

PRESS RELEASE - AIDA WC

Extreme depths at the Aida individual world championships in freediving - 2009 Bahamas.

Gold medals in the no fins category landed as predicted with the current world record holders: William Trubridge and Natalja Molchanova.

In the classic fin category (CWT) nobody could challenge ruling champion Natalja Molchanova - and as expected Herbert Nitsch took the gold medal.

The drama was around the silver and bronze medals.

The world championships started with record depths demanded for a place in the final in the no fins category. Three french men announced the same depth - 73 meters (which became the qualifying depth), forcing the organization to include them all in the final. It was no surprise that the ruling world record holder William Trubridge announced the deepest depth in the final. The plate was lowered to 90 meters depth where no light reaches down. Before that the crowd on the beach had seen the Austrian Herbert Nitsch try for a world record depth of 89 meter, making it down there in a 3.40 minute dive, but failing to deliver correct surface protocol to the judges at the surface, due to low oxygen and lack of focus (and lingering narcosis). Trubridge competing on "home turf" did a very secure dive to 90 meters leaving the competition behind. The Canadian William Winram did an impressive come back, with first an 80 meter dive in the heats, and then 86 meter in the final, claiming the silver medal. Due to young Alexey Molchanovas short black out at the surface after a 83 meter dive, the french man Guillaume Nery took the bronze with a 78 meter dive - and remember, these are dives done with breast strokes down and up.

Among the women Natalja Molchanova was out of reach for the other women with her 62 meter no fins dive lasting 3.15. Nikki Roderick, New Zealand, claimed silver with a 55 meter dive (coached by her partner the multiple world record holder Martin Stepanek). Jana Strain Canada kept within her limits, not pushing it too far as has happened before, took the Bronze medal with a 54 meter dive coming up with blood from the sinuses.

But no one was as happy as Junko Kitahama finishing 4th with a 52 meter Japanese record (leaving her coach crying happy tears). Junko having progressed nearly 10 meter during the training week preceding the World championship.

Constant Weight dives (CWT = with monofin).

After an early turn from Jana Strains, leaving her out of the CWT (fins) final, Swedish Klara Hansson made it into the top 6 doing one of the many national records during this world championship. Japanese Misuzu Hirai managed two national records in this competition and finished 4th with a dive to 72 meters. Jarmilla Slovincikova from Czeck republic did 74 meters national record and finished with a bronze.

Sara Campbell having lost motivation for really challenging the ruling Champion Natalja, did a (for her) easy dive to 92 meters. Natalja for the first time in years not announcing a world record depth in a world championship claimed the gold medal after a 97 meter dive.

For the men, in the classic fin category not even a 80 meter dive with monofin was enough to make it into the top 10. One of the favorites, the Japanese Ryouzo Shinomiya, turned early at 90, and missed the final, letting swedish Johan Dahlström into the top 6 and the final.

The final for the men was all clean dives, everyone making their announced depths the 6th and last place in the final with a 100 meter dive. as expected.

The Blue Hole in Long Island proved to be perfect place for performance freediving. Calm, deep, warm waters a few swim strokes from land. 51 athletes from 17 nations participated making it one of the smallest World Championships, but at the same time one of the most successful in the sense of depths achieved and number of national records.

World records

Natalja Molchanova 62 meter CNF

William Trubridge 90 meter CNF

BO percentage 8%

DQ percentage 10%

VERTICAL BLUE

- WC organizer.