

Combined Clubs Weekend 2008 – Ken Saville, Ocean Divers Plus

For 4 days over the June Long weekend, Tasmania's dive community came together for a great weekend of diving and events in Tasmania's premier dive destination, Bicheno on Tassie's east coast.

Over 80 divers and partners attended the 4 days, from most of Tasmania's dive clubs, TSDC, Ocean Divers, Leven Scuba Club, Tas Uni Scuba club and Club Go Dive.

The weekend was a mix of diving, scheduled events and socialising.

Tasmania's winter weather was outstanding for the 4 days, with shorts and tee shirts the order for the afternoons! On arrival on the Friday, we set up a base at 3 Scuba Court for members to base themselves, with Justin having a house near the beach.

Ocean Divers and the TSDC combined for dives on Bird Rock and Muir's Rock on Friday afternoon, just south of Bicheno. Vis was excellent and a fun dive was had by all. The other clubs arrived Friday night and a social gathering for dinner at the local pub was a pleasant start to the weekend.

Early Saturday morning saw the official start to proceedings and then the diving began in earnest. Some clubs used their club boats, or were ferried out in shifts by members boats, into Bicheno's world re-noun marine park, others did shore dives around Governor Island.

Bruce from Bicheno Dive Centre, ran constant dive charters into the park, as he also had a group in from Victoria to add to the numbers.

The diving was excellent, good vis and just brilliant sea life, what more could you ask for?



Saturday afternoon saw the running of the “Scuba Olympics” where clubs competed against each other over 3 events, being a scuba equipment relay, blind navigation around a sports oval, and the notorious “Spud Hunt” where members looked for potatoes in about 6 metres of water off the Bicheno breakwater, with special coloured spuds having excellent prizes. The main prize of a set of Scubapro regs was won by a member from the Tas Uni club. Ocean Divers Plus won the Olympics for the 3rd year in a row, from a fast finishing Tas Uni Club and Leven club. Club Go Dive was last.



Saturday night saw a BBQ dinner at a function centre in the centre of town, followed by presentations of prizes and talks from various dive bodies from around the state.

Michael Jacques did a great talk on the progress of the Long Spine Sea Urchin surveys that most clubs have been doing over the last 6 months, the results were very interesting.

With the weekend’s photo competition being judged Sunday night, Sunday morning we were back diving with the weather again superb and some great dives had all day, finishing up with a “Mass” night dive at the Bicheno breakwater that night.

Members gathered at the Bicheno Dive Centre Sunday night for dinner from the local lions club and the phot competition, which was judged by leading Tasmanian underwater photographer Jon Bryan. Categories were “Best Tasmanian Photo” and “Best photo from the weekend”. There were some excellent photos in both sections, which made judging tough. The overall final pix were somewhat controversial with an above water shot of Jen by Paddy getting on the winners list

Monday say probably the best vis of the weekend with underwater visibility about 30 metres! Most clubs did at least one dive before heading home after a big weekend of diving.

The Tasmanian dive scene is small but very active, and the Tasmanian Combined Clubs Weekend, is eagerly awaited each year, as it's a great time to catch up with the various clubs and "Go divin!"

The Combined Scuba Clubs weekend was a huge success with everyone impressed by the diving and the company. Next year the event will be held again in Bicheno over the June Long Weekend.

A big thank you to the organising committee from the TSDC who coordinated an excellent event! Ocean Divers have the duty next year!

Thanks also to Bruce from Bicheno Dive Centre for all his hospitality over the weekend.

Thanks also to the dive community of Tasmania, especially all the retail outlets that donated prizes. Bicheno Dive Centre, Eaglehawk Dive Centre, Aqua Scuba,

Go Dive!, Wynyard Scuba Centre, Island Ocean Charters, Southern Tas Divers and Bay of Fires Dive.

Thanks also to Sport Diving magazine for the great support, Oceanic, Anchor Wetsuits, Stormy Seas and the Beachfront at Bicheno. See you next year in beautiful Bicheno!!

