

## Welcome

Welcome to the June Tech Dive NZ newsletter, a newsletter which marks a special occasion for us. Although a lot seems to have happened it was only one year ago that we sent out our first newsletter, a one page summary with a small amount of diving news and our plans for the future. Since then we've been to a whole lot of diving destinations – some old favourites and some new and exciting spots. In fact it's been an incredible year, better than we could ever have hoped for – and we'd like to say thank you everyone for your support.

We had thought we'd each pick a couple of highlights from the year, but looking back we've realised how difficult it is. How do you decide between exploring Blue Creek for the first time, getting inside the kitchen on the Mikhail Lermontov, doing a night drift dive down the Waikato river, enjoying astonishing visibility on the HMNZS Waikato and finding a huge and un-dived cavern up at Matai Bay? We've run a girls only tech course, as well as NZ's first GUE Tech 1 class, had a Big Day Out, found a missing anchor, researched a flooded power station and to celebrate our anniversary run the world's 1<sup>st</sup> GUE Rec 3 class. More about that later.

So to celebrate our first year and to check which of you have been paying attention we're offering some prizes this month to go with our quiz – and they're really good prizes! As the saying goes 'You've got to be in it to win it', so read on.

## Photo of the Month

June's photo was taken by Kev from Ocean Blue, who looked after Andy on a weekend live-aboard this month. You have to look carefully to spot these little coral shrimps when you're diving.



Please keep the photos coming in – send them by email to [info@techdivenz.com](mailto: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.

## Club Night

Our June club evening was held at the Horse and Trap in Mt Eden, which is a really great place to spend a winter evening. The group that attended were definitely the hard core divers and inevitably there was a lot of discussion about future trips and explorations. Jamie and Andy came away with a very long list of ideas to follow up and it was great to see such enthusiasm for diving.

Our next club evening will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> July and will be held at our old favourite the Abbey on Great South Road. This is another perfect spot to escape from the winter blues and start dreaming about warmer waters and long summer days. We'll be there from 6pm onwards, talking non-stop about diving as usual. So if you feel your enthusiasm for diving is waning with the cold weather then you should definitely come along. Who knows what ideas you might go home with.

## What's Been Happening?

It was always going to be hard to follow last month's monster newsletter, but whilst there hasn't been quite as much activity this month there has still been some interesting diving taking place.

### Poor Knights Live-aboard trip 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> May

Sneaking in between the tail end of one huge weather front and the next enormous weather bomb Andy took a group out for the weekend with Ocean Blue. Enjoying Kev's legendary curry plus dives at the Canyon, Northern Arch, Taravana Cave and Landing Bay Pinnacle it was a great weekend. For the guys that came up from wet and windy Welly it was a reminder that some things will always beat shore diving. The only downside of the weekend was that Rob had his car broken into whilst parked in Auckland the night before the trip up north. If anyone hears anything please let us know.



### GUE Recreational Diver 3 (Trimix) course 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May

"The class started much like any other GUE class with an introductory theory session followed by equipment preparation. In addition to the gear Tom and Peter had worn for the Fundamentals class they also had argon bottles attached to their backplates and would be using decompression bottles. As always the theory and gear session is fairly light-hearted and not particularly stressful. I think Tom and Peter went home that first evening feeling quietly confident. However....." To read the rest of this report please follow the link: <http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/articles/rec3300510.pdf>

### Twin tank workshop 30<sup>th</sup> May



Following the initial session last month Andy completed the twin tank orientation course for Tim, Mike, Chris and Tony this month, with an extended session at the lake. Moving from a single tank to double tanks is not entirely straightforward and there are several new skills to learn and equipment considerations to think about. However, given that all of this group are looking to take their diving to the next level I guess now it's time to practice practice practice. To read Andy's report please follow the link:

<http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/articles/twins290510.pdf>

### Emergency First Response refresher 31<sup>st</sup> May & 1<sup>st</sup> June

Tim and Mike joined Jamie for a couple of evenings this month in order to refresh their first aid skills. So all say after me: 'Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm an emergency first responder. May I help you?' Of course the Kiwis might say it a little differently than that. During the course there was a lot of discussion about what actually happens in real life emergencies, so rest assured you can now feel a whole lot safer when Mike or Tim is out diving with you.

