

Christmas Eve Club Dive 24/12/10 by Larry Thomas

It's Christmas Eve and our annual 'Crays for Christmas' dive trip is underway at 7am as we meet at the Halswell shopping centre carpark.

A 5-15 knot southerly change is forecast around mid-day but is not considered discouraging by the team of assembled divers, so off we go around and over the hills to Akaroa Harbour. Around 8am Scott and Brian launch their boats at Wainui whilst Jens launches his at Duvauchelle.

Approaching the heads the sea is already rocking and rolling as we turn South and soon see on the horizon the Southerly front approaching, so Scott Rhodes suggests we about face and go North into the shelter of Damons Bay. A good call by Scott and the seas are calm enough to get some good dives in and get our quota of 3 Crays each. (We were diving in a Taiapure area)

As we head out of the bay and turn South to get back to Akaroa Harbour entrance, we are confronted with a reasonably angry Southerly, so we forged through it enduring a rough ride. As we get into the shelter of the harbour which was also fairly messy, to top it off it started raining!! No problem to us in our wetsuits though or those in the cabins!!

Boats up the ramp and back to Scottys place to unload the boat and sort dive gear. The rain steadily increases until we have a monsoon-like downpour! We get it all sorted and on the road again back to Halswell and the weather improves to the point where you wouldn't have thought we had just experienced what we did.

Into the carpark we turn and it's pandemonium!! Christmas Eve shoppers everywhere and the carpark is chokka! Manoeuvring boat trailers around the crowded carpark and sorting through dive gear and crays was a bit of a mission but was soon sorted quickly.

All in all, rough weather aside. It was an excellent productive day out diving with great team members.

Thanks to all and especially to Scott, Jens and Brian for making their boats available to make it happen.

Larry Thomas.