

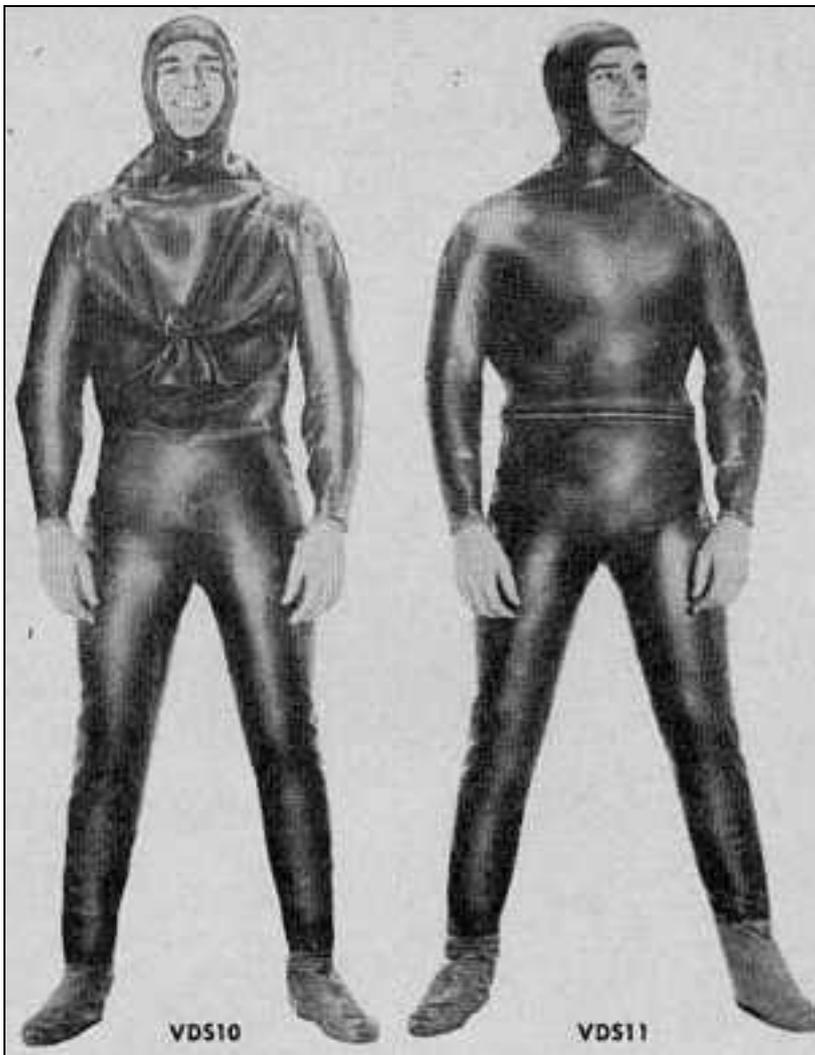
Voit Full Dry Suits

W. J. Voit Rubber Corporation of New York, NY, Danville, IL and Los Angeles, CA was one of the five original American diving equipment manufacturers: U.S. Divers, Healthways, Voit, Dacor and Swimaster (Gilliam, n.d.). The company manufactured the original open-heel swim fins which were designed by Owen Churchill before World War II and which retain a strong following among bodysurfers.

Voit Corporation has a long history of involvement in the sporting goods production industry. Founded in 1922, the company proved innovatory in the development of all-rubber inflatable athletic balls. In the early 1960s, Voit bought the diving equipment manufacturer Swimaster. The company now operates in San Antonio TX and Mexico City.

Voit Underwater Suits

- Voit claimed to manufacture “America’s finest underwater suits” offering “year round protection”.
- These suits made “the diving season last twice as long” and afforded “top comfort and manoeuvrability”.
- Wet models came in “finest quality closed-cell foam neoprene”, dry models in “pure gum rubber”.
- A wide range of styles and sizes were offered: full suits, hoods, shirts and pants, “four sizes to fit every physique”.
- The suits were available custom made or as kits: ready to wear or “do-it-yourself kits for the “economy minded”.
- Voit’s line in underwater suits appears to have lasted for a limited period only, as later publicity concentrated on basic equipment such as fins, masks and snorkels (Skin Diving History, 1960).



Voit Full Dry Suits
VDS10 Front Entry and VDS11 Waist Entry

Voit Full Dry Suit Facts

- The front-entry **VDS10 full dry suit** was made of “the highest quality, two-ply lightweight gum rubber”.
- The suit offered “an effective seal everywhere”.
- The entry chute closed with a rubber strap.
- An exhaust valve at the neck released excess air.
- The suit had “extra strong seams, double reinforced at seam crossings.”
- The colour was a “handsome two-tone blue”.
- The suit completely covered the body and came with a hood and soft boots which “slid easily into swim fins”.
- The suit cost \$54.95.
- The waist-entry **VDS11 full dry suit** came with “the same top protection, materials and colour” as the front-entry VDS10.
- The suit was a two-piece model, comprising shirt with hood and pants with boots.
- A ring and rail assembly was included for sealing the shirt to the pants.
- This suit also cost \$54.95.
- A **VDS80 “Do it yourself” Full Dry Suit Kit** costing \$37.50 offered “substantial savings plus self-satisfaction or personal accomplishment”.
- A **VSRK1 Dry Suit Repair Kit** provided “materials and tools for easy, quick repairs. On the spot servicing avoids loss of valuable diving time”.

References

1. Bret Gilliam (n.d.) *Interview with Dick Bonin*, <http://www.fathomspub.com/cgi/interview.pl/9>
2. Skin Diving History (2006) *Early Mfg. & Retailers - Voit*, http://www.skindivinghistory.com/mfg_retailers/v/Voit/index.html