



MARTIN DIVE CLUB News



October 2002

October Meeting

Off-Season Diving Preparation, Phil Merchant, Wet-N-Fla Scuba

Come hear about off-season dive activities at our October 8th meeting. Phil Merchant, owner of Wet-N-Fla Scuba in Longwood, will give us his thoughts on things you can do in the cooler months to enhance your SCUBA life year-round.



Phil learned to dive in 1982, started working in the dive industry in 1990, became a NAUI dive instructor in 1993, moved to Orlando in 1994 to manage Jim Hollis Scuba World, opened Wet-N-Fla Scuba in 1996, and became an Instructor Trainer in 1997. His latest achievement was becoming a Course Director for NAUI this year. This is the highest Instructor level a person can hold in NAUI in the recreational side.

Phil will be talking about some of the many things you can do to continue your quest for knowledge in diving even though it is starting to become winter (if you can call what we have winter). He will lead a brief discussion about courses like Nitrox, CPR, first aid, and reef fish identification that can be done in the winter months that don't necessarily involve actually getting in the water but can make your diving experience more enjoyable. He will also say a few words about winter storage of equipment.

We'll be gathering and mingling at around 6:30 p.m., with the evening's presentation beginning at 7:00 p.m. Afterwards at about 7:30, we hold our "formal" meeting covering **CLUB** business and member trip reports, followed by door prizes and our fantastic "50-50" raffle.



We meet at the Big Apple Buffet, which is located at 198 S. Semoran Blvd (SR 436) in Orlando [phone (407) 382-7220]. It's just north of SR 408 (the East-West Expressway) on the west side of SR 436, behind the Sonic Burger drive-in restaurant. It's in the old Holiday House location in the Royal Oak Village Plaza shopping center. The price is \$9.49 for the regular buffet (including sushi) and \$11.99 if you want crab legs, clams, and oysters. We will have a server for beverages, and they have a full bar. There are tons of things on the buffet - Mongolian barbecue, Oriental, fried chicken, and Italian, along with salads and dessert!

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The Camera Guy says it's Photo Contest time again! Please see page 3 for dates and details.

President's Column

Hello Fellow Divers!!

For our September meeting, the **MDC** heard about Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy from Mark Walters, Florida Hospital. I heard it was a good talk. I was not able to be there since I was on the Nekton Rorqual.

I will give a full report of the Nekton at the next meeting.

For our October meeting, we will have Phil Merchant from Wet-N-Fla Scuba. He will be talking about Off-Season Diving Preparation.

I hope to see you at the October 8th meeting.

Dive safe,
Marie Frank

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might otherwise have missed. Once you've named it, you're more likely to remember it.

SECRET TRICK 7 - Focus on a Few

Don't expect to identify 20 new fish on one dive. If you try to look for 20, you'll probably confuse them and not see any. Instead, focus your search on two or three new creatures until you've learned to spot them and name them. Then, you can add two or three more to your repertoire.

SECRET TRICK 8 - Have a Search Image

Study the ID book before you dive, not just after. Know which fish you might find in the area and develop what Laddie Akins, director of the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF), calls a "search image" before you get wet. Commit to memory, or even write on a slate, the size, shape, color, and markings of your target and, just as important, its behavior and habitat. Does it hide in the kelp or swim outside it? Is it likely to be deep or shallow?

Bonus Trick of the Divemasters: Home Field Advantage

One of the biggest reasons the dive guide can find that unusual creature is that he's been to the same site a thousand times. Many fish are territorial, and when you've found them once, you'll find them again in the same place. (So that's how they do it!)

Fish-Finder Resources

Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) promotes field surveys by sport divers. The REEF web site lists common fish for various areas, with pictures, identifying marks, and behaviors. Check out the ID quiz for common fish and test your knowledge on the Web at www.reef.org.

Reef Fish Identification by Paul Humann. The leading series of guidebooks to reef fish around the world. Also available are guides to corals and invertebrates, a CD-ROM, and a lot of information on the web site: www.fishid.com.

