



AIDA Competition Safety Freediver Course

Student notes

Course Structure

AIDA Competition Safety Course is a two parts course:

- Day 1 is the **AIDA Pool Competition Safety Diver Course**
 - 1 Theory Session
 - 1 Exam
 - 1 Pool Session
- Day 2 is the **AIDA Depth Competition Safety Diver Course**
 - 1 Theory Session on Deep Safety
 - Exam
 - 1 Deep pool / Open Water Session

The two parts can be completed as one course or at separate times with separate certifications

Course Content Part 1: AIDA Pool Competition Safety Diver

1. Theory session

- 1.1. General Information on AIDA International Competitions
- 1.2. AIDA International Competitions vs Record Attempts
- 1.3. Characteristics of AIDA International Pool Competitions
- 1.4. Static Competitions
- 1.5. Dynamic / Dynamic No-Fins Competitions
- 1.6. Role of the Competition Safety Freediver
- 1.7. Safety Freediver procedures
- 1.8. Pool Competition Safety Diver Equipment

1.1. The AIDA International Regulations & Ranking

- One set of Regulations to govern National/International Freediving Competitions and World Records (currently ver12)
- Most AIDA Nationals enforce AIDA International Regulations for National Record attempts
- Ideal is for every performance around the globe to be judges under the same conditions
- This is one of the primary functions of a competition organizer and a safety team

1.2. The AIDA International Competitions vs Record Attempts

Three levels of AIDA Competitions

- **National Competitions**
=> 2 Judges, National AIDA Approves
- **International Competitions**
=> 3 Judges (one D level) AIDA Int. approves
- **World Championships**
=> AIDA International Sanctions organizer after vote – 5 Judges Jury minimum

- **Record attempts can be run in all 8 AIDA disciplines**
- In a record attempt the organizer is directly linked to the athlete – any organizational/safety mistake is the athlete's mistake
- In an AIDA Competition the organizer/safety is responsible towards athletes and judges for the smooth running of the event

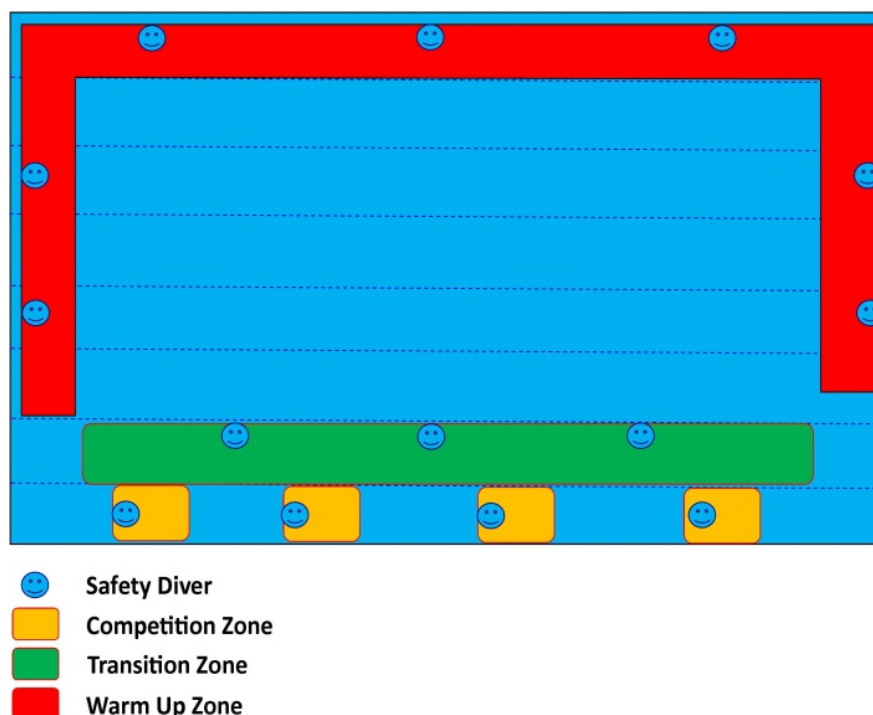
1.3. Characteristics of AIDA International Pool Competitions

