

## 2.3 Technical Diver Curriculum

### 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 Technical Diver Level 1 course must:

- a. Submit a completed Course Registration Form, Medical History Form, and Liability Release Form to GUE HQ.
- b. Be physically and mentally fit.
- c. Hold insurance that will cover diving emergencies such as hyperbaric treatment, e.g., DAN Master-level insurance or equivalent.
- 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. Have earned a GUE Fundamentals - Technical certification.
- h. Must have a minimum of 100 logged dives beyond autonomous entry-level scuba diver (or equivalent).

#### 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 (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 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.