



International Scuba News

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www.internationalscuba.com

Upcoming Lake Weekends:
January 28-29
January 18-19

'Tis the Season

The gift-giving season is amongst us already. Have you done all your holiday shopping? I only have 2 more to presents to buy. I procrastinated this year and can't tell you why, oops! It isn't too late to buy those cool diver gifts. We have lots of stocking stuffers (watches, slates, whistles, defog, can openers, money clips, mugs, cups) and we also do gift certificates. We have had a great turn out

for buying classes whether they are open water or above. If you have finished your shopping don't hesitate to stop by and chat; we love seeing all of you and sharing great dive stories

- Patti Stewart

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Becky, We Will Miss You

We would like to congratulate, our senior most Divemaster, Becky Bonds. She is getting married in July in southern California to Brian Ronald (some of you may remember him). If you notice the California portion, that means we are losing Becky. She is now part of the fruits and nuts gang. Becky has been with International Scuba since 1998 and before

that she worked with Mike Rowe in Nacogdoches. Her friendship and talents will be sorely missed. On the bright side, we get a new place to go diving. Bring your 5mm.....

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Creature Feature — Christmas Tree Worm



Christmas Tree Worm — *Spirobranchus giganteus*

Two spiraled crowns of radioles, with double-horned operculum between. Color and patterns of radioles variable, though most frequently shades of brown, orange, maroon and .white.

Shy; when approached instantly retract crowns into tube and close openings with operculum.

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”

Equipment Care Tips - *Storing Equipment*

Some of us are diehards and dive year round both local and remote. Some of us are a little less enthusiastic. In either case when you leave your dive equipment idle, you want to make sure that you store it properly so it will last as long as possible. I hope this hints will be helpful.

Regulator: Make sure your regulator is well rinsed. Any salt or dirt will tend to corrode the parts faster than necessary. Let it air dry. When you put it away, avoid stress on the hoses. You can coil the hoses and lay it flat, or if you prefer you can hang it on one of the combination BC/Reg hangers, just make sure the second stages and console are draped over the hanger, not just hanging down. This adds stress to the hoses and drastically lessens their life.

BCD: As with the regulator, make sure it is well rinsed. Also make sure you rinse out the inside of the bladder. This can be done with a hose by letting water in the inflator hose as if you were orally inflating it. Rinse it out a couple times. Make sure you get as much water as possible out. Once this is done, blow the BCD up part way and either stand it up on the floor, or hang it on a BC hanger or a thick hanger such as a men's sport jacket hanger.

Cylinders: Store cylinders upright with about 500 psi in it.

Wetsuits: Make sure they are rinsed and dried well. Store it hanging on a wetsuit hanger, or if you prefer on a thick hanger such as a good men's suit hanger. You can

lay it down, but make sure not to crease it. It's a good idea to put something between the folds so it won't crease. Never store anything on top of it. If you compress the neoprene it will no longer have the insulating capability it once had.

Cameras/Lights: Remove the batteries and o-rings. Store in dry place. Follow any extra manufacturers recommendations.

Fins: Store laying flat. Do not store anything on top. If you saved the inserts from when you bought them, you should put them in the foot pocket. Paper will work in a pinch. The idea is to prevent the fin from taking a shape other than its natural one.

Be sure to keep all of your equipment out of the sun and garage. Heat, sunlight, and car exhaust are the worst enemies of scuba gear during storage.

I hope these tips help. If you have any questions, let us know. We are always here to help.

• Brian Divine
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Travel - *Plan Ahead for 2003 Trips*

The best trip values are always early. We can assure the best prices when we secure the group price 90 to 120 days out with a deposit. It may seem like a long way out, but each trip is ticketed and pre-paid 30 to 45 days in advance. If at all possible look at the trip schedule and your schedule and choose the trips that best fit. Deposits are \$150 pp and always apply to purchase. Insurance is usually \$35-\$55 depending on the destination. Purchasing trip insurance will secure your trip. If you need to cancel or move the money to another trip, it can be done. If you cancel without insurance you will lose whatever you have paid toward the trip. If you cancel with insurance you lose only the amount of the insurance. Insurance is always a personal option and available upon request.

