

Jubbly 624

11th June 2007

Competition special

PHENOMENAL THOMAS IS TALK OF DIVING WORLDWIDE

On only his second outing on the Senior circuit and at just 13 years of age, Thomas Daley finishes 4th in the final of the Mens Platform at the Madrid Grand Prix, after finishing 2nd in the prelim, with a PB and the highest score achieved by any British male in 2007.

STAR OF THE WEEK

CHARLOTTE HERBERT – Intermediate Squad

Charlotte Herbert has been diving for a few years now, but despite strong physical attributes, she has really battled with nerves throughout all of her competitions.

This is the reason she dived in the Skills event, rather than at National Age Groups this year, to give her an opportunity to get to grips with and hopefully overcome those nerves which have been verging on crippling, in previous competitions.

At the SW Skills event on 9th June, she finally looked like she was beginning to enjoy competing and put together a strong series of 12 dives to take a comfortable victory.

This is a major breakthrough. Well done Charlotte – keep it up!!

DIVER SPOTLIGHT

THOMAS DALEY

You hear about his successes all the time, but who is Thomas Daley?

Born 1994, Diving competitively since September 2002

- » Youngest ever under 18 National Champion (aged 10)
- » First Junior International in 2005
- » First Senior International in 2007

Look up “precocious talent” in the dictionary and you might just find this young man’s name there.

Spotted by a coach taking part in regular diving lessons, Thomas was pulled out and put into a competitive squad in September 2002. He entered his first competition at the National Novice Championships in April 2003 where he won a silver medal in the 8/9 boys.

In September of the same year he went to an invitational meeting in Southampton and won gold on 1m, 3m and platform – that’s when it began.

Favourite thing to do when not diving

Go to caravan in Newquay (Cornwall) with my family

Sporting hero

Lance Armstrong, Alex Despatie (youngest ever Commonwealth Champ at 13), Leon Taylor (British Olympic silver medalist)

Life ambition

To move into sports science and stay involved in diving

Most embarrassing moment

My Dad dressing up as Elvis at diving parties!

His phenomenal success has led to Thomas becoming involved in many National schemes and attending many award ceremonies, through which he has met many famous athletes and can boast having Dame Tanni Grey Thompson and Gymnastics World Championship medalist Beth Tweddle among his Facebook pals!!

Thomas has regularly been featured in the National media, appearing on Blue Peter, Sportsround, Sky News, BBC Horizon and all the daily newspapers, particularly the Daily Mail who has included Thomas in

their Magnificent Seven feature, tracking the progress of seven young athletes as they head towards 2012.

Regularly used terms: Intermediate Group - divers working towards Grade 5 & BS1 & 2. Advanced Group - divers that have passed Grade 5 & Board Skills 2. Squads competitive training groups. Novices - first rung of competitive ladder. Intermediate/Age Groups - next rung of competitive ladder. Elite Juniors - highest level domestic event for divers aged 9-18. Junior - 18 & under. Senior - all ages (where you will find our elite Olympic divers).

Diving balcony etiquette - Parents please do not coach your children or call them over during classes, Divers must be clothed and wearing shoes when on the balcony and if you are using still or video cameras, please sign the book at reception and ensure you only take footage of your own child.

Parent Liaison - Jayne Glynn, jayne@plymouthdiving.com, 07944361424

Child Protection - Plymouth Diving’s independent Welfare Officer, Kathy Hancock, Kathy@plymouthdiving.com, 07759266041, Plymouth City Sports Child Protection Officer, Sam Grevett 01752 607206, ASA Swimline 0808 100 401

Useful references - www.plymouthdiving.com (everything you need to know about the programme, including newsletters and important documents/competition information etc), www.britishswimming.org (the governing body website)

Diving news & views for Parents and Divers involved in the Plymouth Diving Programme, Intermediate Group upwards

16 June	Flip and Fun competition for Intermediate & Advanced Groups & Novice Squad	
COMPETITIVE PROGRAMME DATES		
5-8 July	Senior National Championships	Senior Team
14-15 July	National Skills Finals, Plymouth	Selected divers from Advanced Group, Novice Squad, Intermediate Squad
STAFF ABSENCES		
5-8 July	Andy, Sally & Sam away (Senior Nationals)	

THOMAS DALEY AT MADRID GRAND PRIX 9-10 June 2007

For some time, Plymouth Diving's young star, Thomas Daley, has been considered one of the greatest talents ever to grace a diving board in the UK. However because of his age, he has had very few opportunities to demonstrate his true potential on the international stage. That changed this year, when British Diving Managers took the bold step of allowing him to compete on the Senior Grand Prix circuit where, unlike the major championships, there is no specified lower age limit.

