Site: Far Mulberry - Night dive

Vessel: Emma-Jayne hard boat from Selsey/Itchenor

Depth: 11m

Conditions: Evening 19:00 ropes off, slight swell, light breeze.

Visibility: 3-4m underwater

Divers: Leo & Andy both Open circuit Scuba.

Special kit: Lights on divers, lit SMB each and torches.

Details: Site is 20mins out from Selsey Bill and permanently buoyed. Main site is an 80m long concrete caisson Phoenix unit intended to be part of the D-day Mulberry Harbours. There are two associated wrecks; a German air-sea rescue float (“lobster pot”) and work boat. These are connected to the shot base by guidelines but were not visited on this occasion.

The main site is well broken up with projecting steel reinforcement to be wary of. The NE end is more intact and nearly reaches the surface, this provides a sheltered/shadowed area.

At depth there was some current so we kept to the lee (shot side) of the site. Large Lobster were out on the prowl and a conger spotted. Lots of Bib and Wrasse as is usual. The broken nature of the site means plenty of holes to hide in so night time gives the chance to see some of the more retiring residents.

The best part of an hour on the wreck followed by a safety stop on the shot chain.

Happy divers.

Site: Aeolian Sky

Vessel: Skin Deeper. Hard boat from Portland

Depth: 30m

Conditions: Sunny, minimal swell.

Visibility: 5-6m underwater.

Divers; Gerry and Andy both OC twin sets.

Details: The Sky is a Freighter Wreck from the mid 70’s. All hands taken off but a several million Seychelles Rupees was lost. No one’s ever owned up to finding these…..

Large sections of the site were demolished during salvage operations. The stern super structure is fairly intact and is lying to port, the companion ways and compartments are easily identifiable although much of this is now wobbly. Torches are useful as even on a bright day it can be quite overshadowed. Lots of bib, wrasse and bass. Large edible and spider crabs sit amongst the debris.

We confined our dive to the more intact areas and carried out a multilevel dive up the structure to about 20m where it finished. From here we put up a DSMB whilst looking at very bright painted Topshells and then drifted off into the green for our safety stop.

Nice dive Gezza!

Site: HMT Sapper

Vessel: Emma-Jayne Hard boat from Selsey

Depth: 30m

Conditions: Bright and warm but a bit of swell.

Visibility: 1-2m, less than 1m on the Wreck itself.

Divers: Siobhan & Andy. MK6 CCR and twin set with stage respectively.

Details: HMT Sapper is a WW1 casualty sunk by mine. Can’t tell you much about this as the visibility dropped away quickly on the wreck. I found the bottom of the shot but then realised I was wedged in the corner of a compartment and took a little time to extricate myself.

There was a mild current across the wreck and several divers hanging about near the shot so Siobhan & I took a course out from the wreck itself. We circled around looking at small marine life, the good thing about poor visibility is you get better at spotting the little critters!

We had about 40 minutes at 28m before ascending for a couple of decompression stops I needed to do. Under these conditions I wouldn’t recommend the site to a diver who doesn’t have much UK sea experience. But it was good practice of skills such as staying in close contact and communicating as we were on different systems.

Good to dive with an experienced buddy.

Site: Knoll pins – Lundy Island

Vessel: Obsession 2. Hard boat from Ilfracombe.

Depth: 6-18m

Conditions: Sunny to slightly overcast. No swell.

Visibility: 4-7m underwater.

Divers: Chris & Andy both OC.

Details: Dropped in just off the pins. Descended down the south west corner. Between the two pinnacles we followed the contours around to the eastern end at 18m. There were more particles in the water here so we turned around and zig-zagged our way up to the safety stop.

Big scallops on the sandy seabed, pink coral fans, sea urchins and lots of kelp in the shallows. Another buddy pair said hello to a seal at 20m.

I got the DSMB out at 6m but managed to birds nest the reel in my pocket. Fortunately I got 6-7m free and could put up the “blob” without a problem.

Picked up by the boat and hot chocolate all round. Chris had never done any “kelp bashing” and was quite taken by the forest like habitat. Then off to swim with seals!

Site: SS Shirala

Vessel: Emma-Jayne. Hard boat from Selsey

Depth: 22m

Conditions: Evening dive, overcast. Calm sea state but steady current.

Visibility: 2m

Divers: Tim and Andy. Both OC.

Details: A steady current near the surface so the shot line was nearly horizontal. This eased off near the wreck. Quite dark but to be expected late in the day. Quite “green” on the wreck itself but the shot was very close to the fo’c’sle gun that still stands a couple of metres proud. Difficult to make out the layout back from the bow due to poor visibility and toppled nature of many hull plates. However lots of big crustaceans taking advantage of the wreckage.

We swam out in a series of overlapping figure 8’s with the gun near the centre so as not to lose our bearings. I’d like to revisit the site in better conditions or with the sun overhead as there is a lot more to see. We had about 45 minutes bottom time before having to call it a day. No we didn’t find any diamonds.

Back to shore in time for a pint as well!