

VB 2010 Profile - JARED SCHMELZER



Jared Schmelzer is a relative newcomer to competitive freediving. He trains with Martin Štěpánek and the FIL team in Florida, and is tenaciously perservering with bifins and a regular mask, which he has used in constant weight training dives to 70 meters (not far off from Rob King's national record, set with a monofin...)

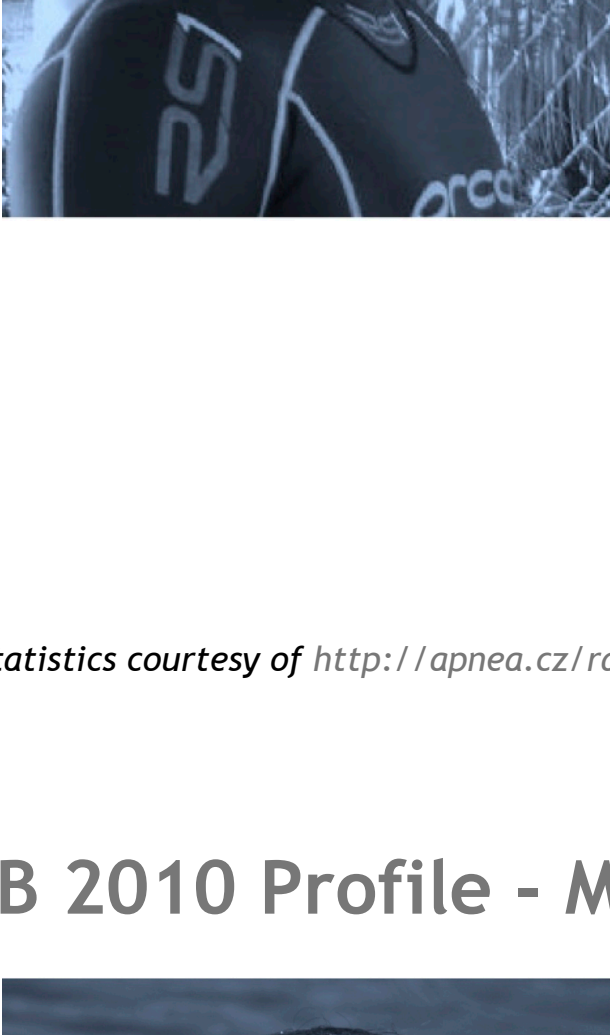
Jared represented the USA in the world teams championships in 2008, receiving three white cards, and was due to compete at the Individual World Champs last year, but was called away at the last minute by his duties as a helicopter pilot.

Drawing on a grounding in Jiu Jitsu, and training in Florida's warm gulf stream off the coast of Fort Lauderdale, he has made steady progress in his performance, and was also the organiser of the Gulfstream Open competition in July 2009.

best results - all federations/all time							
disc.	RP	world			U.S.A.		
		#	% avg	% max	#	% avg	% max
STA	4:43	293.	99.5%	40.7%	23.	89.1%	61.7%
DYN	113 m	212.	109.4%	45.2%	10.	115.0%	67.7%
CWT	58 m	73.	119.0%	47.2%	11.	104.3%	69.0%

