



The Reef Dive Resort—Mataking Island East Coast of Sabah

~NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2009~

Welcome from the new Resort Manager!



Mr. Luke J COX

Resort Manager and PADI IDC Staff Instructor at Mataking Island

Hi,

Welcome to this our 3rd edition of the 2009 Mataking Newsletter.

My name is Luke and I am the new Resort Manager at Mataking island, having taken over the reigns in May of this year.

At 37 years of age I have managed resorts in Asia for a number of years now, having worked in Thailand, Cambodia, China, Hong-Kong and also in the Mediterranean.

It has been an exciting 5 months since I joined the Mataking family in May of this year as we have made some exciting changes to the island and the facilities which we offer our guests.

From such exciting events as the June Reef day through to our ever-popular summer BBQ events and the sinking of our 2nd artificial reef, we have grown stronger and stronger as a resort in the area.

In this edition, you will find news of what we have

achieved so far this year and looking forward to in the next few months.

This period, we also welcome our new Japanese Open Water Scuba Instructor, Chino and our new resident Marine Biologist, Amelia to the team on the island.

Development on the island continues as our new reception area, restaurant extension and new executive villas take shape. It is hoped that the new villas will be ready for their first guests in December of this year.

We do hope that you enjoy this edition of the Mataking newsletter. For any further information, please e-mail me at mataking.manager@live.co.uk



Chino, our new Japanese Open Water Scuba Instructor is welcomed to the Mataking family.

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Amelia joins the team

Our dedicated marine Biologist, Khoo Min-Hui sadly leaves the team this month to move onto pastures new in Singapore.

Over the past year, Min has developed the turtle hatchery project to what we have today and worked tirelessly to

enhance the fragile ecosystem in the waters surrounding Mataking.

Replacing Min-Hui is Amelia, a graduate student in Marine Biology.

Amelia will be working from Advanced Open Water through to Divenmaster in the

next 18 months as she continues to develop the marine biology unit where Min-Hui left off.

We wish Min-Hui the best of luck in his new adventures and again, welcome Amelia to the team.

Good luck to you both!



The Reef Dive Resort—Mataking Island



The MV Sipadan Mermaid joins the Shipwreck Pos to become the island's 2nd Artificial reef, breathing new life into our silent world at the resort.



The MV Sipadan Mermaid is laid to rest

In an effort to further enhance the underwater environment around the island, on Saturday 26th September, the Reef Dive Resort created its 2nd artificial reef, in the shape of the MV Sipadan Mermaid, a 52ft steel hulled vessel.

Originally starting her life as a Norwegian fishing boat, the Mermaid was responsible for many successful trips at sea, including along the coasts of Malaysia.

As the Mermaid became older and it has become less cost-effective to maintain her, great thought was put into what should be done with her.

Managing Director of the resort, Mr. David Sie who kindly donated the Mermaid, officially opened the sinking ceremony as the vessel began her final voyage to the bottom of the sea. Mr. Sie said, "The sinking of this new wreck will help us build up the fragile ecosystem at the is-

land whilst easing the pressure off the Sipadan. We hope to see new life on this reef within a matter of months as it creates a new home for many different types of marine animal".



"Earning the PADI 5* status is a huge challenge which we are working towards. The staff are ready, the management are ready... lets do it!"

The Developing Dive Centre

As the resort moves forward at Mataking, the dive centre moves forward with it.

Neo, our Dive Centre Manager said, "We are working towards a 5* PADI status which highlights us as a premier dive resort. We are now going to be offering more specialties to our customers and continue to offer the best

diving experiences in Sabah.

With the development of our reef system around the island we are confident that our professionalism shines through at every opportunity.

Making regular trips to the world renowned Sipadan, we now offer a far greater range of activities to our customers.

We now offer a full range of watersports to tempt our customers from their sunchairs, .



Chef Eddy learns how to make Kimchi—Korean style!

YEH, This is the KIMCHI!!

In July, the island was visited by our good friend and host David Kim, together with 60 friends for a working vacation with a difference.

In an effort to offer some good home cooked Korean food at the resort, our very own Chef Eddy spent a day with our Korean friends learn-

ing how to make this culinary delicacy.

"Its quite a skill to make, but I enjoyed the challenge and even our European guests from Italy enjoyed it", Eddy said.

During their stay, David and his friends also enjoyed a day

trip to nearby Kalapuan, tried their hand at Batik painting, went snorkeling and tried Discover Scuba Diving.

