

**REPORT FROM PLYMOUTH DIVING**  
**DECEMBER 2006**  
**The end of the year**

The end of the year, has seen a flurry of events for the Plymouth Diving Team, as the new competitive season begins.

It started with the White Rose Novices in Leeds, where a small team of just 7 divers traveled to the annual event for novice level competitors. This is the first rung of the competition ladder.

Abigail Herbert put in a superb performance to finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the final of the Girls 10-11 years and Amy Ransome finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the final of the Girls 14-16 years.

These were well deserved medals for the two girls. Abigail Donoghue and Hannah Waters also gained top 10 places.

Just 1 week later and the competition programme moved up a level and moved on to Southampton, where some of the UK's leading Age Group divers competed for top individual and team honours. This event also provides those who are making the move up from Novices, an opportunity to experience competing at this level.

The Team's more experienced girls really dominated proceedings in the 16-18 age group categories. Jessica Taylor, Jenny McDonald and Alex Newton won 8 medals out of 9 in the 1m, 3m and platform events, with Jessica taking 2 golds and a bronze, Jenny taking a gold a silver and a bronze and Alex taking 2 silvers.

In the 14-15 age group events, the girls were on top form again, with Ros Le Grys winning gold on 1m and silver on 3m and Emma Barrow picking up a silver in the platform event.

There was also a well deserved bronze medal for newcomer Jenny Bunsell who finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 8-9 girls platform event. She also made the final on 3m where she finished 5<sup>th</sup>.

Joanne Cowen and Jane Allan made 4 finals between them in the girls 12-13 event, where Jane finished 6<sup>th</sup> on 1m and platform and Joanne finished 5<sup>th</sup> on 3m and platform.

Not to be outdone, there were a number of medals from the boys too.

Harry Glover and Elliott Hatherley have been winning medals at this level all year and this event was no exception. Elliott won silver in the boys 14-15 years platform event, with Harry taking bronze and both boys made the final on 1m and 3m.

Like Harry and Elliot, Aaron Walters has had a highly successful year and got the 2006/2007 competitive season off to a flying start, picking up a silver medal in the boys 12-13 years 3m and a bronze in the platform event. He also made the final on 1m.

The baby of the boys team, Ashley Hendrick made 2 out of 3 finals, finishing 6<sup>th</sup> in the boys 10-11 years 3m and platform

With further top 10 places for Jack Glover, Charlotte Donoghue and Charlotte Herbert, the team fought off close competition to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> in the team standings, behind hosts Southampton.

Thomas Daley was absent from the Southampton meeting as he was at a GB Junior Squad training camp in Beijing, however he was on top form at the next meeting – the National Schools Championships in Bedford.

Thomas led the team with a very comfortable victory in the Junior Boys category. Representing his school, Egguckland Community College, Thomas finished a massive 80 points (in 280) ahead of his nearest rival.

There were also medals for Rosalind Le Grys from Hele's School, who won a bronze in the Intermediate Girls Championships and for Jessica Taylor from Plymouth High School for Girls, who won bronze in the Senior category.

Aaron Walters from Ivybridge Community College brought the medal tally to 4 when he won yet another bronze in the Intermediate Boys event.

Jenny Bunsell, from Hyde Park Junior School, Jane Allan from Devonport High School for Girls and Oliver Markwick from Woodford Junior School, the remaining members of the team, all made top 8 finishes. Unfortunately, Junior International and medal certainty Kyle Prior from John Kitto Community College, had to withdraw at the last minute due to injury.

In the final event of the recent series, the divers traveled on to Luton for the annual Luton Challenge. On top form again, Thomas Daley took gold in the 12-13 boys 1m and platform events and then with partner Claire Wonnacott, went on to claim second place in the Pairs knockout competition – an event unique to the Luton Challenge.

Claire also achieved the best result of her career at this competition, winning gold in the 16+ 1m event, ahead of Commonwealth Games Team Member, Rebecca Gallantree from Leeds.

Diving up a category, in next year's age group, Aaron Walters continued his medal winning ways and picked up 2 bronze medals in the 14-15 years 1m and 3m events.

It's been a fabulous start to the 2006/2007 competitive season and the Plymouth Diving Team hope to maintain this success through to August next year when the season reaches it's climax.

That's it for 2006 as far as the Age Group level divers are concerned. The 1 remaining event is the most important of the new season for Plymouth's elite team of Senior and Junior International stars. The 2007 British Championships which are being held early on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2006, are doubling up as the World Championship trials. The pressure is on as Tonia Couch, Sarah Barrow and Brooke Graddon all fight for places on the World Championship team. The event in March will herald the first opportunity for anyone to qualify for the Beijing Olympics. Thomas Daley and Kyle Prior will also be getting themselves in the mix and hoping to continue their dominance of the Junior rankings.