His first outing was in Canada just a month ago, where he remarkably made the semi-final (top 12), finishing 10th against some of the World's leading talent. Just 5 weeks on, the confidence that gave him was evident at the Madrid leg of the FINA Grand Prix circuit. He stunned everyone with one of the most outstanding performances ever witnessed by a diver, who turned 13 just weeks ago.

He qualified for the semi-final stage of the contest with an astonishing second place in

the preliminary, just 10 points behind the Olympic Champion from China, Hu Jia. His score of 480 was a personal best by some 30 points and the highest score achieved by a British male in 2007 – including our Olympic Silver medalist Peter Waterfield.

Keen to demonstrate that performance was not a one-off, Thomas went on to win his semi final with a score of 450 and book himself a place in his first Senior International final (top 6) at only his second attempt. He finished 4th in the final, an agonizing 6 points away from a medal, with a score of 420 points. In each round of dives, Thomas had to perform his 6 most difficult dives and over the 3 rounds, he missed just one of those 18 dives. It is difficult to describe just how remarkable this performance is from a 13 year old boy on just his second outing at this level.

Thomas's goal had always been 2012, but with performances like this, Beijing is certainly beckoning.

There are still a lot of what if's at the moment, but it all comes down to January's British Championships and the World Cup Trial, where Thomas will have his first opportunity to make a full major championship team. If he achieves that, then a top 18 place at the World Cup will almost certainly secure him a place on the Beijing Team.

** Plymouth team-mate Sarah Barrow was also in Madrid with the British Team, but after injury niggles and a throat infection, she was diving below par and took 16th place in the Women's Platform event. Her score of 259 was disappointing after some excellent recent results in China and Canada, where she had scored over 300 points. Sarah was also 5th in the Synchronised platform where she was trying out with a different partner, Rebecca Gallantree from Leeds, there score of 273 was an excellent score for a first time competing together.

NORTHERN CROSS, LEEDS, 27-29 April

A small team of just 14 divers travelled to the Northern Cross in Leeds at the end of April, with Coaches Fito and Claire. This event is very similar in standard and stature to our own Armada Cup. Some of the UK's leading divers take part, but it's also a great avenue for divers to begin learning how to compete at Age Group level, so there is a real mixture of levels competing.

There was a sensational victory in the Mens open platform even for Harry Glover who won gold in the new, very exciting "knockout format" finals. In the same category, Steve Glynn also picked up 2 fourth places in the finals of the 1m and platform events.

In the 14-15 years boys events, Aaron Walters continued to put pressure on his more experience counterparts and it finally paid off when he won bronze in the platform event. He also made the final and finished 4th on 1m.

The 12-13 boys events are the most hotly contested of all, with some of the UK's leading future talent in this age category, just breaking into the top 10 is a challenge and a half. Jack Glover knows that he has such a performance in him, but was just lacking the sharpness that would make the difference between the middle of the pack where he settled in all 3 events and the top end of the rankings. Ashley Hendrick and Drew Cunningham are also beginning to develop their competitive confidence and finished just a few spots below Jack in their events on 1m, 3m and platform.

On the girls side, Jenny McDonald won a well deserved bronze in the womens open 3m, Alex Newton was 4th and Emily Deighton 6th. On Platform, Alex reversed the 3m result, taking 4th ahead of Jenny in 5th. They both beat Junior International Suzanne Collins from Leeds!

Jo Cowen competed on just 1m and platform in the 14-15 age group, where she picked up a 14th place on 1m and an unlucky 7th on platform, just missing out on the final.

The 12-13 girls event is very similar to the boys. High in numbers and very high in quality and experience. Jane Allan did well to secure two top 12 finishes and one top 10 in her 3 events (1m, 3m, platform), with Charlotte Donoghue, just a few places behind in 18th, 18th and 13th. Youngest member of the team Jenny Bunsell, found the going tough in the 9-11 years girls, another very high standard event. She finished 21st on 1m, 14th on 3m and 12th on platform.

Well done to all the divers – apologies for the delay in publishing this report! Thanks to the staff also, I know this was a very difficult weekend as the news of Gavin Brown's accident circulated, making for a sombre atmosphere.

Reports on South West Regional Skills and Flip 'n' Fun will be in next week's newsletter.