



Ontario Underwater Council
www.underwatercouncil.com

2011 Report
on
Scuba Diving Incidents in Ontario, and
Recommendations to Prevent Recurrence

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Document Control

Date	Description of Change	By Whom
June 13, 2011	Created document	Dave Noble
June 13, 2011	Near Miss - student	Dave Noble
June 27, 2011	Incident – Kirkfield Quarry	Dave Noble
July 7, 2011	Update to Kirkfield incident / removed Point Traverse incident as not a diving incident	Dave Noble
July 17, 2011	Update to Kirkfield incident	Dave Noble
Aug 3, 2011	Incident – Tobermory July 31, 2011	Dave Noble
Aug 12, 2011	Updates	Dave Noble
Sep 12, 2011	Incident – St Clair River	Dave Noble
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Nov 14, 2011	Updates - Sarnia	Dave Noble
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Submitting an Incident Report

To submit a report, you should contact one of the [OUC board members](#).
 You can also complete and return an [Incident Submission Form](#).

For comments on this document please contact

OUC's Director of Sport Safety
ouc.safety@underwatercouncil.com



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Ontario Underwater Council

Report on Scuba Diving Related Incidents in Ontario, and recommendations to prevent recurrence.

Goals:

The goals of this report are to:

- **Educate** (inform) readers on Scuba Diving incidents that have occurred in Ontario, the direct causes leading up to those incidents, and recommendations to prevent recurrence.
- **Prevent** and /or reduce the numbers and/or severity of future scuba diving incidents in Ontario, thus making the sport of scuba diving more safe
- **Earn** the privilege of continued sport self-governance by demonstrating that the greater Ontario scuba diving community cares deeply about sport safety and that it works hard to identify past incidents, and prevent future ones.
- **Keep** premiums for OUC's Liability Insurance Policy for Scuba Organizations as affordable as possible.

Intended Audience:

Although this report is posted on the Web and can therefore be read by anyone, the *intended* audience for this report is:

- Ontario Underwater Council (OUC) Members and Member Organizations (Clubs, Charter Operators, Retailers, etc.)
- Not-yet OUC Members and Member Organizations (Clubs, Charter Operators, Retailers, etc.)
- Scuba Certification Agencies (e.g. ACUC, PADI, NAUI, BSAC, etc.) that certify divers in Ontario
- Scuba Safety Organizations (e.g. Divers Alert Network) that provide services in Ontario
- Ontario Government, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Office of the Chief Coroner (Dr. Andrew McCallum at time of publication)
- Other Canadian Provincial Underwater Councils, whether still self-governed, or provincially-governed (e.g. Quebec)
- Other Ontario Provincial Sport Organizations
- Other users of Ontario waters, including but not limited to: commercial and recreational power boaters, sailors, hydro-electric power generating companies, commercial and sport fishing users, personal watercraft operators, etc.



Scope:

The scope of this particular report includes:

- Only scuba diving incidents that OUC has learned about independently and those that have been brought to OUC's attention by outside parties.
- Only scuba diving incidents that have occurred in Ontario, and in the case of dives in waters that share boundaries with other provinces or states, those dives that had both their planned entrance and exit points inside Ontario boundaries
- Recreational scuba diving incidents
- Technical (including Re-breather) scuba diving incidents
- Recommendations to prevent recurrence, where sufficient direct causes have been identified to allow relevant recommendations to be made.
- Corroborated information from public domain, survivors interviews, coroner's reports, police, witnesses, that OUC deems to be helpful in understanding the incidents/s.

The following are *not* in scope of this report:

- Snorkelling incidents
- Free-diving (breath-hold diving) incidents
- Scuba diving incidents that occur outside of Ontario or that have their planned entry and exit points outside Ontario.
- Everything that is not expressly listed as in-scope of this report shall be, by definition, out of scope of this report.

Publication Frequency:

OUC's goal is to re-publish this living document as soon as possible after any of the following occur:

- When we become aware of, and have confirmed that an incident has occurred.
- When we receive more information or facts about the incident.
- When we develop recommendations to prevent the incident from recurring in the future.
- If you wish to be notified of these re-publications, please sign up to OUC's Safety Advisory e-mail distribution list at www.underwatercouncil.com/maillinglist



Recommendations:

The goal of OUC's recommendations is to prevent future recurrence of scuba incidents.