The posted prices are for double occupancy. If you need to travel single please know the price can increase by as much as \$250 per person. It is always best to try to find a buddy if possible. If you do not have a buddy when you sign up for a trip, we will try to find you one, but if one cannot be arranged you will have to pay the single rate.

If the dates posted are not good for you or you want another destination please let us know. You can always do your own trip. It is not really hard to find 10 friends that want to go diving. Give it try. YOU WILL HAVE A BLAST!! Special compensation available. Ask me about it before you plan your trip. It is worth the effort!!!

• Tami Gardner
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Divemasters' Delight – *Overweight*

OVERWEIGHT - To Be or Not To Be

I'm not writing about fitness (That's Casey's article), nor am I trying to plagiarize Shakespeare. I want to share some "ballast ideas" to help folks save some air, and some work. Thus, extending their bottom time.

When we're out of the water, carrying around excess weight is obviously unnecessary. We all know that. Plus, on a weight belt there is comfort to be considered. When we're in the water, excessive weight causes us to waste air. At the surface, it takes more air to float our BCD's. During the dive we waste air mainly from constantly adjusting our buoyancy. It also makes swimming harder since our BCD's are fuller. A bigger BCD is more bulk to have to push through the water. Besides, I'd rather breath my air than dump it in my BCD.

Since everyone's physiology is different, and individual equipment configurations vary, we all need to learn how much weight we need to dive efficiently. To start, come by the store. Bring your swimsuit, towel, something to write on, and whatever neoprene you use. Get in the pool with

only a swimsuit and find out if you're a floater or sinker. Then don your wetsuit and learn what weight you need to compensate for the suits buoyancy. Then your scuba gear. Try to use an air tank that isn't full. 700 or 800 psi works well. An aluminum tank that is nearly empty will be positively buoyant at the end of a dive. (Doing a safety stop is difficult if you're under weighted) Keep notes as to your weight requirements and keep them in your logbook. Then when you're at the lake you'll save time trying to adjust weights when you're already in the water. If you're on a trip to "real water", first do a check out dive from shore and adjust your weight to account for the added buoyancy of salt water. You'll be glad you did. Note the weight required in your logbook so you'll have the info on your next trip.

Dive safe, Have fun,

- Curtis Powell

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The World of Divers Continues to Grow

The number of certified divers in the world continues to grow and International Scuba continues to contribute to that growth. We would like to congratulate and thank all those divers who completed there certification in Novem-

Open Water/Junior Open Water:

Tho Ly
Kim Ly
Chen Ho
Kevin Ho

Specialty Diver:

Rick Ferguson Night

Photo Tips — *Taking a Photography Course*

Great photographers have learned their trade via many methods. Some are completely self taught through years of trial and error. Others have college degrees from prestigious photography schools such as the Rochester Institute of Technology. The rest of us who don't have years to dedicate to the quest for better images must try to combine time constraints with as many tips and pointers as we can get. I have attended several photographic seminars and workshops and gotten some key tips along the way from some more experienced underwater photo pros.

I have had several inquiries about the PADI Underwater Photographer specialty class done in conjunction with a blue water trip. The benefits of such a combination would be tremendous.

1. Most of us less fortunate souls can only allow ourselves a few dive trips per year. Trial and error learning is great, but we would all rather come home with good images and skip the error part.
2. Learning from others is a key. As a group, the work of other participants can be a great aid in understanding our own techniques.
3. Classes and diving go hand in hand. Rather than try to remember everything taught in class, one can immediately jump in the water and apply those lessons.



Film development or digital review would be almost immediate, which allows technique improvements before you finish your trip.

4. The guided group benefit. We would be picking our dive sites to maximize photographic opportunities. No rushing to keep up with the group.

No camera? No problem. Arrangements can be made. Buddy/spouse/partner not a photographer? No problem. They are welcome, too. They make great spotters. The number of participants would be limited in order to maximize the level of interaction.

