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Scuba Emporium

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1976 Equipment Specialty

1976 Why Equipment Specialty?

I was working the sore late at night catching up on repairs. Back in the 70's I would come in early or stay late to get the repair work done. As I started getting busy I needed help, I wanted the help to be trained well and be able to repair anything. So I wrote the course I thought would do the job. My first course was 30 hours; you would learn repairs of regulators, gauges, were just getting into the vest, now called BCD's. We taught wetsuit repair and tailoring. Think back to years before this you would purchase rolls of neoprene and make your suit, so this was easy. Then I taught tank and valve repair and lastly yep, Air compressor maintenance. After a few classes I was no longer doing repairs, I had staff. These students loved hanging around the DIVE shop, now we call DIVE Centers. They would service all the equipment and took care of the compressor. Now if a major problem went wrong with the compressor I would put the block in the truck and drive down to Ocala Florida to MAKO compressors and they allowed us to rebuild them in the factory. So it was not odd that in a bad time I could be gone and back in three days. I was fast and good and compressor overhauls, most of the time just simple maintenance keeps them running.

Today we no longer can go into the factory to work on product. See we do all we can here and if a big job comes up we have to call in help. The nice thing is we have two compressors so we are very seldom without air, the life blood of a store. Now we send suits and dry suits out for repair, if we cannot fix them here. I must say we do most of that work in house. Today all regulators technicians need to be certified by a t least one manufacturer. But if you do not know how to work on a system like and AGA full face mask you will not be able to complete the task. This is why we have three of us trained in AGA repair.

So what is the repair course today about? Well PADI came along and put there touches on the program. We all knew it was too dangerous to have all these people out there overhaul regulators. The manufactures would not know who was doing the work and so there was NO way to tell people if something bad was going on or a part recall had taken place. But PADI still new a course was needed. The course save divers hundreds of dollars, here is how. Today's Equipment Repair Course could be calling Equipment Maintained Course. During the program you go thru all your equipment and learn how to store it, maintain it, and Treat it. And clean it. The course teaches you how to extend the life of your equipment and straps. Sometimes simple thing like never folding the wet suit, a fold makes a seam that will cause neoprene to separate and that my friends become a cold spot in the suit. We teach simple suit repair, BCD maintains and cleaning and proper regulator maintains. As well as for us in the Midwest how to pack and store the equipment for the winter. Now if you're diving with an active store such as SCUBA EMPORIUM we do all we can to keep you diving all winter? So storage is not a problem. YET you still need to learn cleaning and maintains. So I will see you in the next Equipment Repair Course.