



Or M 24 as it also was known, is an old Swedish Minesweeper which has been converted into a Live Aboard dive ship and operate in the area around the island Öland and down in to the Baltic sea to the area at the island of Bornholm. Kim Laursen, Jesper Nielsen and I had been looking forward to a week of diving in the Åland Islands, but since the dive center did not deem it necessary to respond to our mails, we had to see us for an alternative, Diving we should and not in the area around the South of Funen.

After a largely uneventful 4 hour drive we arrived Thursday evening 23rd Sep. 2010 to Sirishamn, where we had to sign on M 24.

After a small hunt around the port to find M24 we got our diving equipment unloaded came on board and got installed in each bunk. Then it was time for a tour of the ship, as well as an explanation as to how the diving, filling tanks, etc. would be done.

Then it was just to enjoy the beautiful evening and wait for the rest of the divers who were to join for this trip.



Friday morning, it was out of bunks so we were ready for departure at 08 o'clock. Then there was approximately 3 hours of boring sailing before we could drop the shot line onto the bridge of FU SHAN HAI.

During the passage over to the island of Bornholm we were briefed about how the diving for this day was planned to be performed. Later we found (we stupid Dänen) out that our Swedish leaves something to be desired.....

After the shot line was dropped, the ship's Cabin Boy, Deckhand and Dive Guide, Eva, slipped down and checked that the shot line was at the right place. Then it was just about getting into the dive equipment. On board the M 24 there was a luxury as we were not accustomed to from back home, because when one was in the equipment you just moved to the port side just behind the bridge, here you took the flippers, mask and gloves on, after which the deckhand clipped our stage bottle on where you wanted it. Even my "small" camera was just suddenly attached at its place at my left shoulder.....

On Discovery/Animal channel you often see the cameraman jumps into the water with his camera, this I had always sworn that I would never do..... that was one of the camels which had to be swallowed in life's long journey, I should surely not be outdone by the other, when you can look like a pro ... so the whole weekend the camera got the big trip in the water every time!!!!!!!

The weather behaved well and there was nearly no wind so it was quite easy to swim the short distance to buoy at the short line. Then it was just to vent some air out of the wing and dry suite and get down and enjoy the great ship all the 25 minutes we had available.

The top of the aft mast meetings at 25 m. here's both Radar scanners in their place, the top of the bridge emerged at approx. 32 m. the only thing missing here is the



main compass (magnetic compass), port bridge wing is located at 35 m.

Kim and Jesper took a walk on the vessels bridge, while I did a hovering "flyby" in front of the bridge. It is a weird feeling to hang there and hover at 40 meters and know that there are 10 meters down to the ships main deck and further 15-20 meters down to the seabed!!!!!!!

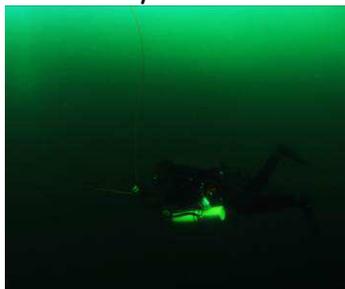
It was fun to see that the only window that is missing is the large center window on the bridge; all the others were in place incl. those with rotating windows (they make it possible to look out even in bad weather with a lot of water spraying on the windows). All the Windows were filled with tiny blue mussels (in the waters at Funen we are used to some decent sized clams)

As we reached the aft part of bridge deck we could see the chimney which stands slightly aft of the accommodation house. The chimney was not visible on our last dive trip to FU SHAN HAI in 2009, so I'll guess on that there was 10-15meter visibility, not too bad in Danish waters at late summer.



Our 25 minutes went by way too fast, however, so we had to move towards the surface and the 30 min. long ascent that awaited us.

Free-floating we followed the shot line up. As there was no current, it was not necessary to hold fast in the shot line so we took our deko free-floating. It had been



agreed with M 24 that we would have to be lying below the shot line buoy because the ship would lie close to the buoy ready to pick us up. This should actually be no problem, but just suddenly the buoy disappeared out of sight. This resulted in a small swim to the M24 before we could hang our stage bottles and camera on the liner which hanged down along the ship's side, at which point the crew lifted them on

board. As we came on board we got the Earth's biggest dressing-down by the Captain.

On the next dive it happened again, but this time we were ready and swam with the buoy. It turned out that it was one of the other divers, who thought that it was very smart to take hold of the shot line and then swim diagonally up until he was at his deko stop, after which he adjusted the line so he could hang in the buoy. To my question on whether he thought it was smart and if he had considered how it might affect other divers. He looked surprised at me and said that to him it seemed to be very smart, but he had probably not considered the last aspect of his maneuver. It could not, however, ease the Captains bad temper from the first dive though we had found the cause for the missing buoy.....