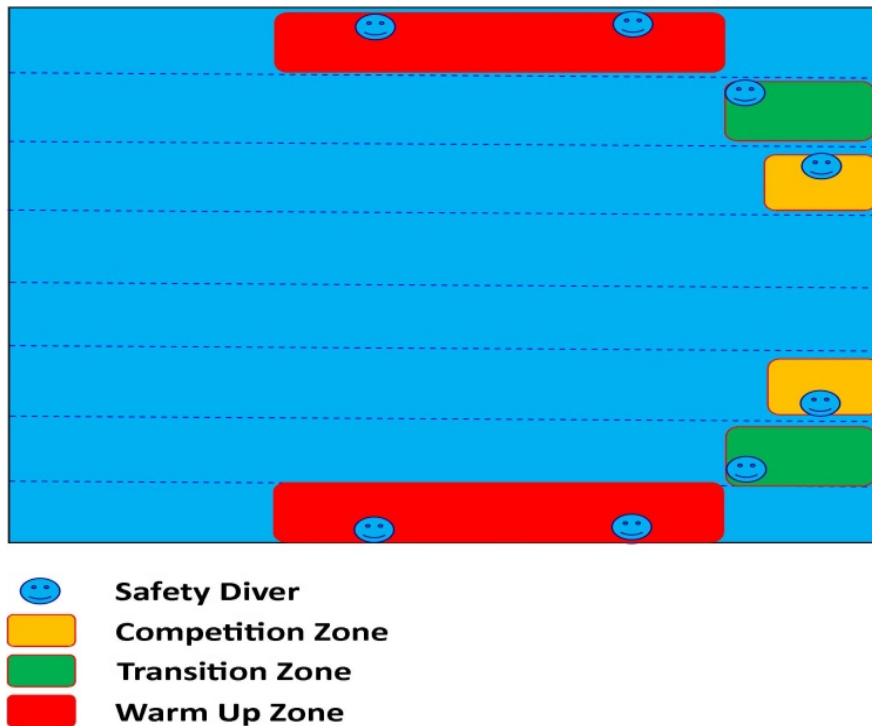
- **3 Pool Disciplines**
 - Static (STA)
 - Dynamic With Fins (DYN)
 - Dynamic Without Fins (DNF)
- Takes Place in Pool (Confined Water possible for STA)
- Min pool depth of 120cm for World Championships
- Min pool depth of 60cm for STA and 90cm for DYN/DNF
- Min pool length 25 yards for DYN/DNF

1.4. Static Competitions

Pool Setup

- **Warm-up Zone**
Athletes prepare here for 45min prior to OT
- **Transition Zone**
Athletes wait here after finishing warm up prior to entering the comp. zone
- **Competition Zone**
Athletes perform their competition attempt here

