The Villages Scuba Club

Improving You Air Consumption

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5 Tips to Suck Less (Gas)

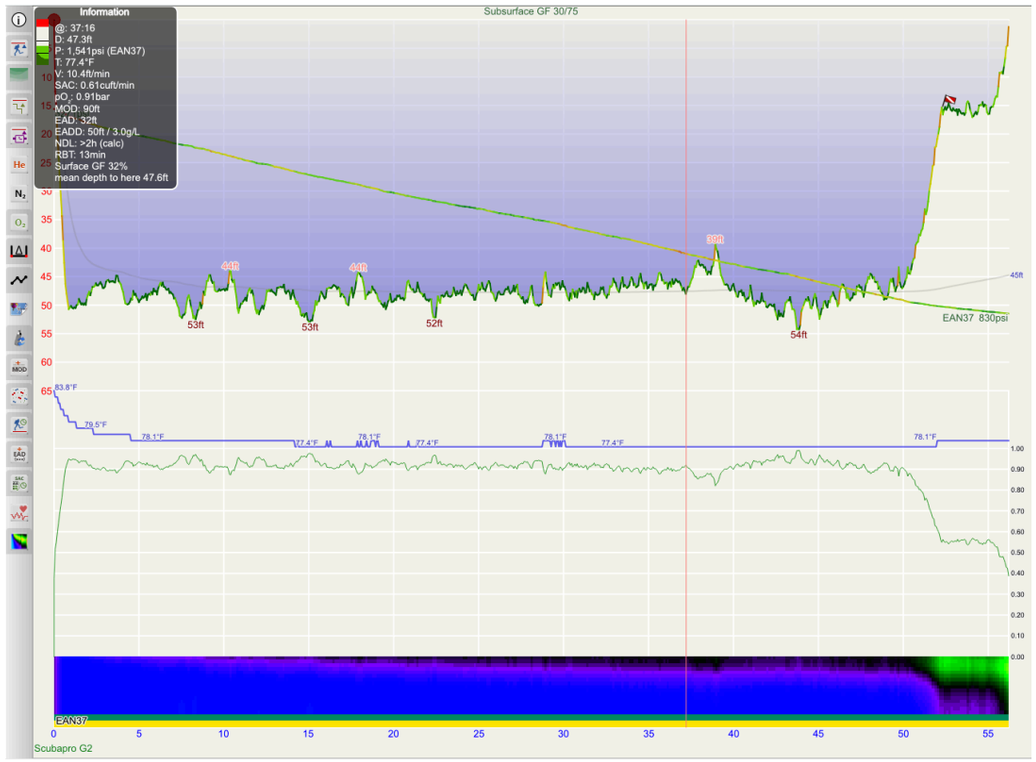
- Reduce your stress
- Reduce your weights
- Improve your buoyancy and trim
- Improve your propulsion
- Regulate your breathing

