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Seen at *DEMA 2006* NEWS & Equipment

Impressions from the 30th DEMA Orlando, November 8-11



PETER SYMES

Uh-oh. Time for the annual DEMA report again. Like tax returns, it routinely catches me a bit off-guard that it's already that time of year again. I always struggle a bit with either one as I have to put all my creativity into one report but none whatsoever into the other—but here we go...

By Peter Symes
With additional reporting and photography by
Millis Keegan
Jason Heller
and Eric Cheng

For dive industry professionals worldwide, DEMA is one of the major annual highlights of the year. As is the case with Christmas, anticipation tends to start early nurturing ongoing speculation about what surprises will be unveiled this year by the secretive manufacturers. For the uninitiated, the DEMA show is the biggest and most significant dive trade show on the planet, but it is also a trade show with admission for dive industry professionals only—it is off limits for the general public. In a convention hall that looks like the size of Boeing's 747 assembly building, over 600 exhibitors from all over the world have erected what seems to be a small town of booths and displays big enough to warrant its own tram line.

Along the seemingly endless rows of long isles of booths, pavilions and exhibitions, we find a diverse mixture of established equipment brands—such as Suunto, Mares, Aqualung and many others—blended with a sound undergrowth of sprouting enterprises all vying for the interest of the pro-

PETER SYMES

spective buyers, some of which actually brought some fresh thinking to the table. On the floor, we also find resorts and dive operators from all continents offering their

wares interspersed with training agencies, publishers, environmental organizations, treasure hunters, dive magazines, apparel and jewellery and every imaginable flavour



Ran Vered, David Doubilet, and Howard Rosenstein from Fantasea

JASON HELLER



JASON HELLER

Wayne Hasson, from the Aggressor Fleet, organized busloads of 200 high school students to tour the show floor and learn about careers in diving



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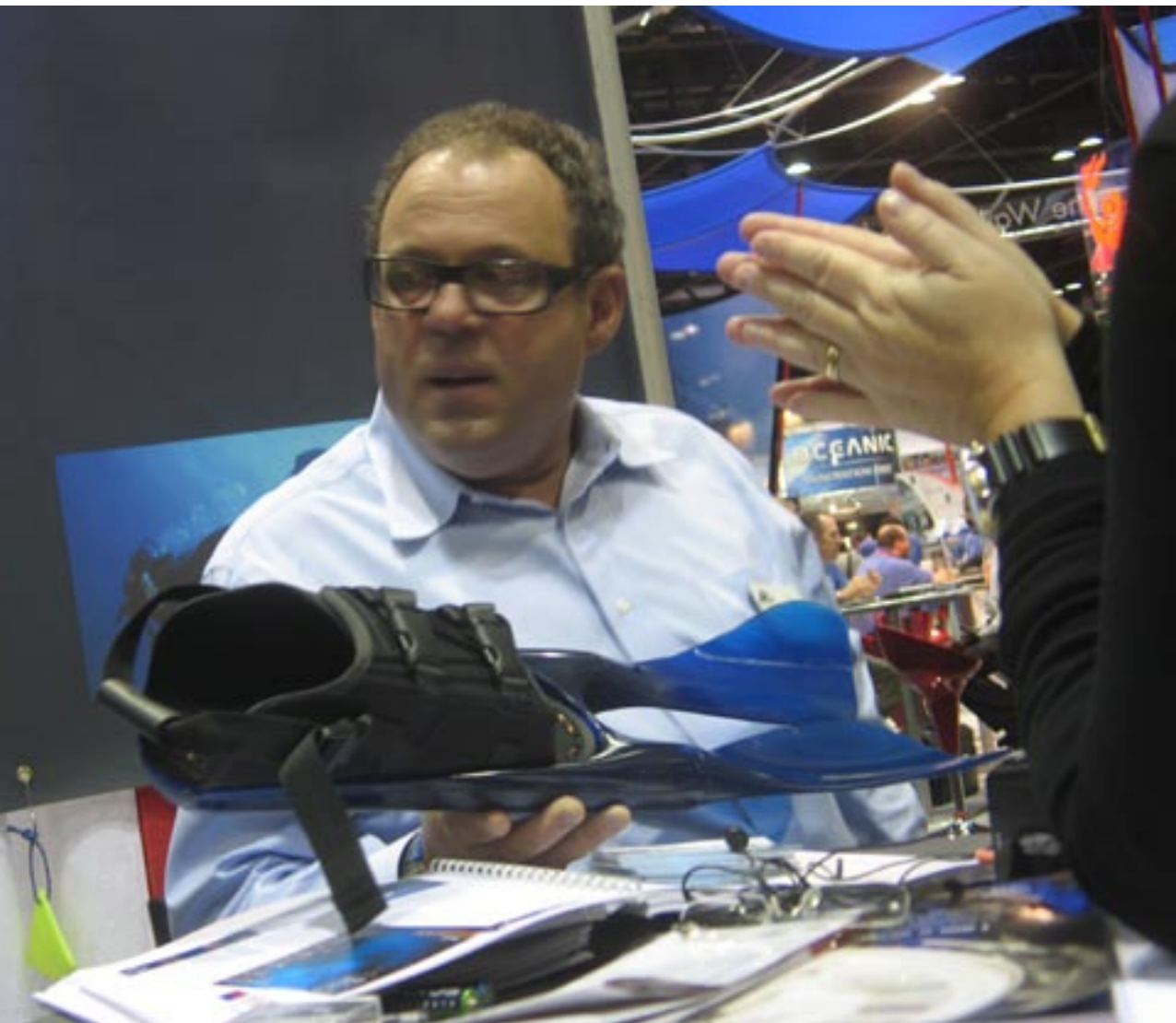
Silly or Great?

