

NEWS

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IN THE MARKET FOR A MICRODIVE?

Anything that gets people under the water has got to be a good thing, and Mark Evans was intrigued by a new entry-level diving course.

Actually, the Microdive course is best described as an entry-level route into diving. The brainchild of Rob Hart – the man behind the innovative Mini-B scuba-system-in-a-backpack concept – the Microdive course is aimed at getting people into the underwater world as quickly and easily as possible. Rob isn't taking on the diving organisation big boys with his Microdive course, instead it is better seen as being another route into traditional scuba diving. You see,

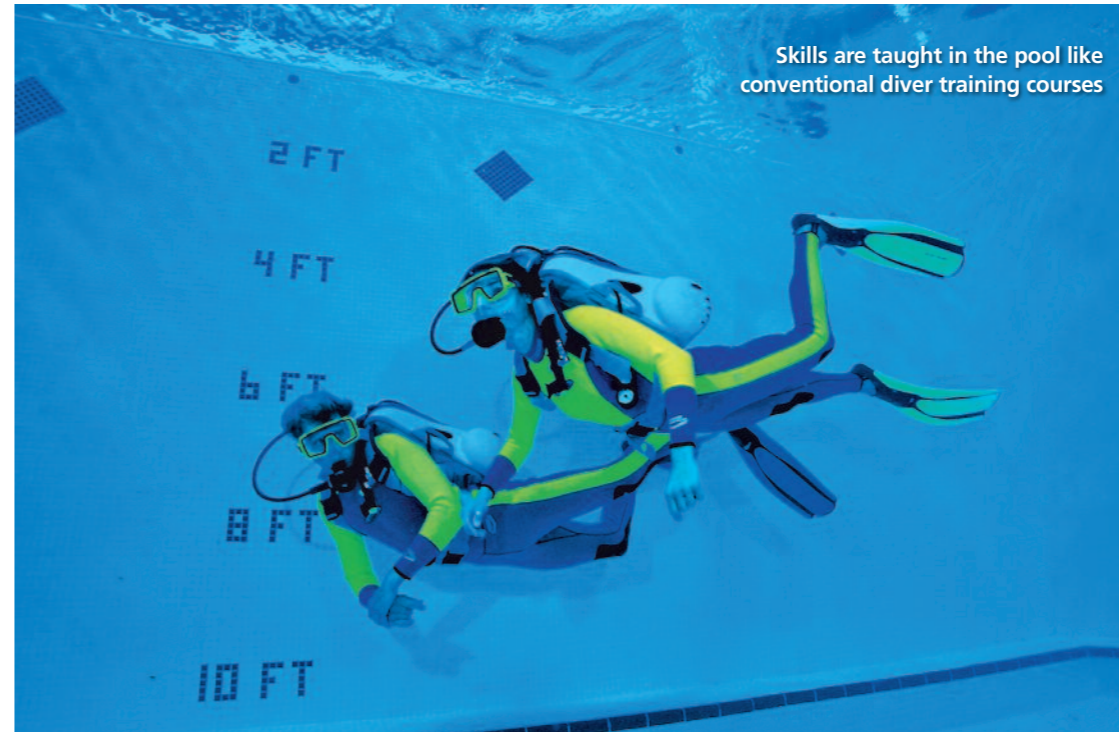
requires the participant to locate a dive centre where they want to have their quiz reviewed and in-water skills taught in the pool. Step three sees the participant take part in three 20-minute orientation dives in unenclosed water under the supervision of the dive instructor. And that's it. Once these three steps have been completed, the participant then gains a Microdiver qualification card and a certificate, and is able to dive subject to the site meeting the criteria listed above. Get hold of a Mini-B, mask and



“Microdiving is an intermediate activity that provides a crucial step between snorkelling and conventional deep open water scuba diving”

Microdivers - as qualified course participants are known - are limited to just 9m and must dive in water which is not subject to strong surge, currents or heavy wave action, offers at least five metres of vis, and features no overhead obstacles. With such stringent limits, you might wonder why anyone would bother becoming a Microdiver. Well, the beauty of the course is that it is quick and easy to complete. Step one involves obtaining the Microdive course materials, reading the glossy manual, watching the demonstration on the DVD and then answering a series of questions in the quiz section of the manual. Step two

requires the participant to locate a dive centre where they want to have their quiz reviewed and in-water skills taught in the pool. Step three sees the participant take part in three 20-minute orientation dives in unenclosed water under the supervision of the dive instructor. And that's it. Once these three steps have been completed, the participant then gains a Microdiver qualification card and a certificate, and is able to dive subject to the site meeting the criteria listed above. Get hold of a Mini-B, mask and



provides a crucial step between snorkelling and conventional deep open water scuba diving, and is ideal for those wishing to dive to depths no deeper than 9m. “So if all you want to do is learn how to safely dive with the fishes in the shallows, dive from the beach or to be able to get below the waterline to inspect the underside of your motorboat or yacht, this is the ideal activity for you.”

Rob hopes that the short duration of the course and the ease of diving with a small Mini-B unit will tempt plenty of people into the underwater world who perhaps wouldn't have gone the normal dive training route. The big advantage of this is that once people have become Microdivers and got a taste for being underwater, the next logical step is moving on and completing an entry-level course with PADI or one of the other major training organisations. www.microdive.com

How much does it cost?

The Microdive training package costs £79.95, and then the recommended price for the quiz review and in-water skills tuition is £85, with a further £85 for the three open-water dives.