

# MORE TRAINING

STORY BY PATRICK VAN HOESERLANDE ILLUSTRATION PETER BOSTEELS

Skubba had already completed a lot of training sessions in the swimming pool and he was becoming a better diver each time. He learnt a lot with Fred, and not once did they get bored. Every lesson was exciting and fun.

“Lesson”. The word reminded him of school, but these were not the kind of lessons he was used to. He wished school was as much fun as these diving lessons. After each session, the two friends thought they knew everything there was to know about diving, but soon after, they realised that there was still a lot more to learn.

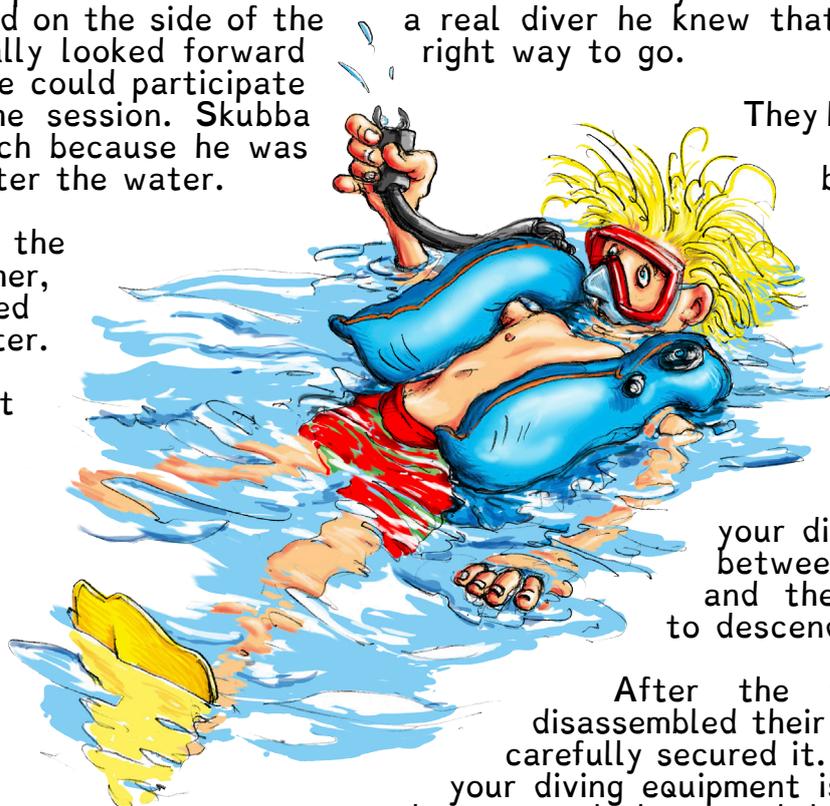
Pool trainings started with a little explanation about what they would learn in the next hour, and why they needed it for diving. Then they “dry” practiced it, which meant they repeated the exercise Nella demonstrated on the side of the pool. Fred especially looked forward to this, because he could participate in this part of the session. Skubba did not like it much because he was not allowed to enter the water.

When they passed the dry training together, Skubba was allowed to go into the water. He started with a little warm up first by swimming a bit and practicing some exercises they already knew, followed by repeating what they had done during the dry practice, this time in and underwater. And before he realised it, the training was over.

The training always ended with a water game. No session was without some playtime. Fred soon realised that these were not just games. Every game had something to do with what they had just learnt or practiced. By playing, they repeated what they had seen a few

minutes before. Skubba had not noticed that at first, but he was playing in the water while Fred was watching from the side of the pool.

What had they already mastered? They could completely assemble their own dive equipment. They did their buddy checks by checking their buddy’s dive equipment functioned correctly. They could see if something did not work well and they knew what everything was for. In the water, a BCD jacket is used to hover. Hovering was important, because during the dive Skubba did not want to crash to the bottom or stir up silt. There was no silt in the pool, but they had to learn how to hover for their explorations later on in open water. When Skubba went down, he added a little bit of air into the jacket. When he ascended, he let the air out. That may sound strange, but as a real diver he knew that this was the right way to go.



They had been shown how a balloon becomes bigger with the more air added to it, making it rise upwards. He could not allow this to happen with his BCD. A jacket is used to control your dive by hovering between the bottom and the surface, not to descend or rise.

After the training, they disassembled their equipment and carefully secured it. Taking care of your diving equipment is important. It does not only last much longer this way, but it also allows it to work well. And diving with equipment that works well is safer and much more fun.

Their pool training sessions had made real divers out of them. They now knew everything about diving. Right?

At least, that’s what they thought...