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Diving the wreck of the Delaware - August 18th 2007

When we arrived at Clark's Landing Marina at 6:30 AM the wind was blowing from the west and we knew we were not going to the Algol, 20 miles offshore. Captain Dan Bartone of the Independence II figured the Pinta was a better choice.

Leaving Manasquan Inlet and heading north the seas were surprisingly calm but after only 15 minutes we started to get beat up and decided to turn around and head south back to the wreck of the Delaware. The Delaware was built in Philadelphia. She was built as a freighter but during the Spanish –American War was refitted to carry passengers as most of the passenger liners were being used to carry troops. In July of 1898 she left her berth on the East River and was heading to Charleston and Jacksonville. Ten miles out to sea and east of Barnegat she caught fire. All 66 crew and passengers got off safely and were rescued. The wreck, burnt to the waterline, sank two miles offshore just south of Point Pleasant while being towed back to New York by a salvage tug.

All seven divers aboard the Independence II did two dives on the Delaware and we all had a great day on the water despite difficult conditions. Our crew included Captain Dan, with Dave Oldham and Bill Trent working as crew. Dave tied us into the wreck wrapping the chain on the shot line solidly around a huge chunk of metal at the bow section of the wreck. There was little chance of pulling off the wreck with Dave's tie-in despite the conditions. In fact, Captain Dan sent a line to a second dive boat that showed up after us (the advantage of us being on a fast dive boat) and the two boats held tight. Bill Trent played host to everyone and prepared lunch, which was provided as always by Adventure SCUBA.

While unloading our gear we talked to the crew of another dive boat docked at the same marina. They had tied into a barge, did one dive and during their surface interval while being tossed about in the waves broke loose and lost their anchor. At that point they called it a day.

We're back out again next Sunday, August 26th. We plan to head south to the Great Isaac. This is a wreck we rarely get to so it should be a real treat. The Great Isaac is an intact ocean tug, which sank after a collision. You don't want to miss this dive. Call the shop and reserve your spot.