- OUC can only publish relevant recommendations to prevent recurrence if we have sufficient hard facts relating to the direct causes of the incident.
- This means that it could take some time between initial publication that an incident has occurred, and the subsequent publication of relevant recommendations to prevent recurrence.
- OUC needs **your** (the greater Ontario Scuba Community's) help to reduce / prevent future scuba diving incidents. If you are aware of such hard facts or information regarding an incident, or know someone who is, please inform BOTH of the following individuals as soon as possible:
 - OUC's Director of Sport Safety at:
 - ouc.safety@underwatercouncil.com AND
 - OUC's Scuba Incident & Prevention Report Coordinator at:
 - ouc.reports@underwatercouncil.com
- Wherever possible, OUC will position recommendations positively (what people **should do** to prevent future incidents), rather than negatively.
- OUC's recommendations may be directed inwards towards the diving community, and/or outwards to other users of Ontario Waters.
- In some circumstances, third parties such as Police, Coroner's Office, etc. may conduct all areas of the investigation into the incident, and only involve OUC after the investigation has been concluded. These third parties may then request OUC to develop the recommendations and to use OUC's communications channels and contacts to communicate them to the greater Ontario Scuba Community.

Disclaimer:

No claim is made by the OUC, OUC's Director of Sport Safety, OUC's Scuba Incident & Prevention Report Coordinator, or by any contributors, as to the completeness or accuracy of information contained within this report.

Notwithstanding the above, OUC, subject to the availability of its volunteer resources, makes every effort to verify and corroborate the information provided in this report, and to ensure that the recommendations to prevent recurrence are relevant, and if followed, would prevent a similar incident from happening in the future.

Certain personal risks are inherent in most sports, and the sport of scuba diving is no exception. By engaging in the sport of scuba, you accept these risks. No amount of training, experience, equipment, policies, etc. can completely eliminate all personal risks, and the OUC, its Board Members, Regional Coordinators, and Members are not responsible for any losses, injury, or death sustained as a result of members or non-members taking these risks.



SECTION A: Fatalities - Summaries & Recommendations

Fatalities - Summaries and Recommendations are listed in chronological order.



Date of Incident: 2011-06-10

Summary:

OUC was informed in mid-June 2011 of what initially appeared to be a scuba-related incident near Point Traverse.

Investigation revealed however that this was not a scuba-related incident as originally believed.

Accordingly OUC removed the preliminary report and recommendations from this document.

OUC:

- Commits to publishing Incident Reports as soon as possible after being notified of the incident.
- Obtains and receives information from many independent sources, including survivors, witnesses, police, provincial coroners' offices, etc.
- Makes every effort to validate information obtained / provided
- Makes every effort to publish only respected public domain sources in its incident appendices
- May receive information from various levels of government and policing agencies that OUC is NOT permitted to publish
- Reserves the right to change its documentation, including recommendations, at any time and without notice, as new information becomes known.
- Makes every effort to ensure that recommendations made are:
 - relevant (that if followed, would have prevented the incident)
 - impartial (that do not seek to lay blame, but rather seek to prevent recurrence)
 - reasonable (that can be implemented without undue effort)

In some cases it is inappropriate for OUC to publish the non-diving related information it receives.

In this case the OUC was informed of additional information which caused the removal of the incident.

We apologize for the earlier posting and ask for the dive community to stand with the family and friends of the deceased and give them the support they need in this time of grieving.

OUC Recommendations:

n/a



Date of Incident: 2011-06-26

Summary:

A fatal accident occurred at approximately 12:25pm. Ilya Klebanov, a 49 year old male diver, passed away in a scuba training incident.

A number of scuba groups, incorporating approximately 50 to 70 divers, were diving at Kirkfield Quarry on this day.

One of the training facilities was conducting an SDI Solo Diving Course when Ilya was noticed floating face-down at the surface of the lake at around 12:25 p.m. His instructor and a buddy from the training facility, and several members of a Toronto based dive club responded. There was some confusion for a few moments as to whether this was a drill or an actual rescue.

Immediately upon being brought to shore, the patient was put on 100% Oxygen, with AED until EMS arrived. At no time did the AED recommend shocking. An OUC club responded in water, supplied both the Oxygen and AED equipment and co-ordinated most of the rescue logistics on shore. CPR was continued until EMS took over.

It was approximately 12:27 when the victim arrived on shore. EMS arrived at approximately 12:55pm, and the rescue teams worked with EMS until 1:13pm, at which point they received permission via radio to discontinue assistance. The victim was unable to be revived.

The Coroner's office has not released pathology results.

This report will be updated when details are available / confirmed.