### Tech Dive NZ Referral Scheme – **new for winter 2010**



We believe we run great courses and provide exceptional training. We also believe that the ultimate purpose of doing courses is to go diving and have fun. Unsurprisingly we've found that having done one course with us most students immediately want to do another course - so staying true to our beliefs we have put together the following incentive scheme for both you and your friends, to help you enjoy more Tech Dive NZ training and diving. (For full terms and conditions please see our website.)

- Refer a friend and when they sign up for one of our classes we will give you \$50 off your next course.
- And you get to give your friend a \$50 voucher for a Poor Knights dive trip with Ocean Blue.
- And there's no limit to how many friends you can refer. Refer 10 and get \$500 off your next course.

### Tech Dive NZ Satisfaction Guarantee

We truly believe in all of our courses, so much so that we are confident in offering a money back guarantee – something that we think is unique in the New Zealand diving industry. If you do a course with us and do not improve both your knowledge and skills we will refund your course fees, subject to the terms and conditions outlined on our website.

Why are we so confident? All the Tech Dive NZ instructors have qualifications from multiple training agencies and significant experience from many different countries around the globe. Additionally we have selected only those courses that we are passionate about teaching and that we feel offer the best value for money and greatest learning opportunities. If you don't believe us then come and see for yourself – what have you got to lose?

### Tech Dive NZ Beanies

The Beanies are finally here and even if we do say so ourselves they look pretty cool. They're also very warm, which is probably why half of them have already gone. So if you want to get yourself a beanie you need to be quick. Contact Andy for details: [andy@techdivenz.com](mailto:andy@techdivenz.com)



## What's Coming Up?

There is always a lot going on at Tech Dive NZ, 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!

## GUE Instructor Training Course 10<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> October

In October Andy and James will be tackling their most challenging dive course yet, as they attempt to prove to the GUE Instructor Trainers that they deserve to be the next GUE instructors. Whilst they cannot get a full sign off during the course, their performance will have a big impact on how much longer the process takes and how soon they will be able to take the final exam. It's going to be a huge learning curve for both of them, so look out our future reports as we follow their progress. Also as this newsletter goes to press James will be in Oz doing his first intern with Liam – we expect a report on that next month James.

## Winter Trips

As mentioned in the previous couple of newsletters we are in the process of organising trips to go shark cage diving, visit a flooded Maori Pa site and explore Lake Waikaremoana. Many of you have already contacted us to express interest and we will be letting you know dates shortly, once we get the appropriate permits arranged. If anyone else is interested in these trips please let us know.

## Dive Projects

Our HMNZS Waikato mapping project is continuing well and we are starting to put together our ideas for presenting all the findings. If you are interested in helping with this project please let us know.

We are also planning to start a new project very shortly, a detailed mapping survey of the caves at the Poor Knights Islands, done in conjunction with Dive! Tutukaka. Jamie will be running some basic cave surveying classes, so if you are interested in helping with this project please let us know.

## In next months newsletter

Next month we'll be bring you a report from Rob's trip to Japan where he did a GUE DPV (scooter) course, plus Jamie will be reporting from France where he will be in the middle of interning on a GUE Cave 1 class, happily watching James taking all the pressure.

## Tips and Techniques – Reaching your valves



We could write a whole newsletter on the problems people have with valve drills and the weird and wonderful solutions sometimes tried, however here are a few tips which will help:

1. Don't drop out of trim as this actually makes it harder. As you drop out of trim the tanks fall lower on your back and the air in your wing migrates to the top, forcing the tanks further from away from you.
2. When you reach for your valves try to keep your elbow

close to your ear rather than in line with your shoulders. Try it now as you sit at your computer and you'll see for yourself how much further down your back your hand reaches. Your colleagues might think you're a bit odd though...

