

HD, Past winners: High show since 2013!

FINA Communications Department

On July 29, 2013 in Barcelona, the sixth FINA aquatic discipline entered in the programme of the World Championships: High Diving. In the Catalanian capital, many hundreds of spectators gathered in Port Vell to follow the action of the two first rounds of the men's competition. Since then, the "Best Athletes of the Year" awards have been given to the top stars of the discipline and the list certainly includes some of the legends of this demanding sport.

Before coming to Spain, a neophyte in High Diving could perhaps identify one single name in the discipline: Orlando Duque, from Colombia. Born in 1974, he started his trajectory in pool diving, but seeking other challenges for his sport career, he then switched to High Diving and was for many years the only identifiable star of the sport, following his successes at the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series.

In Barcelona, Duque did not disappoint and won the first FINA world title in history. He naturally got the 2013 award for the "Best Athlete of the Year". One year later, in the inaugural edition of the World Cup, held in Kazan (RUS), the Colombian star was once more the best, collecting also the FINA prize at the end of the year.



Rachelle Simpson (USA) and Orlando Duque (COL) - Photo by deepbluemedias

From 2015, a new era started, with the ascension of Gary Hunt, from Great Britain, to the top of the world hierarchy. The British star, always keen in presenting new and more difficult dives, is constantly enlarging

the boundaries of the discipline and his effort has been well rewarded. In 2015, at the Kazan World Championships, Hunt was the gold medallist, an achievement he repeated less than one year later at the World Cup in Abu Dhabi (UAE). On both years, he got the FINA accolade for the “Best Athlete of the Year”.

North American power

Among women, the three awardees so far all come from North America. Cesilie Carlton (USA) shared with Duque the honour of being the first FINA world champion in Barcelona 2013, while her teammate Rachelle Simpson shone in the following two years.



Cesilie Carlton (USA) - Photo by deepbluemedi

Simpson was the best in the 2014 World Cup and achieved success again in Kazan (RUS) one year later, at the 2015 World Championships.

In 2016, another name appeared at the highest level, more precisely at the World Cup in Abu Dhabi. Lysanne Richard (CAN) was the best of the field and was happy to receive the “Best Athlete of the Year” award at home, in the Canadian city of Windsor.

List of past winners*

Men

2013 – Orlando Duque (COL)

2014 – Orlando Duque (COL)

2015 – Gary Hunt (GBR)

2016 – Gary Hunt (GBR)

Women

2013 – Cesilie Carlton (USA)

2014 – Rachelle Simpson (USA)

2015 – Rachelle Simpson (USA)

2016 – Lysanne Richard (CAN)

**The FINA World Aquatics Gala “Soirée des Etoiles” has been successively organised in Doha (QAT, 2014), Budapest (HUN, 2015), and Windsor (CAN, 2016).*
