

Raised in the Czech Republic, Martin Stepanek trained as a finswimmer, freediver and SCUBA diver. He earned a degree in Forestry Engineering at the College of Forestry in Trutnov, and then studied Sports-Biology at Charles University in Prague. After immigrating to the United States, Martin acquired a degree and qualified as a Deep Sea Commercial Diver from the Divers Academy of the Eastern Seaboard. This afforded him extensive experience in mixed gas diving, hyperbaric chamber operations and saturation diving.

His passion for physiology and sports biology led him to further explore what the human body experiences while freediving. Martin found himself working closely with top researchers from prestigious universities like Harvard and the Karolynski Institutet of Sweden to uncover some of the physiological mysteries behind his sport. His participation in this ongoing research has helped scientists better understand the impact that depth and pressure have on freedivers.

Martin can hold his breath for over eight minutes and dive down to over 370 feet on a single breath of air. In the course of six years he has set eleven Freediving World Records in various disciplines. In addition to competing, Martin is also a certified International Level B Freediving Judge for the International Association for the Development of Apnea (AIDA).

As a senior instructor for Performance Freediving International, he developed educational materials for clinics that he taught to over two thousand people worldwide. He is also an Instructor Trainer for the International Association of Nitrox and Technical Divers (IANTD). He continues to train competitively and set world records in various disciplines. Martin is presently the Director of Training and Development of Freediving Instructors International (FII), through which he hopes to educate and inspire people about his sport.