We used to be on the lookout for the craziest or most silly invention at the DEMA show, such as the twin tube snorkel or the snorkel with built-in FM-radio. This year, however, we are not quite sure whether the Amphibian fin by brothers Abraham and Ronen qualifies or it is a stroke of genius in disguise. We are all quite familiar with the problematic issue of walking around in fins, right? In this original fin design, the blades pivot up thanks to hinges placed on both sides of the foot. Since the fin is already in two pieces, OmegaAquatics plans to add more features like interchangeable blades in the coming year. Currently available in colors of blue, yellow, green and grey. www.omegaaquatics.com

of ocean-related businesses. So, how was this year's DEMA, the 30th of its kind? I have been to 13 of the past 15, and in these years, it has always been a dynamic marketplace—some years much more so than others. The past couple of years have been disturbingly quiet, with the show in Houston in 2004 being an outright lame show low point. The

dive industry has been struggling since the turn of the millennium, and it has experienced a strong change in dive travel, which 9/11, SARS and the turmoil in the Middle East didn't exactly help. So, it was a pleasure to see that at this year's show, a lot of the 1990's dynamic energy was back. Most of the major manufacturers were back in the show, and there was once more some interesting news

here and there, which will be presented in the following pages. But DEMA is much more than just displaying new inventions and travel destinations, it is also a buzzing meeting place where numerous seminars are held. ■



A typical scene: Bartering on the show floor. Bob Evans, founder and of Force Fin, demonstrates his latest design



Some of our fellow digital media 'accomplices'. Wendy and Jason Heller of DivePhotoGuide (above) and (right) Eric Cheng of WetPixel and Willy Volk of Divester



Ear dryer

The Sahara DryEar ear dryer circulates safe, gentle, warm air inside the ear canal and evaporates the trapped water leaving the natural environment in the ear relatively unchanged. It's the first ever, totally natural way to dry your ears and at the same time minimize the number of infections due to the moist environment in the ears after a dive. www.dryear.net



DEMA SHOW



Now for saltwater

The new Submerge model is a fast u/w scooter that weighs under 50 pounds. With its single 20 cell pack it is supposed to run a minimum of 60 minutes up to 100 minutes. It has the same driveline/motor and construction as previous models, and comes with a three-year corrosion warranty. www.silent-submersion.com

Mares Alikai

Today, we are highly weight restricted when traveling by air, and Mares has taken that to heart when presenting this lightweight BC for women. It folds to a compact size, is comfortable and promises a great buoyancy lift. A special feature to save the back, is the Trim Weight pockets, placed on the tank strap, holding up to 6kg/13lbs.

Will women be attracted by the fact that Alikai means the "Queen of the Sea"? www.mares.com



DEMA SHOW

Liquivision



We were looking for something new in mask design, and I think we found it. The mask that you don't have to equalize, is that even possible? The Nirvana-2 says it is, the mask is filled with salty saline water, and the special lenses in the goggle is supposed to correct your vision. Because the goggle is filled with water, it can never fog or leak. It sounds too good to be true, and I can't wait to try a pair. www.liquivision.ca



Status

It's here. The regulator that monitors your use and tells you when it needs service. The Apeks Status compact first stage accomplishes that with a digital display. This could save you some money. The Status is compatible to EAN 40 and comes standard with an environmental dry kit suitable for cold water diving. Four medium pressure ports 3/8" UNF and one high pressure port 7/16" UNF. www.apeks.co.uk



