



# Bottom Times

Scuba Shack Fall / Winter 2004

from... **Dean's Desk**

**Our Feature Story:**

**We're going to Roatan, Honduras**

This is the time of the year that we would normally tell you how to start winterizing your gear, service your regulators, drain down your tanks, etc, etc. However this year we're not going to run that article. (If you really want to know, stop by the shop and we'll go over it with you).

I've got to tell you about how I feel. I am excited. I'm excited about the open water courses that we ran and the new students that are diving in our area. I'm excited about the advanced courses such as the deep diver, search and recovery, navigation, Nitrox, CPROX and CPR1st. I'm excited about the wreck diver course that we ran out in Mallorytown and not only the student's positive reaction to the course but to diving the St. Lawrence as well. I'm excited about the dives we made out on Lake Muskoka and Lake Joseph (plus the worlds worst C.D. shrine that we have started at depth in Lake Joe). I'm excited about how well the Muskoka Seals Dive Club has expanded and the number of members that came out for each Wednesday night dive. I'm excited about all of the special projects that we ran and never thought that we could get through. Not only managing to finish them but to excel and make them even better for the people we instructed.

I could go on and on about how excited I am about last year, but believe it or not, I am even more excited about what's coming up yet this year and into next spring. Take a look at the winter and spring course schedule that we have set up for you. Anyone that wants to put in the time and do the dives can go from an Open Water Diver thru to being a Rescue Diver and on to a Divemaster by the end of summer. We already have students enrolled for most of these courses and they are excited.

Don't bother to put your gear away, we still have open water and we're going to keep diving until it ices over. While we're waiting for the ice to thicken up, guess what, we're not going to stop. We're going to one of the top 10 dive destinations in the world. With over 125 dive sites on Roatan, Honduras alone, it will be a little difficult to get out to Utila or any of the other Bay Islands and keys. This is a place that I've been trying to dive for the last 10 years (I guess I don't have to tell you how e----d I am). Rumors of whale sharks and sightings of giant manta rays are running rampant. As soon as we get back, we are going to fire up the chain saws and start cutting holes in the ice. From 27 degree water to 4 degree water. Yee-haw. The ice diving course is on.

All of our incredible instructors, dive masters and shore masters will be back and I do not have to say anything about them. Ask any student who has taken a course and they will be extremely complimentary about the high standards, quality and thoroughness of every one of them. For this we thank them. Doug, Jeff, Joel, Damon, Rob, James, James, Shawn and Teena (she has undauntedly been the shore master at every open water, no matter what the weather, for the last 3 years ) we all thank you for your hard work and dedication. If you noticed a new name on this list, it's that of Damon Helde. Damon started diving when he was 13 and received his open water certification at the tender age of 15. He took his open water instructor and Medic First Aid instructors in Florida at SEDI. Returning to diving school after working and playing in areas like Panama, California, Mexico, Bahamas and British Columbia (some of the finest cold water diving in the world), he received his Cat. #1 - commercial diving certificate. It's been over 2 years that we've been trying to get Damon on staff and we are very happy that he's now with us.

Our web site sucks and we know it. So we've sent Sandy off to school (actually she volunteered) and will soon have it back up and running properly. We will be able to put current course information,

## Muskoka Seals Dive Club

What an impressive year we've had with the dive club. The membership is up over last year and the number of members that came out to each dive was also up. Don't throw away your cards yet (those of you that got them and for the rest of you - they are at the shop along with the club tee shirts) as we will be going to work at keeping our skills honed to perfection. We will be having club pool nights on the following Thursdays: February 3rd, April 14<sup>th</sup> and May 26<sup>th</sup>. So keep your gear ready to go.

When we added up the club dive points this year and presented the prizes at the fall windup (we actually had the wind up the same year), we found that this year it was so close with not more than a few points separating Kris Rhodes in 1<sup>st</sup> and Ted Jacobs in 2<sup>nd</sup> with Jean Guy Talbot coming in with a very strong 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thanks to all club members for giving us all so much fun this summer. To everyone who did 2 or even 3 dives the last day up at Lake Joe - well done and we won't have the barbeque on the same day next year. We will keep you posted about the spring fling kick off early next year.

Think about where you would like to dive next summer - then we'll have to do a reconnaissance dive.

## Tech Talk with Greg Staples



Breathable gas on the left - non breathable gas on the right.  
 Buoyancy differences between Faber steel 98's and the new PST E8-130  
 Gear configuration and rigging  
 Hi tech or high priced underwater lighting systems  
 Why won't standard fins give you enough propulsion when you're wearing a set of 8" doubles?

This only goes to show you that the more you think you know about tech diving, the less you actually do. Chester and Greg are trying to explain it to me, so we will get their help on this. When you don't know all of the answers, you have to go to the pros.

There will be a column on technical diving in the next newsletter, Send any questions - technical or not in to us; and for questions that we publish; we'll send you a little gift.

## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sale - December 4<sup>th</sup>

One day a year - for 7 hours only we beat up our suppliers for better pricing and pass it on to you. This year it is our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary so you can be sure that we will do our best to make this day the best that it can be for you. Everything in the store will be on sale for this one day only. Know someone who would like to learn to dive? Know two people? For this day only - Sign up for an open water course - get the second FREE!