Public References:

<http://www.scubaboard.com/forums/accidents-incidents/387292-death-kirkfeild-today.html>

<http://ontariodiving.com/showthread.php?14377-Divers-Death.&p=150486>

See Appendix #1 for news article references.

OUC Recommendations:

*OUC highly recommends that organized groups and commercial dive organizations (charters, etc.) have an O2 kit and an AED available for **immediate** use by **trained** personnel.*

If you need to vomit, keep the regulator in your mouth and exhale fully through the regulator. (Before vomiting, a sharp breath will be involuntarily inhaled. The vomit will exit through the exhaust). Purge the regulator. Ascend safely and terminate the dive.

Stay within close proximity to a buddy/student to be assisted or assist in an emergency situation.



Date of Incident: 2011-07-31

Summary:

A fatal accident occurred at approximately 3:00pm. Dr. Jan Raczycski, a 49 year old male diver, passed away during a dive on the wreck of the James C. King at Russell Island in Tobermory.

In December, an investigating officer from the OPP stated that the official cause of Dr. Raczycski's death was a heart attack.

Subsequent to the OUC communicating with the OPP, the Owen Sound Sun Times followed up on their preliminary article on the death of Dr. Raczycski. In the December 2011 articles, the paper reports that the victim's fiancée's son brought Dr Raczycski back to the surface from depth. Once out of the water, efforts were made to revive the doctor, but he was unable to be revived.

On January 16, 2012, the paper quoted coroner Dr. Rick Mann as saying there will be no inquest held, but recommendations may be made based on the investigation of the accident.

Public References:

<http://www.scubaboard.com/forums/accidents-incidents/391303-diver-dead-tobermory-lake-huron.html>

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestar/obituary.aspx?n=jan-mieczyslaw-raczycski&pid=152853990>

See Appendix #2 for news article references.

OUC Recommendations:

Divers should review their fitness to dive at least annually; more often if there are known or suspected health issues, preferably with a physician who is aware of the complications of diving.

*Divers Alert Network has a number for physicians to call for consultation on medical concerns. **DAN Medical Information Line (+1-919-684-2948).***

The WRSTC has a medical form which includes background information for physicians. A download link is available on the OUC Safety page.

*OUC highly recommends that organized groups and commercial dive organizations (charters, etc.) have an O2 kit and an AED available for **immediate** use by **trained** personnel.*

If you are not feeling up to a dive for any reason, postpone your participation until you are feeling up to diving in the particular conditions

Dive within your training, experience and limits

Rescue Diver training and practice is recommended for all divers



Date of Incident: 2011-09-12

Summary:

48-year-old Wilnelmus Bardoel from Ingersoll went missing in the St. Clair River and failed to resurface on Monday while scuba diving with two other people near the Bluewater Bridge.

After a six day search, the body was found Sunday morning, at around 9:00am near the Bluewater Bridge in Sarnia. The body was found about 100 meters from shore by sailors from Port Huron

At around 9 a.m. Lambton County OPP and Point Edward firefighters recovered the body of Wilnelmus Bardoel, 48, of Ingersoll from the St. Clair River south of the Bluewater Bridge.

We are awaiting further information from the Coroner's office.

This report will be updated when details are available / confirmed.

Public References:

<http://www.scubaboard.com/forums/accidents-incidents/396174-diver-missing-ontario.html>

<http://ontariodiving.com/showthread.php?14570-Scuba-diver-goes-missing-in-Ontario-river&daysprune=365>

See Appendix #3 for news article references.

OUC Recommendations:

Do not dive without a buddy.

Stay together in buddy teams. Special care must be taken when diving in odd numbers.

All buddies should return to the surface together.



Date of Incident: 2011-10-25

Summary:

OUC was informed on October 28, 2011 of what initially appeared to be a scuba-related incident in Haines Lake near Parry Sound.

Investigation revealed however that this was not a scuba-related incident as originally believed.

Accordingly OUC has removed the preliminary report and recommendations from this document.

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- Makes every effort to validate information obtained / provided
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In this case the OUC was informed of additional information which caused the removal of the incident.

We apologize for the earlier posting and ask for the dive community to stand with the family and friends of the deceased and give them the support they need in this time of grieving.

OUC Recommendations:

n/a



Date of Incident: 2011-mm-dd

Summary:

TBD

For public domain information of this incident, please refer to Section C, Appendix #nn of this document.

