

### Maui, Hawai'i Dive Trip: Practical Tips

by Erwan Lent

- Cheapest tank cards: Pacific Dive, in Lahaina ( \$ 30 for ten tanks)
- Most personable staff at dive shop: Pacific Dive, Lahaina
- Best free list of dive sites with directions and maps: the Maui Dive Shop magazine, available at the many Maui Dive Shops along the coast
- Cheapest (my son says: “and best”; I did not try them myself) guided dives: for beach, scooter and night dives: Pacific Dive, Lahaina
- For the perfect boat trip, maximum 12 divers, one guide to six divers max, and to benefit from the immense naturalist knowledge of a marine biologist who published books on the local marine environment and specializes in nudibranchs, Mike Severns Diving.
- Longest opening hours of dive shop: from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM (but you pay a lot for tanks and weights) Maui Dive and Surf Shop in Lahaina.
- In the summer, shore dive sites are more easily accessible in West Maui, whereas in the winter your best bets are in South Maui.
- An instructor who can teach all the specialty courses you can think of: Artie at Pacific Dive, Lahaina. He teaches all classes, all levels, at affordable prices, not your usual inflated resort prices with competence and humor. Quite a character.

### Pedagogy tip

by Valerie Lent

Granted: I know nothing about diving; I just started. However, I am a teacher, so I can't help it; I have to teach the experienced divers something.

You have probably already experienced diving in the company of a novice diver, whether by chance from a dive boat, or while encouraging your friend or family member to share your passion. If so, no doubt you felt the urge to share your wisdom and advise your buddy on how to improve their skills after noticing their errors. This is great, but it is a fruitless endeavor if the timing is wrong.

For example, you have just ascended, your novice friend has barely inflated his BC and is just starting to process the excitement, the emotions just experienced, and there you go with a “next time you could try to wave your arms less, and you should blablabla---” This will only generate frustration, shame, loss of confidence, anger, maybe a swear word or two; and none of it will register in the remotest recess of the novice's brain. On the other hand, if you reach the shore first, wait until you have poured a (small) glass of wine over which to relive the dive, and then mention all the “ You could---”, then you will be listened to, heard, and thanked.

# 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](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PDC_midweek_dive), or send e-mail to [PDC\\_midweek\\_dive-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PDC_midweek_dive-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

## Membership

\$25/year for individuals, \$40 for families. Membership runs May-April and includes a monthly newsletter, free air-fills, and other benefits. For details or to join, contact Noah Philips at:  
[membership@paradisediveclub.org](mailto:membership@paradisediveclub.org).

## Newsletter

Send newsletter items to Stuart Ponder at:  
[webmaster@paradisediveclub.org](mailto:webmaster@paradisediveclub.org)

## Website

[www.paradisediveclub.org](http://www.paradisediveclub.org)

## Join the Coolest Club in Town!

1. Monthly meetings with entertainment.
2. Raffle prizes (we all need new dive stuff)
3. Great dive buddy pool
4. Beach and boat dives, AND weekly night dives
5. Club BBQs, and other activities
6. Free air-fills and gear discounts at local dive shops
7. Right to proudly wear the official PDC T-Shirt (nobody has a logo as cool as ours).

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*Many thanks to our sponsors for their generosity including air/fill donations and gear discounts!*

## Meeting Place

The July 28th meeting will take place at  
Petrini's Restaurant in Santa Barbara.  
14 West Calle Laureles.

Feeding frenzy at 6:30pm, meeting at 7pm