

# WELL AND TRULY TESTED



John Bantin doesn't often award new products 10 stars, but a new regulator makes a big impression!

## REGULATOR SHERWOOD SR1

**EVERY DIVER SHOULD KNOW THE NAMES** of Ian Himmens and Stan Ellis, and appreciate that they owe them a debt of gratitude. With the advent of the ANSTI machine that they conceived and developed (and the EN250 criteria that followed) regulators have simply got better and better.

In the past, Sherwood regulators had a reputation for being tough and easy to service. They were a favourite with dive schools, especially in the USA, but they probably didn't deliver the air as generously as much of the competition.

That was then, and this is now. Sherwood has introduced a completely newly designed regulator, and it's a very good one indeed.

With a claimed "work of breathing" (WOB) of less than half a joule per litre at 50m with 62.5 litres RMV, the all-new Sherwood SR1 enters new territory for this long-established American gas-handling company. Remember, it was not so very long ago that we thought a WOB of one joule/litre was the defining barrier.

### First Stage

At first glance, this looks like the work of Dean Garraffa, formerly of Scubapro and more recently a boss at Atomic Aquatics. I'm told it is not. It has a rotating turret on which the medium-pressure ports are arranged, and two high-pressure ports are positioned well away, on the main body of the regulator.

Unusually, this piston-type first stage has a diaphragm that presses on the spring chamber. This is environmentally sealed against the risk of detritus or ice crystals that might form, interfering with its operation.

Open the tank valve, and the pressure is transferred to the outer diaphragm in a very outwardly visible manner.

### Second Stage

The second stage looks like a jewel, with its mixture of black techno-polymer and shiny stainless steel, and it's very compact.

It is pneumatically balanced for consistent performance, regardless of remaining tank pressure. It has a single adjustment that simultaneously sets the effort needed to crack open the valve and adjusts flow-rate.

It also has a "smart" valve-opening lever and floating crown that reacts to depressurisation and relieves the load on the seat. So it can be used and put away for a period without any unintentional engraving that will put it back to the service technician the next time you want to use it.

Entry holes for the water are concealed around the rim of the design, in addition to four let into the front cover.

### Purge Control

The front of the regulator is beautifully finished, with a stainless-steel ring retaining a large rubber purge button with a grippy finish. It's unmistakable to use, and the purge proved to be progressive and very effective.



### Comfort

Wow – what a fantastic regulator! I found that even when breathing air at 50m deep, it took little effort whatsoever. It was as good as the best I've tried, if not better.

I didn't need to touch the BRA knob at any time, and it never wanted to free-flow, yet I detected that it was harder to exhale than inhale – and that's a first for me.

The exhaust-T, although compact, was not too small, and I rarely encountered any problem with exhaled bubbles entering my field of vision. When a crew-member carelessly dragged my rig out of the RIB and bounced the regulator up the stairs of the boat, causing the exhaust-T to come off, I was instantly able to refit it, and the SR1 went back to its distributor looking no worse for wear.

This regulator is in danger of replacing my much more costly Atomic T2 as my own favourite for diving in water that's warmer than near-freezing.

Back in 1993, I was castigated by diving retailers for saying that a new-built British regulator was a lot better than the well-established Swedish-built job. That British regulator is now the number one choice with many deep divers. Let's wait to see how well this Sherwood SR1 is received by the diving public. Perhaps this is the next step forward. ■

### COMPARABLE REGULATORS TO CONSIDER:

Scubapro G250/MK17, £379

Aqualung Legend Supreme, £399

Apeks GTX 50, £353

## SPECS

PRICE ▶▶ £360

FIRST STAGE ▶▶ Environmentally sealed piston-type

PORTS ▶▶ 5mp and 2hp

SECOND STAGE ADJUSTMENTS ▶▶ BRA

CONTACT ▶▶ [www.sea-sea.co.uk](http://www.sea-sea.co.uk)

DIVER GUIDE ★★★★★★★★