As our dive depth was restricted by fact that we dived on air, the second dive was an almost repeat of the first dive, however, with the exception, now we knew where we were going to stop to see some of the smaller details.

It was some tired but happy divers who arrived to the port of Tjen, where we were to spend the night on board the M24. After a refreshing shower in the toilet building on shore (there was only cold water), we were ready for dinner. You can say a lot, but on board the M 24 one eat well, it is, to quote their website "plain countryside cooking" and in the diving-friendly quantities.

Day no. 2, however, we had to recognize that there probably was something that we has missed during the briefing the day before. We were keen to get out to a new



wreck. It was after all a "Bornholm dive trip", but it turned out that day offered further 2 dives on FU SHAN HAI!!!!!!!!!!!! Don't come and tell me that it is easy to understand Swedish, for none of us 3 "stupid Danish divers" had grasped that. Well, we were some kind outnumbered (the score was 6-3 to Sweden) so we just had to enjoy yet another dive on FU.

As we sailed out it was largely calm seas but quite hazy, but skipper found without problems the wreck.

Then get into the dive equipment and down to the big wreck again.

This time, however, I would also check out the bridge in order to shoot a few pictures. Kim and Jesper had talked a lot about that button to the ship's whistle was still without fouling and could be pushed down (probably something that each diver has done). However, it proved not so easy to get through the door to the bridge; I first succeeded when I held the camera and both flashlights vertical!!!!!!

Well inside the bridge, it was a weird feeling to swim across the desks with maneuver equipment, Radars and the steering wheel; as well as hovering over the chart table. I usually stand behind such equipment and chart tables at my work.

After we had been inside several different places and examined most of it wreck down to and including bridge deck, it was time to find back to the shot line again. During this, I thought that I was about to step on a sea turtle, but it turned out that it was one of the other



divers who dived with a rebreather (an Inspiration with black back cover) which had crept underneath me (and we of course do not have sea turtles in the Baltic waters ☺).

Some of the others from the boat have tied a strobe light to the shot line so it was easier to find. Kim and Jesper was, however, convinced that it was unnecessary as they had me (just because that I managed to take 70 pictures in 25 minutes??????)

Back on M 24, we 3 Danes agreed that we did not bother a 4th dive on FU. As one only dive on air and a 50% Nitrox for the deco it is limited, how much new one can cram into 4 dives on FU.

So to the Swedish diver's great wonder we did not suit up for the 4th dive. It was first here that it dawned on them that maybe they had chosen a few too many dives to FU on one trip.

Well we just enjoyed the good fresh sea air as well as being on board a vessel that are equipped for diving in raw volumes.

When the last dive of the day was done we sailed towards the port of Hasle, where we would stay overnight. To Swedes ' delight we arrived early enough allowing them rush ashore to pick up something "Swedish milk" (read: Beer). While the skipper "fighting in the galley" and got a good dinner hammered together, the rest of us got a hot shower in the bathroom on shore.

After dinner we had a pleasant time on the quayside in the fine weather as well as a few locally ice creams. Later while the Swedes struggled with their thin Lager beers, we 3 stupid Däne, each enjoyed a "mother's Stout" (a beer brewed at a local micro-brewery). In contradiction to the Swedes we believe that quality is far better than quantity.....

It was with the promise of diving on the submarine the next day that we quite tired turned toward our bunks.



The next and last day our luck ran out, it had begun to blow quite a bit. As we came out of the Harbor, it was clear that it was too much for diving and the course was laid towards the port of Sirishamn.

At noon we arrived at Sirishamn after which the usual packing of cars confusion arose. I had parked so far away, that Jesper and Kim had got hold on our gear and got it on the jetty while I retrieved the car. As I came back with the car the bewildered Swedes had packed their cars and was about to bolt off.

After we had packed the car and spent half an hour on chat we rolled against Funen and Svendborg again.

We all 3 agreed that it had been an ok trip and the 3 dives on FU had been good. But we also agreed that next time we are going on a diving live aboard, we must remember to ask in to which wreck that is planned to dive. And listen better at briefings at the beginning of a dive trip. It may sometimes even be necessary to turn into English languish when you are dealing with the Swedes.

It is certainly not the last time that I am doing such a dive weekend. But certainly the last time that I will go on board the M 24, unless that we are enough to have the for ourselves.

Despite the small fuck ups, it had been a good dive trip.

Olsen

(In 2014 the M24 was placed in the market for sale and the live aboard was terminated)

