

Trip Report: HMNZS Waikato, 23rd January 2010

Astrid Lorange

Mike and I braved the early morning start to arrive in Tutukaka to be greeted with nice enough weather, there just being a few ripples on the water and a boat nearly empty with 2 crewmen, one visitor and Mike and I.

We went down for our first dive of the day with the plan of mapping the whole deck of 1 of the Waikato, armed each with a map and a pencil. After checking out the helicopter hangar we headed down to the torpedo room, where I managed to lose my pencil after only 5 minutes in the water. It did make the mapping harder for the rest of the dive, but Mike handled it well and we reached the ladder to the bridge having checked all of the starboard and port sides. We ended the dive there and came back to shore where a hot chocolate and a coffee were waiting for us.



We discussed the dives, a few modifications were made to the maps and then Andy and Tim joined us for the rest of the day doing an advanced wreck course. We headed back to the Waikato for our second dive of the day, the first one for Andy and Tim and also Christian and Sian who joined us on the boat too. Unfortunately, upon reaching the dive site a wave broadsided the boat and Andy's twin set fell off its station on the deck of the boat causing the regulator first stage to jump out of place and not seal, so Andy surfaced the dive on the surface with Ben, the skipper. Tim joined us therefore for our second dive of the day where the plan was to double check

quickly what had been done before on deck 1 and head for deck 01 to extend the mapping progresses. After another good dive, we came back to the café to warm up.

During the surface interval, Andy managed to fix his twin set and we went back to the dive site for our third dive of the day. Andy forced me to wear his shower cap, don't ask, and Mike used that time to take a picture of me. Thankfully the picture doesn't appear in this report! If you need to know, Tim and Andy were completing a part of the course with simulated silt out using a shower cap to block Tim's vision.

This time Mike was aiming at finishing deck 01 whilst I would be laying lines for practice. The dive went well once again and I took some time to make some pictures on the way back to the line and then, on the way back to shore we met a group of dolphins which was a really cool sight. Overall, my best diving ever on the Waikato, I really enjoyed it. Thanks Mike.

