

Advanced nitrox thinking

Scubapro's Aladin Sport Matrix may have the look of an entry-level diving computer but it's actually an advanced nitrox computer with features including customisable algorithms, a digital compass and multiple gas switching.

Larger than a watch, but certainly less bulky than others of its ilk, the attractive silver-faced Sport is available in a two-gauge console or compact, wrist-mounted version with a hard, rubberised protective casing and robust strap. It is depth-rated to 120m.

The display, a combination of upper segments and lower dot-matrix digits, is both clear and concise with the crucial depth, duration, no-decompression and decompression data easily digested at a glance. A removable screen guard protects against impact damage and scratches.

Two push-button controls provide access to a scrolling menu system and there are three selectable operating modes: freediving, gauge or scuba. In the scuba sub-menu I could input my preferred partial pressure of oxygen (selectable between 1.0-1.6) and gas mixes (21-100 per cent oxygen). Information pertaining to age, physical condition and experience level can also be included to offer greater conservatism. This includes a six-step choice of microbubble levels, designed to slow the ascent

process in stages, thus allowing the body more time to desaturate.

I opted instead, to utilise Scubapro's Profile Dependent Intermediate Stop (PDIS) feature. Although similar to a conventional deep stop, the PDIS is more flexible in both its approach and execution. Based on nitrogen loading from the current and previous dives, as well as the gas mix in use, the PDIS interprets the user's dive profile to calculate an intermediate stop. This provides a more gradual ascent than that of a conventional deep stop and being non-mandatory there are no penalties incurred for non-observance.

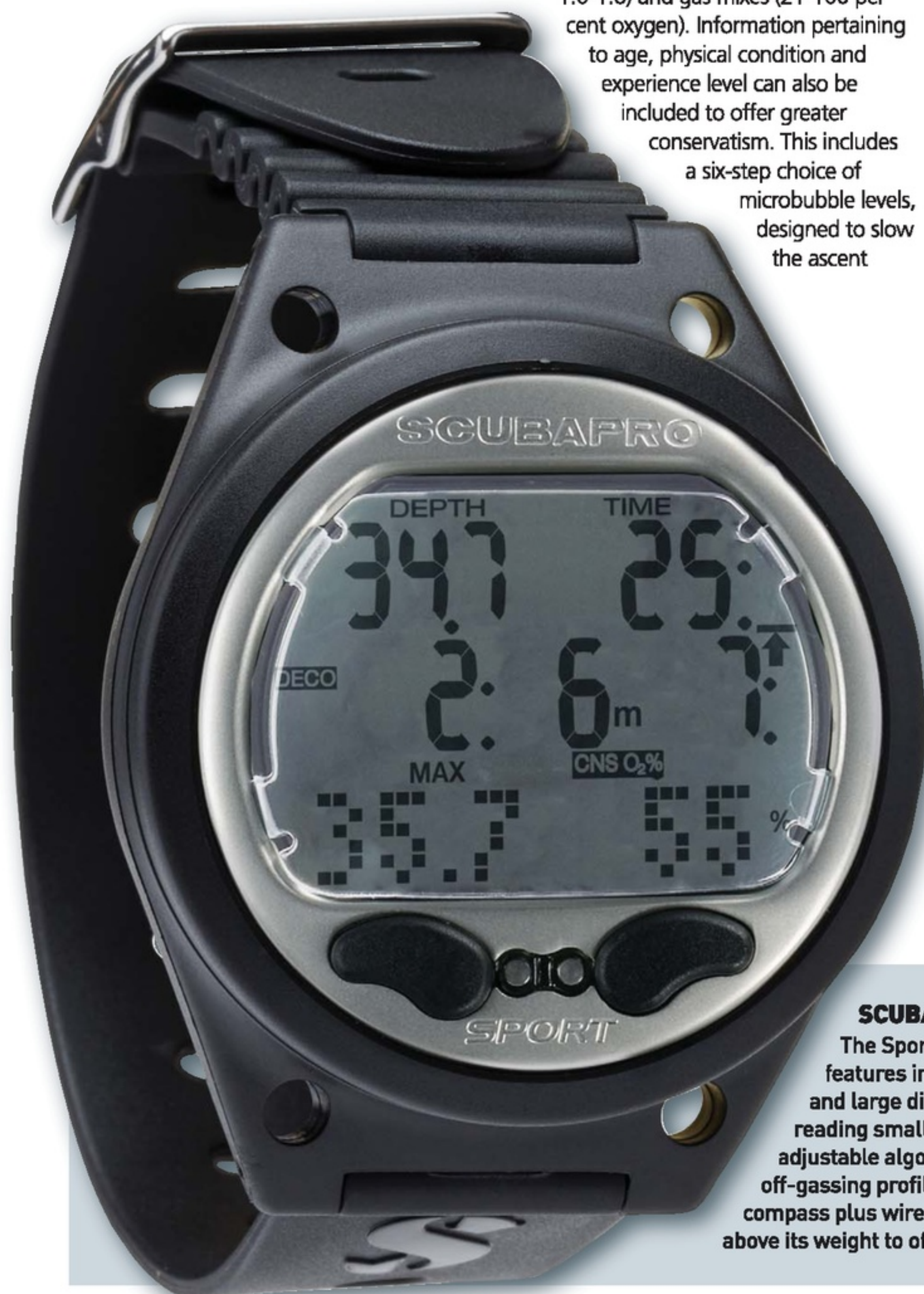
On sloping reefs or walls I could easily follow its profile while happily continuing to explore my surroundings, while during less interesting free ascents I was free to continue to my normal safety-stop depth.

The Sport (Matrix) also uses the tongue-twisting Predictive Multi-Gas ZHL16 ADT MB algorithm to allow use of up to three nitrox gas mixes. This is suitable for experienced divers and novices alike who can continue to expand their skills without having to upgrade their computer.

In addition to a selectable backlight, visual and audible alarms, a bookmark feature, altitude adjustment and a dive planner, the Sport (Matrix) also has a very effective digital compass. This is easily calibrated at the surface in a minute or so and is conveniently displayed on the dot matrix portion of the screen when activated underwater.

The user-changeable CR2450 battery has a lifespan of up to two years or 300 dives and dive logs can be transferred wirelessly to a Mac, PC or mobile device via bluetooth.

Neil Hope



Aladin Sport (Matrix)

Company: Scubapro

Price: £230

Web: www.scubapro.com

SCUBA says

The Sport (Matrix) packs plenty of up-to-date features into a compact form. The uncluttered screen and large digits are ideal for those who have difficulty reading smaller watch-sized displays, while its adjustable algorithm allows the user to customise their off-gassing profile. With multi-gas capability, a digital compass plus wireless transfer, this computer punches well above its weight to offer great value for money.