

Ashley Hendrick year summary:

My first competition of the year was my only home competition this year and my first official competition in the 'Boys A16+' age group. It is good to compete in the home pool as you get a chance to leave the sweltering pool conditions between events and this does not happen when you compete in other pools. I had a good 10 metre competition and came 2nd in the prelims and managed to retain this place during the final and therefore winning a silver medal. Next I competed in the 3mtr event and to my surprise qualified for the final in 1st place scoring a personal best on this board with 287.10 points. I again managed to retain my position through the final and won a gold medal in this event. Lastly during the Armada Cup I competed on my least favourite board in the 1mtr event. I competed 8 dives during the prelim and qualified for the final in 3rd place, which was good considering my tariff is quite low for this board. Again I managed to maintain my position and came away with a bronze medal. Overall a very good start to my year winning a medal of each colour during this competition.

At the beginning of June I competed in Southampton at the British Gas Elite Junior Championships. In this event I competed in the 3mtr and platform events. Firstly in the platform event I performed 9 dives and achieved 2nd place in the prelims with a score of 445.45 points. During the final I maintained my position to take Silver. In the 3mtr event I qualified for the final in 6th place and finished 4th in the final with 458.85 points. All in all a good competition although I felt I could have dived better which could have meant a place at the Junior European Diving Championships, but this is what I shall be striving for in 2012.

At the end of June I competed in the British Gas National Diving Championships in Leeds. I only competed in the platform event during this competition as it is a senior competition and I was required to perform 6 optional dives with the highest tariff possible and no required dives, as is usually required in junior competitions. I was feeling quite nervous at this event as I was competing against Britain's top senior divers. However my first dive was good and I scored three 9's which was a nice surprise under the circumstances. I qualified for the final in 5th place with a personal best score of 366.20 points for six optional dives. During the final, unfortunately, I was not able to maintain my form and dropped to 8th place, so was obviously a bit disappointed, but proud that I had done well in the prelims.

In July I travelled to Barcelona with my fellow team mates from Plymouth Diving. I was to compete for the first time in an outdoor pool and have to say I was rather worried about not being able to 'spot' the water as I was somersaulting. My fears were soon put to rest as I trained for a couple of days before the competition started. My first competition of the meet was the 3mtr event and I was diving in the men's senior event. There were no preliminary events during this competition and I came 3rd with 289.20 points and a bronze medal. Next I competed in the 3mtr Syncro event with a partner from Plymouth Diving. There were only two pairs competing in this event we won a gold medal beating the German pair by 23 points. Next was my platform event which I was actually quite looking forward to. I came first scoring 320.70 point with six optional dives and took the gold medal which I was really please about. In the 1mtr event I again competed six dives and came 3rd so another good result and therefore winning four medals out of four events. At the end of this meet my name was announced and my coach told me to go to the podium. I was a bit shocked and wasn't sure what I was called for but soon found out when I was presented with a trophy for the highest scoring dive of all the male competitors throughout the whole competition.

My last competition of the year was the Southampton Invitational 2011. I competed in the 1mtr, 3mtr and platform events. First was the platform event and I qualified in second place and maintained my position during the final to take a silver medal with 328.70 points. In the 3mtr and 1mtr events I qualified for the final in first position in each event and managed to maintain these positions winning two gold medals.

Next year I am aiming to achieve some more personal bests at these competitions and also compete at the British National Cup in Southend-On-Sea at the end of January. For this I need to ensure that I have a list of high tariff dives ready, to the best of my ability, to compete at this senior event. I am looking forward to this event and hope that with this list of higher tariff dives I will have an even more successful year and qualify for the Junior European event next summer. 2012 is going to be a very exciting year for diving in Plymouth as we will be moving into the new pool at the Life Centre and will have a much better equipped dry land training area and more diving boards which will hopefully help me to improve my performance and achieve my goal in 2012.