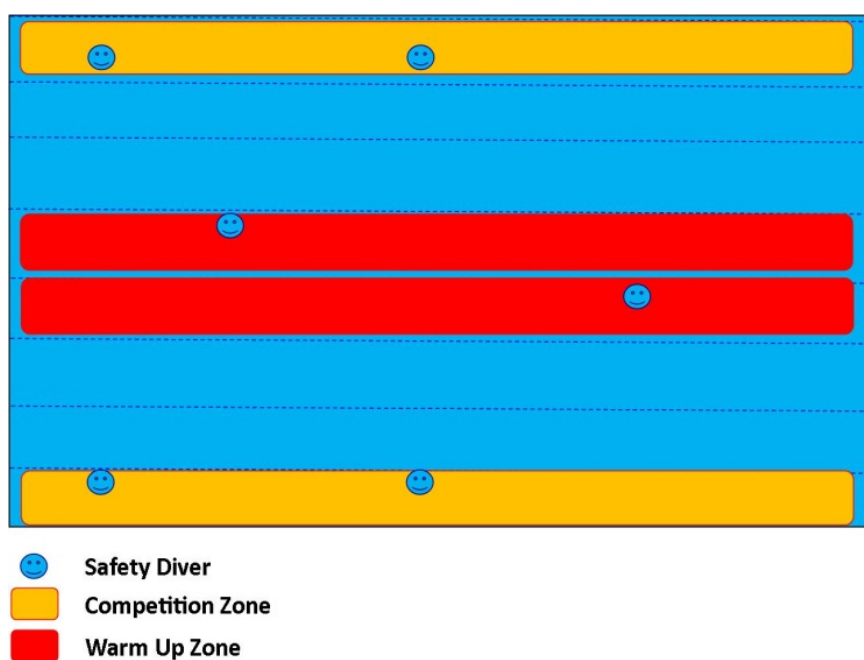


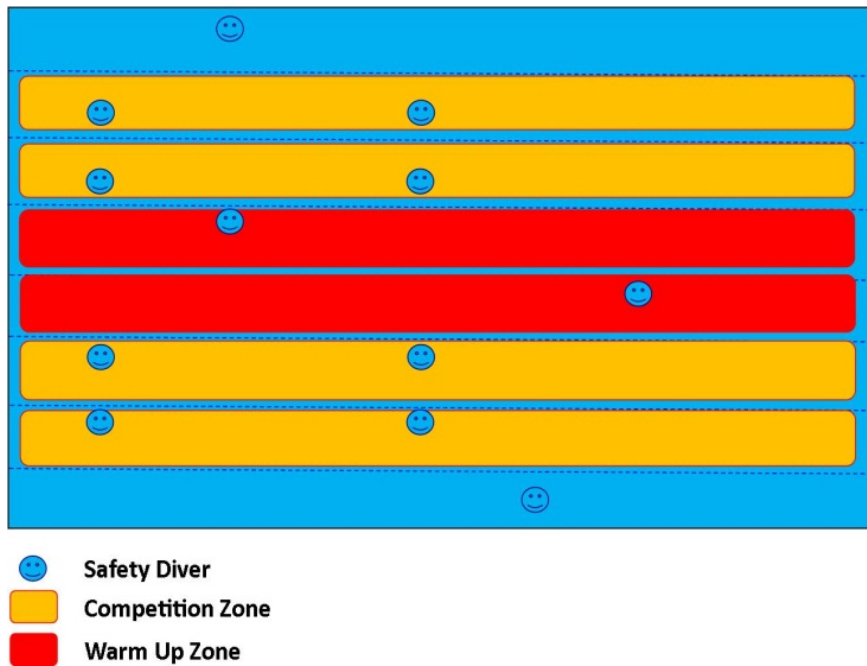


1.5. Dynamic / Dynamic No-Fins Competitions

Pool Setup

- **Warm-up Zone**
Athlete can enter 45min before OT
- **Competition Zone**
Athlete performs competition dive here





1.6. Role of the Competition Safety Freediver

Warm Up / Transition Zones

- Ensure safety of the athletes
- Maintain calm and quite environment
- Assist the athletes
- To ensure and assist the unobstructed progression of the competition
- Follow the instructions of Competition Organizer and the AIDA judges

Official Competition Zone

- Ensure safety of the athletes
- Follow athletes' performances in area of responsibility and intervene if required
- Follow instructions given by AIDA Judges or Competition Organizers
- Maintain calm and quite environment
- Ensure and assist the unobstructed progression of the competition

1.7. Safety Freediver Procedures

Warm Up / Transition Zones

- Safety role is to monitor athletes during warm ups
- Safety follow warm up dives only if asked to by athlete or deems necessary (big performances)
- Assist the athletes in their warm up (ensure same behavior toward all athletes)
- Inform AIDA Judges and/or Organizer of any problems in their area (O2 use, BOs, behavior)

Official Competition Zone

- Follow athletes' performances in area of responsibility (DYN/DNF)
- If in STA athlete is assisted by coach the safety diver is still responsible for athlete's safety and is ready to intervene
- Maintain calm and quiet environment
- Assist in the unobstructed progression of the competition

Hints and Procedures for Pool Competition Safety Divers

- If in STA athlete is assisted by coach they are responsible for taps - the safety diver can still be asked by the judge to perform extra taps
- In STA the official taps are at AP-1min, AP,-30sec, AP, and then every 15sec after AP
- In DYN and DNF start the safety dive at the 5m mark to be close to the athlete in case of a packing black-out
- Don't use any weights when safetying in DYN/DNF as holding a diver at the surface during a rescue will be very difficult
- When safetying in DYN/DNF wear a wetsuit to increase your buoyancy

Interaction with the Judges

- AIDA Judges are responsible for maintaining AIDA Regulations during a competition
- Safety divers must assist the Judges in this task
- In pool competitions communication between judges and safety is easy as distances are small and safety divers are at the surface
- In STA and after the athlete has surfaced in DYN/DNF only the AIDA Judge can decide to have the safety diver to stop a performance due to disqualification (BO, PBMM, LMC)
- Once the athlete surfaces, the safety diver must not touch or in any way assist the athlete (verbally etc) unless instructed by the AIDA Judge OR the athlete's safety is compromised (airways clearly sinking below surface)
- The safety diver is not responsible for keeping performance time (STA) or distance (DYN/DNF) but is encouraged to do so to improve their ability to identify and respond in case of emergency

1.8. Pool Competition Safety Diver Equipment

The Competition Safety Diver must have the following equipment:

