

The

TRIDENT



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The Trident is the official newsletter of the Long Beach Neptunes, a non-profit organization. The Trident is published monthly and is provided free of charge to the members of the Long Beach Neptunes and associates.

The Long Beach Neptunes would like to thank the following members for their work in obtaining our 501(c)(7) non-profit organization status:

Jeff Benedict, Brian York, Jon McMullin, Will Wither, Steve Parkford

2023 CALENDAR

- **May 3rd** - Monthly meeting IN PERSON at Me 'n' Ed's Pizzeria
- **June 7th** - Monthly meeting IN PERSON at Me 'n' Ed's Pizzeria
- **June 10th - 60th Annual Blue Water Meet**
- **October 14th** - Long Beach Neptunes Fall Classic

FISH STANDINGS

CALIFORNIA

Calico Derby	Open
Calico Bass	Open
White Seabass	Open
Yellowtail	Open
Halibut	Jacob Seto 20.9lbs
Sheephead	Open
Bonito	Open
Barracuda	Open
Dorado	Open
Bluefin Tuna	Open
Lobster	Open

OUT OF STATE/COUNTRY AWARDS

Yellowfin Tuna	Open
Reef Fish	Open
Pelagic, non-tuna	Open

Kent McIntyre Award

Will it be you this year???

Perpetual Big Fish Trophy

Let's go!!!



MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

May 3rd, 7:00PM



This month's club meeting will be held IN PERSON,
at

Me-n-Ed's Pizzeria

**4115 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, CA
90712**



MY FIRST WSB OF THE SEASON

Conditions here on our coast haven't been the greatest because of back to back storms, ripping up the kelp beds, as we all know. So I decided to put a second trip to the island together, as the first one we all came back with doughnuts but we heard plenty of croaking.

I called Hobie Ladd, to see if he was game & of course he was all in but was having trouble finding a third diver. After talking to John Hughes, finding out he couldn't go, he suggested I link up with Scott De Firmian. Talking to Scott & he was all in for a full day of diving hard for Seabass. Feeling pretty confident with a solid group, we headed to the island early in the morning, with high hopes.

As we got to the zone, I seen a boat anchored, fishing, where I wanted to start the day. So not to be an ass, I chose another spot, which no one was on.

Getting suited up, I was the first one in the water. After making my first drop to about 45', I seen the viz wasn't the greatest, at a hazy 12' to 15'. But with plenty of life, I felt confident we were in the right zone. On my second drop, I felt I was diving a little better, with a longer working breath hold. On my third drop, I hit about 50', cruising right off the reef, when I seen 3 fish in front of me, moving off. I lined up on the closest one to me, & shot. Hitting it center mass, I felt confident in a good holding shot. But my Ulusub, reel had backlashed, & a loop of line got stuck around the finger handle of my reel, not allowing anymore line out. As I started to fumble with the tangled line I realized, I couldn't undo the tangled mess. My next thoughts were, let go of the gun or drop my weight belt, in order to help me surface, as I'm at the end of my breath hold. I chose to drop my belt, & thankfully that allowed me to surface with my gun still in hand.

I called out for help to my dive buddies, Scott & Hobie, letting them know, I need an extra weight belt. Hobie got there first in order to help. After he had listened to what happened, he gave me his weights so I could retrieve my fish, & also tied his float line off to the closest kelp stringer, marking the area of where I dropped my belt.

Having the ability to retrieve my fish now, I drop down to assess the situation, & I see it was a great holding shot, & the fish was done fighting. I brained the fish, & headed for the surface once again. The next drop I was able

retrieve my fish, & I had also put eyes on my weight belt. So I punched yet another dive to the reef. After grabbing my weight belt, I realized, there was no way I was going to surface with it, I dropped it again.

