

Welcome

Welcome to the April Tech Dive NZ newsletter. In this months issue we have details of our latest Lermontov trip, a trip report from our ongoing cave exploration in the South Island, details of an exhilarating night dive down the Waikato River, photos from our Big Day Out plus lots more. And if you are a Star-Trek fan you definitely don't want to stop reading until the very end, with our monthly strange and unusual story...

This is also a strange and unusual time of the year, fluctuating between lovely warm and lingering summer days and chilly blustery autumn-is-definitely-here type days. That said the ocean always lags behind the earth and although air temperatures are dropping the water is still very warm (19 degrees at the Poor Knights yesterday!) so perfect for divers. So if you were wavering and thinking about packing away the dive gear for winter hopefully something in this newsletter will fire you with enthusiasm for one more diving weekend.

Photo of the Month

For this months photo we've decided to run a caption competition. Do any of you have something suitable to say about this diver who clearly has a major problem with their drysuit seals? Email info@techdivenz.com with your suggestions and if we get enough good ones we'll publish a best-of selection in the next newsletter. We might even offer a prize.....



Please keep the photos coming in – send them by email to info@techdivenz.com. They don't have to be underwater shots; anything that's diving related is fine!

We never intend to fill your in-box with emails you don't want. So if you'd rather not receive this, hit the reply button and ask us to remove you from our email list.

Editorial

This is a new section for TDNZ, one we intend to include whenever we feel there is an important issue to discuss – in this case the need to build experience in order to stay safe. This has been a very adventurous month for us, with deep wreck penetrations inside the Lermontov, cave explorations at Blue Creek and a very exciting drift dive down the Waikato River – at night. All these trips have run very smoothly and successfully and everyone has had a great time, but please remember that a lot of planning and experience goes into these trips, they don't just happen on a whim.

Sadly shortly after our successful Waikato River dive, a young man drowned in the same stretch of river whilst with a group of friends who planned to complete the same drift as us, only swimming rather than diving. This is a tragedy for the family and friends but should serve as a timely reminder to us all that there is always an element of risk in our activities.

Risk is a vital ingredient in all adventurous activities, but we should always strive to ensure that it is a controlled and understood risk. When we decided to do a night dive down the river it was only after several day dives to get our bearings and after checking flow rates with the council. We also had backup equipment, had checked and illuminated our exit point and made sure that we were completely ready and had checked through all our equipment prior to darkness falling. We also made sure that we stayed together for the whole trip, so that we could help each other out if necessary. In short we took things seriously – and as a result had a very exciting dive.

Leading certain guided dives on the Lermontov is another good example. When we lead people into areas that they wouldn't ever get to by themselves, areas that are darker or deeper inside the wreck, a different set of potential problems arises. For example: what happens if the guide and the person being guided lose each other? As guides on the Lermontov we always seek to avoid the 'trust-me' situation, where we are taking people into areas that without the guide they would have great difficulty exiting from. As such making a call on a divers experience and training always forms part of our decision on whether and where to guide people. (We also make decisions based on what equipment you have, e.g. redundant air supply.) We would love everyone to be able to see everything that we've seen, but as with all things in life experience is important. However, gaining experience takes time and needs to be done in manageable steps.

So don't fret if you haven't done all the exciting diving you want to, you will in time. But equally don't assume that you can do things right now that you cannot – we do not want to write another sad editorial. Safe diving, from all the team, at Tech Dive NZ.

Club Night

Our April club evening was a small affair, given that many of us were away enjoying a trip to the Lermontov. We returned to one of our old haunts, the Abbey on Great South Road, which is perfect for a few drinks and the usual telling of dubious diving stories. As always the food was spectacular and the bar staff friendly.

In May the club evening will be a mixture of the sedate and the extremely energetic depending on your preference. We will be going to Waiwera Hot Pools, either to relax and enjoy a soak or to roar down the various slides – your choice. Andy is definitely taking the slides option! Expect to receive an email from Mel over the next week as she organises some car-sharing.