1. Mask & Snorkel (avoid goggles)
2. Wetsuit (3mm)
3. Fins – for DYN/DNF (long blades are recommended)
4. Wristwatch with stopwatch function (set to official time)
5. Competition schedule with OTs, Announced Performances and Athlete's PBs
6. Flutter Board / Buoyancy aid

Course Content Part 2: AIDA Depth Competition Safety Diver

2. Theory session

- 2.1. Characteristics of AIDA International Depth Competitions
- 2.2. Constant Weight / Constant No-Fins Competitions / Free Immersion Competitions
- 2.3. Role of the Safety Freediver
- 2.4. Safety Freediver procedures
- 2.5. Depth Competition Equipment
- 2.6. Ethical & Legal Considerations of Competition Safety Divers
- 2.7. Reminder: Dealing With Incidents Spotting an Hypoxia

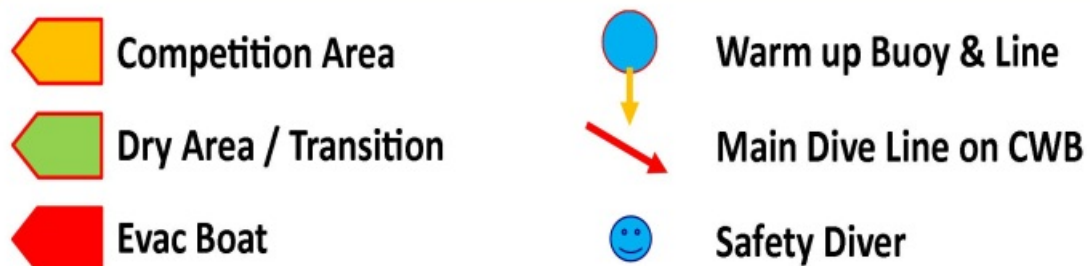
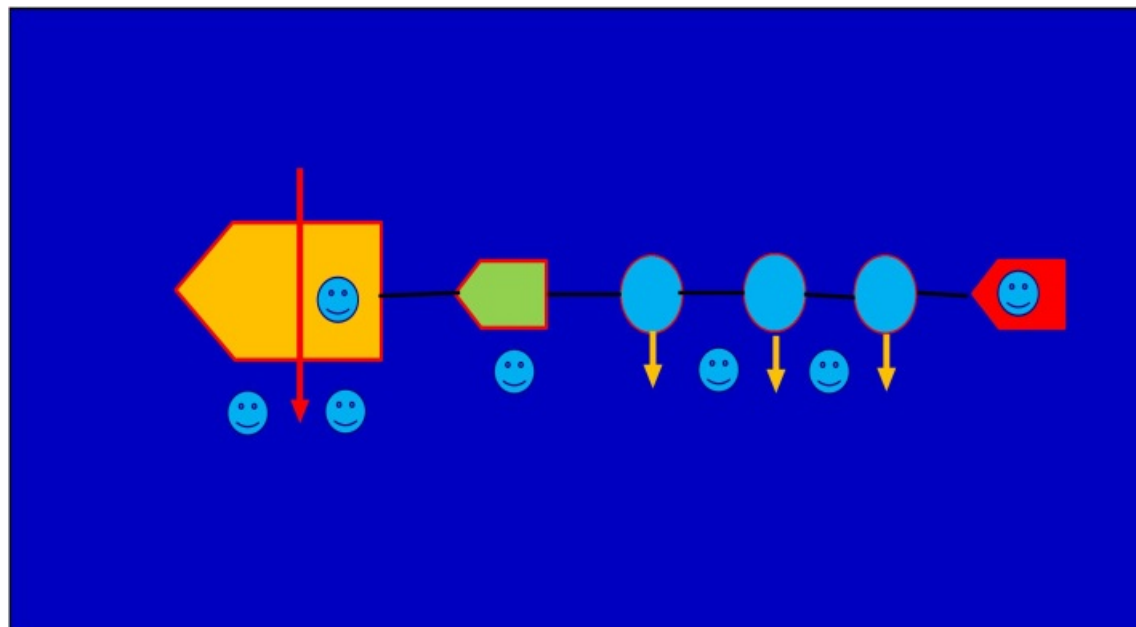
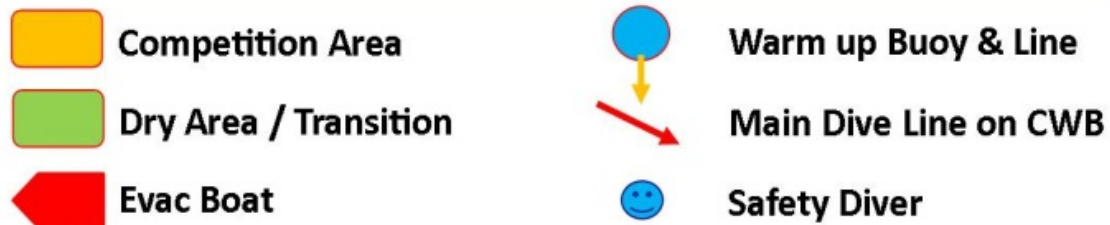
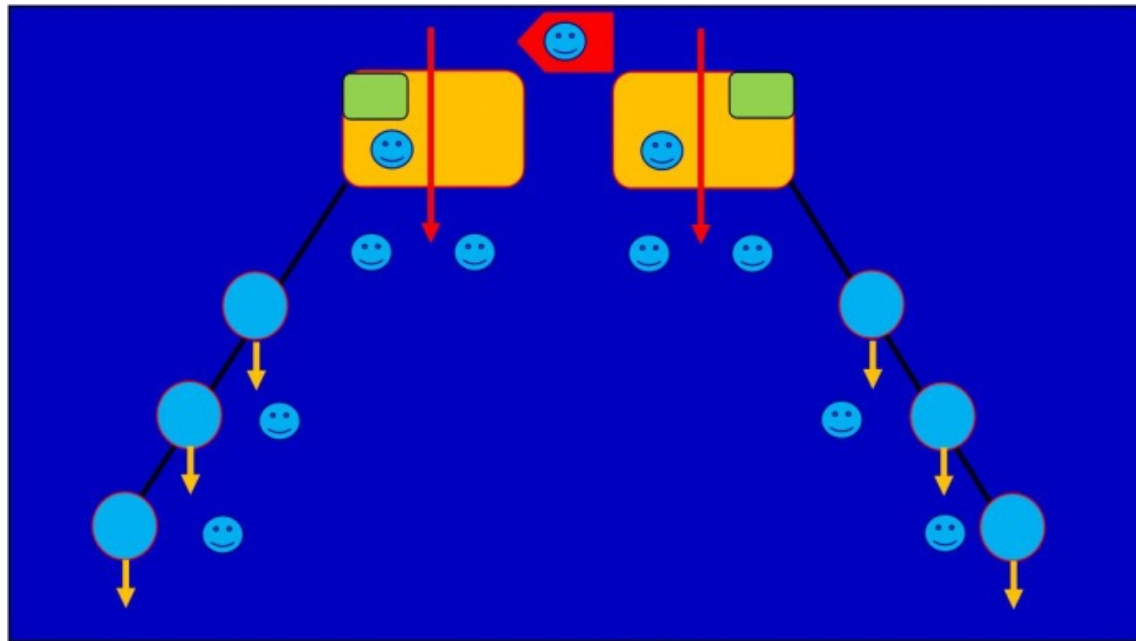
2.1. Characteristics of AIDA International Depth Competitions