Cobra2

The air integrated Suunto Cobra2 is a full-featured decompression dive computer. It monitors and displays pressure, tracks your rate of air consumption and continuously calculates your remaining air time. Two-gas switching Nitrox, Air, and Gauge modes, and an electronic compass with tilt sensor perfects this tool. www.suunto.com

Analox



It only takes a small concentration of Carbon Monoxide, breathed at pressure, to have an adverse effect on the human body. The Analox CO Clear™, with a fixed alarm, that continuously monitors for high levels of Carbon Monoxide contamination from compressors is a tool to help a filling station to deliver clean air.

www.analox.net

These fins created with hydrodynamic 'wing' shapes aspire to lift you forward in the water like a small airplane. They can be used with traditional strokes, but their strength shows when using the dolphin kick.

Mor-fin.com

MorFin





Aqualung i3

Next step in BC technology is the streamlined Sea Quest Pro QD with an integrated inflation and deflation system. The system has the diver controlling ascent and descent by pulling a lever up and down. The lever is fixed to the BC on the left lower side. Pull up, and air from the tank enters the BC; pull down, and **both** the upper and lower one-way air valve simultaneously releases air from the BC. This makes venting easier if you are in a head down position. For some old timers, this might take some time getting used to, but the nice streamlined design could make up for that. Another neat feature is the flat contour of the valves, they are now actually embedded in the vest rather than sitting on top of it.

www.aqualung.com



Swiss Video Lights

This small and powerful video light gives a natural white light of daylight quality with a color temperature of 5200 Kelvin at 21 watts. It has eight settings ranging from 14 to 28 watts. The light includes a bracket that mounts easily on standard arm systems and to top that off, it adds only 0.27kg to your gear. Burn time is 100-180 minutes. Another good feature is the overtemperature protection that allows you to use the light also outside the water.

www.keldanlights.com



It's smaller than you think



DEMA SHOW

Wide screen

Designed to be easy-to-read, a large size display was one of the primary requirements. To optimize readability in every circumstance, special attention was also paid to the size and brightness of the numbers when designing this piece —so was maximizing the viewing angle of Nemo Wide. You have an easy four button access to the system and a nice ergonomic design for comfort.

www.mares.com



Henderson

Perhaps Henderson's most highly advanced, patent pending material. The material called Insta Dry™ dries in just minutes. It is still warm, has anti-microbial properties and keeps the water shedding. The outer layer is made of durable, non-pilling Micro Mesh high carbon.

www.hendersonusa.com

Hot Down Under

It can get cold while diving even in Florida, but with the help of the "Heated Kidney Belt" you can keep warm under your suit. Put your kidney belt on, and when needed, a push on the right spot will release heat for up to an hour.

www.hotsuits.com.au



And it will lead you through the dive with light. It really doesn't matter how good a dive computer is if you can't see the display when you are diving. The display of the Liquivision F1 - Technical Grade Bottom Timer really shows you big fonts on the display, bright and clear, with a 180 degree viewing angle. You can not miss your dive time and depth unless you close your eyes. www.liquivision.ca



Ladies only

The first and only regulator dedicated to women, writes Mares in their new 2007 catalogue. It is elegant, it is lightweight and comes (except in the US) with a anatomically designed 'jAX mouth-piece' that can be custom moulded. The second stage is built over the Mares Proton.

www.mares.com



May the Force (Fin) be with you

Bob Evans once again releases a forceful fin, not like any other. As always, a futuristic design, colorful, like nothing before seen. The beauty of his new innovative models are that the blades are exchangeable. You keep the new comfortable footpocket and pick the fin blade that fits the dive you are about to do. www.forcefin.com



Vyper2

The Suunto Vyper2 includes Gauge and Nitrox modes as the predecessor, but with the added feature of gas switching. The Suunto Vyper2 can be programmed in one percent increments for nitrox mixtures between 21 and 100 percent oxygen. It is also possible to adjust oxygen partial pressure between 0.5 and 1.6 bar in 0.1-unit increments. Adjustments can be applied to both mixes. Wear it as a wrist unit with a protective boot, or mount it on a two-gauge console. www.suunto.com



Whites Catalyst

Unique above the shoulder to shoulder self entry system CSS – patented Captive Suspension System panels all around the waist and above the knees (360°!) and revolutionary pattern design allowing seven sizes to fit 90% of all human beings! www.whitesdiving.com