Tasting Eddy's Kimchi once made David gave the thumbs up, in saying just 5 simple words, "Yeh, This is the KIM-CHI!"

The Reef Dive Resort—Mataking Island

2009 Reef Day a Huge Success

Saturday 6th June this year, marked the 3rd Annual Reef Check and Reef day event at The Reef Dive Resort, Mataking Island.

The management and staff of Pulau Mataking were joined by Reef Check Malaysia, guests at the resort, WWF and students from SMK Datuk Panglima Abdullah and SMK Kabogan Semporna. The team was also joined by our friends at the PGA and even the Army.

The day started with a light breakfast for all of the participants, followed by an opening address by Mr. Luke Cox and a presentation by Mr. Paul Liang of Prodivers and the resort resident marine biologist, Mr. Khoo Min-Hui.

Participants then split into groups and carried out a beach clean of both Mataking Besar and its sister island Mataking Kecil.

Being so close to the coastline of both the Philippines and Malaysia, the island is often victim to floating rubbish from these coastlines such as plastic bottles, cans and other discarded waste.

In just a few hours, the groups together collected just over 100 full bags of plastic rubbish from the beach! The most unusual item found was a plastic football trophy from Indonesia with a 1987 date on it. I wonder if it had been floating in our seas all this time?



“The Reef Day Team in June 2009 cleared over 180KG of litter from our beaches, educated each other and made a vital step in preserving our beautiful wildlife

New homes for our babies! (and new parents too!)

At the island we have 2 turtle hatcheries which we have developed over the past few months in order for us to preserve and protect these beautiful creatures.

What we have found problematic however is that sometimes, some of the eggs were not growing due to tree roots growing up through the sand and sometimes even our resident monitor lizards were

getting into the hatcheries!

Therefore, a team of our landscape boys, headed up by Min-Hui have successfully renovated both of our hatcheries.

Min Hui said, “The boys have really worked hard these few weeks and now the babies have a new home. Most of our turtle nests were adopted by customers this year which

is also really cool. Thanks to everyone that continues to support our project”.



“Its taken a few weeks for us to do, but we have done it as team! A new home for baby turtles and new adopted parents. COOL!”

The New Mataking Fleet is underway

As the resort develops and news of our popularity reaches out worldwide, we have recognized that our fleet of boats, ranging from passenger vessels through to dive vessels needs to meet the challenges.

Therefore, the resort are pleased to announce an ex-

citing re-fit programme of all our fleet starting in September of this year.

The newest addition to the fleet will be large passenger carrying catamaran with an ability to transfer passengers from Semporna to the island in luxury.

As Sipadan trips reach even greater popularity, we will also be converting one of our existing boats to a diver friendly vessel with a long-range capability.

Work on all vessels is well underway and is set for completion at the end of 2010.



The new passenger boat nearing completion

The Reef Dive Resort—Mataking Island

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Since our opening in April 2003, we have continued to expand and develop the resort, yet keeping a go-green culture and emphasising an eco-friendly way of life.

As we develop the resort we have taken into account the valued comments of some of our guests as they have stayed with us. Here are just a few examples:

We now offer:

Free welcome drinks and a cold face towel upon guest arrival.

Private dining upon request at either our exclusive spa area or jetty, with private waiter

Rental of an underwater camera through our partners, Treasure Image

.... Plus all of the other luxury that you have always enjoyed at Mataking!

Were on the Web....

Check us out at www.mataking.com.

Looking back—looking forwards!



The new traditional costumes used for the famous Igal—Igal dance as part of the staff performance.

Here are just a few of the comments made by our valued guests this season:

- Thank you for an excellent stay at Mataking Island—a wonderful week. (Chris and Tillie, Vancouver, Canada)
- Thank you for a wonderful holiday—our honeymoon. Thank you for our special first dinner—candlelit seafront, serenade and delicious cake. A special thank you to Fatimah and Lena for their friendly welcome and help. (Helen and Brendan)
- We've been travelling and enjoying our holidays for 3 weeks but the stay here was a holiday within the holiday! Everything's been perfect and we're planning to come back next year. (Lena and Alex)
- Love love love this place! Thanks for everything. Hopefully come back in the future. Simply love it. Goodbye to the wonderful staff and to the wonderful place. (Alessefoto—Italy)
- We love this island. My husband and I shared

impressive times here. You are all fantastic, many thanks to the dive centre. Beautiful diving. Wish I could stay here... (Ona)

...See you all again soon!