statistics courtesy of <http://apnea.cz/ranking.html?>

VB 2010 Profile - ERIC FATTAH



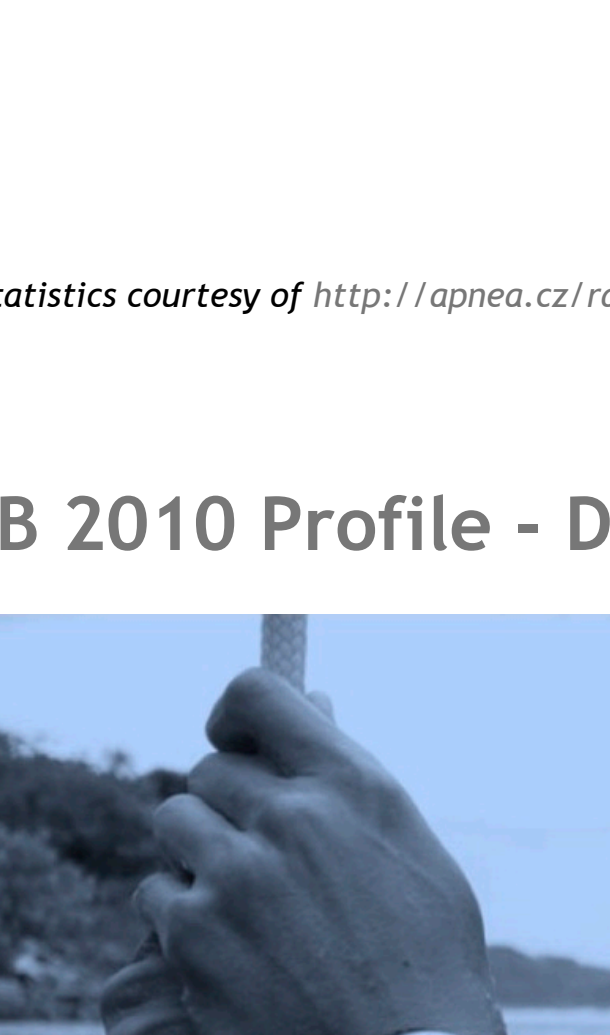
Eric Fattah arrived on Long Island this morning with \$350 of overweight luggage. One can only guess at what new equipment, gadgets and exotic nutritional supplements are concealed in the many bags he has brought with him from Vancouver, Canada. He is known as an innovator, being the first to document a strategy for the 'mouthfill' equalisation, the inventor of fluid goggles, and deviser of many other devices and strategies. Will Vertical Blue 2010 serve to reveal his latest concept in freediving? He has arrived much earlier than previous years, so he has plenty of time to experiment.

In 2001 Eric broke Brett Le Master's constant weight world record, with a monofin dive to 82 meters in the frigid waters of Vancouver. Since then he has been diving mostly using an FRC, or passive exhale, to start the dive. However rumour has it that this year he is switching back to conventional inhale diving, so we could see him challenging William Winram's Canada constant weight record of 84 meters, and perhaps even entering the fabled list of 100 meter divers.

best results - all federations/all time							
disc.	RP	world			Canada		
		#	% avg	% max	#	% avg	% max
STA	7:12	33.	151.8%	62.2%	2.	147.3%	97.7%
DYN	150 m	103.	145.2%	60.0%	3.	159.7%	73.2%
CWT	82 m	24.	168.2%	66.7%	2.	198.5%	97.6%

statistics courtesy of <http://apnea.cz/ranking.html?>

VB 2010 Profile - MISUZU HIRAI



Misuzu Hirai returns for her second visit to Dean's Blue Hole, and her first appearance at Vertical Blue. She is the reigning Japanese freediving champion, holding national records in Static, Dynamic and Constant Weight. Her dive to 72 meters at the World Championships in December 2009 ranks her as the 7th deepest female constant weight diver of all time, and she will be looking at moving up that ladder towards the dominant pair of Natalia Molchanova and Sara Campbell.

A poor swimmer as a child, Misuzu, known to her peers as Mimi, caught the freediving bug when on holiday in the Bonin isles (Ogasawara) in 1999. Snorkeling for the first time, she had to wear a life vest, and watched as skin divers played with dolphins below her. Each year she returned, and developed her diving skills, taking up yoga as well to complement her freediving and becoming a yoga instructor by profession.

best results - all federations/all time							
disc.	RP	world			Japan		
		#	% avg	% max	#	% avg	% max
STA	6:10	14.	150.9%	73.6%	1.	148.2%	100.0%
DYN	174 m	14.	183.5%	81.3%	1.	188.9%	100.0%
DNF	77 m	69.	103.7%	48.1%	8.	117.9%	57.9%
CWT	72 m	7.	174.8%	71.3%	1.	179.7%	100.0%
CNF	20 m	32.	58.5%	32.3%	7.	82.5%	38.5%
FIM	57 m	13.	136.9%	63.3%	2.	157.0%	95.0%

statistics courtesy of <http://apnea.cz/ranking.html?>

VB 2010 Profile - DAVE MULLINS



Dave rejoins Vertical Blue after an absence from competitive depth diving in 2009. At VB 2008 he set a New Zealand depth record of 108 meters in constant weight, before having a brave attempt at the World Record. His national record was lost to William Trubridge, who dove to 110m at the 2009 World Championships, so Dave's first goal may be to try to regain that title, before trying to move rapidly through the teens in a bid to chase down the two CWT superstars, Herbert Nitsch and Martin Štěpanek.