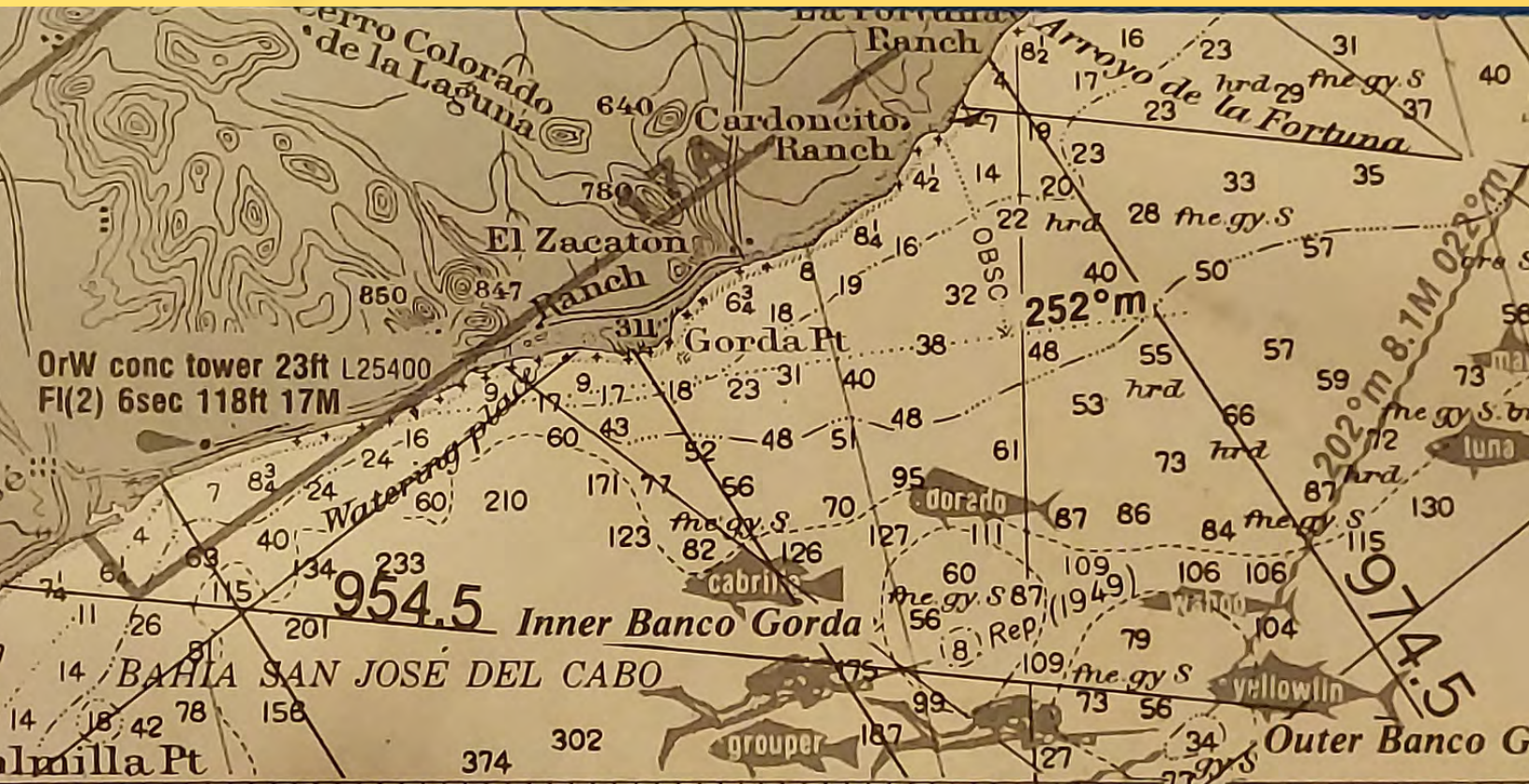
I decided to take my fish back to the boat, put it on ice, & grab a CO² float for my belt. Getting back to Hobie with the float in hand. Scott is now there, & suggests, I use Hobie's float line instead of the CO² float. So after several attempts to find my belt, Scott reminded me, the club would buy me another belt. But being me, determined, I make one more drop finding my belt & was able to clip the float line to it.



I feel so blessed to be apart of this club with so many great divers, who will go above & beyond to not only have an amazing day on & in the water but also make sure everyone one makes it home safe. HUGE thanks to Scott & Hobie for backing me up. So stoked to be apart of this family.