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Predator

This new edition of the Neptune Space mask is constructed with parts made of Ergal, a lightweight and durable aluminum compound used in aeronautics for applications requiring high mechanical resistance. These parts have a light gold finish which recalls the helmets of the first deep water divers. The mask design allows divers to make sensitive micro adjustments to the airflow, even when using gloves. Surface treatments protect the mask from salt water damage and tech-polymer protection treatments allow the PREDATOR to be used in extreme conditions. The total weight of the mask is 970 g with a positive buoyancy of just 296 g, creating a light and comfortable fit.

www.oceanreefgroup.com

Side exhaust

The Aqualung Kronos regulator has a combined venturi and breathing-resistance knob to simplify adjustments and also sports a side exhaust system to warm the internal components and

disperse bubbles—which especially photographers will know to value. www.aqualung.com



TB130 Oxy booster

This is a single stage, single acting air-driven gas booster pump (also suitable for oxygen) All components are O₂ clean. Technical Information: Length 600 mm/23.62 in, width 200 mm/7.87 in, net weight 15 kg/35 pounds (without whips) www.airetex.com

AquaSketch



This new gadget, meant to replace the u/w slates has a phosphorescent writing surface that illuminates during night dives. Use the included Graphite pencils to write on a 5-foot roll of blank Vellum and sketch little Nemo if your buddy is boring.

www.aquasketch.com



Arc Lenses

All Atomic Aquatics masks come standard with their special Ultra-Clear optical quality glass with exceptional clarity, light transmission, and no color distortion. ARC technology coatings further improve this already incredible lens material by reducing reflections and by allowing more light in the diving mask. Atomic Aquatics introduced Ultra-Clear to the diving industry and has never used low cost, poor quality green float glass like the other masks on the market.

www.atomicaquatics.com

Weezle

Cold feet are a major complaint of divers. Weezle boots use the same innovative materials as used in their undersuits. Available in Compact and Extreme Weights. Instead of having an undersuit sock that finishes at the ankle, we have extended it up the leg to just below the knee. Ankle weight wearers will find that this also adds a layer of comfort not featured in other undersuits and long-legged people will avoid having a cold gap.

www.weezle.co.uk



Flip-up camera

With HERO you will at least always have your camera ...erh... handy. It simply sits flat on a neoprene wristband until you need it. Once needed, it pivots up in an upright position—where it stays secured—you aim, shoot and hey presto your holiday shots for auntie Agatha is in the box. Ant is not only for diving. Take it cycling, kayaking or climbing. Connects to your computer via a standard USB-cable. www.goprocamera.com

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www.surfacemarker.com



Aeris mask HUD

Not really the latest news as it was launched by Oceanic mid 2006, but finally we got to try one on. Like a Porsche, this mask is sort of on the pricey side, but the finish is very nice and has a luxurious feel to it. The mask feels good and, most importantly, the HUD display is both clear and easily visible, yet not too imposing. Great for photographers and others who carry stuff around and need to stay focused. www.diveaeris.com



Nitelze LED Wand

15 hours is how long a tiny button battery will last you on this signal wand, or marker, from Nitelze. It is shock and waterproof with a depth rating of 1000ft / 300m. It also doubles as a handy pointer. www.niteize.com



H2Odysea Regulator

The "Magnum" is H2Odysea's third generation regulator. What struck me upon handling it at the show is how compact the first stage was and the exceptional finish. This forged brass first stage, with environmental sealing, screws into any size tank with 3/4" thread. It is mostly used for redundant air systems but can also be used on rebreathers and argon systems. **(no website found)**



Smoke on the Water

No, we are not referring to the classic rock song by Deep Purple but the upcoming look on Atomic Aquatics Splitfin. As an added standard feature, the elegant "Smoke on the Water" model comes with the new spring strap. These have a variable pitch and geometry that both allows for a more comfortable fit and simple one-handed removal. Available in early 2007.

www.atomic-aquatics.com



Clever as Ever

If you feel that you need some help controlling your ascent rate and have an extra hundred dollars to spare, this handy little device might be exactly what you need. It clips on easily to your mask strap and gives off an alarm when you ascend too fast. It will also signal a safety decompression stop of 3 minutes at 15 feet of water. Will it help prevent diving death and diving-related injuries? It may or it may not, but it will most definitely make you aware of when you lose your concentration and begin an unwanted ascent. However, what if you let yourself slip a little deeper than you were supposed to? Well, then you are on your own. The product is called MARA, the Miniature Ascent Rate Alarm, and is invented by Master Underwater Technologies www.masterunderwatertech.com

Whites Legend

This, their first compressed 2mm neoprene dry suit that incorporates the patented Captive Suspension System panels under the arms, waist and above the knees, allows the most difficult technical movements to be achieved effortlessly. www.whitesdiving.com

