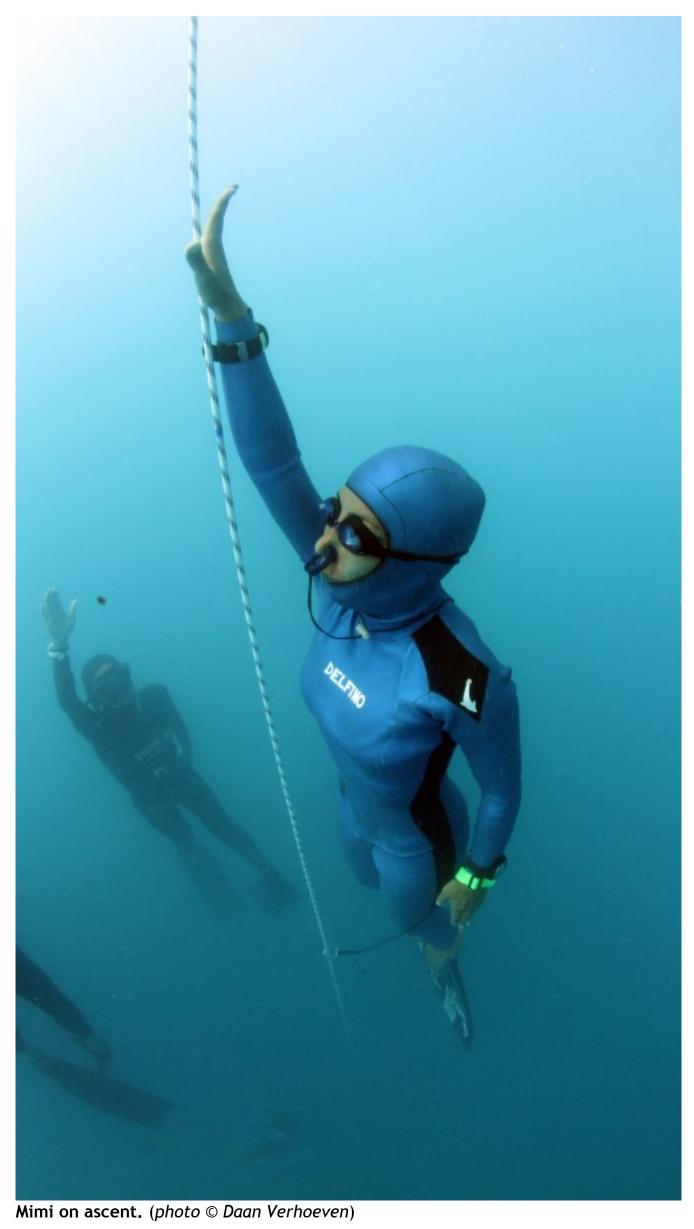
## **Racing to the Finish**

There are only two more days of diving to be had at Suunto Vertical Blue, and what a competition it has been thus far! The tally of national records in aggregate is a whopping 47, and of those eight were set today on the opening day of the final act of the competition. Chief among today's eight were Misuzu Hirai's fantastic effort in Constant Weight (CWT) with a big dive to 90m for such a small lady, and the third national record for Chilean freediver Simon Bennett who completed a FIM performance to 60m and attained a personal best -- rocking what Simon calls "old school" style "*no packing and a big chunky mask!*"



