

### Welcome

Welcome to the Tech Dive NZ October newsletter. For us, Labour Day officially marks the start of summer – and what a mixed long weekend it was, with blue skies, calm seas and plenty of sun to go around and then torrential rain in the north on Monday. Still, there were sightings of orca at the Poor Knights – does it get better than this? Hopefully everyone got to the beach, bach or managed to squeeze in a dive somewhere!

### Photo of the Month

If you've been following what's going on, either on Facebook or the website, then you'll have probably read about our trip to locate and dive Horahora Power Station that has been submerged in Lake Karapiro since 1947. This month, our favourite photo is one submitted by Mel – if you can't read what's written on the back of the tanks, don't worry as we'll tell you more about that later, and you'll find out how the dive went!



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

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### What's Been Happening?



As always, there's been plenty of training and dive trips since the last newsletter – with some trips more successful than others! First, congratulations to Tony, John and Peter who are New Zealand's most recently certified GUE divers. Jamie put them through their paces over two consecutive weekends in October making that the third course this year. Astrid also upgraded her previous “rec” pass to a full “tech” pass, well done Astrid! Not everything went to plan, however... a set of twin tanks that had been propped up against the picnic tables somehow managed to fall over causing them to get twisted out of shape. Fearing the worst, the tanks were shipped off to the recompression chamber to deal with the bend... we've promised we won't name who actually tipped the tanks over, we're all just glad that the treatment was successful and that all symptoms have disappeared.

Trips wise, we made another trip down to Taupo at the beginning of the month, with one day of glorious sunshine and one of rain. We made the most of the first day by various buddy pairs diving different locations in the lake, then all converging on the Waikato River for an afternoon drift dive. Whilst the flow rate was down, it was still a fun dive – despite the fact that one pair of divers surfaced five minutes into their dive to find themselves upstream of where they started! Mentioning no names, but Bryan and Larry had got stuck in an eddy under the bungy much to the amusement of Jamie and Mel who were the only ones who realised! It was a great turnout, and Tony made the effort of writing up the weekend as a trip report – though the water was no where near as cold as he makes it sound: [www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/041009.pdf](http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/041009.pdf).



The October skive dive to the Alderman Islands became a casualty of circumstance thanks to an email from the Waikato Historical Society – this might seem tenuous, but for the last few months we've been trying to pinpoint the location of Horahora Power Station. Horahora was New Zealand's first hydro-electric power station but was submerged when a newer power station was built downstream. The email was the last piece of the puzzle, so we loaded up the cars with all the gear we'd need to dive a piece of New Zealand history, which as far as we know has never been dived. If you haven't read it already, there's a trip report on the website that will tell you all about our day: [www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/211009.pdf](http://www.techdivenz.com/pdfs/trips/211009.pdf).

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For the long weekend we again headed up to Matai Bay, though this time Jamie and Andy “took one for the team” by staying behind – the diving in the area is excellent, and the atmosphere is very relaxing. The only drawback is that spaces are always limited, but this time Cas, Chris, Lee and Bryan were the lucky ones who got their names on the list and their first trip to the area. Mel is in the process of writing a trip report which will be on the website soon – don’t forget, all of our trip reports are there for you to catch up on at any time: [www.techdivenz.com/reports.html](http://www.techdivenz.com/reports.html).



### What’s Coming Up?

There’s plenty to look forward to in the next month with a couple of courses running in November, firstly a Self Reliant Diver course at the beginning of the month, then our first Advanced Wreck course towards the end of the month. Both of these courses are unique to us and have been written to help you get the most out of your diving! The Advanced Wreck has just been approved by PADI and focuses on improving skills needed for penetrating wrecks beyond the light zone. This is a definite must for anyone thinking they might join us on our January trip down to the Mikhail Lermontov! The course will be taught on the HMNZS Canterbury, but if you’re not interested in the course then come and dive anyway! We’ll be staying at the Cowshed, and if you’re not into wrecks then Shane and Julia will be putting on a second boat to some other dive sites. If you’ve not stayed at the Cowshed before, it’s a great place to hang out for a weekend and Julia’s cooking is second to none – it really is just like coming home after the day’s diving!

