

Four face anxious wait for places in elite event

FRED WOODCOCK - The Dominion Post | Monday, 14 April 2008

Four Wellington youngsters are waiting to find out whether their performances at the North Island diving championships were good enough to book spots at the Australian Junior Elite Championships in Melbourne in July.

Gabe Armstrong-Scott, Alice Wylie-Van Eerd, Ollie Armstrong-Scott and Tom Green were using the championships, held at the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre at the weekend, as qualifying trials for the elite competition, from which they could then qualify for the World Junior Championships in Germany in August.

Diving New Zealand's selectors are expected to make a decision this week, though the four staked healthy claims by starring at the North Island championships.

Gabe Armstrong-Scott, 11, was first in the 13 and under girls 1m, 3m and platform, Wylie-Van Eerd first in the women's open 1m and 3m, Ollie Armstrong-Scott first in the men's open 1m and 3m, and Green was first in the 16-18 boys 1m and 3m.

"They all dived extremely well," Luvaine McDonald, from the Wellington High Performance Aquatics programme, said.

"We're just hoping they will be selected to go to Australia, but we will have to wait and see."

McDonald said the Wellington Diving Club dominated the championships in both numbers and results, which she said was due largely to the coaching programme run by Chinese Olympic level diving coach, Steven Zhu, and Wellington Diving Club coach James Hardaker.

"The standard of diving has increased and the performances have improved so much," she said.

"The divers are training seven days a week and up to 24 hours a week, and the benefits are coming."



ROBERT KITCHIN/Dominion Post

TUMBLE TURNS: Alice Wylie-Van Eerd, winner of the women's open 1m and 3m events, competes in the North Island diving championships in Wellington yesterday.