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2 in 1

Not exactly a new idea but modernized and sports a nice design. The OCTOS Gemini replaces the conventional BC power inflator and back-up second stage regulator by combining the functions of both in a single convenient unit. Eliminates the need for one hose from the first stage. Provides excellent breathing performance without the need for in-water adjustments. Power inflation, oral inflation and exhaust trim valve operations remain similar to the standard BC inflator and allow easy single-handed control. www.sherwoodscuba.com

On Pure Oxygen

A Push-button type of valve injects the oxygen in the breathing bag from the Oxygen cylinder. The gas is inhaled by the diver and the exhaled gas goes back inside the bag (one-way loop system). More oxygen is manually added by the diver as he/she metabolizes. The gas is scrubbed by the canister for Soda-lime (CO2 filtration material).

WARNING: Oxygen Toxicity Rules stated by NOAA and the United States NAVY must be observed and followed closely by the trained operator in order to avoid injury. www.divesafe.net



Getting Hooked

Let's face it, a certain fraction of humanity consists of knot-challenged members of our society. The Figure 9 rope tightener eliminates the frustration of tying, adjusting and untying knots. www.niteize.com



Getting Hooked Up

Tired of having your laptop running out of juice while you are on a long-haul flight? Enter this little gizmo which plugs into the passenger seat's audio jack and outputs regulated power to the attached USB charging cable/connector. Price:\$34.99 www.inflightpower.com

Wetsuit Bag

Who doesn't know the problem? Everyone tells you to be careful with your wetsuit, but no one shows you how to actually do that. iQ delivers a solution: the new Wetsuit Bag. With this bag the transport and storage of your wetsuit will be a piece of cake. With a special suspension feature, the folding of the wetsuit will be reduced. An open net on one side of the bag ensures ventilation, while the other side is closed so that a wet wetsuit will not drip during transport. An additional compartment provides enough space for neoprene accessories like boots, gloves or others. It's the best thing you can do for your second skin. www.iq-company.com

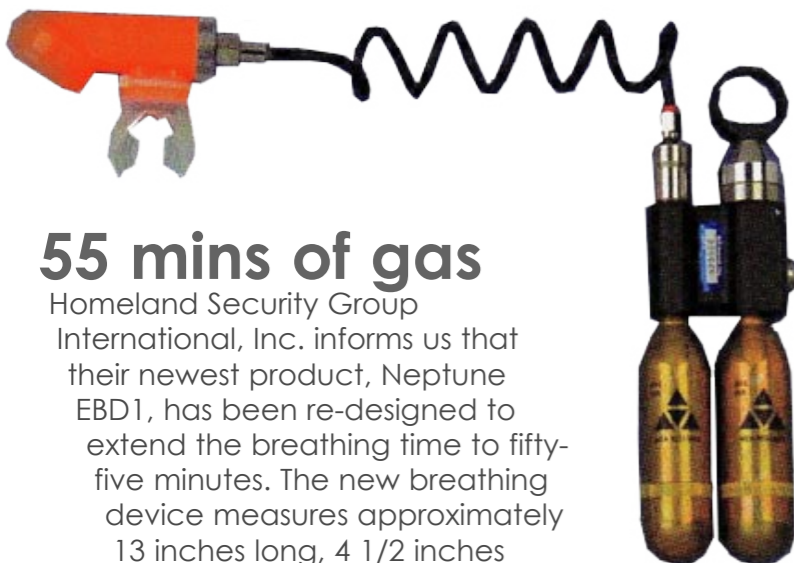


Taking the inlaws on a picnic?

The Discovery 1000 is a state-of-the-art submersible that offers panoramic viewing, contemporary styling, hydrodynamic efficiency and extraordinary range, endurance and maneuverability. Originally designed for launch and recovery from a superyacht, the Discovery 1000 is a modular design available in either two, four or six-passenger configuration all based on an identical external framework. A 40 KW diesel engine with hydrostatic drive can be added to each vehicle as an option to increase surface range and speed. The Discovery design prioritizes the following characteristics:

- * Minimum weight in air
- * Exceptional viewing
- * High level of comfort
- * Low hydrodynamic drag

www.ussubs.com



55 mins of gas

Homeland Security Group International, Inc. informs us that their newest product, Neptune EBD1, has been re-designed to extend the breathing time to fifty-five minutes. The new breathing device measures approximately 13 inches long, 4 1/2 inches wide with a weight of just less than five pounds. The new version, which has not been officially named, will supply 55 to 60 minutes of positive, 2-stage regulated airflow depending on stress. www.hsgint.com