

Lyttelton – Motonau - Akaroa Trips 22nd & 23rd/12/07

Hi to all,

I would just like to say a big thank you to Tony Glentworth for taking me along on a great weekend of diving.

In the early hours of Saturday morning, after meeting at 5am at Lyttelton boat ramp, we set off for Pigeon bay. The ride out was pretty good encountering a 1m swell on the way with not much wind. We stopped for a fish but will have to try again another day.

Having got a few tips on catching cray (the closest I have got to a cray is passing the one on top of the shop at Kaikoura) we set off. Visibility was 1 to 2m. If it wasn't for Tony's bright yellow dive bag I would have lost him before we got to the bottom. (13.5m) Tony pointed an eel out on the way, then spotted a cray. I could just see him, so I watched to see how it was done. His arm went in, then the struggle. The cloud surrounded his body slowly and it gave me an optical illusion that Tony was being dragged in. I'm thinking, I know he said they could get big but should I grab him by the legs before he disappears. Then he pulled a nice sized cray out. We were both pretty happy for totally different reasons. We didn't see any more crays after that.

Heading back to Lyttelton we met up with about 10 hectors dolphins that looked like they were fishing. Lines were put out but alas Tony's cray was the only invited guest to turn up. Arriving back at the boat ramp at 9.45am, it was hard to believe we still had a whole day ahead of us.

Now to the Motonau trip.

First thing Sun am having checked the forecast for high winds I thought the trip would be cancelled. But no, Tony called and said we were on for Wainui/Akaroa . We met everyone at New World and then set out. Stopping at the Hilltop Tavern it was decided Akaroa would be the best place to put in. The ride out was fun pushing out through 1.5 to 2m waves. David Moore said he saw the Dominator's prop come out of the water.

We pushed on out past the heads and found a nice spot at Squally Bay, David and I suited up and went in first while Tony buddied with Gary Chalmers while Craig Henderson, Sarah Howard and David Larcombe did their thing on the Dominator.

Well Diving with David Moore cray fishing brings too mind Arnie Schwartzeneger the Terminator. I don't think I have ever seen someone move that fast underwater before. I'm not sure of the exact number of crays he got but it was pretty impressive. I tried for a couple but got a couple of feelers for my effort.

Having watched him on the 1st dive(14.5m), I didn't want to be the only diver not contributing to the catch (more on that soon). I lined one up thinking of all the tips I had been given, so here goes. I lunged for the little bugger, but unbeknownst to me the terminator was behind me, all I saw was something flash past me and the cray was in the bag. So please David .Tap me on the shoulder 1st, so you don't scare the hell out of me. I finally spotted one and just went for it. To my surprise I had got a reasonable grip but so had he. I wasn't giving in after what seemed like 10 minutes but I'm sure wasn't, I had him. I was just a pity I couldn't get him in the bag. All forgiven, David came over and showed me what the best way to get him in. (I would have carried him if I had to, this one is not the one that got away.)

Sorry for prattling on but I'm sure you all remember your 1st. (no rude remarks please)

Tony and Gary were productive in their dives, On Tony's 1st dive he came up with a couple I think, you will have to ask him as did Gary(they seemed to be coming from everywhere.)

Tony spotted some but had run out of air and was keen to get back in. His 2nd dive he came up Whooping and hollering and a smile almost as big as mine,
I think it may have been the biggest on the boat.

Sarah, Craig and David had shot round to another bay for their second dive and returned with good catches too, I think we will leave it to the divers themselves to say who got the biggest.

Both dives done we had some refreshments and then headed home with a much calmer ride arriving at the ramp around 6ish. Having divided the crays at New World, we all went on our merry way.

I'd like too wish you all A Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.
Keep Safe.

Ps The last known sighting of a bighorn and dominator full of crays was going through the drive through at Burger King.

Terry Reilly