What's Been Happening?

There has been a lot of diving going on since the last newsletter, so much so that we don't have enough space to fit it all in this month – which is a pretty good problem to have really. So apologies if you were expecting to read about our Waikato mapping project or 'tec-style open water' course, but you will have to wait until next month. As usual the full write ups for each event can be found on our website, but here is just a taste of what we've been up to:

PADI Assistant Instructor Course: 18th – 21st March

Being involved in the training of diving professionals is something that I have always enjoyed, whether it's helping Divemaster trainees get to grips with understanding PADI standards or getting instructor candidates to think about not just how they teach, but why they teach the skills that are in a given course. When the opportunity to teach an entire Assistant Instructor course in conjunction with Global Dive came up, I jumped at the chance. What made this particularly exciting was... To read the rest of this report just follow the link: <http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/articles/ai210310.pdf>

Waikato River NIGHT TIME drift dive: 26th March

It never ceases to amaze me at how easily people become creatures of habit, doing things the familiar way because it's easy. Diving shouldn't be like that, there is so much variety that it should be impossible to ever get bored of diving – you do get out of it what you put in. We came up with the idea of doing a night drift dive down the Waikato River back in October 2009, but the long summer evenings aren't that conducive to easy night diving so the idea has been simmering away for a long time..... To read the rest of this report just follow the link: <http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/drift260310.pdf>

Tech Dive NZ "Big Day Out": 27th & 28th March

The best way of measuring the success of a dive trip is definitely just looking at the size of the grins on peoples faces after each dive. And on that basis alone our inaugural Tech Dive NZ "Big Day Out" was a great success! We chose Taupo as a central location and weren't disappointed, with divers travelling from Auckland, Wellington and Tauranga to come and join in the fun. There was plenty going on with dives in the lake, the drift dive down the river and some teaching with an Overhead Protocols workshop – all of this following on from our night drift dive.... To read the rest of this report just follow the link: <http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/taupo280310.pdf>



Mikhail Lermontov trip: 2nd -5th April

Dive 2 – I was diving with Mel again and our plan was to do a big exploration of the engine room. We quickly found the skylights, Mel tied-off and we entered the cavernous interior. The visibility was noticeably better inside the wreck than outside, but because the space is so vast and black our canister lights initially struggled to pick out familiar landmarks. It took almost a minute of swimming through inky black space to get to the gantries that surround the huge valves and cylinder heads. This was our reference point and from here Mel explored in several different directions over the following 30mins. To read the rest of this report just follow the link:

<http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/lermie020410.pdf>

Riwaka Resurgence trip: 6th April

I know I might be a little biased but I always enjoy diving Riwaka Resurgence. Although the dive itself is not particularly long, deep or technically challenging it still brings out a big smile on my usually slightly grumpy looking face. (I'm not really grumpy – it's everyone else.) The setting is spectacular, the entrance pool is inviting, the visibility is usually fantastic, there are some great formations to look at and for most people that I guide this is a dive which involves facing and defeating their fears – which always guarantees a buzz. This trip was no exception – by the time I was entering the entrance pool I was already humming happily to myself. To read the rest of this report just follow the link: <http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/riwaka050410.pdf>



Blue Creek Resurgence trip: 7th – 12th April

All it took was 7 sets of doubles, 5 x 80cf stage bottles, 3 x 80cf deco bottles, 5 x 40cf deco bottles, 3 x argon bottles and 20 regulators. Oh, plus the rest of the “standard” dive gear. Add 4 humans with 4 hand trolleys from Mitre 10, a combined total of 42km of walking with a further 6 man hours (note the use of the word man, not woman...) of clambering over rocks with cylinders and everything appeared like magic at the top of the entrance to the cave. Easy...

Read more at <http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/bluecreek070410.pdf>.

