

Letter to the Editor

Letter-to-the-Editor
Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine
DUMC, Box 3315
Durham, NC 27710

February 7, 2005

Re: Book Review of *Diving Science* 31 (4); 461-462, 2004)

To the Editor,

My co-author Dr. Aksenov and I appreciated the “visibility” that Dr. Vorosomarti’s book review of *Diving Science (Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine, 31 (4); 461-462, 2004)* afforded us, although we are very troubled by its mis-information.

We feel his review reflected a lack of intellectual honesty and responsibility for a reviewer of the caliber used for *Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine*. I say this because of our analysis of his 15 criticisms, 12 essentially had no justification.

Although this letter is not intended to become the forum for a debate, I feel three brief responses to Dr. Vorosomarti’s criticisms are warranted. First, the book was not designed for the entry-level recreational diver as he seems to imply. Our aim was to fill a niche between dive manuals and the esoteric physician-oriented medical texts on diving that are currently available. Consequently, it is designed for “knowledgeable divers” who

wish to know the first response interventions for medical problems of diving, study the physiological responses to the aquatic environment, teach diving, prepare for scientific diving missions, or simply have the satisfaction of knowing as much about the subject as possible. A second example is Dr. Vorosomarti’s comment that we omitted information about respiratory heat losses and symptoms of hypothermia. These subjects were appropriately covered on Pages 14 and 228, respectfully. Third, the introduction to Chapter 11 (Page 207) explains why we included, and categorized as we did, a group of disorders as “surface related”.

The recreation SCUBA diver is now better trained and more knowledgeable than at any time in the history of sports diving. This is affirmed by the fact that diving certification organizations currently offer more than a dozen advanced and specialty qualifications for their basic entry-level card holders and all the programs have their foundations in diving science.

Although Dr. Vorosomarti chose not to comment on the special features, uniqueness and originality of our dive text, it is not an excuse for the lack of objectivity of his criticisms. As a first edition, 400 page, dual-authored (versus edited with multiple-authors) scientific book, I feel that there were remarkably few errors for a text of this magnitude and for the scope of information we covered. Certainly, in the next edition we will give attention to the valid criticisms Dr. Vorsomarti made and not withstanding my comments above, I am respectful of the time and effort he expanded on generating the review.

Sincerely,

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