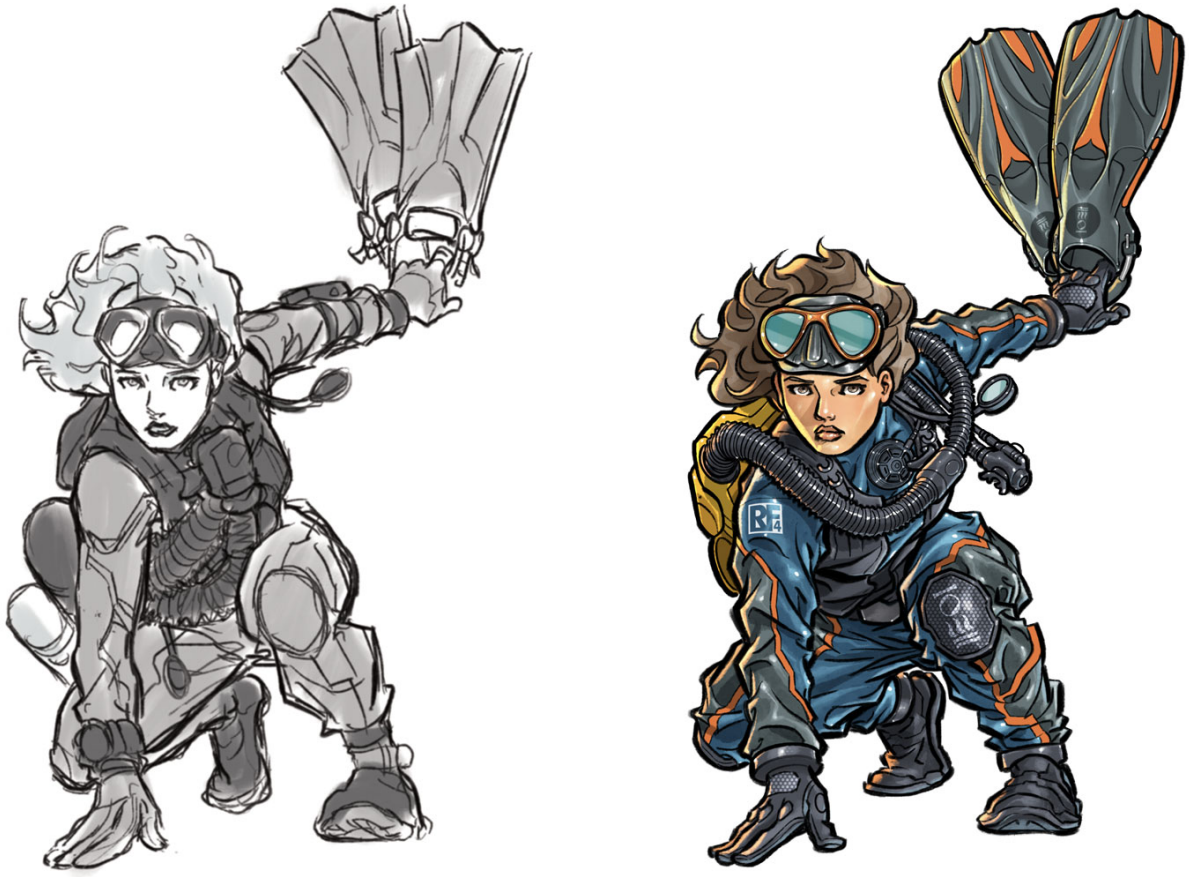
We can be Heroes: inside the Rebreather Forum 4 imagery

Rebreather Forum 4 (RF4) is the largest and most significant closed-circuit rebreather (CCR) event internationally, convening the top minds in the industry from around the world every decade to advance rebreather technology and improve safety.

This year, technical, government, and scientific divers and researchers have reunited in the old city of Valletta, Malta, in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea, to participate in this landmark event and discuss **diving safety**, **physiology**, **technology**, **training and operations**.

RF4 organizers wanted to illustrate and celebrate rebreather divers, so they enlisted an artist behind iconic Marvel comics to depict divers in superhero-style.



A superhero woman rebreather diver simulating Spider-Man moves. First sketch versus final version.

Ian Churchill is a West Sussex-based artist who illustrated Marvel Comics and DC Comics titles including THE AVENGERS, X-MEN, SUPERMAN, and THE HULK.

Churchill created a number of rebreather diver cartoon characters to represent the real superheroes of the CCR community, from explorers to scientific and military divers dive instructors and professionals, underwater photographer and videographers. **Each one of them is a hero** in their own way, pushing the limits of exploration, and advancing the knowledge and curiosity of the human race.



The idea behind the imagery is to inspire the diving community. Just as the Marvel Comics superhero images represent the hope for justice and the potential to amaze, **the RF4 diving heroes are there to inspire us all to share knowledge and celebrate the potential**. We can all share a sense of marvel.



An early version of a superhero diver and its final version.

The characters also celebrate the diversity of the diving community people with various racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. They also represent the different **configurations** in rebreather diving: backmount, sidemount, ventral.

The Marvel-like imagery used to represent this community was a stroke of genius that not only celebrates diversity, but also inspires us all to be heroes in our own way. We can all make a difference, and rebreather diving is just one way to do it.

The RF4 team wishes to thank Fourth Element for kindly sponsoring the artwork.

About the author

Cristian Pellegrini is a digital marketing and communications specialist at DAN (Divers Alert Network) Europe, and editor of Alert Diver Magazine, the international online diving magazine promoting DAN's mission. A scuba diving instructor and full cave diver, he loves when his inner kid takes command, unleashing his creative spirit, and finds passion playing with words, visual stuff, and marine life.