Poor Knights Skive dive: 15th April

Sorry no trip report written up just yet for this one – but given that it was only a couple of days ago, I think you can forgive us! In case you were wondering the weather was lovely, the water was 19 degrees and very blue, with visibility a good 15-20m. We dived at Lightshaft cave and Cream Gardens – a very good day, especially for Jamie who loved being back up north after his 6 degree cave water down south.

What's Coming Up?

As you can see from this newsletter there is a lot going on, some activities planned many months in advance and some almost on the spur of the moment. If you want to be involved then make sure you keep up to date with this newsletter, or better still check out our website or Facebook page. We always try to offer a range of activities to suit different tastes, but that said we don't believe we're perfect (well nearly), so if there is a location you'd love to dive please contact us. The chances are that we're already thinking about it!

Cave diving talk and video presentation – Global Dive – 26th April

Jamie will be giving a presentation on cave diving around the world at the Global Dive Club evening at the end of this month. As well as showing photographs and video footage he will be trying to explain the attraction of cave diving. And if he manages to get it edited in time he will also give the first public showing of the latest video footage shot at Blue Creek last week. Everyone is welcome from 6pm onwards at Global Dive's shop at Westhaven Drive. Contact Mel for more details if you need them.

Maori Pa dive

This is advance warning of a dive we're planning for this winter, which was originally scheduled for last year but delayed when the boat operator changed hands. No date has been set yet, but we don't want you to miss out if you're keen. In Lake Okataina there is a submerged Maori Pa site which we are planning to visit. If you are interested in New Zealand history or underwater archaeology then this is a must-not-miss trip, or if you simply want to do something completely different. Please let Andy know if you are interested on andy@techdivenz.com.

Shark cage diving

New Zealand is starting to get a reputation as a great destination for shark diving, with shark cage operators now well established in both the Hawkes Bay area and Invercargill/Stewart Island areas. We are thinking about organising a club trip and want to see how much interest there is. Please let us know if you are interested in doing a shark dive and we'll get things arranged. Email Mel on mel@techdivenz.com.

Mikhail Lermontov – 2 more trips in 2010!

Come and dive with us as we explore one of the largest dive-able shipwrecks in the world! Following the success of our January and April expeditions we have organised two more 4-day trips to this colossal wreck. Spaces are going fast, so book in now. Visit the cinema or library, check out the bridge and officers quarters, be amazed by the enormous engine room, slide into one of the bars or even swim past the swimming pool. This wreck has it all! Contact Mel for further details: mel@techdivenz.com

Trimix Tuesdays

We now have a big enough group of qualified divers to justify chartering a boat mid-week specifically for deeper dives. Also now that Andy our hard working(?) university lecturer has his calendar for the next semester we can start to plan these trips. If you are interested in joining us for these deeper dives (and you have the appropriate qualifications), please contact us for details.

In next month's newsletter

As promised we'll have details of the first 'tec' open water classes that Mel has been running at Auckland University, plus lots of exciting news about the wreck HMNZS Waikato, which this year celebrates 10 years since it's sinking. Several teams of TDNZ divers are involved in projects on the Waikato, including a full re-mapping of the interior and a hunt for the anchor.

Tips and Techniques – Running a Guideline

Line laying is an extensive topic and it takes a lot of time and practice to get good with lines, but here are a few tips to get you started.

1. Remove the double ender from the reel prior to running the line – it is easily entangled in the line otherwise.
2. Use your thumb or fore finger to keep tension on the reel as you reel out. This helps prevent slack line.
3. When you are doing a tie-off due to a direction change make sure you go around the back of the object first, that way you'll get a very cleanly running line.
4. After using a line during the dive take the time to tidy it up once back on the surface. That way it is always ready for next time. Happy diving.