In terms of trips, we’re going to try and arrange the November “skive dive” on November 11<sup>th</sup> on the HMNZS Waikato. There will be plenty of scope for wreck lovers to spend as much time on the wreck as they like on each dive, so if you’re trained for decompression diving then there should be no issues with long run times. If you’re interested in coming along, then let either Andy or Jamie know. We’re also running another trip to Matai Bay in November, however this trip is for people with Cavern certifications only. The sole purpose of the trip is to scout out new caves in the area and every dive will be in a cave. Now that James has his own canister light, if the conditions are right we’ll also be trying to “make the connection” through Cray Cave!

There’s plenty planned beyond that, so if you want to look into December and January then check out the calendar on the website: [www.techdivenz.com/calendar.html](http://www.techdivenz.com/calendar.html).

### Dive Trips

You can keep track of our planned dive trips on the website, but each month we’ll provide you with a reminder of what we’ve got planned. Here’s what we’ve got planned over the next couple of months, so get in touch if you’d like to come along on one of these:

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- November “Skive Dive”; HMNZS Waikato, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009
- Matai Bay – Cave Exploration; 14-16<sup>th</sup> November 2009
- Cowshed; 27-29<sup>th</sup> November 2009
- Poor Knights; 5-6<sup>th</sup> December 2009

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

## Dive Courses

There are two courses to look forward to, both of which involve two evening sessions and an open water weekend. Dates for the courses are:

- Self Reliant Diver; 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 7-8<sup>th</sup> November 2009
- Advanced Wreck Diver; 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 28-29<sup>th</sup> November 2009

If you are interested in either of these courses then get in touch with either Andy or Jamie. In order to do the Advanced Wreck course you will need to have completed the basic PADI Wreck course – if needed, we can either arrange for a course to run mid-November or maybe add on an extra day so as to complete the basic wreck skills the day immediately prior to the Advanced Wreck weekend.

## Tips and Techniques

Ask yourself this question – how much weight do you have on your weightbelt and why? Most divers are normally carrying one or two more kilos of lead than they need to, and you only realise just how hard it is making your diving once you get rid of it. For many people, it’s easy to answer the first part of the question but the answer to the second part is hard to pin down! Often, the only answer is “because that’s what I use”.

If you are lucky enough to be diving with your own equipment, working out how much weight you really need is as easy as doing a buoyancy check – after a dive when you only have 40 bar in your tank. If you can float at eye-level with an empty BCD and a near empty tank then sink as you exhale, then your weighting is spot on. If you sink before you exhale, then you are overweighted. This month’s tip comes with a challenge – we’ve had a couple of great successes in terms of convincing people they don’t need the amount of lead they are carrying – so it’s over to you, do a weight check at the end of a dive and take those couple of kilos off and see how much easier your diving is.

Send us your results over the summer and we’ll see who drops the most amount of weight by the end of the season. Remember – your suit must stay constant, it’s cheating to switch to a 3mm suit to lose the weight....!

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**And Now for Something Completely Different...**

It's been a month of sighting "creatures of the deep", starting back in September when Jonathan Downes spotted a "creature" thrashing around in one of the Lakes of Killarney in County Kerry, Ireland, while on holiday. This isn't just an Irish phenomenon, though – scientists in Canada have launched a search for serpent-like creature in a lake on Vancouver Island. And don't forget, Canada is the only country in the world that has built a landing pad for alien visitors, so they might be on to something! But, when it comes to strange monsters of the deep we can always rely on Loch Ness in Scotland to be in the news. On a recent expedition to try and find evidence of the Loch Ness



monster, U.S. research teams came across something quite unexpected - not a prehistoric creature of the deep but thousands of plastic covered golf balls..... remember, the truth is out there...

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