3. Try not to hunch your shoulders when you reach for your valves. The tanks are attached to a metal plate that won't bend with your back! Keep your head back and your back straight.

4. If your shoulders are inflexible try a program of stretches, after a couple of weeks you will definitely notice a change. Cameron Martz has some great advice for this on his website: [www.divefitness.com](http://www.divefitness.com)

Above all maintain a sense of humour - with practice and perseverance you will get better. Safe diving.

### Test Your Knowledge

\*\*\*\*\*PRIZES\*\*\*\*\*

As this newsletter marks the start of our second year we decided that this month's quiz would be a test to see who has really been reading our previous newsletters – and there are prizes too!

1<sup>st</sup> prize: \$100 voucher towards your next Tech Dive NZ course

2<sup>nd</sup> prize: A Halcyon hooded top

3<sup>rd</sup> prize: A Tech Dive NZ beanie

Obviously we won't be posting the answers in the usual place on the website, although all the answers can be found on the website if you know where to look. Send your answers to [info@techdivenz.com](mailto:info@techdivenz.com) by the 5<sup>th</sup> July for a chance to win. All correct answers will go into a draw and the winner will be announced in next month's newsletter.

1. In which newsletter did we introduce the quiz section?
2. What was Mel looking for using milk bottles and an underwater metal detector?
3. In which newsletter did we have the picture of Tom trudging across the mud in an attempt to dive a piece of NZ history?
4. In which newsletter did we let slip that Jamie and Paris Hilton had been mentioned in the same Ukrainian Blog entry?
5. In which month did we first visit, although not dive Blue Creek?
6. In which newsletter did we feature a flatulent turtle?
7. In which month was the TDNZ Big Day Out?
8. Who was Canary Cave named in honour of?
9. Where was Jamie when he was forced into doing a dive in a wetsuit and split fins?
10. What was Andy doing when he was quoted as saying: *“At the end of the first dive we were almost ready to throw in the towel.”*

### 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:

[www.techdivenz.com](http://www.techdivenz.com)

| <i>Trip</i>                          | <i>Dates</i>                               | <i>Contact</i> |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| HMNZS Canterbury / Northland Dive    | June 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup>   | Jamie          |
| Mikhail Lermontov                    | October 2 <sup>nd</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Mel            |
| Mikhail Lermontov                    | October 7 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> | Mel            |
| Riwaka Resurgence                    | October 11 <sup>th</sup>                   | Mel            |
| Lake Okataina/Flooded Maori Pa site. | TBC  | Andy           |
| Shark cage diving                    | TBC  | Mel            |
| Lake Waikaremoana                    | TBC  | Jamie          |

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>  |
|---------------------------|--|------------------|
| GUE Fundamentals          | Aug 18 <sup>th</sup> to 22 <sup>nd</sup>                                       | Auckland         |
| PADI Cavern (live-aboard) | Sept 10 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup>                                      | Poor Knights     |
| PADI Self Reliant Diver   | Sept 14 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> | Auckland         |
| GUE Tech 2                | Sept 22 <sup>nd</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup>                                      | Auckland/Cowshed |

If you are interested in any of these courses then get in touch with [mel@techdivenz.com](mailto:mel@techdivenz.com).

### And Now for Something Completely Different...

So you love the underwater world and want to make a career out of it? Well becoming a dive instructor is no longer your only option. Hannah Fraser has managed to make a career out of being a mermaid! A life-long fan of mermaids Hannah started drawing them at age 2 and made her first tail at only 9 years old. Now in her mid 30s Hannah is regularly filmed and photographed underwater wearing her specially designed tail and has swam as a mermaid with dolphins, whales and baby sea-lions. Hannah describes herself as a professional mermaid and can hold her breath for over 2 minutes. She even gained her diving qualification whilst wearing her tail. (Don't worry Andy's already checked – it doesn't break any PADI standards.....)