Your Officers and Staff

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Photo Contest Deadline at October Meeting

The **MDC** meeting on Tuesday, October 8th, will be the deadline for entries to this year's annual photo contest. As you can see from the Contest Rules, there is a category for everyone, ranging from above-water snapshoters to serious underwater shooters. There is even a First Time Entry category.

Results will be presented and prizes awarded at the November 12th **CLUB** meeting. If you have any questions, or if you want to enter your photos, contact Capt Mike, the "Camera Guy," at (407) 273-6655 (home) or (407) 808-6453 (days).

Mike McCleskey

More from the camera guy . . .

It's not too late to enter the **CLUB**'s annual Photo Contest. Every year at the November meeting, the results of the contest are unveiled and an amazing collection of prize stash is distributed. Not a photographer, you worry? Not a problem! Your **MARTIN DIVE CLUB** has the equipment and resources to help you capture your diving adventures on film.

We have available, for a very minimal fee, equipment ranging from simple underwater point-and-shoot cameras to a professional-quality underwater photography system. The cameras have a range of lenses and strobe accessories to fit any need. And the best part is that we have friendly, knowledgeable **CLUB** members who will hold your hand through the process and teach you what you need to know to use the gear.

We also have some new resources for even the experienced photographers. We have an excellent video series on underwater photography and two new books to offer. "The Traveler's Guide to ER (Emergency Repair) for the Nikonos V Camera" is an easy to follow, illustrated guide to handle unforeseen problems with the camera, and our copy is even signed by the author! A special thanks goes out to Marie Frank for donating it to the **CLUB**. We also now have a hard copy of the entire Nikonos V Workshop, published by Bob Warkentin's Southern Nikonos Service Center. This is an extremely

thorough guide to everything you could possibly want to know about the workings and care of the camera, with that special flair that only Bob Warkentin can give it.

For information on any of the **CLUB**'s camera equipment, contact Mike McCleskey, Camera Guy, at (407) 273-6655 or at mmccleskey@cfl.rr.com.

Now get out there and take some pictures!!!!

Contest Rules

All contestants must be **CLUB** members in good standing as of the date of entry. Winners will be announced at the November **CLUB** meeting. Photos may be entered in the following categories:

Separate Print and Slide Categories

- 1a & 1b Underwater, normal or wide angle
- 2a & 2b Underwater, close-up and macro

Combined Print and Slide Categories

- 3 Underwater, fixed-focus (Ikelite AquaShot or similar)
- 4 Most unusual, unique subject matter
- 5 First-time entry
- 6 Above water, dive-related
- 7 Most likely to embarrass
- 8 Most interesting, having absolutely nothing to do with diving (the photo must include a **CLUB** member).

Entries must be submitted no later than the **CLUB meeting on the October 8th.**

Fine Print

A photo may be entered in only one category. Each contestant is limited to two photos per category, six photos for the contest. Any category with a single contestant will be eliminated. Photos must have been shot since September 30, 2001, by the contestant. Photos in categories 1 through 5 must be taken while snorkeling or scuba diving.

The contestant's name must not appear on the picture or slide. Photos may have titles. Photos will be returned the night of the awards. The decision of the judges is final.

Format Limitations

- Photos must be no larger than 5 by 7 inches (except for panoramic), unmatted and unframed.
- Photos may be cropped, but may not be digitally enhanced

MDC Dives the Bahamas with ScubaRadio on the Nekton Rorqual

The week of September 7 through 14 found a band of members of the **MARTIN DIVE CLUB** diving their hearts out aboard the newest live-aboard boat in the well-respected Nekton Diving Cruises fleet, the Nekton Rorqual. The trip was put together by Marie Frank in cooperation with ScubaRadio (www.scubaradio.com), bringing many fun adventures, merchandise, and after-hours foolishness that a trip of this nature would not otherwise have.