OUC Recommendations:

- *Recommendation 1.*
- *Recommendation 2.*



SECTION B: Near Misses - Summaries & Recommendations

Definition of a “Near Miss”

A “Near Miss” is any scuba-related situation or incident that did not result in a fatality, but that did put the diver/s health and/or safety at risk.

To report a near miss and submit it for consideration for publication in this report, please send an e-mail to ouc.safety@underwatercouncil.com with all relevant details.



Date of Incident: 2011-06-11 or 12

Summary:

A student, diving with a group from Quebec, was reportedly taken to emergency medical services in Brockville this weekend.

The student, diving with 2 instructors, apparently returned to the boat after an uneventful dive. He then reported feeling numbness and was given oxygen and taken into the dock in Brockville to meet EMS.

The student was reported to be in satisfactory condition. No information is available as to the diagnosis or treatment of the diver.

OUC Recommendations:

- *Recommendation 1*
- *Recommendation 2*



SECTION C: Appendices



Appendix #1

Public Domain Information on Scuba Fatality of 2011-06-26:

http://www.cp24.com/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20110628/110628_police_blotter?hub=CP24Home

Police identify body of scuba diver found in quarry

Police have identified the body of a York region scuba diver who was found floating in a water-filled quarry in eastern Ontario.

The body of 49-year-old Ilya Klebanov was discovered Sunday afternoon near Talbot River Road, just outside of the community of Kirkfield.

Provincial police say the Thornhill resident had been attending a certification dive to obtain his solo diving certificate.

<http://www.thepost.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=3189742&archive=true>

Diving death probed

ELDON TWP. - A post-mortem examination was to take place in Toronto today (Monday) on the body of a 49-year-old Thornhill man whose body was found in a water-filled quarry on Talbot River Rd. northeast of Kirkfield Sunday .

Police and emergency crews were called about 12:30 p.m. after the man's body was found floating in the water. Attempts to revive the man, who had been attending a certification drive to obtain his solo diving certificate, failed.

The City of Kawartha Lakes OPP crime unit is probing the death.



Appendix #2

Public Domain Information on Scuba Fatality of 2011-07-31:

<http://www.lfpress.com/news/london/2011/08/03/18506661.html>

Doctor's sudden death hurts area community **By CHIP MARTIN, THE LONDON FREE PRESS**

Last Updated: August 3, 2011 6:41pm

As Clinton prepares to bury one of its five doctors, lost in a scuba diving accident at Tobermory last weekend, OPP in Bruce County say they continue to await the results of a post-mortem examination.

Jan Raczycki, 49, died about 3 p.m. July 31 after exploring the wreck of The King.

His death occurred in Fathom Five National Marine Park, an underwater preserve popular with divers and not far from Raczycki's Tobermory cottage.

One of his patients, who asked not be named, shared with The Free Press her despair at the loss of the family practitioner.

"Dr. Raczycki was the best doctor I could ever have," she said.

"There were many things about him that I had grown to appreciate. The way he treated his patients, no matter how sick you were (and) he wasn't satisfied until he had a smile on your face," she said.

"He was always happy for his patients when good things happened for them."

Raczycki's obituary spoke of his wide-ranging personal interests.

"He partitioned his soul between music, nature, travel, and his community where he will be missed by patients, colleagues, friends and his family," it read.

He leaves behind a son, Ivan, 22, and daughter Scarlett, 18. He was predeceased by his wife, Roxanne.

Visitation is at the Falconer Funeral Home in Clinton from 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday followed by a private family graveside service Friday.

Donations are being encouraged in his memory to Clinton Public Hospital and Doctors Without Borders



<http://www.owensoundsuntimes.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=3419010>

Attempts to save doctor a harrowing experience for divers

By Scott Dunn

The James C. King was loaded with lumber from Parry Sound when she wrecked in a late November snowstorm in 1901 off the tip of the Bruce Peninsula.

The former schooner turned barge and the steamer W. L. Wetmore towing her sank northwest of Island. The crew rowed safely to shore in lifeboats.

The King's bow now rests almost 30 metres below the surface of Lake Huron. The lake bottom rises steeply and the stern is three metres below the surface.

Sunlight penetrates the cold, clear water and casts a tranquil, turquoise light on the bones of the wrecks in Fathom Five National Marine Park.

This was the destination of the Laura J dive vessel on Sunday, July 31, of the Civic holiday weekend when Dr. Jan Raczycski, a 49-year-old father of two, died after encountering trouble while diving the King.

Esra Samli was on the same trip to experience a deep cold-water dive — where the equivalent of almost three more atmospheres of pressure bear down on the divers at depth — at no more than 10 C.