With the biggest lungs in the sport (estimates are around 16L), Dave has the oxygen needed to complete extremely deep dives, but in his case he is limited by the build-up of lactic acid and narcotic gases, which are intensified by his higher initial lung volume. His success will depend on the effectiveness of the acclimitization training he has been conducting in New Zealand's cold and exposed Lake Taupo, in the central plains of the North Island. Rumour has it that Dave has also been training constant without fins, and if he is able to convert his world record performance in no fins dynamic (DNF) then he could be a strong contender for the Suunto Dive-off title..

best results - all federations/all time							
disc.	RP	world			New Zealand		
		#	% avg	% max	#	% avg	% max
STA	8:11	10.	172.6%	70.6%	2.	152.3%	90.4%
DYN	248 m	2.	240.1%	99.2%	1.	182.2%	100.0%
DNF	232 m	2.	272.7%	100.0%	1.	212.1%	100.0%
CWT	108 m	6.	221.6%	87.8%	2.	178.3%	98.2%
CNF	50 m	29.	117.6%	55.6%	3.	83.5%	55.6%
FIM	40 m	78.	80.2%	35.7%	5.	70.4%	37.0%

statistics courtesy of <http://apnea.cz/ranking.html?>

VB2010 Profile - ALFREDO ROMO



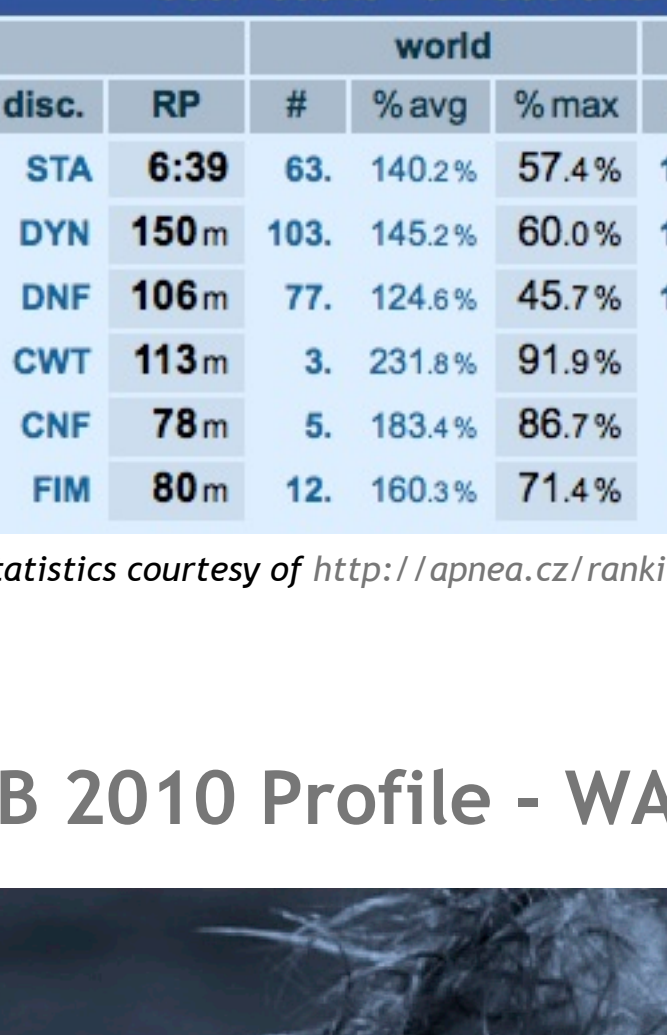
Alfredo Romo Hernandez is the only athlete attending Vertical Blue 2010 who will be making his debut in freediving competition. His is an extraordinary case...

At the Vertical Blue Master Class held in September 2009, Alfredo enrolled at the last minute as one of the relative beginners to the course, with a history of swimming and scuba diving, but little experience with freediving. Towards the end of the course, the Mexican from Riviera Nayarit started to find his groove, and each day he effortlessly powered down deeper than the day before, coming to the surface each time with a warm Mexican grin. On the last day of the competition he swam to 51 meters, doubling his personal best from the start of the week, and this with plastic bifins and a regular volume mask.

