Parting Shot

Our particular trip to Grand Cayman, hosted by Dive Tech and Cobalt Coast Resort during Tek Week, included a visit to Stingray City. There was more than a little eye rolling among the tech divers of the group when our divemaster asked how many wanted to go. Two of us decided to say yes and make the forty minute boat ride to North Sound and check it out. Stingray City probably sees more visitors than any other place in the Caribbean, so I just planned on using the 12 foot max depth dive as an extra "safety stop" and not expect too much.

As we pulled up to the sandbar there were at least a dozen boats already there. OK, I thought, just smile and get suited up. Our guide finned us over to a nice clear patch of sand and we settled down. It couldn't have been but a minute or two and all of a sudden a whole squadron of winged southern stingrays descended on us. After another couple of minutes there was nothing but flashes of grey, white, and an occasional swim fin protruding out of the suspended sand ball like a cartoon fight seen. When the large green moray with cataracts showed up it went into high gear.

People started paying less attention to the rays and started focusing on our big toothed friend. I imagine more than a few folks would have liked to know before the dive that Mr. Green was hard-of-seeing! He (I assume he was male by how he acted) had no problem winding his way sinuously around whomever he felt might have a treat for him.

One of the human guests - who it turns out, loves morays - decided to touch and pet him. Before long they winded their way around the sand bottom in a dance that wasn't to unlike a tango. By this point most of the goodies the dive guide brought down were gone and only a few rays were left buzzing the perimeter. Those of us who followed the action were amazed at how little trepidation our diver had in handling this wild animal. As the moray's partner got bolder, I couldn't help think that he was going to signal that he had had enough in a very moray like way. After a few more minutes the eel decided there just wasn't anymore food around and took off for his next encounter. We could hear a slew of anchors dropping in so it wouldn't be long. I'm just glad ol' Mr. Green was in a good mood for the duration of our visit. As to whether or not the sojourn to Stingray City was worth it; well, I shot over 150 photos in less than twenty minutes and had a ball.



Nikon D2x, Subal ND2 Housing, 10.5mm FE lens, f13 @ 1/160sec, Dual Ikelite DS-125's set at 1/2 power

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Do you have a nice shot with a short story behind it?
If so e mail me and yours could be the next "Parting shot".
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