She was still adjusting after five or 10 minutes underwater when she noticed the doctor's fiancée, Heather Douglas, point her thumb up, then skyrocket to the surface.

Samli immediately understood that only in desperation would someone risk surfacing so quickly, possibly injuring internal organs and blocking arteries due to expanding gases formed with so rapid an ascent.

Samli's dive buddy, Daniel Lieb, spotted Raczycski flailing three metres from the bottom. When Samli looked down she saw a murky cloud that revealed the doctor's form as the silt slowly dissipated on the lake bottom.

Douglas's son dove down and grabbed Dr. Raczycski. The doctor's eyes were closed and his regulator, the mouthpiece supplying his pressurized oxygen, was out of his mouth.



Samli swam to him and put her air supply to his mouth but he didn't take it. She inflated his buoyancy compensator vest and hers, and the three of them shot to the surface behind Douglas.

"I am thinking, 'Oh my God, what will happen to him? What will happen to us because we are skyrocketing up? Like the nitrogen is just horrible,'" Samli recalled. A fourth diver, Lieb, followed in seconds.

Samli was taught about the skyrocketing manoeuvre during her diver certification training, completed in Tobermory about a year earlier. This was her 16th dive. Afterward she understood from the dive boat captain that the doctor was on his 14th or 15th dive.

The short time they spent underwater limited their risk of experiencing the bends or the most serious diving-related injury, a fatal arterial gas embolism. Decompression stops are required to forestall the bends or a deadly embolism.

"At 30 metres you can stay around 15 minutes before decompression stops become important but as we age, shorter stays would be prudent," said Tobermory dive-medicine expert and coroner Dr. George Harpur.

Capt. Tracy Edwards was on the dive boat about 50 metres away, Samli estimated. When screaming to the captain for help seemed futile, they started swimming for the boat, Samli said. Douglas had swum farther ahead.

They battled a strong current and the doctor was a big guy, Samli said. Each diver, carrying about 100 extra pounds of gear, swam with masks and mouthpieces on.

"This doesn't help when you're trying to save someone's life in water. We are all in need of help at that time," she said.

The captain couldn't move the moored boat because of the danger it would present to other divers still in the water, unaware of the emergency.

Samli's dive buddy, Lieb, tried to perform rescue breathing and to massage the doctor's heart while in the water. But then Lieb couldn't catch his breath and he started to panic for his own life. Samli turned her attention to Lieb as they bobbed on the surface until he was all right.

She and the fiancée's son, who appeared in his mid-20s, swam on, towing the doctor nearer the boat. The captain threw them a floatation aid, which drifted away as the current took it, Samli said.

She started to swim for it, while Lieb and the fiancée's son stayed with the doctor. The life preserver was small and too far, Samli decided, so she turned back for the boat.



There they helped each other unload extra weight before beginning the arduous process of heaving Dr. Raczycki into the boat.

Three of them pushed while the captain tried to pull Dr. Raczycki up onto a narrow, elevated access platform at the back of the boat. Then Samli heard a cry for help.

"Please help me, I'm dying," Samli said she heard Dr. Raczycki's fiancée cry out. She turned and saw Douglas floating "in an emergency position on her back on the surface of the water, waiting for help."

Samli left the doctor again and swam to the woman. She tried to calm her down and they swam back to the dive boat. They still hadn't been able to bring the doctor aboard. They were losing time.

Once aboard, Edwards began CPR on the doctor, while Raczycki's fiancée performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, Samli said.

Samli understands it took five minutes to get Dr. Raczycki from the lake bottom to aboard the boat, though she suspects it took longer.

Another Divers Den boat arrived and a man on it took over CPR. Samli helped squeeze an oxygen bag over the doctor's mouth. Edwards estimated she performed CPR for 20 minutes.

Coast Guard responders used a defibrillator and CPR in tandem. All Canadian Coast Guard vessels carry AEDs (automated external defibrillators), communications officer Carol Launderville said.

But at least 18 minutes elapsed from the time help was requested, 2:55 p.m. and 3:13 p.m., when the Coast Guard crew arrived in their rescue Zodiac vessel, had the casualty on the dive boat and found him unresponsive, said Capt. Pierre Bolduc, at the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre, which dispatched the Coast Guard.

Harpur, also medical director of the hyperbaric chamber clinic in Tobermory, attempted to resuscitate the victim there, police said in an interview. Harpur said he couldn't discuss the specifics of this case, which is still under investigation by the coroner's office.