At VB 2010 Alfredo will attempt to chase down fellow Mexican Luis Turrent's national records in Constant Weight (58 meters) and Constant No Fins (45 meters). But he may not stop there...

Because he has never competed before, Alfredo has no statistics to download from <http://www.apnea.cz>. (however is sure to make a big mark in the database before long).

VB 2010 Profile - CARLA SUE-HANSON



Carla started freediving as a student at the Vertical Blue master class in 2008. The year later she competed for USA in the AIDA World Championships. Now in 2010 she is back in Dean's Blue Hole, with her sights set on the CNF national record for USA, currently at 48m.

Carla started her aquatic career on the surface, representing the USA in butterfly, and for a time holding the women's world record. Now she trains just as hard, but under the water, at her hometown of Newport, California.

best results - all federations/all time							
disc.	RP	world			U.S.A.		
		#	% avg	% max	#	% avg	% max
DYN	90 m	154.	94.9%	42.1%	6.	91.9%	66.2%
DNF	81 m	56.	109.1%	50.6%	5.	97.4%	67.5%
CWT	50 m	35.	121.4%	49.5%	8.	102.4%	71.4%
CNF	40 m	15.	117.1%	64.5%	3.	103.1%	83.3%

statistics courtesy of <http://apnea.cz/ranking.html?>

VB 2010 Profile - GUILLAUME NÉRY



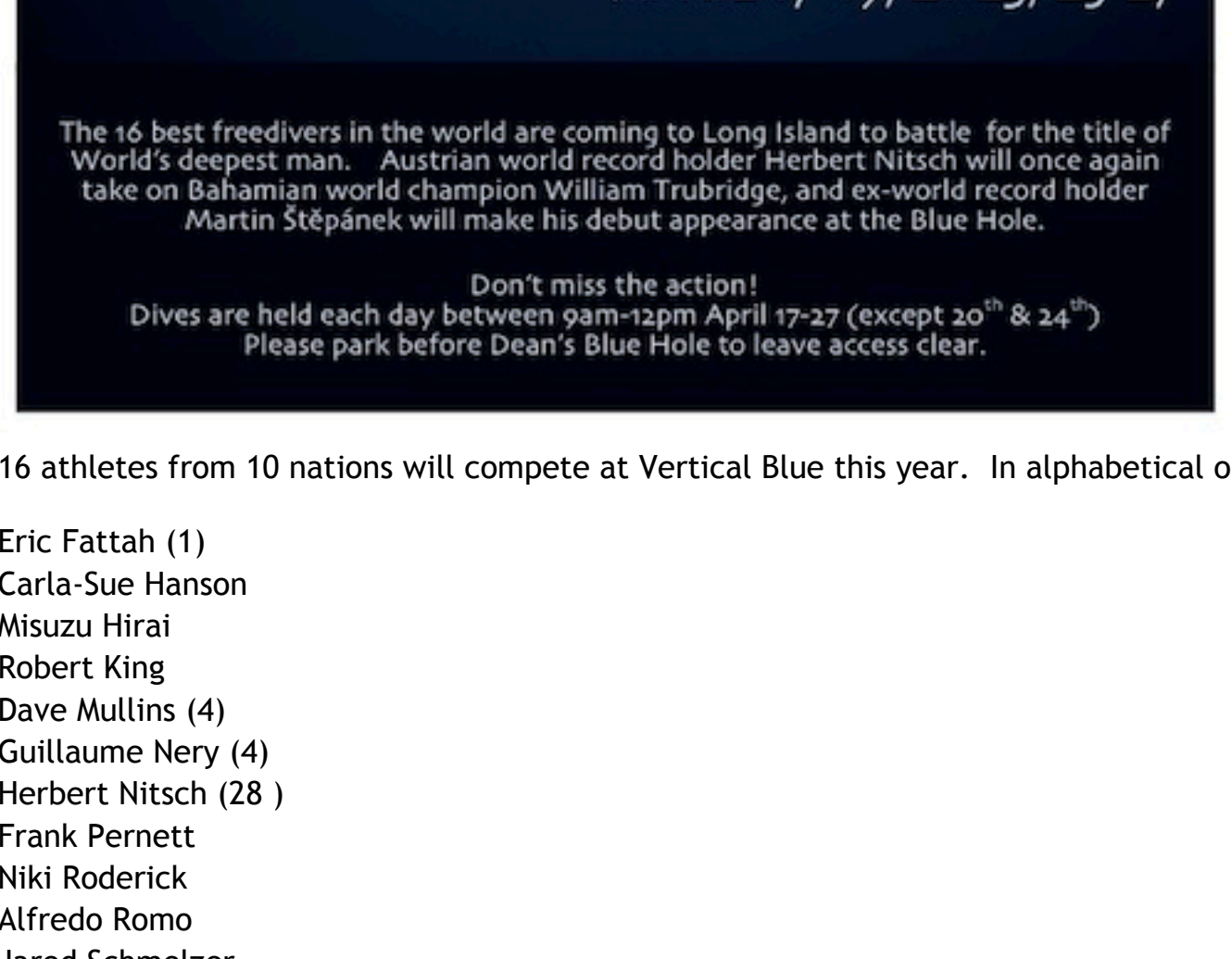
At the 2009 Individual World Championships Guillaume cemented a year spent training in the No Fins discipline with a 78 meter dive that earned him a bronze medal. He also came very close to making the podium in Constant Weight with a monofin dive to 109 meters, after very little specific training in this discipline. These performances, combined with an improvement of his French national record of 80m FIM, will set him in good stead for the Suunto Dive-off, where the results of all three disciplines are combined to determine the best all-round freediver.

