

drying cameras. E6 processing available on board, but we had to mount our own. Two divers reported that their last two roles were ruined by negligent processing. Instructor Annie Crawley, an accomplished underwater photographer and videographer was incredibly helpful, making suggestions above/below the water, reviewing our slides, and allowing us to use her expensive equipment. I learned more from her in a week than from all other trips combined.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Bilikiki, November 2002, Wuni Ryschkewitsch, Gainesville, FL.

Vis: 50 to 150 feet. Water: 80 F. Dives logged: 3,350. Excellent crew, excellent boat, tinny easy to dive from and get into. I have hip and knee replacements and need some help and got it every time. Very good operation all around and a friendly crew. Eleven crew, eight divers.

(www.bilikiki.com)

Bilikiki, August 2003, Jan Breidenbach (aquafauna@aol.com), Granite Bay, CA.

Dives logged: 800+. Vis: 75-90 ft. Water: 80-85 F. Dive restrictions enforced: 120 ft. How easy dive life can be! Diving from the "tinnies" meant no surface swims. Wonderfully laid out dive deck, camera area, great staff. Excellent dive guides for novice and expert divers. Friendly local people — natural beauty. Solomon Is. doesn't deserve travel advisory. It is great there.

Spirit of the Solomons, September

2003, Nikki Mahann (nikkim@oz.net), Bellevue, WA. Experience: 501-1000 dives. Vis: 80 to 100 Feet. Water: 82 to 84 F, calm. We were disappointed as far as seeing pelagics, only a lone shark or turtle showed up. The macro was very good. The sea fans and soft corals are magnificent. We used reef hooks on several of the strong current dives, what a great way to watch the huge schools of jacks, tuna and barracudas! We searched for the seahorse but didn't see one. I was lucky to see the elusive shrimp gobie on a dive at White Beach. The crew couldn't have been better which compensated for the age of the boat. Meals were plentiful and satisfied the needs of the health conscious eaters as well as the picky ones.

(www.bilikiki.com)

TONGA

Ha'apai

Nai'a, August 2003, John Sommerer, Silver Spring, MD.

Previous diving Caribbean, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Micronesia, PNG. 250-500 dives. Sunny, cloudy, windy. Calm & flat, choppy, currents, no currents. 73-75 deg. F. 3mm wetsuit. Vis: 40-100 ft. Dive own profile. Dive guides had a tendency to urge you to come up after about 50 minutes if they could find you. Great facilities. Ten of sixteen passengers were UWPs, and each had more than one camera. Plenty of workspace, charging capacity, etc. The film photographers had a bad day when a whole batch of E6 went bad, but Rob Barrel