

Trip Report - Mikhail Lermontov (Go Dive), 13-15 August 2010

By Drew Jeffrey

Well it all started with a fine crisp morning and a decent hour of 10am at Dom's. With a lunch stop at Kaikoura and quick visit to check out the young seals Ohua Point we arrived in Picton at 4:30pm.

Realizing we had parked up outside the wrong dive shop, a quick call was made to get more directions. We arrived to be greeted by Brent and Hamish from "Go Dive" Picton where we signed our lives away before boarding the two vans supplied to make the 2.5hr journey to the lodge.

With now pouring rain, howling wind, and Dom complaining of "strong arm steering", we arrived in Portage to find we were only half way so a change of drivers to give Dom a rest was needed.

Getting to the first gate, Anna was given the task of closing the gates only to find this was easier said than done. So with some assistance and mocking from Dom, the gate was locked, but not before they found themselves drenched from head to toe.

Several gates later and what seemed a very steep drive down a slippery track we made it to a very inviting lodge. We all found beds, ate dinner, were briefed on the next days dives and off to bed for a good nights sleep.



Dawn to a clearing day we had a hearty breakfast and prepared for the days diving.

With a short journey on the dive boat we arrived at the dive site above the wreck, geared up and got into the first dive in our arranged groups of dive buddies. Descending on the wreck was breath taking, to see something so huge looming up in front of you started to give some perspective of the

size of this ship and with a balancing of my BCD we started to make our way down the starboard side of the ship.

Plenty of growth on the surface of the ship and abundant sea life about made for an exciting dive.

Returning to the surface after the required safety stop, we were off back to the lodge for a lunch break and a collection of stories as to who saw what and where they went. With the tanks refilled it was back to the dive site for round two.

Entering the crisp waters we then ventured below for another look, and with my immediate decent I quickly found some particularly important parts to a dive torch that my dive buddy lost on the previous excursion (aye Anna, hehehe) and with that some more exploring was underway.

The last dive of the day was granted by vote to be a scallop dive in one of the sheltered coves where a good collection

of a well sized harvest was gathered along with a random flounder and I got to experience playing with a couple of carpet (I think) sharks. The day finished with



a brilliant hot meal, a couple of quite ales, tall stories and some horrendous jokes, hehehe.



Sunday greeted us with a closing weather system carving up the inshore waters and made gearing up and executing a final dive on the Lermontov interesting with some making the well deserved call to wait for the next dive in more sheltered waters for some more

scallops. With the return to the lodge it was clean and pack up time and a long journey home via Kaikoura for tea.

All in all, the best dive trip I have done to date, with great hosts “Go Dive” I would gladly recommend them to anyone and a crew from the club that was so welcoming to new members one could not have asked for a better weekend of wreck diving.

So many thanks to...Dominic, Kurt, Anna, Steve, Eddie, Win and Glenn

and of course Brent and Hamish of Go Dive, simply a brilliant weekend.



Warming up cold booties with warm water

