



Course Report: Global Dive Assistant Instructor Course, 18-21st March 2010

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Being involved in the training of diving professionals is something that I have always enjoyed, whether it's helping Divemaster trainees get to grips with understanding PADI standards or getting instructor candidates to think about not just how they teach, but why they teach the skills that are in a given course. When the opportunity to teach an entire Assistant Instructor course in conjunction with [Global Dive](#) came up, I jumped at the chance. What made this particularly exciting was the fact that PADI have changed their instructor development materials this year – my teaching style has always been conversational, based around challenging instructor candidates to develop their own understanding of the issues involved in teaching rather than simply taking my word for it. The new materials that PADI have just released are designed to be used in exactly this way.

The course started on Thursday evening at Global Dive, with some introductions, an overview of what the next few days would entail and the first lecture on the PADI system of diver education. Even with just two candidates the three and a half days of the course were going to be pretty full on for everyone, but being located in such a well organised facility was a great help on keeping things to the schedule – particularly important for the Friday and Saturday, where lectures were interspersed with trips to the pool for teaching presentations and skills development!

The purpose of the Assistant Instructor course is to actually “teach someone how to teach” whilst at the same time giving a candidate an understanding of all the issues that relate to the conduct of scuba classes. So Friday morning was heavily focused on this, with lectures on PADI standards, risk management and of course how to conduct confined water training. This left the candidates just enough time to prepare their first teaching presentations before heading over to the Olympic Pools then finishing up for the day.

Along with more lectures and workshops, the main focus for the Saturday was to ensure that the candidates understood the role of an instructor in the classroom and help them start to create their own toolbox of teaching skills. Being based in the dive shop was a great bonus here, giving the candidates immediate access to a wide range of good quality dive equipment that could be used to help explain the concepts that their presentations were related to. We also has another session at the pool, were as well as more teaching presentations we looked at various skills and how they can be conducted in different ways to help student divers learn to be better scuba divers. To end off the day, the final lecture was on the topic of teaching in open water to prepare the candidates for the next – homework for the evening was to prepare for some teaching scenarios the next day!

On the Sunday, with the end of the course in sight, the candidates did another classroom presentation before we headed over to Lake Pupuke to conduct the open water teaching scenarios that involved skills from both the Open Water and Rescue courses as well as a rescue skills assessment.

The Assistant Instructor course is a challenging course, but one which is very rewarding – both to do as a candidate, but also one to teach. We're looking forward to running more courses in the future with Global Dive!