

On Thursday, June 20, 2002, David VanZandt and Kevin Magee played hooky from work and kicked off the dive season on Dave's boat, the "Sea Dragon." The day was beautiful with sunny skies, warm 80 deg F temperatures, and calm seas of less than 1'. The first wreck was the "Algeria," a large schooner / barge that went down in a spring storm in 1906 while anchored off Cleveland's harbor during a longshoreman's strike. It is approximately one mile straight out from the Brown's stadium.

After entering the water and descending to the bottom, viz was found to be only 3'-5' from top to bottom. The light was also slightly dimmed despite the shallow 35' water. The water temperature was 65 deg F on the top and 60 deg F on the bottom. The wreck lies east-west and consists of a lot of timbers forming the outline of the wreck with the middle filled with gravel. Despite having dove this wreck in good visibility in the past, they had no idea where on the wreck they were. They ran out Kevin's reel following the timbers west, then partially ran out Dave's reel before finally turning around. A very slight current was noticed heading north. Total dive time was 40 minutes, and very little was seen beyond a recent anchor rope with no anchor at either end.

Afterwards, a deeper wreck was tried in the hope of finding better viz. They traveled west of Cleveland to the "Two Fannies," a three-masted bark that sank in 1890 off Bay Village in 55'-60' of water. This wreck usually has better viz than surrounding wrecks. After descending, however, viz was found to be even worse at only 2'-3', and light conditions were very dark, requiring a light to see anything. One's eyes never got adjusted to the dark. Additionally, the bottom temperature was noticeable colder at 55 deg F, although no distinct thermocline was encountered during the descent.

The anchor snagged on one of the standing centerboards amidships, where viz and the light conditions were slightly better 5'-8' off the bottom. Descending to the bottom on the south side and following the timbers along the outside hull, Dave's reel was used to travel east towards the bow. A large windlass was found among the debris at the bow. Heading west along the north side, heads were bumped into overhanging timbers that are the remains of deck crossbeams and hatch frames. A noticeable current was heading south, making it hard to keep from being pushed into the wreck. After returning and releasing the anchor, the anchor immediately drifted into the remains of the gill netting from last year on the centerboard at the stern. Shears were used to free the anchor.

Total dive time was again 40 minutes. Afterwards, biting black flies were noticed to be very prominent on the "Two Fannies" despite few being encountered on the "Algeria." The diving was slightly less than optimum as far as viz was concerned. Overall, however, the day topside was beautiful, and it was great to finally be in the water.