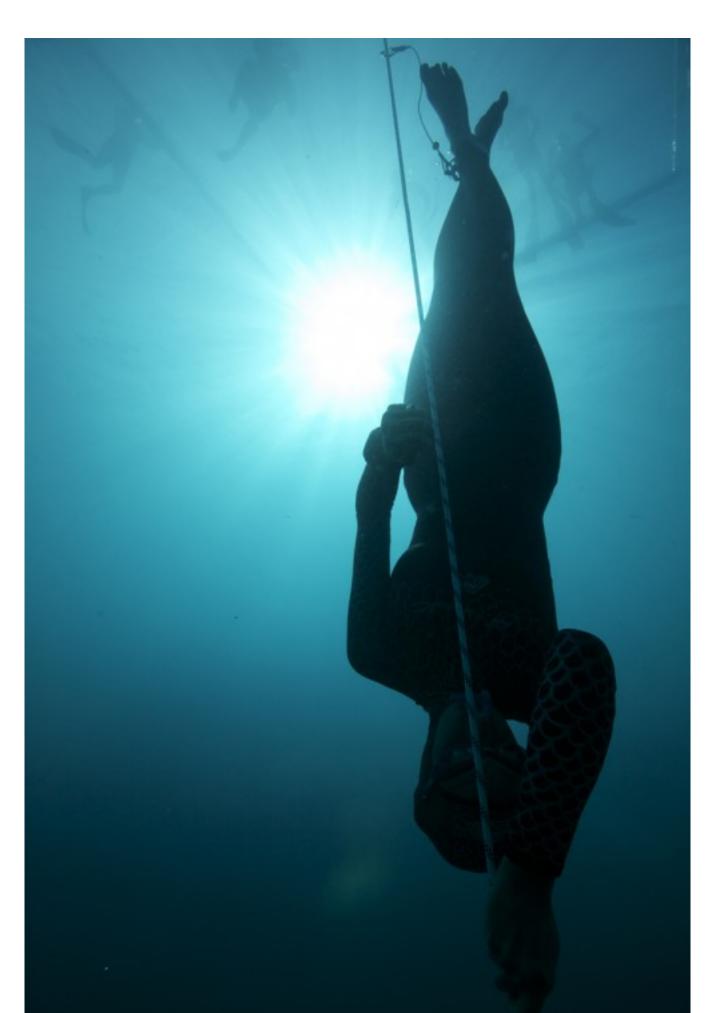
Team Chile celebrates. (photo © Daan Verhoeven)



As the full moon now starts to wane, so does the competition but there is still much to be revealed as the athletes race mostly against themselves before the finale of the event. But there is one race in particluar that is very tight and very interesting to watch -- the race between two of the ladies: Ashley Futral Chapman and Alena Zabloudilová. Currently Ali is leading Ashley by less than two-tenths of a single point, and if both of these capable divers complete their dives tomorrow them Ashley will be leading by an even smaller margin. And what will they do on Friday? The last day of the competition? Only time will tell but for now we'll all just have to wait, even though we are just giddy with anticipation.



Alena smiles. (photo © Daan Verhoeven)



## A Good Day for Alexey Molchanov

Today was a good day for Alexey Molchanov. This fourth day of freediving at Suunto Vertical Blue proved to be in the cards for the Russian freediver. Delivering a much cleaner surface protocol than he offered the first day, Alexey ascended into history by successfully completing a Constant Weight (CWT) dive to an astounding 126m. With today's dive Alexey retains his world record status in the CWT discipline. Will this push Trubridge to announce 127? Are there more world records in store for this last event of the AIDA World Cup? Stay tuned as there are still five more days of intense competition still yet to unfold.

In addition to Alexey, today we saw another 10 national records being set, including two for Chile and two for France. So far an incredible 25 national records have been set at Dean's Blue Hole this week, and with Alexey joining Ashley Futral Chapman we've now seen two world records in just four days. Records for the day include:

