

## Seabase Scuba Crew Shake Down (submitted by John Woodhouse) 5-16-2010

The 2010 seabase crew held a “shakedown” diving trip at Ft Wetherill state park in Jamestown RI Island over the weekend of May 7 & 8<sup>th</sup>. The crew of 6 boys and 2 adults received their PADI scuba certifications a year ago last May and it was time to “shake out” some the logistics associated with dive gear and diving techniques in preparation for their one week “Scuba Adventure” at the BSA National High Adventure Seabase in the Florida Keys this coming August.

The crew is led by former Senior Patrol Leader Eliot W. and the Shakedown was organized by Ron Beaulieu and Mike Healy. The crew set up on Fri evening at “Camp Healy” in Cranston, RI and staged all their gear for an early departure to the Ft. Wetherill State Park dive sight. Weather conditions were not ideal but not terrible either. The early morning wake-up and trip to the dive site were punctuated by some thunder, lightning and heavy downpours, but the crew was undeterred. By the time they arrived at Ft Wetherill State Park the rain had subsided to a cool drizzle and the thunder had abated, with air & water temps in the 50’s.

The scout crew of Eliot W., Ryan W., Ronny B., Matthew S., Nathan C. and Matthew S., and adult leaders Jeff Shorter and Tad Coburn were joined by several experienced “Gray-Bar” scuba divers to help supervise and execute the program laid out by Mike Healy. The scuba divers were paired off into buddy groups, geared up with their wet suits, BCD (buoyancy control device), regulator, air tank, fins, mask, snorkel, boots, gloves, hood etc...etc.... Each team did a check of their buddy’s gear, made sure the air was on and that all safety checks were a go. Adult instructors Andy Dixon, Bill Munger and Barry Griffiths took charge of small groups and led them on a 45 min dive around the cove with depths of up to 25-30 feet. Mike Healy shadowed the group in his kayak. Visibility was barely 6 feet, but the crew was able to spot some jellyfish, horseshoe crabs and flounder. The going was tough the water was cool with a mild surf and the crew quickly learned how physically exhausting scuba diving can be.

After the first dive the crew warmed up with some hot chocolate and a cold-cut lunch while discussing what went well and not so well on the first dive. Gearing up for the second dive went a lot faster and the crew was instructed on how to set a bearing with their compasses and had to set and follow an underwater course from one end of the cove to a landmark (Mr. Woodhouse) on the other side of the cove and then back. This proved to be pretty challenging but was a useful exercise. After the dives the crew drove back to “Camp Healy”, rinsed and dried out all the gear and then relaxed with a cookout meal of burgers and dogs prepared by the crew. A rousing cheer was given for Mike Healy and all the adult leaders and instructors and then the crew headed back to Lexington. Parting words from the Gray-Bars.....”If you guys could survive this day of cold weather dives, you are going to love the warm sunny waters of Seabase and be able to dive with much less gear”.....”Amen to that”..... thought the crew!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



**Set up at Camp Healy**

**Now, exactly what goes where??**



**Mike Healy gives pre-dive instructions**

**A little help from my buddy!!**



**Ok, ready, set ..lets go!!!!**



**Man is it Cold out here!!!!**





**Nothing better than a little hot chocolate warm up!!!**

**Scout Crew**



**Adult Leaders and Gray-Bars**



**Oh Man O Man, Here we go again!!!**

**Post Dive, Taking care of the gear**



**Finally, some great burgers cooked up by Ronny B !!!**