

On Thursday, May 4, David VanZandt and Kevin Magee dove the "Atlantic," a side paddlewheeler off Long Point in the eastern basin. They again used Osprey dive charters to do this. The weather was overcast and cool at 50-55 deg. F and there was a slight drizzle before the dive, but the lake was dead calm with a mirror-like finish and absolutely no wind. Later in the day the overcast began to clear, making it another beautiful day to be out on the lake.

Being the middle of the week, no other divers were present on the boat. No mooring as yet is on the "Atlantic" for this season, although it normally has a buoy tied to the port arch. We were probably the first on the wreck this year, so the wreck was grappled with a hook and line for the descent.

The wreck is at 150' and is silted up to the deck. Sticking out of the mud are the two INTACT paddlewheels, a large walking beam engine between them, structural arches, the forward mast, and the stern. Also evident are the collapsed pilothouse and cabin areas in the middle of the wreck. Because of the overcast and deep depth, lighting conditions were not good, requiring lights to be used. Visibility was estimated to be between 30'-50'. Much time was spent exploring the stern and various openings in the wreck, and some attempt was made to free up last year's mooring line and send it to the surface for the dive operator. A free ascent was made after this attempt proved unsuccessful.

Bottom time was 20 minutes, and because of the depth, this is a deco dive. A lift bag was shot to the surface to aid in the free ascent and stops. Total run time was 53 minutes, water temperature was 37 deg. F, and maximum depth was 149'. Due to a cuff seal leak, VanZandt experienced some chilling due to leakage into the suit from some faulty gloves, but he survived just fine. Magee experienced some minor equipment deployment problems and has vowed to leave alone all ropes that have been sitting on the bottom for half a year.