

SPUMS ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING 1997

The 1997 Annual Scientific Meeting is to be held at the Waitangi Resort, Paihia in Northland, New Zealand from April 13th to 20th.

The theme of the meeting will be “The Pathophysiology and Treatment of Decompression Illness” and the Workshop will be devoted to the “First Aid Management of Diving Accidents”.

Confirmed speakers are Dr James Francis, until recently at the Naval Medical Institute, Alverstoke, England and Dr Richard Moon of Duke University Medical Centre, Durham, North Carolina, U.S.A. Both are excellent speakers and acknowledged experts in the field of decompression illness.

The venue is a first class resort hotel immediately adjacent to the historic Waitangi Treaty House and situated right on the foreshore of the beautiful Bay of Islands. There is outstanding temperate water diving in the region, especially at the Poor Knights Islands with water temperatures at that time of the year around 20-22°C. The region is renowned for its sailing and game fishing and there is a huge range of land based activities for registrants and their families.

Conference conveners are Dr Michael Davis, Medical Director, Hyperbaric Medical Unit, Christchurch Hospital, Private Bag 4710, Christchurch, New Zealand and Associate Professor Des Gorman, Department of Occupational Health, University of Auckland School of Medicine. Enquiries should be addressed to Mike Davis in Christchurch.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WHAT IS TECHNICAL DIVING ?

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5/1/96

Dear Editor

With no intention to either condemn or praise the practice, I would like to take issue with the definition of “technical recreational diving” in Des Gorman’s review of the Safe Limits Symposium which was in the June issue (1995; 25 (2): 110-113).

Des’ list of technical diving practices included diving deeper than 50 msw and diving with oxygen-nitrogen mixtures. Now, some hot-dog divers have been diving air deeper than 40 or 50 msw since not long after air was invented, with nothing more technical than any other dive. Likewise, diving with oxygen-enriched air involves nothing any different from an ordinary dive except a little more knowledge, certainly nothing “technical” about the dive part (making and analysing the mixes yourself, okay, that is technical).

Technical diving is diving beyond the normal range using special equipment, techniques and competence. One good minimal definition of a technical dive is a dive involving a change of gases. (That has to be extended to include diving with a rebreather.)

Come to the meeting in the Maldives to hash this one over.

Bill Hamilton

Key Words

Letter, technical diving, nitrox.

Editor’s note

Dr R W Hamilton, PhD, is one of the guest speakers at the 1996 Annual Scientific Meeting in the Maldives from April 20th to 28th 1996.

UNDERWATER OXYGEN TREATMENT FOR DECOMPRESSION SICKNESS

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31/1/1996

Dear Editor

I have read with interest the editorial in the September 1995 edition of the SPUMS Journal and the review of underwater oxygen treatment of decompression sickness by Dr Carl Edmonds.^{1,2}