

Introducing Team Hector - DEEP TECHNICAL SAFETY DIVERS

For the 100m CNF record attempt in December (Project Hector) we will be employing a team of deep technical divers to provide safety for William during the dive. They will all be equipped with closed circuit 'rebreather' systems, which increase the depth and bottom time for these divers and mean there won't be a column of ascending bubbles in Dean's Blue Hole (which can create powerful currents that play havoc with the freedive).

Two of these team members, Brian Kakuk and Paul Heinerth, are introduced here. Both were part of the original team that assisted William Trubridge in his first successful world record dive to 82 meters in Dean's Blue Hole in 2007.



Brian Kakuk is a former US navy diver who is based out of Abaco island, in the north Bahamas. Brian began exploring the many blue holes and cave systems of the Bahamas in 1990, and has set several world records for distance traveled inside a submerged cave system. Imagine following an underwater passage for over a kilometer through narrow openings and over ominous rockfalls, removing your equipment to push it in front of you through the tightest constrictions...

In 1994 Brian broke a world record for distance penetration in an underwater cave system. The previous record had been set by a team of six British divers stationing 14 tanks so that one of their number could travel 1.1 km back into Conch Sound Blue Hole on Andros island. Brian entered the same cave alone, and carrying all the air he needed with him he brought out the British team's flag, after replacing it with one of his own 30 meters deeper into the cave.

You can see [some images here](#) from a recent National Geographic article that documented Brian's explorations and archeological excavations inside Bahamian blue holes.



Paul Heinerth is one of the very first pioneers of the extremely dangerous and technical sport of cave diving. He certainly has more experience than anyone else alive in diving Florida's porous countryside and the Cenotes of Central America. He was one of the first divers to explore Weeki Wachee Springs (site of the famous underwater ballet and mermaid shows that began back in the 1940's) and has conducted countless dives inside this incredible cave system, with bottom times of over 5 hours at 100 meters. Battling currents at times so strong that they can knock your mask off your face, he has mapped hundreds of meters of this cave, to depths of over 120 meters.

In 2004 he retrieved the bodies of two cave divers who lost their lives at 100 meters inside the 'Eagle's Nest' sinkhole in Hernando county. Read more about this retrieval and the dangers of cave diving [here](#).

Brian and Paul will be stationed at 100 meters (330 feet) and 80 meters (260 feet) during William Trubridge's record attempt. Hanging in the empty darkened waters of Dean's Blue Hole, they will watch William carefully as he descends to the bottom plate and starts his ascent. In the event of any kind of emergency they will be ready to intervene by clipping

him to an ascender or lift bag so that he can be brought to the surface rapidly and safely.

If all goes according to plan they won't have to do anything other than watch the show!



During their decompression stop, Paul Heinerth (left) and Brian Kakuk (right) congratulate William Trubridge after his successful record dive to 82 meters without fins.

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