



Bite the rubber mouthpiece and start the flow of air to stay underwater

Salvare Second Breath

Have you needed to clear a prop, but couldn't hold your breath long enough? Theo Stocker tests a device that may be the answer

Every so often, like it or not, we have to go under the boat, whether for a quick scrub, to check underwater fittings, or to clear a fouled propeller. Holding your breath makes it hard to stay under water and you can't do much useful work.

The Salvare Second Breath addresses this problem, without the cost, bulk and complexity of scuba diving equipment. Derived from emergency breathing equipment for helicopter pilots and America's Cup sailors, it is a miniaturised air tank. Interlinked air chambers in a solid piece of aluminium allow flat rather than cylindrical air

tanks. Salvare offers two models. One is about a foot square, for wearing on the chest or back, while the other is the size and shape of a small hip flask that is strapped to the wrist like a watch.

On both models, air is released by biting down on a rubber mouthpiece. This is mounted directly on the canister of the small model and on a short tube for the larger canister. You can then continue to hold your breath until you need more air. The small canister will give you three to eight breaths, which isn't lots, but will increase how long you can stay under.

Once the canister is empty, it can be refilled to 200 bar by a simple hand pump, like those used for bicycle suspension or air rifles. The package is neat, simple and feels robustly well-made.

Using it wasn't quite as straightforward as we had hoped, however. We tested the smaller wrist-mounted canister in Southampton Water in October when water temperatures weren't far off their warmest. Standard scuba equipment uses a regulator mouthpiece



The Second Breath reduces complex breathing equipment to a minimum

but the Second Breath has no such regulator. Without one, water entered my mouth when I bit on the mouthpiece and I found it hard to clear the water from my mouth. Whilst I could easily initiate the flow of air, it was hard to overcome the reflex not to inhale underwater. Practice would help, as would a more easily-used mouthpiece.

There were two other shortfalls for us. The wrist-mounted canister means you have to take a hand away from what you're doing to breathe, and its limited capacity doesn't give much time for more serious work underwater. ▲

Price £260-£280

Contact Salvare Worldwide

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ABOVE: The latest iteration of the Second Breath wrist mounted unit

LEFT: The current model is housed in neoprene

OUR VERDICT

Of all the kit available, this is perhaps among the simplest and most streamlined. It's a fantastic concept and being able to manually refill it is appealing, however I'm not sure it is quite easy enough to use for widespread adoption by yachties at its current stage of development.

RATING
5/10

PROS

- Small, light and robust
- Genius idea that meets a real need
- Simple manual refilling

CONS

- A bit of a knack to use it
- Limited capacity
- Requires moving a hand to breathe from it