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The 39-inch limit came from Qantas, which serves several of my usual dive destinations. I watched a fellow diver lose his 42-inch rolling carry-on to a grumpy Qantas gate attendant in Cairns, and no amount of whining about other airlines' limits made any difference.

I spoke with Air New Zealand, Alaska, ALM Antillean, American, Cayman, Continental, Delta, Northwest, Philippine, United, and USAir. None were as restrictive on cabin baggage as Qantas. All except Qantas permitted carry-ons up to 45 inches on international flights. A few even allowed larger carry-ons. Nobody seemed to care much about weight as long as a carry-on doesn't *look* heavy, or as long as heavy items weren't placed in an overhead compartment.

But what do they mean by "heavy"? Continental permits a carry-on weighing up to 70 pounds, while Philippine Airlines has a 25-pound limit, and Qantas can stop you if your bag exceeds a ridiculous

11-pound limit. I've never seen a scale at a boarding gate, but it's possible.

Most airlines also allow additional items, such as a camera, an overcoat, and a purse, any of which could be used to move you out of the gray area between OK and not OK, especially if you were wearing a garment with a lot of pockets.

### What to Buy

If you want never to be hassled by some crabby gate attendant nor to own different bags for different airlines, consider doing what I did: buy a 39-inch (l+w+h) rolling bag, and learn to pack fewer items tighter. I can almost certainly bring the bag on board any airplane, as long as I don't act as if it were full of heavy diving gear. I used to lug an over-the-shoulder carry-on, but when it was full, I needed a hand cart to make it through large airports. That cart was one more thing to keep track of, and it said something unpleasant and obvious

about the bag's weight. By comparison, a rolling cart might only have my undies in it. Without a scale, who's to know?

There are plenty of rolling 42- and 45-inch bags, and others that almost meet the more common 45-inch limit (such as the 47-inch bag from Sharper Image), but I just didn't want to start a rolling luggage collection. The only 39-inch model I could find in the San Francisco Bay area was Travelpro's #7182, which cost about \$160 and is guaranteed for three years. It's an uncommon model in stores, but if you can't find it where you live, you can get it mailed from ASU (800-873-3330). Mine's been beaten around on several trips but has held up fine so far. With very careful packing, it's just large enough to hold all my vital traveling dive gear except my fins, which always go aboard under my arm because they're so long that they'd never fit into a carry-on anyway.

Delmar Mesa

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## Who Said That?

### *Anonymous accusations on the Internet*

Anonymity and freedom of speech in cyberspace are being challenged by a Caribbean resort owner in a court case that could dramatically restrict the rights of computer network users.

The resort owner and a scuba instructor claim they were defamed on a computer bulletin board by an anonymous user, and they asked a judge this week to force America Online to reveal the name of the subscriber so they can sue the person for libel.

If Bowker and Joslin are successful in obtaining the name, it could have serious implications for millions of people who use the Internet to think, write, and debate in a world where they are identified by their ideas, not their names.

Technology experts fear a morass of court cases that would hold computer users accountable for what they say anonymously. "What this case brings up is the specter of millions of libel suits

every time there's a disagreement on the Internet," said Daniel Weitzner, deputy director of the Center for Democracy and Technology in Washington. "I think it's a critical issue."

The motion, filed in Cook County Circuit Court, charges that Bowker's dive shop at the Carib Inn in Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles, and instructor John Joslin were defamed by a message posted on an America Online bulletin board for scuba divers by a user identified as "Jenny TRR." The bulletin board is accessible to the company's 3.5 million subscribers.

In June, Jenny TRR wrote that she had had a bad experience while learning to dive at the Carib

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Inn with an instructor who she said used drugs. "Since I'm a little new to diving, needless to say diving with a stoned instructor was a little scary. . . . I won't mention his name but he's the only white instructor there."

According to Bowker, a frequent visitor to the Carib Inn told him of the allegations. Much of the Carib Inn's business depends on communication with customers via computer, said Lawrence Levin, the attorney for Bowker and Joslin.

When Bowker investigated the charges made by Jenny TRR and

found them untrue, he posted a message on the same bulletin board rebutting them and asking Jenny TRR to recant, Levin said. When no apology came, Bowker decided to sue for damages, claiming his business had suffered. But first he must find out the identity of Jenny TRR.

"The person who used this abused the privilege of being able to communicate with people worldwide on America Online," Levin said. "This has serious repercussions for businesses."

Several calls seeking comment from officials at America Online were not returned.

Abraham Haddad, chairman of the computer science department at Northwestern University, said the anonymity of cyberspace should be maintained as long as it was not used to commit a crime.

"There's really a need to protect people's privacy as long as no laws have been broken," Haddad said. "What would happen is people would think twice about saying things publicly. That really would be terrible."

Brian Bergstein  
Associated Press

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## Things to Watch Out For

### *Readers report from the trenches*

By the time you read this, our *1996 Traveling Divers Chapbook* will be at the printer, jam-packed not only with your reviews but with all-new information about weather, the seasons to dive, tips on the areas, and more.

"What's a chapbook?" you ask.

chap•book (chap'book) *n.* A small book of popular tales, ballads, poems, or tracts formerly hawked about by chapmen (peddlers or merchants) [1790–1800, chap(man) + book].

John Q. and I are the chapmen, you're the balladeers.

This past year we asked you to report on the good and the bad. In this issue we'll let you know some of the bad. Next time, some of the good.

In the springtime, now and then, sea lice appear off Little Cayman. In May, Allen and Cathy

Williams (San Angelo, Texas) were "attacked by sea lice ('sea bather's eruption') caused by the larval forms of the thimble jellyfish zapping you with their nematocysts. I had about 100 on my neck and the itching was terrible. Advil, cortisone creams, antihistamines and Caladryl help, but time is the only true healer."

That's minor compared to what happened to M. Sorrel (Old Bridge, New Jersey), who in August was on the *Febrina* in Papua New Guinea. "I wore a shorty and must have jumped right onto a jellyfish during a night dive. I was also stung numerous times during the course of the week, even through a Lycra skin. The cumulative effect of the toxins caused a severe allergic reaction (seizure) the second-to-last night of the trip. The captain assumed I was bent, appeared more concerned about liability, and was

ready to have me medically evacuated to Australia. Anything I had to say about how I felt physically was totally ignored. Fortunately, a diagnosis from the local doctor (an adventure in itself) verified the cause."

Speaking of things in the water, Alessandro Usai (Belgium) was diving on the day boat *Aquanaut* in the Red Sea out of Hurghada, Egypt. "None of the boats in the Red Sea seems to have holding tanks for their toilets," he writes. "Surfacing at some sites with more than ten boats around was fairly disgusting."

Rough territory, those tropics. Gigi Ethan Davis (Coppell, Texas) took Lariam as their malaria prophylaxis, but Ethan got malaria after spending three weeks in PNG. "Fortunately only two days of diving were missed. Doxycycline and chloroquine are recommended by those who live in PNG, but the Centers for Disease Control stand firm in recommending Lariam."

Michael J. LaFemina, M.D. (Thousand Oaks, California), a Club Med doc and once medical