Nekton Rorqual

Photo by Mike

We kicked the trip off by attending the live broadcast of ScubaRadio on Saturday afternoon at a local watering hole to wind down from the real world and get in the right frame of mind for the trip. Following the broadcast, a total of 30 divers and probably 300 pounds of ScubaRadio's sound system were loaded aboard the boat.



Greg and his 'equipment'

Photo by Mike



"Dive Deck"

Photo by Mike

The Nekton Rorqual was launched into service in October of 2001 and, like its sister ship the Nekton Pilot, is a SWATH (small waterplane area twin hull) construction designed to be extremely stable and to avoid the rocking motion that leads to seasickness. While it looks like a large floating box, its 80-foot by 40-foot size allows three levels containing large cabins with private heads, a roomy salon and dining area, and a 2000 square foot sun deck complete with jacuzzi. Diving was done from the rear dive deck which hydraulically lowers to water level. More information on the boat and Nekton Diving Cruises can be found at <http://www.nektoncruises.com>.



Sun Deck

Photo by Mike

The meals were served in a combination of buffet and sit down; after helping ourselves at the buffet, the crew waited on us for seconds, desserts, and drinks. Breakfasts consisted of scrambled eggs, pancakes, sausage and gravy, french toast, etc. The "after morning dive" snacks consisted of chocolate

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chip, butterscotch, and oatmeal cookies; brownies; banana bread; etc. Lunches consisted of chicken Caesar salad, "Taco Day," BLTs, hamburgers, hotdogs, etc. The "after afternoon dive" snacks were egg rolls, mini-hotdogs, mozzarella sticks, etc. And dinner was the best; we had prime rib, shrimp fettuccine, turkey with dressing, mashed potatoes and pork roast, etc. Some of us were glad we got the large number of dives to make up for our eating.

There were 11 crew members plus one captain for 30 divers. They were all accommodating and helpful with our dives and made our stay on the ship comfortable and relaxing.



"Drifting with the 'Rorqual'"

Photo by Mike

The itinerary for our week focused on the Cay Sal Bank area of the southern Bahamas, carrying us within 30 miles of the Cuban coastline. The only landfall we made over the entire week was for a 30-minute stop into Bimini to pick up a few souvenirs. Otherwise, it was "dive, dive, dive!"



"Nice eel, pretty eel"

Photo by Marie

Mike McCleskey managed to log 25 dives over the week, and Marie Frank was only a couple shy of that. It is impossible to detail all of the diving, but we did get in dives in three different blue holes, two drift dives, a shark-feed dive, and numerous night dives. The weather was fairly cooperative, although we had mostly overcast days and some rain. At least we were a week ahead of Hurricane Isidore.



"The Coast Guard to the rescue"

Photo by Mike

Mid-week brought some excitement we could have done without. In the middle of the night, one of the crew members woke up with classic symptoms of decompression sickness (DCS), (the bends). She was immediately put on 100% oxygen and an emergency evacuation plan was put into place. By 8:00 a.m., we had a Coast Guard cutter alongside and a helicopter inbound from Miami. The captain and crew did an amazing job of preparing the ship for the helicopter's arrival. When it did show up, the Coast Guard "chopper" lowered a basket onto the upper deck and whisked the victim away with expert efficiency. We later learned that the injured crew member was given three treatments in the recompression chamber, which completely relieved all symptoms. She was ordered to avoid diving for 6 weeks, but then will be able to return to normal. Upon our return to dock in Ft. Lauderdale, she was there with a big smile to greet us and tell us how lucky she was.

Greg the Divemaster and the rest of the ScubaRadio crew certainly brought some extra fun along on the trip. First, it was the "care package" for every diver including a very nice Armor backpack-style dive bag, Sea Vision mask, ScubaRadio T-shirt, and lots of other small goodies. Then, there

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Rorqual, from page 5

was always music playing up on the sun deck with karaoke almost every night, as well as joke contests, games, and other activities which usually included more prizes. One night was the erotic pole dancing contest, which I will not bother to discuss here, since I am sure our News editor would censor it out. Did I mention that there tended to be a bit of alcohol consumed during these evening activities?



