



www.scubaemporium.com

Scuba Emporium

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1975 Ice Diving

Why Ice Diving?

Today people go ice diving for fun and the challenge to do something different. Back in 1973 I did it for other reasons. I had already been helping local Fire departments and some of those dives were in the ice. I was also called out when anything was lost in the ice like a snow machine. I was the go to man to locate them and hook them up to be pulled out. So I was very comfortable with diving under the ice. But as you know from the first story I was now in business and by 1976 I needed a way to make money all winter. The summers were fun and very rewarding. But when old man winter came in the local dive business came to a halt. So I wrote an outline for Ice Diving, a PADI Distinctive Specialty and started running a few classes a month. This was just about the only way to make enough money to pay the big \$800.00 a month rent. Today we pay more than that a week.

Now to sell that class, well that was the hard part. You see, I was getting paid to be there, the customer was paying to enjoy the experience, so I needed a few good reasons to get people to sign up. Looking back, I could have made it just with the local fire departments but I wanted more. So we were out diving, Lemont Quarry, and Lake Michigan and I had my new 8MM movie camera with me. I went in one whole and had two divers in the other. I filmed all of the cutting and entering thru the hole, then underwater I filmed us upside down playing golf on the ice. I saw a fish sleeping, so I handed off the camera to one of the guys and was filmed lifting the fish up to the surface, never taking it, all the way out of the water and then I brought it back down. He was a little perturbed gave me an odd look and swam a few feet off, too rest.

So now I have in the store a movie playing for people to see and from this I was able to sign people up for the Ice diver class. They saw how good visibility was and the fun we all had. Now I was happy, heading out to the lake in our wet suits, pouring warm water in the suits and having fun under the ice. The warm water was how we filled the suits up to limit the rush of cold water. Later I learned that was not a real good idea. So I purchased a dry suit. WOW, now I was a diver and a warm one at that.

Today is a lot better, we have more instructors so we are in and out faster, we have some fantastic dry suits with very warm undergarments, as well as electric undergarments. So now we all have fun. You can take on the challenge too and be one of the few that have done an ice dive or carry the ice diver certification card.

See you on your next cool dive,

Patrick