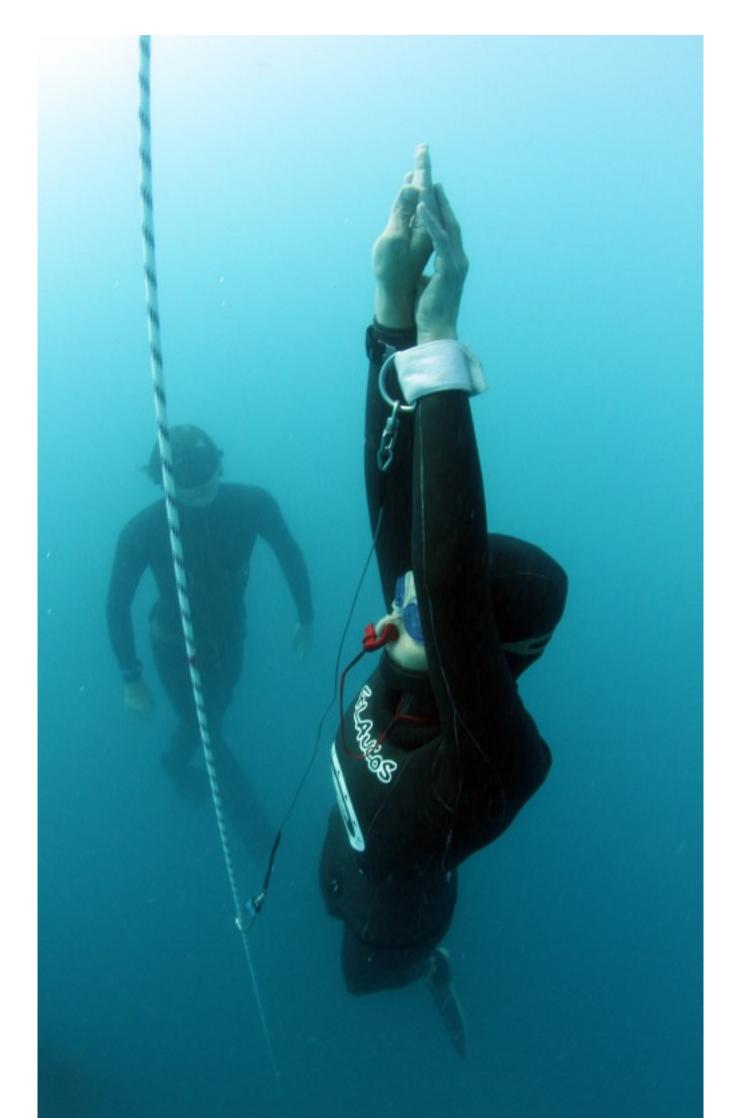
- Macaren Benitez, Chile 45m FIM
  Simon Bennet, Chile 42m CNF
- 3. Guillaume Nery, France 118m CWT
- 4. Rob King, USA 94m CWT
- 5. Misuzu Hirai, Japan 87m CWT
  6. Morgan Bourc'his, France & European (continental) 86m CNF
- 7. Mariafelicia Carraturo, Italy 79m CWT
- Yaron Hoory, Israel 78m CWT
  Iru Balic, Venezuela 70m CWT
- 10. Alejandro Lemus, Mexico 61m FIM



**126m feels good to Alexey.** (photo © Igor Liberti)



Air expanding, Guillaume rises. (photo © Igor Liberti)



Forza Italia - Mariafelicia Carraturo (photo © Igor Liberti)



A berry, berry good dive for Iru. (photo © Igor Liberti)

## More White Than Yellow, More Yellow Than Red

Tomorrow is Thanksgiving for the Americans, and Rowdy Boys is having a traditional dinner with sage

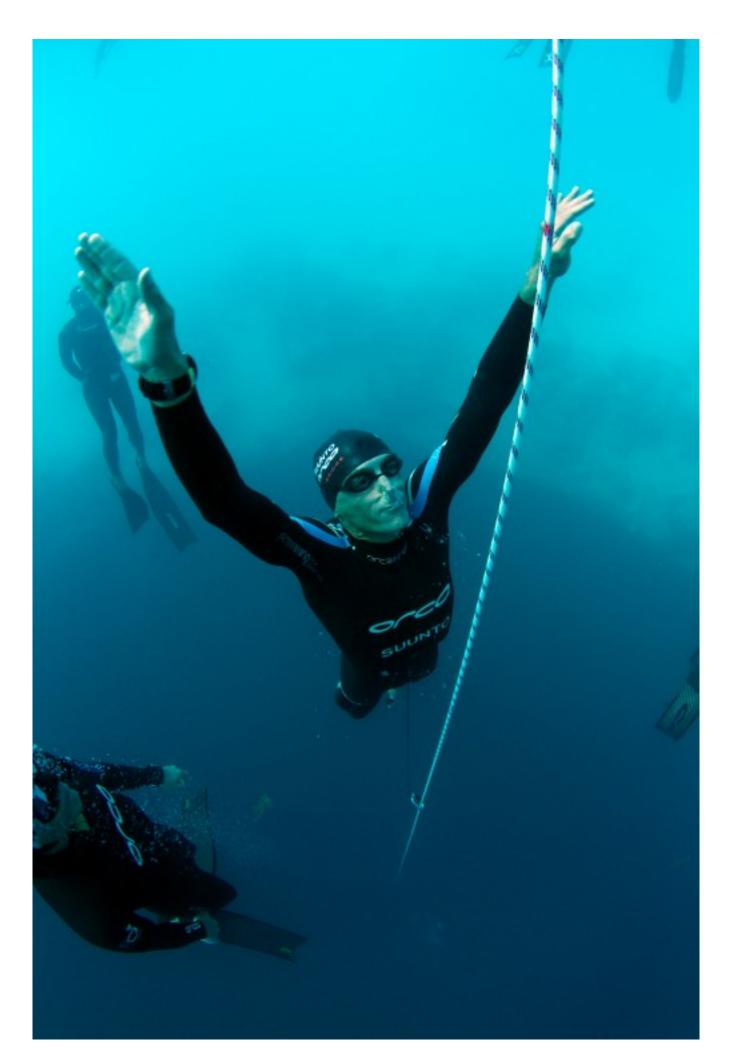
stuffing and all of the fixins'. As Day 2 of Suunto Vertical Blue comes to a close we are all most thankful for good friends, great support and a terrific start to our competition. It has been easy for some, tougher for others but among the things we count as a blessing is simply this: on both day one and day two of the competition we have had more white cards than yellow, and more yellow cards than red. With 22 white cards on Tuesday and 16 on Wednesday, we are off to a very good start.

