

## 2.3.1 Technical Diver Level 1

### 2.3.1.1 Course Outcomes

GUE's Technical Diver Level 1 course is designed to prepare divers for the rigors of technical diving and to familiarize them with the use of different breathing and decompression mixtures. Additional course outcomes include: cultivating, integrating, and expanding the essential skills required for safe technical diving; problem identification and resolution; the use of a double tanks configuration and the potential failure problems associated with it; the use of nitrox for accelerated and general decompression strategies; the use of helium to minimize narcosis; and the applications of single decompression stage diving with respect to decompression procedures.

### 2.3.1.2 Prerequisites

Applicants for a Tech 1 course must:

- a. Submit a completed Course Registration Form, Medical History Form, and Liability Release Form to GUE HQ.
- b. Hold insurance that will cover diving emergencies such as hyperbaric treatment, e.g., DAN Master-level insurance or equivalent.
- c. Be physically and mentally fit.
- d. Be a nonsmoker.
- e. Obtain a physician's prior written authorization for the use of prescription drugs, except for birth control, or for any medical condition that may pose a risk while diving.
- f. Be a minimum of 18 years of age. Documented parental or legal guardian consent must be submitted to GUE HQ when the participant is a minor.
- g. Be a certified GUE Fundamentals diver with a Technical pass.
- h. Have completed at least 100 non-training dives beyond autonomous scuba diver certification.

### 2.3.1.3 Course Content

The Technical Diver Level 1 course is normally conducted over six days. It requires a minimum of seven dives (including three trimix experience dives) and at least forty-eight hours of instruction, encompassing classroom lectures, land drills, and in-water work.

### 2.3.1.4 Technical Diver Level 1 Specific Training Standards

- a. Student-to-instructor ratio is not to exceed 6:1 during land drill or surface exercises; it cannot exceed 3:1 during any in-water training.
- b. Maximum depth of 170 ft/51 m
- c. Dives must not be planned to incur more than 30 minutes of unadjusted decompression time, as established by GUE's DecoPlanner.
- d. No overhead diving except when taught by an Active GUE Cave 2 instructor.
- e. Standards for Tech 1 training in a cave environment:
  - i. Students participating in a Tech 1 course conducted in a cave environment must be at least GUE Cave 2 certified with 25 dives conducted at the Cave 2 level.

- ii. Students passing a Tech 1 course conducted in a cave environment will be awarded a Cave Diver Level 2 - Normoxic Trimix certification instead of a Technical Diver Level 1 certification.

### **2.3.1.5 Required Training Materials**

GUE training materials and recommended reading as determined by the course study packet received via online download after GUE course registration.

### **2.3.1.6 Academic Topics**

- a. Introduction: GUE organization and course overview (objectives, limits, expectations)
- b. Dive planning, minimum gas, gas strategies, and gas management
- c. Gas properties: breathing gases, oxygen, narcosis, and hypercapnia
- d. Decompression theory: history, overview, and decompression sickness
- e. Practical decompression: general guidelines, DecoPlanner, ratio deco, and other considerations
- f. Emergencies: accident prevention and management

### **2.3.1.7 Land Drills and Topics**

- a. Reel and guideline use
- b. Dive team formation, communication, and protocols
- c. Back gas regulators/valve failure modes and management
- d. Decompression cylinder set up
- e. Gas switch procedures
- f. Decompression cylinder failure protocols
- g. Unconscious diver recovery
- h. Backup light deployment
- i. Decompression gas sharing

### **2.3.1.8 Required Dive Skills and Drills**

- a. Demonstrate proficiency in safe diving techniques, including pre-dive preparation, in-water activity, and post-dive assessment.
- b. Demonstrate awareness of team member location and a concern for safety, responding quickly to visual indications and dive partner needs.
- c. Demonstrate a safe and responsible demeanor throughout all training.
- d. Demonstrate proficiency in underwater communication.
- e. Demonstrate basic proficiency in managing the GUE equipment configuration.
- f. Demonstrate proficiency with proper ascents and descents, utilizing variable ascent rates and safe gas switching procedures.
- g. Must be able to swim at least 400 yds/375 m in less than 14 minutes without stopping. This test should be conducted in a swimsuit and, where necessary, appropriate thermal protection.
- h. Must be able to swim a distance of at least 60 ft/18 m on a breath hold while submerged.
- i. Demonstrate proficiency in gas failure procedures, including valve manipulation (fixable, non-fixable, and erroneous failures), gas sharing, and regulator switching as appropriate.