RICHARD CUNNINGHAM

Gordo Banks 1984



Jake Seto, our newsletter editor, asked for some fish stories for the May newsletter. With that request, here's a short story about diving Gordo Banks, Baja. Only one nice fish was shot, a sixty-pound amberjack, but it was an interesting day of diving. I was diving with another Neptune, Vance Carriere

Gordo Banks is not an easy location to find, especially in 1984. No LORAN stations in Mexico and no GPS. We had a compass and a fish finder on board my panga, but that was it. The Banks are roughly eight miles north of San Jose Del Cabo, and five miles east of the Punta Gordo, in the Sea of Cortez. There are several high spots that, if you can find them, generally hold big game fish, similar to Farnsworth Banks. It took us awhile, but we eventually found the top of a pinnacle in about 80 feet of water. Conditions were perfect: flat calm, extremely clear water and a comfortable water temp. The fish finder was painting lots of life below the boat with a few large marks just above the rocky bottom.

After setting the anchor, it didn't take us long to get wet. From the surface, I could see what I thought were bait fish. A quick dive on the bait indicated these were 10 to 15-pound tuna. I was deceived by the unusually clear water. While hovering over the schooling tuna, which were about 30 feet below us, we heard humpback whales singing in the distance. I knew that was one of their traits, but I'd never heard it before. I was impressed. They were probably several miles from us, but the sound was crystal clear and a bit haunting. Really cool!

Time to shoot some fish. Hundreds of tightly-packed tuna, though not big, were circling us. I pulled the trigger on one that was close. The shaft went through the fish and into a second fish that was behind it. The first fish was a through and through and the shot was well placed. A second tuna was hit but the point did not penetrate deeply into the fish, and it was lost. Having one fish on a shaft and one on the shooting cable—at the same time—was crazy: two fish swimming in different directions and lots of vibrations. My recollection is hazy, but I believe that Vance also shot a fish out of this school.



While we were fluffing around with these very active fish, a shark made an appearance. The shark was not huge, nor was it aggressive, but we decided to get out of the water quickly. While climbing aboard the panga, Vance inadvertently dropped his hand-made gun—in eighty feet of water.

Vance could probably free dive to that depth, but I couldn't. A search of the area without SCUBA was out of the question. But we had a full SCUBA tank on board, so Vance decided he would use the tank to search for his missing gun. Vance rolled into the water on SCUBA, with a gun, and headed for the bottom. We were still a little spooked by the shark, which is probably why Vance included the gun while on SCUBA

About ten or fifteen minutes later, Vance surfaced with a sixty-pound amberjack on his shaft. I told him, “Nice fish, but did you recover the gun?” Vance said something like, “Nah, but I saw this big jack and couldn't help myself, so I shot it.” He knew the fish would not qualify for any club award, but like a true Neptune: if a fish was close and big, he'd shoot it. And I probably would have done the same thing.

Once we were back aboard the panga, we noticed the humpback whales surfacing a mile or so from us. Seeing the big whales spyhopping and hearing them sing was unforgettable and so impressive.

Tom Blandford



Side Bar

I love to hear old fish stories. I have one about Big Jim Christenson that I'd love to submit, and I'm certain the members have some fish tales that would be fun to read. So, put them in print and send them to Jake.

The charter for the Blue Water Meet did not work out. So, I find myself without a ride. If anyone has some extra space, I'd love to join you. I can steer a compass course and drop an anchor. Please reach out to me at mvgracias45@gmail.com Thank You!

Last, there is a fictional book on Amazon about the Neptunes, spearing fish and police work. I've included the names of a few members, so you should buy the book to see if your name is in print. The title: Pursued, the author is Thomas Blandford. (Truth be told, if you fed a chimp enough bananas, he could probably figure out how to publish a book on Amazon, so writing a book is no big deal. But it's a fun read. There is another book, nonfiction, entitled: The Dented Badge, same author. It's a collection of very short stories about cop work in LA during the 70ies, and 80ies. It will make you laugh. Thanks for putting up with my nonsense,

Tom Blandford
mvgracias45@gmail.com



MY PERSONAL BEST HALIBUT

A pair of long-time dive buddies were in town last week and we decided to check out the local haunts for signs of ghosts in the area. The weather was a less than perfect, but we wanted to make the best of what was to be had, so we headed out to a kelp bed that has finally returned after a long hiatus. As we hopped in the water, we were greeted with green, cold, and murky water. Not ideal. We managed to stay in just long enough to stop feeling our toes and decided to move to the second spot. Same story there. Screw it, lets go have some whiskey to warm up and smoke the last bit of my white seabass from last year. Turns out that was the right decision for the day.

