



Top dive: Wellington diver Kate Irving shows the style that saw her receive special mention from the New Zealand selectors at the national championships in Dunedin. Picture: ROSS GIBLIN

Wellington divers end the year in style

■ DIVING ANNA JENSEN

WELLINGTON'S best young divers have capped the year off in style, dominating the medal tally at the national championships in Dunedin.

The Wellington Diving Club, under the guidance of coach James Hardaker, won 13 national

titles as well as five silver medals and a bronze over the weekend.

The top performer was Gabe Armstrong-Scott, who broke two national records in the 13-years-and-under 1m and 3m springboard events, and she was joined by Lexi Mills and Alice Wylie-van Eerd as multiple winners.

Kate Irving and Holly Wright received special mention from

national selectors after their performance in the girls under-13 synchronised dive.

It has continued a successful trend for the region, which has been unbeatable in recent years.

That gap is set to extend further following the introduction of the diving academy at Wellington High Performance Aquatics, which gave the young divers

plenty to work for. They were back in the water yesterday, with their sights set on the challenges next year with Wylie-van Eerd, Mills and Ollie Armstrong-Scott targeting the world youth championships in Germany.

"We've now got five months till the next big competition.

"It's going to be training through Christmas and into the

new year. Some are training up to 20 hours a week and that will be going up next year," Hardaker said.

"The first test really is next year and at the world junior championships, and if we can get athletes there then we are on our way to the Commonwealth Games in 2010 and from there the Olympics in 2012."