Banded Butterflyfish

Photo by Mike

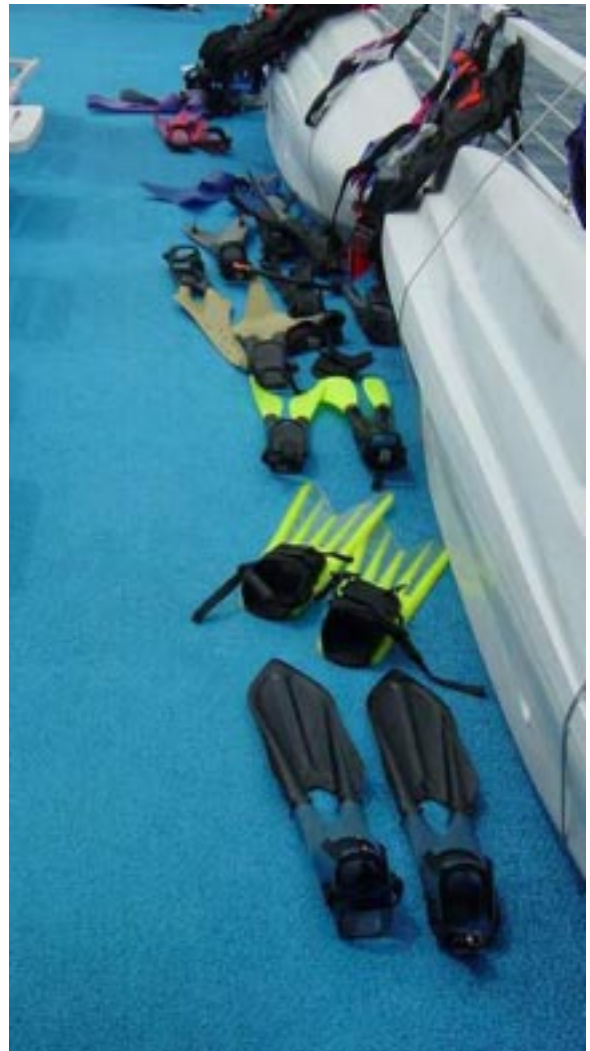
One entertaining story is related to the fact that Greg had brought along an underwater communication system provided to him by the manufacturer to demo on the trip. Portions of the following week's broadcast of ScubaRadio were actually taped using this system underwater. What was so funny was the first day that Greg and Jeff (from South Florida Diving Headquarters) were wearing the underwater units and Julie the Diving Diva (from ScubaRadio)



Close up and personal

Photo by Mike

and some of the Nekton staff were communicating with them from the deck of the boat. Julie exclaimed to the divers that there was a whale shark right off of the stern of the boat. When Greg and Jeff finally found the boat and swam like mad to get to the stern, Julie told them that the whale shark had just surfaced off the bow. Of course, there really was no whale shark, but Greg and Jeff probably swam a mile before they figured out they were being duped.



The valley of the fins

Photo by Mike

Another exciting add-on to the trip was the fact that Mike's long-time personal friend and hero, Bob Evans, inventor, designer, and president of Force Fin (www.forcefin.com) and his lovely wife Suzanne were along to dive. If you were not aware that Mike is a big fan of Force Fins, be careful when you ask him about it - he may talk your ear off. Bob and Suzanne packed along an unbelievable

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number of fins, some tried and true, some new and experimental, for all to try. Everyone got to try out traditional Force Fins, the original split fins, new fins custom designed for the Cousteau Society, and a pair of completely radical undulating fins inspired by the way snakes or alligators swim. Bob is quite



Bob Evans and his 'radical' fins

Photo by Mike

the entertaining guy to be around and kept the guests and crew well entertained throughout. By the way, after trying out all of these fins as well as a few other brands on board, Mike is still in love with his original, black, beat-up Force Fin Pros.