Reduce your stress

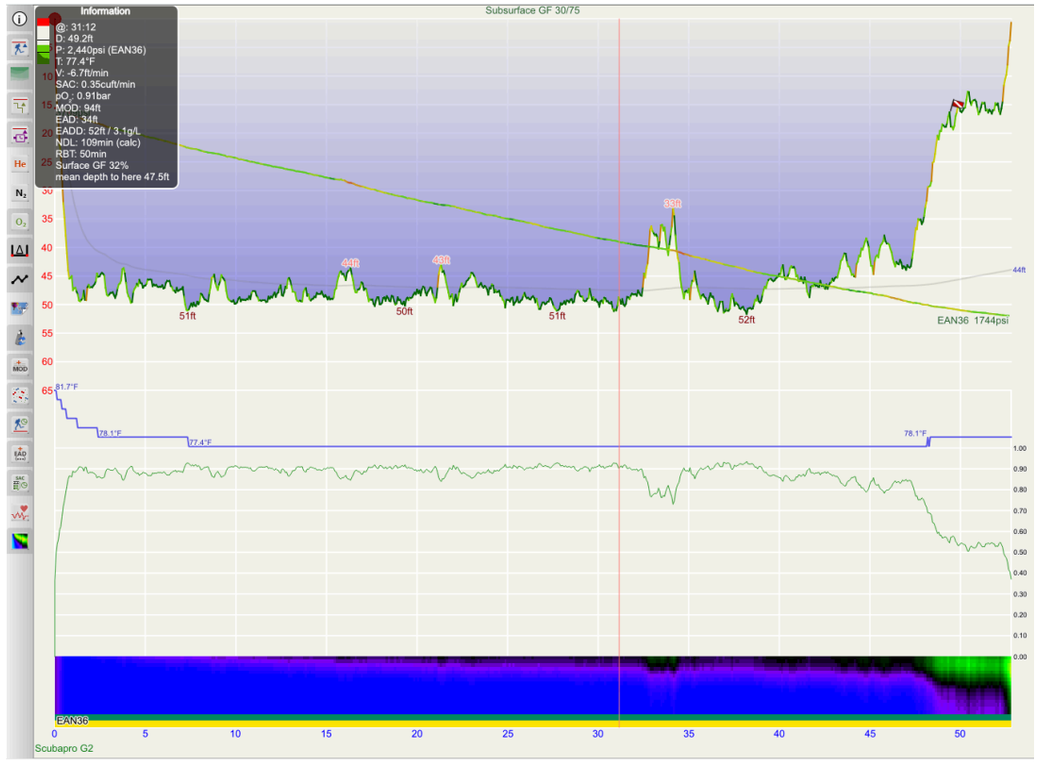
- Before the dive trip -
  - Use a checklist for packing.
  - Pack your dive bag in order of gear assembly.
  - Review your dive computer manual for Nitrox settings.
- On the boat -
  - Set up gear early and check gear.
  - Pay attention to dive briefing.
  - Don’t get overheated.
- In the water -
  - Reduce your workload.
  - Don’t be a squirrel.
  - Check your gauges early and often.

Reducing Workload

Bath & Tennis dive site off Riviera Beach - ~50 foot dive, 55 minutes



Dove with full camera setup
SAC Rate 0.51 cu ft per min



Dove without camera
SAC Rate 0.41 cu ft per min

Reduce your weights

- The more weight you have, the more you have to work to get through the water.
  - You will be using too much weight coming out of your Open Water certification.
  - Most on-line weight calculators seem to overweight divers.
- Can’t get down? Burp your suit, make sure you are fully emptying your BCD. Don’t forget to exhale.
- Consider going to Blue Grotto and doing a weight check at your safety stop at the end of the dive.

Improve your buoyancy and trim

- Goal is to have control of your depth at all times.
- Proper trim reduces drag and requires less energy to move through the water.
- Best approach is to minimize weighting and properly distribute weights to achieve level trim, using
  - Trim pockets,
  - Old tank straps, or
  - Weight-on-Web plates.

- Technique I use is to <u>slightly</u> arch my back. This causes my legs and head to rise. This also causes me to breathe from my diaphragm.
- Consider a back-inflate BCD or Backplate Wing.

Improve your propulsion

- Flutter Kick uses your entire leg and is very powerful, however it is energy intensive and pushes water downward.
- Modified Flutter uses your lower leg only and is less energy intensive, but less efficient. It also keeps your fins away from coral.
- Frog Kick uses your entire leg. When done properly, a frog kick pushes water behind you. Energy intensive, but has built-in rest periods.

Regulate your breathing

- First rule of diving - Always Breathe, Never Hold Your Breath.
- Don’t skip breathe. This causes CO2 buildup.
- A technique to try -
  - Count as you inhale “1, 2, 3, 4” then exhale “1, 2, 3, 4”,
  - Idea is to inhale and exhale slowly and deeply.
  - Focus on breathing with your diapraghm.
  - Don’t blast your exhale.
  - Once you count to 4, try counting to 5, then 6.
- Use this technique after you chase after that turtle.

Bonus Tip #1 - Log your dives

- Type of Water,
- Tank Size and Type,
- Amount of Air Used (PSI or Cu Ft),
- Wetsuit,
- Weights used and how configured,
- Maximum and Average Depth (if Dive Computer provides), and
- Calculate your Surface Air Consumption (SAC) rate.

Bonus Tip #2 - Air Integrated Computer

- Air Integrated Computers typically display Air Time Remaining.
  - Based on your gas remaining and current breathing rate.
  - An alternative is to get a Cressi Digi2 Gauge (or similar) ~$300.
- Pay attention to this readout and adjust your dive profile, accordingly.

Cressi Digi2 Gauge

Questions/Comments?