Waking up at a reasonable hour the next morning, we headed out again in hopes of striking gold. This spot was the same story as the previous day's adventures. When we couldn't feel our fingers, we gathered back on my boat and came up with a plan. Forget seabass, there's halibut around.

Pulling up to one of our favorite sites, our hearts dropped. The visibility was less than five feet due to some surge. I held off on hopping in first, in favor of untangling a marker buoy line that was laying on the deck. So much fun. Josh and Tom (my buddies) hopped in and within a couple minutes, I heard Josh exclaim "Just spooked one!" I tried untangling a little faster.



Five minutes pass and Josh swims up, handing me a just legal halibut. Hey, legal is legal! He swims off, and I finally finish unraveling the line. I hear Tom say, "I just spooked another one!" The fish are IN!



I found my first short, totally uncovered, and easy to spot. I gave it a little nudge and it bolted. I made my way down the beach and ran into Josh who had just stoned a big one moments earlier. Damn! I must have swum right over it without seeing it. I need to get my eyes checked.

Losing feeling in all my extremities, I made my way back to the boat to find Josh cleaning his fish off the port side. I decided to swim around to the other side of the boat when I spotted her.



Sitting in about 12 feet of water, she hadn't had a chance to bury herself. I took the shot. I am a bad shot. It hits directly in the belly and she bolts. Crap. I chase it around for a bit, letting the reel freespool. I come across the shaft, but no fish. My heart sinks, but as I grab the shaft, I feel she's still on the line somewhere. I start making my way over to her, shaft in hand. I find her sitting on the bottom, with an unknown amount of flesh holding the line. I dive down and she bolts again. Patience. I find her once again, but approach quietly. I jam the shaft through and immediately can't see a thing due to all the silt. I make my way to the surface, only a couple of feet behind the boat where Josh and Tom are watching. I hold her up, and we all hoot and holler.



I don't really go for halibut much and it's most likely my personal best. 18 pounds. I was over the moon, and we celebrated that evening with some delicious panko crusted halibut.

Juan-Carlos Aguilar

How I got good at spearfishing: by Steve Parkford

Father, Geoffrey Parkford - taught me how to snorkel and dive to the sea floor

Tony Barragona - copywriter who taught me how to catch lobsters freediving

Tom Murray - introduced me to WSB hunting and all basic hunting techniques

Matt Miagucci - Japanese school teacher taught me how to NOT dive but instead (at least in PV) stealth kelp crawl into current, into the sun looking for sleepers

Big Jim Christianson —spearfishing course and how many ways you can fuck up

Lyle Davis - how not to lay out with your gun for YT but to remain more vertical with gun tucked in; how to hunt wahoo

Rick Hadley - dolphin kick is more efficient and "Don't leave fish to find fish"

Paul Hugaboom - adding a one arm pull along with kicking moves you faster on the surface against current

Seamus Callahan - hook breath; need to breath is not the need for oxygen; and better breath holding techniques don't make you necessarily a better hunter

Mori - make your float line the length of your dive limit; drop your tuna gun and climb the float line to save energy

Del White - how to hunt blue fin and how to do the "Panama dive"

Robert Strobach - how to disperse bilge pump evidence right in front of Avalon harbor patrol

Pete Correal - slow descent for longer breadth hold/ cutting artery behind the gill plate for bleed out

Mike Marsh - how not to take yourself so fucking seriously



Parkford scores 2023 WSB

40ish

25' down

59 degrees moderate viz

Island fish

Stoned, of course



PANAMA 2023 BY TERRY MAAS

Diving for a Cause has made over 11 trips to Panama, specifically to dive the famed gulf of Chiriqui bounded roughly by Coiba Island to the South and the Costa Rica border to the north. It encompasses the famed Montosa Island and Hannibal Bank. While there is an on-again, off-again ban on spearfishing at Hannibal Bank, most of the remaining gulf, encompassing thousands of square miles remains open to spearos.

With the end of Covid, we found our go-to resort at the border bankrupt. The owners graciously transferred our deposit to a resort at Boca Chica, at the opposite end of the gulf. While the resort was excellent, when the owner doubled his price, we scrambled to find alternative boats and lodging. Luckily, the previous resort welcomed us back.