Brittlestar

Photo by Mike

Highlights of the diving include lots of reef sharks, lots of big grouper, lots of lobster, big turtles, friendly stingrays, awe-inspiring blue holes that drop away to the inky depths, lots of squid, and small reef life. Night dives brought out multiple octopus, large basket stars, sleeping fish and lots of hermit crabs. One outstanding event of the trip was a shark attack! Yes, Club President, Marie Frank, attacked a shark - ask her about it.



"Hey, Ray"

Photo by Marie

By Saturday, the 14th of September, I think everyone aboard was glad to be back at dock in the USA, after a week that included an emergency evacuation, the first anniversary of the September 11 crisis, and a Friday the 13th. Make sure to look up anyone from this trip (or any trip with the Nekt-ton fleet) and ask about it. Not only will you hear great diving stories, but you will also hear a strong recommendation that you take this trip yourself.

Mike McCleskey and Marie Frank



**Susan Rauckman,
"Just Hangin'"**

Photo by Mike

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy, Mark Walters from Florida Hospital at September Meeting

We learned about hyperbaric oxygen therapy at our September 10th meeting. Mark Walters, head of Hyperbaric Medicine at Florida Hospital Medical Center, gave us a thorough understanding of hyperbaric oxygen physiology, conditions treated, and therapeutic protocols. In describing the world of hyperbaric medicine, he identified key historical points, cited national organizations, described physiologic effects of hyperbaric oxygen, listed contra-indications, described side effects, and identified the conditions for which hyperbaric oxygen treatment is indicated. He covered the operational considerations related to a mono-place hyperbaric chamber as well as the pressurization and decompression elements of a multi-place chamber used for delivering therapy.



As Program Director of the Hyperbaric Medicine and Wound Care Management Center, Mark is responsible for the administrative duties of operating a department seeing 30 to 40 patients per day. He directs human resources, capital budgeting, marketing, public relations, and strategic planning. As Program Director for Enterostomal Therapy, he's also responsible for the logistics associated with 500 to 600 patient visits per month.

Previously at Florida Hospital, Mark was Chief Chamber Operator responsible for the daily operation of a 12-patient multi-place recompression chamber as well as two mono-place hyperbaric oxygen therapy chambers. He was responsible for planning and execution of preventative maintenance program, staff training, orientation, continuing education, and safety program.

Last, but certainly not least, we had our famous door prize event. Our thanks to the various prize donors, and remember to mention the **MARTIN DIVE CLUB** when visiting our local dive merchants.

Door and raffle prizes were generously offered by Shelly Hayes. They were a T-shirt, storm whistle, and sunglasses. \$19 was collected for the 50/50 raffle, with Don Morrison winning \$9.50.



Find More Fish

Eight Divemaster Secrets

by John Francis

Hey, did you see all those flashlight fish?"

"Cool! And that cloud of yellowhead wrasse? Great dive!"

Don't you just hate that? You saw nothing but the usual background reef, but it seems like everybody else saw all kinds of exotic creatures you've never heard of? And let's not even mention the divemaster who conjures an underwater rabbit out of a coral hat whenever he wants to. How do they do that?

We asked professional fish finders for their tricks. Now the secrets of the masters can be revealed:

SECRET TRICK 1 - Go Slow

"Too many people rush around as if they were driven to see everything on the reef at once," says Paul Humann, photographer and editor of the Reef Fish Identification books. "As a result, they don't see anything." Many of the life forms are pretty well camouflaged so their predators won't see them. Not surprisingly, you don't see them either. But their movement will attract your eye and give them away. If you go slow, and even stop from time to time, you can watch one area of reef long enough to pick up the movements of life. "Whoa! Where did he come from?" He was there all the time.

SECRET TRICK 2 - Look in the Right Place

Remember the joke about the drunk who looks for his wallet under the lamppost because the light is better there? Many divers do the same thing, following the attractive coral formations and only looking there for fish. But you're not going to find a yellowhead jawfish, for example, on top of the coral. It will be in an otherwise uninteresting sandy area, its head sticking out of its hole. Learn not only the fish but its specific habitat, so you know where to look.

