

# WELL AND TRULY TESTED



With Mike Ward busy comparing drysuits, it's down to **STEVE WARREN** to try out a mask, gloves and fins for the regular test pages. And a look at the star-ratings suggests that it was a good month for new kit!

## MASK SCUBAPRO ZOOM EVO

**A LARGE PERCENTAGE** of the diving population has imperfect eyesight, including me. For complicated eyesight problems, the best solution is custom prescription ground lenses bonded into your face-mask, but for many people off-the-shelf lenses will be fine.

Diving-equipment manufacturers usually supply a range of masks into which their own off-the-shelf lenses can be fitted, but it's usually left to the dive-shop to install them.

This can be a tedious process, because you usually have to use flathead screwdrivers or other sharp tools to prise the mask apart, and there's always the risk that you'll slip and pierce the mask-skirt, snap one of the retaining frames or struggle to get the lenses to make a watertight seal.

These are experiences from my former years working in dive-shops that I'd happily have done without.

The Scubapro Zoom EVO mask aims to solve these problems with a design that lets you take the mask apart easily to install or change lenses without needing to use tools at all.

Among the benefits is that if the diver's prescription alters, new lenses can be ordered and fitted at home.

For dive-centres, the mask provides a quick and easy solution to offering rental masks with corrective lenses to suitable clients, always assuming that the mask fits the customer.

After all, a customer who can see under water is likely to be much happier than one who can't. Scubapro supplies lenses in plus and minus prescriptions, as well as bi-focals.

To disassemble the mask, all you need to do is push up on the mask frames' V-lock, then pull out the clip-in frame that surrounds each lens. Reverse the process to reassemble.

Scubapro has a video that shows you how to do this and it really is a cinch (you can find it on YouTube).

A tip I would offer is to fit one lens at a time, then check for a seal by inhaling through your nose, as you do normally when trying a mask for fit. Then, if you should have a leak, you'll know which lens to reseal.



### The Design

Mask-design really is a case of reinventing the wheel every so often. The Zoom EVO is a conventional twin-lens mask with nose-pocket. It's easy to pinch your nose, even with gloves, or to block your nostrils from underneath.

The model I was supplied for testing had a black silicone skirt. It's low-volume and these two attributes make it a good choice for underwater photographers, as it improves the view of camera viewfinders. It's also sold with a clear skirt, making it easier to light the face of a modelling diver, and there's no green hue from the glass, so flesh-tones look entirely natural.

If you want to change the look of the EVO, Scubapro sells frame inserts in different colours. There's also an optional mount for mask-mounting a GoPro action-cam.

### In Use

Overall, neither peripheral vision nor downward vision is as good on the Zoom EVO as on some other masks I've tried, though it's certainly adequate.

Because of some delays in my testing schedule, I tried the mask with three weeks' beard growth, and it didn't need to be cleared once, even on dives exceeding an hour.

The Zoom EVO is one of those masks that can be cleared hands-free with a bit of practice. It's also very comfortable.

Side-profile showing strap-adjustment.



falling apart but, if it did, you can replace it in seconds – a great feature given that mask-straps normally fail only as you're putting them on.

The strap has a built-in elasticated snorkel-keeper – it might be problematic to fit over a snorkel with a top valve, but mine doesn't have valves and it fitted fine.

I don't get why divers would wear a snorkel on their mask while scuba-diving. When I tried it, decades ago, it just kept hitting things and

dislodging my mask and flooding it. But I do

carry a folding snorkel in my BC. It has a soft barrel, and I thought the Zoom EVO's comfort-strap snorkel-holder might cause it to collapse and impede breathing, but it didn't.

### SPECS

**TESTER** » Steve Warren, photography Nicky Martinez

**PRICE** » £39, replacement lenses £27.50 each, GoPro mount £9, comfort-strap £16.50

**LENS** » Twin

**LENS RANGE** » -1.5 to +4

**WEIGHT** » 210g

**COLOURS** » With black frame – blue, silver, yellow, red, pink, turquoise and purple. With clear frame – blue, yellow or silver

**CONTACT** » scubapro.com

**DIVER GUIDE** ★★★★★★☆☆

### Conclusion

The Zoom EVO fulfils its role as a mask into which corrective lenses can be easily and swiftly installed, removed and swapped very well indeed. It also seals well, is easy to clear and comfortable. The comfort-strap works perfectly.

The field of view is just a little narrow, but few people will really notice this. ■



The Zoom EVO disassembled.