

VB Athlete profiles 2009



This year we will be doing athlete profiles in groups by Country

There are 11 countries represented at Vertical Blue 2009: Australia, Austria, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, UK, USA. In each edition we will present the profiles of the athletes of each country.

This is also YOUR CHANCE to get to know more about the competitors (see the lists of men and women below). If you post your questions in the comments beneath this post we will do our best to get replies from each athlete. Ask away!

Suunto "Pick the World Records" challenge



...broken/unbroken???
...who???
...how deep???

This year at Vertical Blue Suunto is giving you the opportunity to win a Suunto D4 freediving computer worth \$500 as well as Vertical Blue team shirts.

All you need to do is accurately predict whether any world records will be broken during the Vertical Blue event, and if so to whom and with what depth.

Athletes of both genders will compete in three disciplines, so there are 6 records that can be potentially broken. Current world records are:

mCNF	male no fins	86m	mCWT	male constant weight	113m	Guillaume Nery
mFIM	male free immersion	108m		William Trubridge		
fCWT	female constant weight	95m		Natalia Molchanova		
fCNF	female no fins	60m		Natalia Molchanova		
fFIM	female free immersion	85m		Natalia Molchanova		

So start studying the 20 Vertical Blue athletes, whose profiles will be uploaded to this site. Follow the links to their websites and personal blogs, and keep your ear to the ground for any secrets or inside information! This competition is open to the public, but not to anyone participating in the Vertical Blue event, families of the athletes, or to employees of Suunto. Entries must be made before 9pm EST on Tuesday March 31. **IMPORTANT: only entries made as comments to this blog (click "comments" underneath) will be accepted.**

For each record you need to list whether you think it will be broken, and if so who will hold it at the end of the competition, and with what depth. If you select "unbroken" you cannot also select an athlete and depth! Please also list your estimated dive time for one (*and only one*) of the world records (to use in the event of a tiebreaker). For example:

mCWT	broken	Hercules	114m	
mCNF	unbroken			
mFIM	unbroken			
fCWT	broken	Oprah	99m	3'05" dive time
fCNF	broken	Catwoman	61m	
fFIM	unbroken			

- The winner will be selected by the following method.
1. correct prediction of whether the record is broken or not = **1 point**
 2. if broken, correct prediction of athlete who retains record at the end of VB = **1 point**
 3. if broken, correct prediction of depth of record at conclusion of VB = **1 point**

1st prize: Suunto D4 and Vertical Blue team shirt
 2nd prize: Vertical Blue team shirt



Vertical Blue 2009: THE MEN

There will be twice the men to women at Vertical Blue 2009, but will they pack twice the punch? Will there be rivalries and closely fought head-to-heads over the 9 days of competition? Who will come up from the mysterious depths of Dean's Blue Hole with the deepest tag for 2009? Stay tuned, follow each athlete's training, and maybe you will know before they do!

William Trubridge

The host of the competition, after a successful 2008 William is back to see if he can better his own records in Unassisted and Free Immersion. He will have to stave off competition from rivals Nitsch and Winram.



Herbert Nitsch

Although he is the best freediver of this decade, Nitsch currently doesn't hold any of the world records in the competitive depth disciplines. This is likely to change at Vertical Blue, as Nitsch can lead an assault on any and all of the three disciplines offered at Vertical Blue.



Ryuzo Shinomiya

The Okinawa Dragon, Ryuzo, entered into the elite group of 100m Constant Weight divers last year. With a refined technique and a measured and methodical approach to building depths, Ryuzo is still improving, and may be a serious contender amongst the world's deepest this year.



William Winram

This year the best freediver in the west (pan-American records in all disciplines) is giving himself a full month to train in Dean's Blue Hole before Vertical Blue starts in April. He says he will arrive with no expectations, which is kind of ominous...



Eric Fattah

Last year Eric set a precedent for FRC diving, with a 67m dive after a passive exhale. His training since has been merciless, but there are rumours he may be coming back to full inhale diving.



Robert King

The United States freediving champion, and a progressive improver, Robert will look to extend his record without fins and maybe attempt the constant weight record held by compatriot Deron Verbeck.



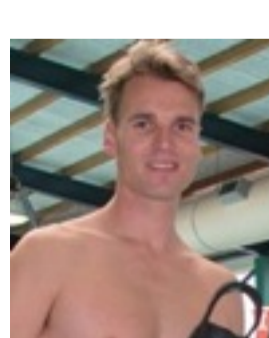
Davide Carrera

In 2001 Davide broke the world record in Free Immersion, with a long dive to 91m in rough conditions. After a long hiatus from any events Davide returned 7 years later to compete with the Italian team at the 2008 world championships. With his graceful and natural style Davide will look to build on the 90m constant weight dive he recorded in that competition.



Walter Steyn

Head and shoulders above any other diver in Australia, Walter recorded the second longest dynamic without fins in 2008: 176m. He has also entered the 200m with a fin. One to watch for Vertical Blue 2009...



Leo Muraoka

Leo stole the show at Vertical Blue 2008, building through grit and determination to a national record in free immersion of 76m. It still stands and Leo will no doubt be eyeing the remaining US records.



Frank Pernett

The lung doctor from Colombia. Frank set the mark for his country without fins last year, and is back in 2009 to improve on it.



Kerian Hibbs

Being one of the top freedivers in a country like New Zealand is equivalent to world class. Kerian will be competing this year with the monofin to convert his huge dynamic into depth.



Mads Becker Jørgensen

The Danish coach, Mads is a strong freediver himself, and will be diving mostly without fins.



Walid Boudhief

A talented up-and-coming French diver, Walid trains at altitude in Colombia.

