

## 3.1 Stage Diving

Unless otherwise noted, all requirements listed under *2.1 Standards Applying to all NSS-CDS Training Programs* apply to the course.

### 3.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Stage Diving Specialty course is to expose the trained cave diver to the basic fundamentals of the safe use of stage cylinders for extended penetration diving in underwater caves while under the direct supervision of a qualified Stage Diving Specialty Instructor. The student is able to build practical experience in the field under controlled conditions. Safety and conversation practices, procedures and techniques common while stage diving the unique environment of a cave are covered to help develop the participant's skills and knowledge in extended range penetration diving. Longer decompression obligations and more complex navigation concerns are covered. This course may be integrated into the Advanced Cave course at the discretion of the instructor.

### 3.1.2 Course Duration

At least two days.

### 3.1.3 Student Prerequisites

NSS-CDS Cave Diver level of training or equivalent.

### 3.1.4 Knowledge Development

Instructors must cover the following subject matter:

- A. Motives.
- B. Equipment.
- C. Procedures and technique.
- D. Task loading.
- E. Decompression.

### 3.1.5 Land/Open Water Drills or Practice

- A. Open water or in-cavern practice of dropping and recovering stage cylinder(s).

### 3.1.6 Cave Dives and Skills

- A. At least three cave dives utilizing stage cylinder(s) for extended penetration.
- B. One gas-sharing drill to be done at instructor's discretion.

### 3.1.7 Equipment Requirements

All equipment listed in the Cave Diver course with the following additions:

- A. Dive cylinder configuration may consist of any twin cylinder configuration agreed to by the instructor and student(s).
- B. Suitably rigged stage cylinder(s) with regulator.

### 3.1.8 Limits of Training

- A. Penetration limited to one-third or less of twin diving cylinders and one-third or less of stage cylinders.
- B. Minimum starting gas volume of 3,100 L/110 ft<sup>3</sup>.
- C. Depths not to exceed 40 m/130 ft.
- D. 20 ft/6 m minimum starting visibility.
- E. No equipment removal in cave (except for decompression and stage cylinders).
- F. No use of diver propulsion vehicles in caves.

### 3.1.9 Student Ratios and Instructor Requirements

- A. Maximum student-to-instructor ratio of 2:1.
- B. To conduct this level of training an NSS-CDS instructor shall be an Active Status Cave Diver Instructor for at least one year and have:
  - 1. Taught at least four complete Cave Diver courses.
  - 2. Have at least 20 logged non-training related stage dives.
  - 3. Have at least 200 logged cave dives.
  - 4. Co-taught at least one Stage Diving course with an NSS-CDS Stage Diving Specialty Instructor.
  - 5. Approval of Training Chairman based on approved Standards and Procedures requirements.
- C. Please refer to Section 4 of Standards and Procedures for general procedures and requirements regarding NSS-CDS Specialty Instructor ratings.