



Newcomers' Promise

Media release for Southampton Diving Academy

A team of eleven divers represented Southampton Diving Academy at the Southern Counties Amateur Swimming Association Novice Diving Championships at Crystal Palace on Saturday 8th March.

There was stiff competition and a large number of entries in every category of the competition, giving the very young and inexperienced team a real challenge.

The most successful members of the group were Ellie Hill and Robert Knight (both 12 years old), who managed to secure 5th and 8th places respectively.

For five members of the team: Kate Hicks (10), Emily Burden (12), Danielle Robinson (12), Sam Colmer (12) and Richard Snook (13) it was their first competition, having been diving with the club for only just over one month.

"I was very pleased and impressed by the way they dived today," said coach, Charly Tomkys. "It is incredible how quickly they have got to grips with the sport and that they didn't let such a high level competition overawe them."

Several of the newcomers joined the sport after an introduction through a free diving tasters programme, funded by a grant from the Awards for All Lottery Fund. "This scheme has been, and continues to be, a great success," said Director of Coaching, Lindsey Fraser. "We have had around 300 children participate in the programme so far and hope to have 800 through before the grant comes to an end in June. Far more of the participants have chosen to continue with the sport than we had ever imagined and we have had very positive feedback from parents and children."

The championships were also an opportunity for the youngsters to qualify to represent their club at the National Novice Competitions to be held in Plymouth on 5th and 6th April. The successful divers were: Ellie Hill, Ciaran Allen, Amy Lovett, Emily Burden, Kate Hicks, Jack Howsham, Sam Colmer, Stephen Lingard and Robert Knight. Those who were unsuccessful on this occasion will have another opportunity to make the grade at the Hampshire Novice and Plain Diving Championships, to be held at the Quays on Sunday 16th March.

"We are really excited about the talent we have coming in at the bottom of the club just now," said coach, Ellie Clewlow. "If this group keep this promising start going we should have a very strong team for the novice events for the next couple of years."

Any child aged between 6 and 13 years can take part in the Awards for All free diving tasters programme by collecting an application form from the Quays reception desk.

Full results were as follows:

Richard Snook, 17th; Ellie Hill, 5th; Ciaran Allen, 29th; Amy Lovett, 20th; Emily Burden, 19th; Danielle Robinson, 24th; Kate Hicks, 17th; Jack Howsham, 17th; Stephen Lingard, 24th; Sam Colmer, 17th; Robert Knight, 8th.

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For further details call the Director of Coaching, Lindsey Fraser: 023 8072 0922.

Please note photo opportunities can be arranged.