What will it cost? Whatever the trip would normally cost plus the specialty course price. No hidden extras. Cameras and film not included.

If you have an interest, please contact me directly with an indication of when you would like to take such a trip.

One last benefit of the course is that photography is photography. The knowledge you gain underwater can lead to better photography on land, too.

- George Vincent

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Casey's Corner — *Holiday Recovery*

Happy Holidays, fellow divers! Are you noticing that you are becoming more buoyant with each surface interval you take from those holiday meals? The average holiday leaves 5 to 10 pounds extra flubber on us. Most of us will also make our New Year's resolution to lose weight and get in shape.

The way to reach success is simple! MOVE! Just 30 minutes each day will make a difference in how you feel and look. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being very high), exercise at the intensity you perceive to be at 6 or 7. You could walk, swim, bike, jog, or take an aerobics class. The whole goal is to expend more calories than you intake,

so, in addition to your activity, watch your plates! Find out what a real proportion consists of, and make adjustments. You don't have to give up the good food, just the amounts of it!

Keep up the hard work...it'll pay off, and your weight belts will thank you too!

Casey McNutt

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*Please visit our website. We do our best to keep it up to date.
Let us know what you think about the site and the newsletter.
An important part of our success has been the friendships developed among customers and staff. That's part of why we dive.*

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Wetsuits— Finding the Right One for You

I get a lot of questions regarding wetsuits and their proper use. There is no one “right” answer for everyone. It depends on several factors, some of which are water temperature, type of diving, budget, and of course, fit. Fashion is starting to play a larger role, as consumers have demanded more colors and patterns from the manufacturers. I'll try to keep to the basics in this piece.

What is a wetsuit made of: Form-fitting exposure suits are usually made of foam neoprene rubber (wetsuits) or spandex-like materials (skins), sometimes with fleece added. The skins sometimes make donning a thicker wetsuit easier due to their slick outsides.

What they do: Exposure suits trap a thin layer of water between the suit and your skin to insulate against heat loss. Even warm water can rob your body of heat 25 times faster than air. The thickness and type of exposure protection you need depends on dive conditions. A thicker suit will keep you warmer. Thin suits made of Lycra provide little thermal insulation but do help protect from scrapes and stings. There are a lot of questions about dry suits as well. The goal, as the name implies, is to keep you dry underneath the outer shell of the suit. Your thermal protection is supplied by wearing warm undergarments, similar to a ski suit or fleece underwear. Your head and hands will get wet, requiring you to wear a dry suit hood and gloves.

What to look for: Fit and comfort. Exposure suits should fit snugly without restricting movement or breathing. Reject any suit that's too loose, however. Gaps at the arm, leg, crotch and neck allow water to circulate and defeat the suit's ability to prevent heat loss. No matter how good a deal you think you're getting, if the suit doesn't

fit you properly you are not going to be warm. And we all know that once you get cold underwater, there isn't much you can do to warm up but end the dive and dry off.

Accessories: You might also think about adding a hood and gloves to increase your comfort level. Even a 3mm beanie makes a huge difference when diving in temperate waters. Gloves can be found in different thickness ranging from 1mm to 7mm.

Cost: Wetsuits and skins range from \$80 to \$550. Dry suits can cost from \$500 to \$2,400. Some divers like to layer a shorty wetsuit over their full suit to add a layer of warmth. If you have the budget for it, then having both a full and a shorty can really extend your diving season.

My advice: As long as a wetsuit fits correctly it will do the job. If you're going the budget route, your choices will usually be limited to basic models. Bright colors and graphics aren't necessary but do make you more visible to other divers. And it never hurts to be seen.

<u>Temps (F)</u>	<u>Thickness</u>	<u>Type of Suit</u>
75-85	1.5mm	Neoprene, Lycra, Xpedition suit
70-85	3.0mm	Neoprene, Beanie
65-75	5.0mm	Neoprene, Gloves, Hood
50-70	6.5mm	Neoprene, 5mm Gloves, Hood
35-65	9.5mm	Neoprene, Dry suit, Gloves, Hood

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