

Smaller Course Marker Buoys

These buoys are actually marketed as a fender (Whitworths Product SKU 36371).

The valve / inflating system is not obvious & this is the reason for this documentation.

The valve is a simple spring loaded arrangement that does not work very well. Both buoys that I have purchased over the years have initially required a replacement valve, but once inflated the buoys seem to retain their pressure.

To inflate you should be able to manually hold an air source against the outside of the valve & if the valve operates correctly the buoy will inflate. When the air source is removed, the valve spring should prevent deflation. A problem with this method is that while inflating, manual pressure and or air pressure can force the valve inside the buoy.

In practice I have found that the valve will not let air past when trying to inflate the buoy, & that the valve cannot be relied upon to automatically prevent deflation.

The thread in the valve body is not designed to take an inflation device. The thread is metric & designed so that a small metric bolt can be screwed in & used as a holding device for insertion & removal of the valve.

To deflate the buoy you should be able to depress the pin in the centre of the valve but the volume of escaping air will be small.

Practically

To deflate the buoy, screw a small metric retrieval bolt into the valve & pull gently to remove the whole valve. Do not screw the bolt in further than is required for good purchase on the valve as you will be crushing the return spring.

To inflate the buoy, screw in a retrieval bolt as described above & remove the valve by pulling gently. Make sure that the valve is in the non-return state (tapping against a hard surface seems to work). Inflate the buoy directly while valve is removed. Remember not to over-inflate as the air will expand on a hot day. Replace valve by gripping retrieval bolt & inserting directly.

It seems like a dud system & that air would escape around the valve but it seems to work & remember that these are designed to be used as fenders & would be subject to much greater pressures than in our application as markers.

A spare valve & retrieval bolt accompany this document.

kjp