More lucky, this year the tuna concentrated at the North end of the gulf just 6 miles from the resort. Previously, it was not uncommon to travel 50 miles or more the waters around Montosa.

Local Panamanian artisanal fishermen keep track of the tuna movements during the night and our captains are able to contact them for the current location of the school. The boats are about 45-50 feet and brightly colored and festooned by a variety of flags and buoys to resemble a floating junkyard.

Each boat also carries alongside a 20-foot log covered with barnacles, which attract bait. The bait serves two purposes, it attracts more bait, which the fishermen trail for chum and it attracts tuna schools and shoals of birds. The boats are basically a floating ecosystem, which follows dolphin schools belching black smoke from their ancient put-put diesels. Quite a site.

Each of the three diving days, we located one or more of the fishermen boats who told us their location and hopefully the tuna. Our local captains know the artisanal captains and often bring them supplies, water, beer, coffee, etc that might run short on their 10 days or more at sea.



The diver's drill remains the typical run-and-gun technique whereby our captain races ahead of the dolphin school and yells "JUMP" when he thinks we are in position with the tuna leading the dolphin. If we are lucky, we can meet the tuna just ahead of the following dolphin. Frequently, the school changes course or swims by so fast that all we dive into is empty water. We made as many as 50 jumps/diver/day. Sometimes a lone tuna will mix with the dolphin or follow the school. In these cases, the fish are moving fast and hard to line up on. The average tuna sighting was at 35-40-feet. Very rarely, the tuna school will stall allowing us a shot.

While the magic time for tuna in this area is 2pm, I was lucky to find them in the morning. I made a dive ahead of the dolphin but found no tuna. After just 15 seconds on the surface, I spotted a school of tuna from the surface, swimming very fast. I quickly dove and orientated myself so that my gun was aimed at any tuna following.

This school was large enough so that there were still tuna swimming toward me allowing me a good shot. Tuna-1

Tuna-2 was taken the last day. Instead of the 30-40-ft viz the previous days, it was clear to 60 feet. A school swam by, slow by tuna standards. I lined up on a nice fish, and just before pulling the trigger while leading him to the left, it suddenly reversed course coming much closer. Now, leading him to the right, I pulled off the shot.

All of the three fish taken this trip were second shot. We have found that when the tuna show, they only hang around for a short time making an accurate second shot the most efficient timewise to boat the fish. Based upon this trip I have made a “reel” to bring the dangerous shooting line attached to the bungee closer to the surface when pulled in from the boat. The reel prevents tangling or cutting your hand by the shooting line and allows the second-shot diver to get down easier when the fish is pulled up into shallow water.

On our way out to the tuna grounds, we discovered the great pacific garbage patch—tree limbs, logs and lots of plastic trash holding an incredible amount of sea life. We found giant schools of jacks, dorado (small), amberjack, whaoo, sea snakes, triple tail small sharks, and file fish—swimming on the surface down to 80 feet. While none of the game fish were shootable size, we all agreed that this was of the densest fish aggregations we’d ever seen. Looking forward to returning next year. Want to join us, check out:

<https://www.divingforacause.org/>

Terry Maas



In November, Neptunes Yu Fukushima, Jason Taylor and Josh Wels along with Aaron Peters and Mike Raabe did a 8 day liveaboard in the Coral Sea. This was our second trip on this boat and again, the trip of a lifetime. Many of you know Mike Raabe's talent behind the lens so rather than blabbering on, here is the link to the video, enjoy-

<https://youtu.be/K1KHSmxTZPg>



Announcement

Some fellow Neptunes are looking for a ride to this years annual Bluewater Meet. If you have a boat and have the room and are willing to take a fellow member along please reach out to:

Tom Blandford - mvgracias45@gmail.com

Scott Bamsey - hbbamz@yahoo.com

If you are a Neptune looking for a ride to the Bluewater Meet and would like me to add you to the list, please send your info to xtrdae86x@gmail.com by MAY 13th. There's a little over a month left to try and secure a ride so don't wait. I'll send out a member wide e-mail on the 14th .

Thank you.



The Long Beach Neptunes are proudly supported by the following entities

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