
where we would do our dives. Since the dive sites were usually a 5- to 10-minute boat ride, we returned to the dock between dives. As a group, we did what we wanted on a schedule we chose.

The diving is mainly on the walls at the entrance to Cockburn Harbor in front of the hotel, but there's a good variety of diving and exploration within a 15-minute boat ride of the dock. On a Convair 440 that crashed on approach to the airport, schools of large horse-eye jacks swirled around the wreck and down the deep wall below. Excellent. Just west of the airplane is the Dream, a collection of massive coral heads overgrown with sponges and bursting with small tropicals, the wall below covered by large stands of black coral.

To the east of the harbor mouth are several deep dive spots, including the Grotto, the G Spot, and Eagle's Nest. These are the places to find such pelagics as reef, bull, hammerhead, and tiger sharks or schools of eagle rays swimming in formation. Old-timers on South speak of schools of 30 or more, but 15 is the largest seen in the last year, and 5 to 10 is more common. Unfortunately, this area has been used occasionally as a dumping ground, and there's some debris

on the bottom. Coral bleaching is also evident here because the water is warmer where the shallow Caicos bank meets the open sea.

Some shallow dives can be found along the top of the wall east of the harbor. The Arch, for example, is a large coral arch surrounded by coral heads and teeming with small tropicals, banded shrimp, brittle stars, spotted morays, and juvenile and adult drum. Inside the arch itself, a school of huge horse-eye jacks posed for wide-angle. I've scored two unusual shark sightings here on different trips — a 14-foot hammerhead and a man-sized mako (lost, no doubt).

I love this funky little island, warts and all. It's a dingy, dirty place with abandoned buildings and litter, but the reward at South is great diving. The risk is the state of the Club Carib at the time you show up. As I was departing, another dispute between owners and dive operator left the two new Carolina 24 dive boats sitting at the new dock Jacques Mayal designed with no divemasters to drive them, the compressor turned off, the E-6 photo processing machine still in its box, and the new rental gear hanging in the dive shop. But that's diving on the edge — the risk is worth the reward.

Q. C.

A Bridge Too Far Gone

When the plane lands in Micronesia's Palau airport, divers get off the plane on the island of Balbedob, then cross the bridge to the capital city, Koror. On September 26, the 450-foot center section of the bridge collapsed into the fast-flowing Renrak Channel 100 feet below. Several cars went into the drink and a few people died. Along with traffic, the bridge also carried electricity, telephone service, and water to Koror.

A few divers were stranded, but as of this printing most utilities have been restored and a ferry operation set up for transportation between the islands. However, if you've booked a land-based operation in Palau, I would advise contacting the resort ahead of time to see if it is fully operational.

J. Q.

Postmarks

Scubapro has parts and Bonaire has crime

Dear *Undercurrent*:

I would like to take this opportunity to respond to your article "Clash of the Titans Continues" from the September

1996 issue of *Undercurrent*. The article on the whole was fairly comprehensive, covering the most important issues for a potential buyer. There were, however, a few

mistakes in the article that I would like to clear up.

Undercurrent wrote that "(Scubapro) Mark 15 spare parts are limited and will run out." Parts in every field of manufacturing eventually become discontinued; however, parts for the MK15 are abundant and are not likely to be discontinued for years or even decades to come.

A second subheading on "Maintainability, Service, and Support" concludes with a statement that implies Scubapro does not take parts inventory and availability into account when designing new regulators. This is absolutely incorrect. Advances in engineering have allowed substantial performance increases to be implemented into newer models while utilizing many existing components.

I hope this helps clear up any misconceptions related to Scubapro products, and by the way, rubber parts are included in the warranty of SCUBAPRO regulators when the warranty is maintained and the unit is serviced by factory-authorized technicians.

Aloha.

Jerrod Kowalski
SCUBAPRO-Pacific, Operations

Dear *In Depth*:

As the director of tourism, I am writing in response to the letter and comments concerning Bonaire printed in your October 1996 issue. But first, let me thank *Undercurrent/In Depth* for providing a forum where concerns can be aired and questions answered.

Then let me thank your readers for taking the time to bring their experiences to our attention.

Unfortunately, we are well aware of the petty theft problem on our island and deeply regret the impact it has on our visitors and island residents alike. To address the problem and ensure our petty crimes do not escalate,

"We have no 'hard crime' on Bonaire and are working very hard to help keep it that way."

several initiatives and programs have been put in place.

1. In November of 1995, the police auxiliary (a voluntary civilian service) was created. Thus, the use of the police auxiliary effectively doubled the number of police cars on the streets.

2. In March of 1996, a new police chief was brought to the Island, making substantive changes in the allocation of

resources, including an effort to change the federal law prohibiting immediate distribution of copies of police reports that was successful and will go into effect January 1997. (The inability to provide a copy of the police report may have led to the perception that no report was being filed.)

3. In November 1996, the Beach Patrol adjusted its schedule of seven days a week, eight hours a day to provide for patrols after 6:00 p.m. at the South Pier. In January, the beach patrol will receive a second car, doubling its size and range.

4. Ongoing in 1995-96, the hotels and other accommodations on the island adopted individual safety awareness and security measures.

We have no "hard crime" on Bonaire and are working very hard to help keep it that way. Anything that negatively impacts our visitors and citizens is taken very seriously. We have a long history of protecting our environment and our natural resources. We will protect our quality of life with equal vigor.

Sincerely,

Ronnie Pieters
Director of Tourism

Tables on a Chip

UWATEC defends dive computers

In the October issue of In Depth, under the title "Computing Your Way into Trouble?" we published excerpts from the 1995 publication of a computer workshop sponsored by the Underwater Hyperbaric Medical Society. Bret Gilliam, who partici-

pated in that session, took issue with a number of points and submitted an article in response. Gilliam is currently CEO of UWATEC (a dive computer manufacturer) and vice chairman of NAUI's board of directors.

In 1988 I was vice president of Ocean Quest International, which operated a 500-foot cruise ship catering to sport divers. We carried ten 32-foot dive boats and offered four dives a day plus a night dive to our 160 or more divers. Before we began operating, we were interested in the role computers might play in eliminating human error in record keeping for repetitive diving. We spent considerable effort chamber- and