Manufacturers' reps from Bare, Genesis, Sherwood and Akona along with all of our instructors and dive masters will be here for the day, so stop in and take advantage of their product knowledge and expertise. Prizes will be given away every hour, the Moose will be broadcasting and you never know who will show up.

**Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> - 10:00am to 5:00pm only**



## Grab your Passport, your dive gear, your camera and join us as we travel to one of the best dive locations in the World!

After our hiatus from planning any sort of trips, we're BACK! This coming February, the 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> we're going to ROATAN, Honduras and NON-DIVERS are welcome and signed up!

We are very excited about this trip; Roatan has some of the best diving in the world, with wrecks, reefs and all kinds of wildlife. The wildlife surfaces in the evening too at this all-inclusive resort – Fantasy Island. I'm sure that we will be creating some great memories for everyone and sharing our stories with those who stayed topside and at home.

### Some facts about Roatan and Fantasy Island All Inclusive Beach Resort

**Where is Roatan:** 35 miles off the north coast of Honduras in Central America.

**Weather:** Warm, tropical climate usually in the '80's most often with trade winds. The dress is very casual even in the evenings but with the sand flies and mosquitoes pants are not a bad idea (neither is repellent).

**Fantasy Island** has a full slate of activities available during the day; from beach soccer to basketball and hair braiding! There is even happy hour, games and if we're really lucky we'll catch ourselves on some video! For the non-divers there is the popular beach chair and a book activity; but there is no shortage of other things to do including snorkeling, canoeing, kayaking, there are even jet skis to rent.

### This all inclusive holiday includes:

- Direct non-stop charter flights from Toronto
  - Airport transfers to and from the Resort
    - Canadian airport taxes
    - 7 or 14 nights accommodation
    - Hotel taxes & service charges
      - 3 buffet meals daily
    - House wine with lunch and dinner
      - All domestic beer & drinks
- 5 days diving (2 boat dives per day + unlimited shore diving)

**All of this from only \$1900.00 per person based on double occupancy for one week, with a non-diver rate of \$1536.00.**

Notes: Insurance is recommended and the "Deluxe package" is only \$119.00 per week. A local departure tax of \$27.00USD is paid at the airport. Two week and singles are available as well.



## Winter / Spring 2005 Course Schedule

**Skin Diving (Snorkeling)** ~ Learn proper snorkeling techniques & skills in just a few hours.

Cost: \$40.00

Thursday evenings; Jan. 27, Feb. 3, Apr. 7, 14 and May 19 & 26

**Basic Open Water** ~ Full Certification as a Scuba Diver

Cost: \$395.00

Dates: Thursday Evenings, Jan. 13, 20, 27 and Feb. 3  
Openwater: Sat. & Sun. June T.B.A.

Thursday Evenings, Mar. 24, 31, Apr. 7 & 14  
Openwater: Sat. & Sun. June T.B.A.

Thursday Evenings, May 5, 12, 19 & 26;  
Openwater: Sat. & Sun. June T.B.A.

**Ice Diver Specialty** ~ Learn the proper techniques and use of equipment for diving under the ice in an overhead environment.

Cost: \$375.00 + manual

Date: Friday Eve, Saturday & Sunday March 4, 5 & 6

**Nitrox Diver** ~ Certification allowing the open water diver to use Enriched Air Nitrox (EAN) mixes up to 40% Oxygen.

Cost: \$150.00 + manual

Dates: Saturday Jan 29 -10:00 am  
Saturday April 16-10:00 am  
Thursday June 17-7 pm;

**CPROX & CPR1st** ~ Learn the necessary skills to save a dive buddies life. You will learn the basics of CPR and Oxygen administration, or CPR and First Aid.

Cost: CPROX or CPR1st \$90.00  
CPROX and CPR1st (combined) \$160.00

Dates: Saturday, March 12 - CPROX 9:30 am; CPR1st 12:30 pm  
Saturday April 23 — CPROX 9:30 am; CPR1st 12:30 pm

**Rescue** ~ Learn the skills required to prevent and manage diving emergencies. Improve your diving skills.

Cost: \$350.00 + manual

Dates: Thursday Evenings, Mar. 24, 31 and Apr. 7 & 14  
Openwater: Sat. & Sun. June T.B.A.

**Night / Low Visibility Diver Specialty** ~ Learn the procedures, techniques, and potential hazards associated with night diving or limited visibility so that you will be able to enjoy night diving with maximum confidence and safety.

Cost: \$150.00 + manual

Dates: Sunday June 27-9 am;

**Navigation Specialty** ~ Learn how to navigate properly underwater using both natural and compass type navigation.

Cost: \$150.00 + manual

Dates: Fri June 4 & Sat June 5;

**Divemaster** ~ The first level in becoming a Scuba Instructor. Learn to organize, conduct and supervise recreational diving activities both land and boat based. Work as an instructional assistant.

Cost: \$450.00 + manual

Dates: Thursday Evenings, May 6, 13, 20, 27;  
Openwater: Sat. & Sun. June T.B.A.  
Plus additional open water T.B.A.