



Marcel Lämmerhirt & the Pro-B4

On September 10, 2012, Profoto released the Pro-B4, a battery generator faster and tougher than any other on the market. Action photographer Marcel Lämmerhirt was the first in the world to try it out. Here is his story.

The Pro-B4 is capable of firing up to 30 flashes per second and delivers flash durations down to 1/25,000 second. Needless to say, this opens up creative possibilities that yesterday's photographers could only ever dream of.

Award-winning action photographer Marcel Lämmerhirt was the first photographer to ever lay his hands on the Pro-B4. Marcel recognized its potential and decided that he wanted to do something that could not be done with any other battery generator. After giving it some thought, he decided to bring the Pro-B4 to Wakelake at Würth an der Isar in southern Germany and take sequence shots of the world champion in wakeboarding, Dominik Gührs, and the junior world champion, Freddy von Osten.

"I love to shoot fast and extreme sports," says Marcel. "It's so real. You can't fake it. The athletes have to work extremely hard to achieve their goals, and trying to portray their achievements in a unique and interesting way is an incredibly rewarding experience. The big challenge as a photographer is to get that perfect shot at that perfect moment when the snowboarder is grabbing the board or when the wakeboarder is high up in the air. You have to get it exactly right to tell the entire story!"

This is the main reason that Marcel got hooked on the idea of doing sequence shots of Dominik. This way he would not have to time his shots perfectly. Neither would he have to ask Dominik to do the same jump over and over again. Instead he could just shoot a sequence and select the shot that, to quote Marcel, tells the entire story.

Before the release of the Pro-B4, there was no battery generator fast enough to do a sequence shoot like this. You needed a powerful studio generator. The problem was that there are no mains outlets in Würth an der Isar. Or in any other lake in the world, for that matter. But with the Pro-B4 being battery powered and capable of firing up to 30 flashes per second, new possibilities suddenly arose.

CASE STORY

THIS MATERIAL MAY BE REUSED.
But remember to give credit to the photographers!



"Sequence shots are amazing for jobs like this," says Marcel. "But it's probably just as useful if you're in the studio. For instance, if you're a fashion photographer and the model's hair or robe is flying around or you're working with powder or something like that – a sequence shot would be just perfect. In that case you may even connect the Pro-B4 to a mains outlet and shoot continuously for days!"

Apart from utilizing the Pro-B4's fast recycling, Marcel also wanted to experiment with its exceptionally short flash durations. To do so, he brought Dominik ashore, placed him in-between three Pro-B4s (two rim lights equipped with Magnum Reflectors and blue color filters and one main light with a Softlight Reflector White). He then threw water on Dominik and pressed the shutter release. So, if you have ever wondered what a splash of water looks like at a record-breaking 1/25,000 second, feast your eyes on this.

"Regardless of how much I love the sequence shots, the water splash portrait is probably my favorite shot," says Marcel. "I've never seen water frozen like this before. You can really see how sharp and crisp it is. It's unbelievable."

As mentioned above, Marcel's ambition with the shoot was to utilize the groundbreaking features of the Pro-B4 to do something that neither he nor anyone else had ever done before. Marcel applied his particular expertise and personal style, and the results speak for themselves. Nevertheless, Marcel willingly admits that he has only scratched the surface.

"Shooting at 1/25,000 second is just magic," says Marcel. "Then there's the fast recycling that enables the sequence shots, and I absolutely love shooting sequences. Other than that, it's hard to tell what you can do with the Pro-B4. It's so new. It's a new generation of flashes, really. I think photographers will have to start thinking in new directions. They have to think: ok, here we have a battery generator that can do things that no other generator can do. So what can I do with it? My idea was this wakeboarding thing. But I'm sure some other photographer will come up with some crazy stuff that I didn't even think of. This is really just the beginning."

[See more of Marcel's work at www.mlpics.de](http://www.mlpics.de)

[Learn more about the Pro-B4 at www.profoto.com/prob4](http://www.profoto.com/prob4)