Read about Guillaume's 'winter' spent training in New Caledonia on his blog [here](#).

best results - all federations/all time							
disc.	RP	world			France		
		#	% avg	% max	#	% avg	% max
STA	6:39	63.	140.2%	57.4%	14.	140.0%	57.4%
DYN	150 m	103.	145.2%	60.0%	14.	145.8%	65.8%
DNF	106 m	77.	124.6%	45.7%	16.	131.4%	63.1%
CWT	113 m	3.	231.8%	91.9%	1.	230.9%	100.0%
CNF	78 m	5.	183.4%	86.7%	1.	132.5%	100.0%
FIM	80 m	12.	160.3%	71.4%	1.	157.4%	100.0%

statistics courtesy of <http://apnea.cz/ranking.html?>

VB 2010 Profile - WALTER STEYN



Walter Steyn was the 10th man to enter the 100 meter CWT club at last year's Vertical Blue, and this year he will return intent on chasing down the other 9 divers. He has a lot of potential in CNF also, although his best performance was several years ago now in Hawaii.

Expect big dives towards the end of the competition as this Australian juggernaut builds momentum and gets his equalisation firing.

best results - all federations/all time							
disc.	RP	world			Australia		
		#	% avg	% max	#	% avg	% max
STA	7:02	43.	148.3%	60.7%	2.	130.3%	97.0%
DYN	201 m	29.	194.6%	80.4%	1.	167.6%	100.0%
DNF	175 m	8.	205.7%	75.4%	1.	151.7%	100.0%
CWT	100 m	9.	205.2%	81.3%	1.	162.0%	100.0%
CNF	66 m	11.	155.2%	73.3%	1.	150.5%	100.0%

statistics courtesy of <http://apnea.cz/ranking.html?>

VB2010 - The Athletes



16 athletes from 10 nations will compete at Vertical Blue this year. In alphabetical order they are:

- Eric Fattah (1)
- Carla-Sue Hanson
- Misuzu Hirai
- Robert King
- Dave Mullins (4)
- Guillaume Nery (4)
- Herbert Nitsch (28 )
- Frank Pernet
- Niki Roderick
- Alfredo Romo
- Jared Schmelzer
- Ryuzo Shinomiya
- Martin Štěpanek (13)
- Walter Steyn
- William Trubridge ( 8 )
- William Winram

In case you are wondering what the numbers next to the names are, they are the number of world records set during the athlete's career. A total of 58 records between all the competitors, almost all of whom are national champions in one or more disciplines. This is the strongest field for a Vertical Blue event, or any freediving competition other than AIDA the world championships. The format, the incredible venue and the dizzying depths being reached by some of these athletes all foretell an epic event.

Expect fireworks...