The field has yielded 9 national records so far, one world record and a host of personal bests. Today Miguel Lozano easily achieved a new national title for Spain with a Free Immmersion Dive to 108 meters, our host Will followed that with his first official dive of the comp to 97 meters in Constant No-fins, and Tunisia's Walid Boudhiaf set his second national record in just as many days with a nice little dip to 93 meters under Constant Weight.

Alena Zabloudilova is shining brightly here, offering two of the deepest performances for the women so far – FIM 80m & CWT 86. And then there's Ashley Futral Chapman who handily nabbed another world record in Constant No-Fins with a big swim to 67 meters. We hope to continue these trends, and to continue to see more white than yellow, more yellow than red.



Miguel ascends. (photo © Igor Liberti)



Will swims. (photo © Igor Liberti)



Walid celebrates. (photo  $\ensuremath{\mathbb{C}}$  lgor Liberti)

## The Ladies of Suunto Vertical Blue 2012

*Suunto Vertical Blue* is pleased to announce an impressive line-up of female athletes poised to participate in the *Suunto Vertical Blue 2012* competition. 20 freediving females from 10 different countries will be competing for the women's overall title in Constant no-fins (CNF), Constant weight (CWT) and Free Immersion (FIM) depth disciplines.The ladies will offer their best dives in each of these disciplines starting November 20<sup>th</sup> and continuing through the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Over the course of nine days a yet un-told story will reveal which female will be the *Suunto Vertical Blue* Champion for 2012. Expectations are high to see stellar performances from top-ranking AIDA divers such as **Alena Zabloudilová** of the Czech Republic, who right now ranks second in the world for free immersion and fourth for constant weight. Making a return visit to the Blue Hole this fall will be **Ashley Futral Chapman**, who is currently second in the world only to Natalia Molchanova in what we call the purest form of freediving -- Constant no-fins. Will Ashley reclaim her World Record title for the United States or will she focus her energies across the disciplines to try and make an overall achievement?



There are equally as many good female contenders from the far east and Latin America. Leading a contingent of seven freedivers from Japan is **Misuzu Hirai** who has a history of setting national records at Deans Blue Hole -- **Mimi** (as her friends affectionately refer to her) has set a total of 3 Japanese national records in constant weight in the warm waters of Deans Blue Hole.



And let us not forget the sirens from South America such as rising star Maca Benitez, who is hoping to improve upon her previous national record for Chile. Brazilian beauty **Carolina Schrappe** has already had an action packed year and is ready to take her own personal bests deeper and perhaps make a run for some of the \$20,000 prize pool, all while mentoring a newcomer to Suunto Vertical Blue, Venezuelan native **Iru Balic.** Iru joins us fresh from training in Egypt with one of our favorite instructor's Sara Campbell. Speaking of terrific English ladies, **Liv Phillip** will also be present representing Great Britain. Phillip, the winner of the 2010 World Absolute Freediver Award, should post some good numbers as well. Stay tuned to see how all of the female athletes perform - we are certain it will be dramatic and breath-taking!