Bruce Peninsula OPP said Harpur pronounced death on Dr. Raczycki at 3:51 p.m., about 2 1/2 hours after he set out to dive the King wreck.



Appendix #3

Public Domain Information on Scuba Fatality of 2011-09-12:



Search for missing Ingersoll man to continue

Posted 1 day ago

SARNIA –

The Lambton OPP reported the search would continue Thursday morning along the St. Clair River for 48-year-old Wilnelmus Bardoel from Ingersoll.

Bardoel failed to resurface on Monday while scuba diving with two other people near the Bluewater Bridge. The search has involved the OPP's underwater search and recovery unit, Lambton County OPP marine unit and both the Canadian and U.S. coast guards.

Since Monday, rescue teams from both sides of the border had been patrolling the area near the Blue Water Bridge and downriver after three recreational divers entered the waters, but only two surfaced. Bardoel was officially reported missing around 2:30 p.m. Monday.

"It's not uncommon for divers to get in trouble down there," said Jim Fedora, president of the Sarnia Underwater Club, noting the unpredictable waters in the area under the bridge. "Most people that get in trouble, usually have problems because of the current. It can range from six to 10 knots there, which is pretty severe."

The waters just south of the bridge –where the diving trio are believed to have entered – is a popular spot, attracting scuba enthusiasts from all over, said Fedora, pointing to two wrecks, the Monarch (an old tugboat) and a sunken barge.

"We've got quite a population of very experienced divers here in Sarnia; we consider it the base case of what we do here, because this is what we have ... but for people who haven't been around here, this is pretty advanced diving."

Changing currents and poor visibility are the most common problems in the area, he said.

Earlier in the week, the search had extended downriver as far as Stag Island.

"We've never had a diver fatality from the current, that I'm aware of," said Fedora, noting that divers have died from health-related issues, like heart attacks.

In 2005, local broadcaster Mark Cartland died shortly after being pulled from the St. Clair due to heart failure. The 41-year-old had been scuba diving south of bridge, exploring the wreck of the Monarch.

Fedora said experienced divers shouldn't be deterred from continuing to the plunge under the bridge.

"I don't think there's any need to stop diving there."



Diver's body recovered

The Windsor Star

September 19, 2011

POINT EDWARD

After a six day search, the body of a Canadian diver was found Sunday morning near the Bluewater Bridge in Sarnia.

At around 9 a.m. Lambton County OPP and Point Edward firefighters recovered the body of Wilnelmus Bardoel, 48, of Ingersoll from the St. Clair River south of the Bluewater Bridge.

Bardoel disappeared last Monday around 2:45 p.m. during a recreational dive in the St. Clair River with three other scuba divers who surfaced a short while later.

Lambton County OPP, St. Clair County Sherriff's Department in Michigan, the U.S. Coast Guard and Point Edward Fire and Rescue all launched vessels last week on the St. Clair River to help with the search. A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter and a Canadian helicopter were also dispatched to the area.

A post-mortem examination is expected to take place at the London Health Sciences Centre today.



Sailboat racers discover body in St. Clair River

BY CRYSTAL GARCIA
PORT HURON TIMES-HERALD

8:08 AM, Sep. 19, 2011|

Local sailboat racers made a surprising discovery on their way to the starting line Sunday morning.

Jeff Seim, Carol Cadaldo and Sherri Marginet were on their boat Music Cal about 8 a.m. when they saw something floating in the water. Upon closer inspection, they learned it was a body.

"We were just heading out, ready to go sailing and we thought it was a balloon," Seim of Port Huron said. "We thought it was a hoax and then we got closer. It was quite dramatic."

They were headed up the Canadian shoreline about 100 yards from the shore when they discovered the body near a harbor south of the Blue Water Bridge, Seim said.

Canadian officials recovered an adult male body from the St. Clair River about 9 a.m., according to a news release from the Ontario Provincial Police.

Members of the Lambton County Ontario Provincial Police and Point Edward Fire and Rescue responded to the scene.

An autopsy is expected to take place today at the London Health Sciences, the news release stated.

Additional information will be released pending positive identification and family notification.

Rescue crews have been searching for a Canadian scuba diver missing since Monday afternoon from a dive in the St. Clair River.

Wilhelmus Bardoel, 48, of Ingersoll entered the river with two Canadian divers near the Blue Water Bridge and failed to resurface.

Numerous crews from the U.S. and Canada have aided in the effort.