- j. Demonstrate proficiency in surface marker buoy deployment (except if Tech 1 training is conducted in a cave environment).
- k. Demonstrate proficiency in switching to a backup mask.
- l. Demonstrate proficiency in switching to a backup light.
- m. Demonstrate familiarity with required course equipment.
- n. Demonstrate proficiency in managing gas-sharing scenarios, including gas sharing on the bottom, gas sharing during ascent, and sharing decompression gas.
- o. Comfortably demonstrate at least three propulsion techniques that would be appropriate in delicate and/or silty environments; one of these kicks must be the backward kick.
- p. Demonstrate reasonable proficiency with a single decompression cylinder.
- q. Demonstrate proficiency with effective decompression techniques, including depth and time management.
- r. Demonstrate dive rescue techniques, including effective underwater management of an unconscious diver.
- s. Demonstrate good buoyancy and trim, i.e., approximate reference is a maximum of 20 degrees off horizontal while remaining within 3 ft/1 m of a target depth.
- t. Demonstrate the ability to manage a failed decompression cylinder using available team resources.

### 2.3.1.9 Equipment Requirements

GUE base equipment configuration as outlined in Appendix A, plus:

- a. GUE double tank configuration
- b. One primary and two backup lights
- c. One decompression stage with stage regulator
- d. One primary reel per team
- e. Drysuit inflation system independent from back gas cylinders (while breathing a helium mixture, if using a drysuit)

Prior to the commencement of the class, students should consult with a GUE representative to verify equipment requirements and appropriateness of any selected equipment.

## Appendix A - GUE Base Equipment Configuration

The GUE base equipment configuration is comprised of:

- a. Tanks/cylinders: Students may use a single tank/cylinder with a single- or dual-outlet valve. Students may also use dual tanks/cylinders connected with a dual-outlet isolator manifold, which allows for the use of two first stages. Dual tanks/cylinders connected with a dual-outlet, non-isolator manifold can be used, but only in recreational (no decompression) diving, and are considered an alternative for a single tank/cylinder. Consult course-specific standards and your instructor to verify size requirements.
- b. Regulators:
  - i. Single tank: The first stage must supply a primary second stage via a 5 to 7 ft/1.5 to 2 m hose. A backup second stage must be necklaced and supplied via a short

- hose. The first stage must also supply an analog pressure gauge, inflation for the buoyancy compensator (BC), and (when applicable) inflation for a drysuit.
- ii. Double tank: One first stage must supply a primary second stage via a 5 to 7 ft/1.5 to 2 m hose (7 ft/2 m hose is required for all cave classes), and inflation for the buoyancy compensator (BC). The other first stage must supply a necklaced backup second stage via a short hose, an analog pressure gauge, and (when applicable) inflation for a drysuit.
- c. Backplate system:
    - i. Is held to the diver by one continuous piece of webbing. This webbing is adjustable and uses a buckle to secure the system at the waist.
    - ii. A crotch strap is attached and looped through the waistband to prevent the system from riding up a diver's back.
    - iii. The continuous webbing must support five D-rings;
      1. The first placed at the left hip
      2. The second placed in line with a diver's right collarbone
      3. The third placed in line with the diver's left collarbone
      4. The fourth and fifth are placed on the front and back of the crotch strap when divers plan to use advanced equipment such as DPVs.
    - iv. The harness below the diver's arms has small restrictive bands to allow for the placement of backup lights. The webbing and system retains a minimalist approach.
  - d. Buoyancy compensation device (BC):
    - i. A diver's BC is back-mounted and minimalist in nature.
    - ii. It is free of extraneous strings, tabs, or other material.
    - iii. There are no restrictive bands or restrictive elastic affixed to the buoyancy cell.
    - iv. Wing size and shape is appropriate to the cylinder size(s) employed for training.
  - e. At least one time/depth measuring device
  - f. Wrist-mounted compass
  - g. Mask and fins: Mask is low-volume; fins are rigid, non-split.
  - h. Backup mask
  - i. At least one cutting device
  - j. Wetnotes with pencils
  - k. Surface marker buoy (SMB) with spool: when required, the SMB should be appropriate for environmental conditions and deployed using a spool with at least 100 ft/30 m of line.
  - l. Exposure suit appropriate for the duration of exposure

### Additional Course-Specific Equipment

- a. Where required, back gas and stage cylinders are marked in accordance with the GUE General Training Standards, Policies, and Procedures document and configured in line with GUE protocols.
- b. When drysuit inflation systems are applicable, they should be sized appropriately for the environment; small tanks are placed on the left side of the backplate with larger supplies affixed to the diver's left back gas tank.
- c. Underwater lights:

- i. When required, backup lights should be powered by alkaline batteries (not rechargeable) and stowed on the D-rings at a diver's chest.
  - ii. Backup lights should have a minimal amount of protrusions and a single attachment at the rear.
  - iii. The primary light should consist of a rechargeable battery pack and be fitted with a Goodman-style light handle.
  - iv. When burn time requirements create the need for an external battery pack, it should reside in a canister mounted on the diver's right hip.
- d. Guideline devices, as required during cave diving activities:
  - i. A primary reel is required for all cave diving and provides a minimalist form factor with a handle designed to support a Goodman or "hands free" handle operation. The primary reel must contain at least 150 ft/45 m of line.
  - ii. A safety spool is required for each diver while cave diving and must contain at least 150 ft/45 m of line.
  - iii. A jump or gap spool is required during Cave 2 diving and must contain at least 75 ft/23 m of line.