

On Saturday, July 10, 2004, twenty (20) divers met at Barcelona, NY, the home of Osprey Charters, to go diving on the boat "Southwind." The divers were Ann Stephenson, Ted Green, Rita Montorsi, Dave Soule, Annette Soule, Greg Ondus, Ken Marshall, Eli Zegarac, Bob Ericsson, KB Sporck, Ed Selent, Dennis Troyan, George Balas, Chris Pearson, Joe Temple, Monica Dobies, Darin Cowhard, Jack Papes, Cindy LaRosa, and Kevin Magee. Also along for the ride was Ondus guest Linda Zander, a non-diver. Captaining the boat was Jim Herbert with Sam Genco as his able assistant.

The weather was perfect for the long two hour run with pleasant 75 deg F air temperatures, a sunny blue sky, and perfectly flat lake conditions. Not a ripple was seen anywhere. Along the way Darin demonstrated his preparedness and expert repair skills several times. He successfully unscrewed a hose at the end of a 1st-stage swivel that no one else could budge. When a tank fell and broke its valve handle, he was there with a spare stem, spring, and special screwdriver to fix it. When someone's regulator free flowed at depth after the first dive, he was there with an interstage pressure gauge to diagnose the problem, discovered its pressure was unstable, and provided a replacement regulator to borrow. Remarkable!

The first wreck was the "Crystal Wreck," an unidentified two-masted schooner in 115' of water off Long Point. It got its name not from the dishes at the site but the beer that was drunk after this wreck was first dove. It was found because it was a known net snag to commercial fishermen, and it was originally called the "Hook" for this reason. There was no mooring present, so Kevin and Cindy volunteered to attach a mooring line by swimming down a float marker's shot line. After gearing up and descending, it was quickly discovered that conditions went to zero visibility and pitch black conditions. They never made it below 80' before losing the shot line, then getting tangled in it, then getting untangled but losing it again, and finally calling the dive and surfacing. Fortunately, better divers were found on the boat, and Greg and Jack successfully managed to tie into the stern's starboard side.

Surface visibility and temperature were respectable at 15' and 70 deg F. At 30'-35' there was a mild thermocline where it dropped to 55 deg F, 5' of viz, and dark. A second thermocline existed at 65'-70' with 41-42 deg F water below it, 40'+ of viz, but absolutely pitch black lighting conditions. Conditions appeared more like those on a 200'-deep wreck than what is normally found on this wreck. The stern points W, and there is a large cavity where the cabin used to be located before the ship sank. At the SE corner of the opening, where the mooring was tied, is a square iron stove, and sitting on top were the remains of a leather shoe, a couple of hammers, and some dishes. At the rear of the cabin is an elevated box-like structure that holds the ship's wheel. The box is partially draped in netting, and the netting also hangs down 15' to the bottom behind the transom, forming a curtain that completely hides the stern. Peeking behind the netting, the rudder can be seen turned slightly off the centerline.

The wreck is in excellent condition. The deck is at 105' and intact except for a few missing boards. The railing is also intact around most of the ship's perimeter. Swimming forward one can see three cargo hatches, the short stub remains of the two masts, a capstan, and a winch knocked askew. At the bow the bowsprit is intact for about 10'-15' of length and draped in netting that forms a decorative bunting underneath. There is a significant amount of floating netting snagged on the port side of the bow, partially hiding a metal anchor. The starboard anchor is missing. The style of the anchor and capstan suggest it was a later style schooner. A large windlass is on the bow, and behind it is a hand pump and chain locker opening with a ladder leading down inside.

Despite the dark conditions everyone saw a good portion of the wreck, and many were impressed. It was generally agreed this would be a great wreck to visit again under better conditions. The next wreck dove was the "Trade Wind," a three-masted barquentine that sank in 1854 after being hit by another sailing vessel, the "Napier," during a December snowstorm. Its cargo was stoves, railroad rails, and two U.S. Government lifeboats, which came in handy and allowed the crew to escape the sinking with no losses. The "Trade Wind" was barely a year old when it sank, leaving the ship in excellent condition on the bottom. It lies in 120' of water just a short ride away from the "Crystal." Unfortunately, it was also not moored, requiring Greg and Jack to again skillfully hook into it. Surface viz was worse with only 3'-5' of viz all the way down to 50'-60', where it became pitch black but again had good 40'+ viz.

The mooring was tied off to a fallen mast on the bottom on the port side. The remains of all three masts can be seen lying on the bottom parallel to the hull on this side, and there is a great amount of detail in them. Still present are topmasts attached with steps, crosstrees, an elaborate bracing platform, booms, and at least one spar still attached to a fallen mast. Unfortunately, due to the darkness a lot of these details could not easily be examined.

The ship lies with its stern pointing N, and its hull has a noticeable tilt to the port (E) side. At the stern is the cabin - a rarity since cabins usually blow off during sinking from escaping air. The cabin fills the entire width of the ship and has two companionways leading inside, one on each side. Peering into the cabin reveals that it is mostly filled with silt with only about 3'-4' of clearance on top. In the middle on the cabin's roof is a small, raised skylight opening. On the roof near the stern can be seen the ship's wheel inside a unique cavity penetrating the roof with a floor about halfway down into the cabin's interior. This is a unique design since the steering wheel was usually on a separate aft steering deck, which does not exist on this ship. Viewing the ship from the stern reveals the impressive sight of the entire transom, rudder, and undersides of the ship. The rudder is turned slightly to port, and the stern stands high off the bottom by about 10'-15'.