Test Your Knowledge

This month's quiz has an equipment theme. How much do you know about all this equipment that allows you to have so much fun? Have a go and when you're ready to find out how well you did you can check the answers on the website: <http://www.techdivenz.com/quizzes.html>

1. In what decade was the first snorkel for divers patented?
2. What is a FENZY?
3. What do divers use argon for?
4. What does SCUBA stand for?
5. A 'HOG' rig is named after which famous diver.
6. What piece of equipment might contain a bourdon tube?
7. Which company designed the Scubapro jet-fin?
8. Who was the co-designer along with Cousteau for the first modern demand regulators?
9. What does DIN stand for? (As in cylinder DIN valves)
10. What type of diving equipment are the following: Apocalypse, Ouroboros, Cis-Lunar and Megalodon?

Dive Trips

You can use the website to keep track of our dive trips, but just in case you forget in each newsletter we'll also provide you with a reminder of what we've got planned. Here's what's on offer over the next couple of months – please get in touch if you'd like to come along on one of these trips:

<i>Trip</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Waikato wreck diving	April 24 th , 25 th & 26 th	Mel
Poor Knights Live-aboard	May 22 nd , 23 rd & 24 th	Andy
Taupo or Poor Knights (dependant on TDI course)	June 19 th & 20 th	Andy
Riwaka Resurgence	September 24 th	Mel
Mikhail Lermontov	September 25 th - 28 th	Mel
Mikhail Lermontov	September 30 th – October 3 rd	Mel
Riwaka Resurgence	October 4 th	Mel

If there's anywhere you particularly want to go diving, either let Andy, Jamie or Mel know and we will help arrange the trip.

Dive Courses

Here is a list of the main courses coming up in the next few months, but for a full list please check out the calendar on our website: <http://www.techdivenz.com/calendar.html>

<i>Course</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Location</i>
PADI Advanced Wreck	April 20 th & 22 nd (evenings), 24 th & 25 th	Auckland/Tutukaka
GUE Fundamentals	May 5 th & 6 th (evenings), 7 th , 8 th & 9 th	Auckland
GUE Fundamentals	June 4 th to 7 th	Auckland
PADI Self Reliant Diver	June 5 th to 7 th	Auckland
TDI Advanced Nitrox & Decompression Procedures	June 12 th , 13 th , 19 th & 20 th	Auckland/Taupo

If you are interested in any of these courses then get in touch with mel@techdivenz.com.

And Now for Something Completely Different...

OK Sean – what’s your excuse for not diving now? And that goes for the rest of you Trekkies out there – we know there are a few of you on our email list. It’s time to boldly go

Boldly Wear What No Diver Has Worn Before

To my knowledge, there weren’t many underwater exploits on any of the *Star Trek* series, but that didn’t stop Eugene “Rod” Roddenberry, son to *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry, from creating “The Original Series Wetsuit” that would make his father proud...I think.

While Gene was crazy about outer space, Rod loves the watery depths and created the Roddenberry Dive Team to increase ocean awareness. “Our mission is to use the notoriety of the Roddenberry name and Star Trek to get people’s attention that indeed our oceans are truly the final frontier,” he told *Undercurrent*. A \$50 membership fee gets you discounts on team events and logoed gear sold on the Web site.

For the wetsuits, Roddenberry worked with West Coast custom shop JMJ Wetsuits to create 3-, 5- and 7-mm one-piece, full-length wetsuits with the uniform colors and rank insignias that Kirk, Spock and the rest of the crew wore. And yes, these are real wetsuits, Roddenberry says. “These are not novel gimmicks, these are the real deal, made using the highest-quality materials and expert craftsmanship.”

Priced between a whopping \$435 and \$470, these may be wetsuits only devoted Trekkies will spring for, but each wetsuit is custom-made. You need to get yourself sized and measured by a professional tailor first, then you send the measurements to JMJ and it’ll deliver your perfect-fit wetsuit in six to eight weeks. You’ve got your choice of Command Yellow, Science Blue and Engineering Red, although you may not want to wear the latter on a shark dive. To buy the wetsuits and join the dive club, go to www.rodtenberrydiveteam.com.