- **3 Depth Disciplines**
 - Constant Weight (CWT)
 - Constant Weight No Fins (CNF)
 - Free Immersion (FIM)
- Take Place in Open Water Environment (sea or lake)
- 2 more non-competition disciplines recognized by AIDA International (record attempt disciplines)
 - Variable Ballast
 - No - Limits

2.2. Constant Weight / Constant Weight No-Fins / Free Immersion Competitions

Depth Competition Setup

- **Warm-up Zone**
Athletes have access to this zone 45min prior to OT
- **Transition Area**
Athletes wait here after finishing warm up prior to entering the comp. zone
- **Dry Area**
Boat or similar which allows the athletes to stay dry prior to their performance
- **Competition Zone**
Athletes perform their official competition attempt here



2.3. Role of the Depth Competition Safety Freediver

Warm Up / Transition Zones

- Ensure safety of the athletes
- Place official depth gauges on athletes
- Check athlete's lanyards
- Manage the flow of athletes to the competition zone
- Maintain calm and quiet environment
- Assist the athletes
- Follow the instructions of Competition Organizer and the AIDA judges

Official Competition Zone

- Ensure safety of the athletes
- Dive to provide safety for athletes at depth and intervene if required
- Follow instructions given by AIDA Judges or Competition Organizers
- Maintain calm and quiet environment
- Ensure and assist the unobstructed progression of the competition