SECRET TRICK 3 - Take a Slate

Have you ever seen an unusual fish and promised

MDC Connections

We have a telephone voicemail account. Got a question about the **CLUB**? Want to let us know that you'll be attending a **CLUB** meeting? Just call (407) 306-5020 and leave a message!

Check out all the great dive information on our **CLUB** home page at: <http://www.martindiveclub.org>.

yourself you'd look it up in the book after the dive, but by that time you couldn't quite remember what it looked like? Carry a slate. Sketch the fish or critter and indicate unusual shapes, markings, and colors. You will probably find that the act of making the sketch will itself improve your memory because it forces you to select and describe what's distinctive.

SECRET TRICK 4 - Learn Families

A fundamental step in understanding anything is to impose order on the chaos. Learn to recognize the large families and types of fish, for example, and you've both narrowed down your search in the identification book and nailed down some of its characteristics in your mind. "I know it's a butterfly fish, but what kind? What's unusual about this one?"

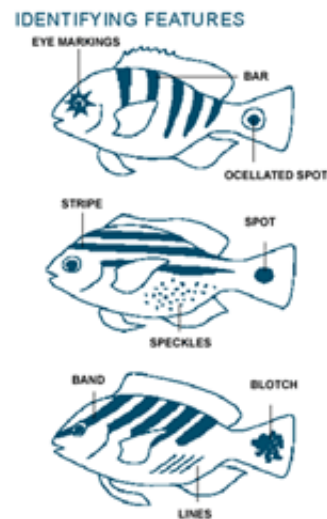
SECRET TRICK 5 - Connect Names and Faces

A name is a memory hook. When you know the names of some fish and other creatures, you can mentally put them aside and better notice the strangers. We are verbal animals, and naming things is a way of imposing order on the world. You keep seeing the same fish with a yellow tail? Learn that it's called a yellowtail snapper and your eye, and mind, can move on to something else.

Think of a computer analogy: Giving a document a name allows you to file it, get it off your desktop, and deal with something else.

SECRET TRICK 6 - Learn the Terms

There is a terminology of fish markings that makes descriptions more precise. For example, a thick vertical line is called a bar, a thick horizontal line is stripe, a thick diagonal line is a band, and a thin line is a line. Which one is it? To decide, you have to notice the line's orientation - a detail you



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Editor's Corner

Thanks for all your help. You've been great at getting articles to me by the 15th of the month. Please get them to me in one of the following ways:

- Call me at (407) 356-2290 and sneaker-net your text and graphics on disk to me at MP-031
- E-mail at work: william.paskert@lmco.com; or at home: wpaskert@cfl.rr.com
- Fax (please call before sending) at work: (407) 356-4694; or at home: (407) 678-5311.

Flotsam & Jetsam

Why?: Jerry Hall, who has been a certified diver for a year, emerged from South Holston Lake near Memphis Friday morning, August 8, claiming the world's record for the longest open-water scuba dive. "I felt very heavy," Hall, thirty-seven, said. "I wasn't used to the gravity." Hall stayed below for seventy-one hours, thirty-nine minutes, and forty seconds. The previous mark was sixty hours and

twenty-four minutes. Hall used thirty-six tanks of air during the dive, which began Tuesday morning, swam as deep as thirty-four feet and took four hours to surface. While submerged, he was given bottled water, fruit, vegetables, and small candies. He got a couple hours of sleep each night with his dive team watching. They pumped warm water into the waters to prevent hypothermia when temperatures dropped overnight. He used petroleum jelly to help his shriveled hands and feet, and, yes, there is a joke here, but we won't be the ones to tell it.



MARTIN DIVE CLUB
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Upcoming Events

- October 8 **Meeting:** Off-Season Diving Prep, Phil Merchant; **Photo Contest Deadline**
- October 25-27 **Trip:** Fantasy Fest, Mike McCleskey
- November 12 **Meeting:** Photo Contest, Mike McCleskey
- December 8 **Holiday Party:** Dubsdread, Marie Frank