Swimming forward, the hull, decking, and railings are all intact. The deck level is at a 110' depth, and along the deck can be seen what appears to be long, thin boards scattered like match sticks. These are, in fact, railroad rails. Peering down into the cargo hatches, the remains of several square iron stoves can be seen as another part of its cargo peeking up through the silt. A new item, a lantern with glass globe, was seen on the wreck. A hand pump, capstan, centerboard winch, and the top of the centerboard box are visible down the centerline of the vessel. At least one block was found on the deck, and the railings have some deadeyes on them. The ship's wooden railings are mostly intact except near the bow on the starboard side, where the hull and railings are broken by a wedge-shaped hole. This is where the "Napier" hit the "Trade Wind." Amazingly, lying across this hole is what at first appears to be a fallen spar but is in fact probably the "Napier's" jib boom.

Two large fluked anchors with wooden stocks can be seen mounted on both sides of the bow. Catheads for the anchors stick out from the railings near the anchors, and the anchor chains pass from the anchors through the hawse holes and into the ship's bow in an orderly fashion. The bowsprit is missing, but the bow has an attractive shape when viewed from the front and stands 5'-10' high off the bottom. A large windlass and square bit are on a raised forecastle deck at the extreme bow, and a large square opening to the chain locker is visible immediately behind the windlass.

After surfacing it was a long ride home, but we were treated to a beautiful sunset and arrived late at 10 PM. We ate dinner at Lisa's (Jim's daughter) restaurant at the top of the hill at the entrance to the marina. Great food and cold beverages were enjoyed by all. She even stayed open late and took an advanced order list to hurry things along and allow the tired divers to go off to bed.

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The next day dawned exactly the same as the previous day with mirror-flat seas, a sunny blue sky, and slightly cooler temperatures at about 65-70 deg F. The same divers were present again except Joe Temple, Jack Papes, Monica Dobies, and Darin Cowhard, leaving only sixteen (16) divers on the boat. Mike also replaced Sam as Jim's able assistant.

The first dive was the "George C. Finney," a 3-masted wooden schooner that sank in 100' of water in October, 1891, with the loss of 7 crew members and its cargo of wheat. The bow points E, and the concrete mooring block is 20'-30' off the wreck's starboard bow. The surface temperature was 70 deg F and gradually cooled to 60 deg F at 60'-70', where a mild thermocline was present with 43 deg F water below it. Visibility was a good 15'-25' all the way down, and a clear 40'-50' of viz was present on the bottom with ambient lighting conditions. The wreck

stands high off the bottom by about 5'-10', and the hull is completely intact all the way around the wreck. The bow is missing its bowsprit, and the port anchor is missing, but the starboard anchor chain can be seen leading from the hawse hole down to the bottom where a large wooden stock is resting, presumably with the rest of the anchor buried in the mud underneath.

The bow's decking is intact, and seen was a square wooden bit, the windlass, chain locker opening, pieces of chain and blocks scattered on the deck, a mast stub with a square fife rail around it, a hand pump, cargo hatch opening, and small winch. On the railings were seen deadeyes, which tensioned the ropes used to support the tops of the masts. The deck is missing after the first cargo hatch, but the hatch frames and centerboard box remain standing along its length. At one point amidships was seen a mast hole with some deck planks over the top of it, one of the clues used to identify this ship from this modification to increase its cargo space. At the stern can be seen another hand pump, the standing rudder post, the fallen steering wheel lying on the bottom with its steering gear still attached, and a graceful transom with a block attached to a metal rail at its center for the mizzen mast's boom.

The second dive was the "Carlingford," a beautiful wooden schooner that sank in 95' of water after being hit by the wooden steamer "Brunswick" in 1881. The bow points W and has 10' of relief off the bottom. The mooring is attached to a concrete block 15'-25' off the starboard (N) side of the bow. The conditions were the same as previous except it was warmer with 45 deg F on the bottom and the visibility was a dirty 25'-30', barely allowing the full width of the ship to be seen. However, the wreck is in beautiful condition with the deck and hull in good condition except for the damage from the collision. There is a large wedge-shaped hole on her port side near the bow where she was struck. This hole extends roughly 10' into the deck and has a bow-shaped look to it. It breaches the hull and allows easy access to the insides of the ship just forward of the centerboard box. Forward of the collision hole is a large wood stocked anchor lying on the bottom with its anchor chain leading up to the hawse pipe. The bowsprit and stem post are both missing, leaving the front of the hull split. On the bow deck is a windlass and large square opening forward of it that exposes the chain locker. It is unusual to have an opening forward of the windlass, and behind the windlass is another large square opening. Both openings are smaller than a normal cargo hatch but much larger than the normal chain locker hatch or companionway.

Moving aft, a round fife rail with a mast hole in the center of it can be seen, but the mast itself is missing. Behind it is a cargo hatch, winch, and then capstan. Further aft is a second cargo hatch with chain draped around the top of a dividing wooden structure in the center. Behind this is a small bit, a metal figure-8 shaped mast step lying on the deck nearby, and a second mast hole with another circular fife rail around it. Both fife rails have a very stocky, beefy appearance. Further aft is a third cargo hatch and then missing decking, deck framing, and

another square opening that is smaller than a regular cargo hatch. The very last 25'-30' of deck is missing or collapsed completely, exposing the curved undersides of the hull leading up to the missing transom. This is possibly where the cabin was located, although it could also have been located forward where the deck framing was. The rudder post stands high at the extreme stern with the steering gear balanced on top, but the wheel is not present. Because of the collapsed stern decking, the whole area under her decks is easily penetrated, and the full length can be swam inside the cargo holds. A large centerboard box and posts divide her for most of her length, and she can be entered/exited at several points through the cargo openings or the collision hole at the bow.

A calm flat ride back to port followed. Overall, a great time was had by everyone, and some excellent schooner wrecks were seen over the weekend. It is only hoped that bottom conditions improve as the season progresses to allow them to be seen and appreciated better.