2.4. Safety Freediver procedures

Warm Up / Transition Zones

- Safety role is to monitor athletes during warm ups
- Safety dive during warm up dives only if asked to by athlete or deems necessary (deep / long warm ups)
- Assist the athletes in their warm up (ensure same behavior toward all athletes)
- Inform AIDA Judges and/or Organizer of any problems in their area (O2 use, BOs, behavior)

Official Competition Zone

- Dive to safety athletes at depth (20m-30m) in co-ordination with organizers / judges
- Maintain calm and quiet environment
- Ensure official depth gauge rotation and lanyard inspection (co-ordinate with transition safety diver)
- Assist in the unobstructed progression of the competition

Interaction with the Judges

- AIDA Judges are responsible for maintaining AIDA Regulations during a competition
- Safety divers must assist the Judges in this task
- In depth competitions communication between judges and safety is impossible during the ascend of the athlete
- During this phase of the dive the safety diver must decide to intervene and stop a performance – perform a rescue (BO, LMC)
- Judges are encouraged to keep the dive time to assist the safeties in planning the start of their dives
- Once the athlete surfaces, the safety diver must not touch or in any way assist the athlete (verbally etc.) unless instructed by the AIDA Judge OR the athlete's safety is compromised (airways clearly sinking below surface)

- The safety diver is can be responsible for checking performance (tag or reading on depth gauge) in co-ordination with judges
- The organizers and safety divers are the final responsible for athletes safety – not the judges

2.5. Depth Competition Equipment

For a Depth Competition the following equipment is required:

1. Counter weight ballast system
2. Bottom weight assembly including plate and bottom camera (normally 20-25kg required)
3. Measured dive line (min 10mm thick)
4. Counter ballast weights with quick attach system (40-50 kg in 20kg bundles ready to attach and drop)
5. Wristwatch with stopwatch function (set to official time)
6. Competition schedule with OTs, Announced Performances and PBs
7. Official Dive computers (2 or 3)
8. O₂ supply – constant flow and demand valve
9. Decompression O₂
10. First Aid kit

For a Depth Competition the following equipment is recommended:

1. Sonar mounted near the dive line to monitor dives – Needs experienced operator
2. Motor driven counter weight ballast
3. Spare surface and bottom cameras
4. Underwater electrical scooters – Needs experienced operators
5. Spare Lanyards
6. AED if allowed in the country of the event – Needs trained and certified operator

Depth Competition Setup

For a Depth Competition the following safety equipment procedures and personnel are also available:

1. Safety Scuba divers
2. Lift bag on freediver
3. Lift bag on line
4. Manual (diver to diver)

Depth Competition Safety Diver Equipment

The Competition Safety Diver must have the following personal equipment:

1. Mask & Snorkel
2. Wetsuit (appropriate thickness)
3. Long blades Fins – (avoid monofins!!!)
4. Depth Gauge (set to official time)
5. Competition schedule with OTs, Announced Performances and Athlete's PBs

Don't forget water and light snacks for longer competitions!

2.6. Ethical & Legal Considerations of Competition Safety Divers

We have spoken about the skills and equipment required to act as a Competition Safety Diver but there are also legal and ethical obligations one should consider.

1. When safety diving at a competition you are legally liable for your actions even if you are an unpaid volunteer.
2. Never engage in inappropriate behavior with athletes or other event staff.
3. Always be considerate with athletes during and after a rescue – it can be an emotionally traumatizing moment for them and your behavior should be appropriate.
4. Never use material (video/photo/sound) collected during events without the specific consent of the athletes AND the organizers.
5. Remember that even if it is only a voluntary short term activity you must treat it seriously and professionally as people's wellbeing or even lives are at stake.

2.7. Reminder: Dealing With Incidents Spotting a Hypoxia

Warning Signs:

- None!
- Irregular kick
- Unfocused eyes
- Pulling line
- Escaping air
- Anything abnormal
- Speeding up at end of a dive

Rescuing a freediver with Hypoxia => **SAFE BTT**

1. Get the diver to the **S**urface
2. Hold him so his **A**irways are out of the water
3. Remove all **F**acial **E**quipment
4. **B**low, **T**ap, **T**alk
5. If the competitor doesn't start breathing within ten seconds, give up to five rescue breaths
6. If no recovery, remove the competitor from the water, start CPR and seek emergency medical assistance
7. The competitor should stop freediving for the day

Being a safety freediver will expand your own freediving horizons and will give you a new level of self-assurance in the water

Get involved in this "other side" of freediving and enjoy!!!