Pymble Swimming

Pymble Ladies' College

DIVING



www.pymblelc.nsw.edu.au/swimming



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Introduction

Welcome to the Pymble Ladies' College Diving Program. This handbook is designed to orientate new students and parents into the world of diving. Let this be your first stop for any questions you may have regarding *Pymble* Diving.

Understanding diving

Diving is one of, if not the most, difficult and technical sports on the globe. It is as beautiful and powerful as it is scary and acrobatic. A unique combination of attributes and rarity within Australia make diving an appealing and mysterious sport. People are often captivated by diving's beauty and acrobatics, and forget the serious risks and consequences athletes take each time they stand on the board or platform.

At *Pymble*, we prize technical proficiency and recognise it as the most sacred and supreme element of diving. Good technique simultaneously protects divers from injury and allows athletes to increase their Degree of Difficulty (DD) by progressing up the skill-chain. Trust your intuition: the more difficult a dive, the more technical proficiency is required. So, how does a diver progress their skill level? There are four main pillars which determine a diver's ability to progress: Technique, Physical readiness, Mental dexterity and Coach evaluation/ approval. An example might look like this:



Technique

Does the diver display expertise and proficiency in the sub skill? Does the diver understand the technique required in the new skill?



Physical readiness

Is the diver physically prepared to execute the new skill/technique safely?



Mental dexterity

Is the diver personally motivated (confidence etc.) and emotionally ready to learn the new skill?



Coach evaluation

Has the coach evaluated the diver and confirmed they are ready to attempt a new skill?

If a diver is missing any of the four pillars, they are not ready to learn a new skill. A missing pillar compromises safety.

Why we go slow

Diving is one of the most difficult and technical sports on the planet. Great divers are built from the ground up. Foundational skills are the bedrock of any great diver and serve as the beginning of a very long 'skill chain'. Foundations are basic skills in themselves and can represent specific elements of more complex dives. Strong foundations are indicative of steady development and long-term progression. There is a reason athletes spend years mastering jumps before ever entering the water head-first.

What are foundations?

Foundations can be broken into three specific sets:

- Jumps
- Entries
- Basic Dives (101, 201, 301, 401).

These three sets of skills are a diver's greatest ally. Significant time should be invested in mastering these skills.

What does this look like in practice? Here is an example skill-chain breakdown for a forward dive tuck (101c):

- A hurdle jump straight represents the approach, take-off and part of the connection.
- A forward peanut roll tuck represents the finished connection, aerial position, come-out, line-up and entry.

Remember, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link!



Understanding Degree of Difficulty and scoring

Divers are judged by a panel of seven judges who each give a score between 0 and 10 points for each dive performed.

The following table gives an indication of the points awarded for dives:

0	COMPLETELY FAILED
½ – 2	UNSATISFACTORY
2½ – 4½	DEFICIENT
5 – 6½	SATISFACTORY
7 – 8	GOOD
8½ – 9½	VERY GOOD
10	EXCELLENT

In classifying a dive in one of the judging categories, certain parts of each dive must be analysed and evaluated, and an overall award obtained. The parts of the dive are:

Approach: Should be smooth but forceful, showing good form.

Take-off: Must show control and balance, plus the proper angle of landing and leaving for the particular dive being attempted.

Elevation: The amount of spring or lift a diver receives from the take-off greatly affects the appearance of the dive. Since more height means more time, a higher dive generally affords greater accuracy and smoothness of movement.

Execution: This is the most important part, as it is the dive itself. A judge watches for proper mechanical performance, technique, form and grace.

Entry: The entry into the water is very significant because it is the last thing the judge sees, and the part probably remembered best. The two criteria to be evaluated here are the angle of entry, which should be vertical, and the amount of splash, which should be minimal.

Scoring

When all seven judges in individual events have allocated a score for a dive, the two highest and two lowest scores are eliminated and the remaining three scores totalled. The number is multiplied by the Degree of Difficulty (DD) rating assigned to the dive. The DD is predetermined with a table range from 1.0 to 4.4 in one-tenth increments. A scoring example is shown below:

Awards: 6 - 5 - **5 - 5 - 5** - 5 - 4
Total: 5 (high and low scores eliminated; scores in bold and red counted only)
DD: 2.0
Formula: *Total Awards (15) x Degree of Difficulty (2.0)*
Score: 30 points

Because difficult dives are harder to execute well, coaches will often select a competition list with the highest execution potential, rather than the highest DD.

Program aims

The aim of the *Pymble* Diving program is to provide two pathways where our students can actualise their diving potential in a supportive environment. The first pathway, recreational diving, is represented by our Vertical Fun Dive (VFD) and Learn to Dive (LTD) squads. The second pathway, competitive diving, is represented by our Pathways and Performance squads.

Vertical Fun Dive

VFD divers will learn basic diving shapes and positions and slowly become familiar with the aerial and acrobatic nature of the sport in a non-competitive capacity. VFD focuses on enjoyment and fundamental movement skills.

Technical Focus: Shapes, positions, jumps, entries.

Attendance: Two or three sessions per week recommended; up to four available (water sessions only).

Competitions: N/A

Examples of basic skills:

- **Poolside** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry
- **1m springboard** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry
- **Depending on skill level** – 3m 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c.

Divers identified as suitable for competitive diving may be invited by the Head Coach to join the Learn to Dive squad.

Learn to Dive

LTD represents a continuation of the recreational pathway, with an added focus on learning how to train. LTD divers will continue to work on fundamentals, while beginning to develop basic dives. LTD prepares divers for 1m dives, for moving basic skills to higher boards (3m springboard) and, if selected, for the transition into the Pathways squad. Think of LTD as a laboratory school to evaluate if a diver is suited for competitive squads.

Technical Focus: Foundations, basic dives, entries.

Attendance: Two to three sessions per week (water sessions only).

Competitions: N/A

Examples of skills:

- **Poolside** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 101c, 102c, 401c wedge
- **1m springboard** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 101c, 401c, 102c
- **Depending on skill level** – 3m 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry (all), back entry, a/c.

Before a diver can progress into the Pathways squad, they must satisfy the skills listed above and/or have been identified by the Head Coach as suitable for upwards progression.



Physical development

Diving develops flexibility, balance, co-ordination, control and the beginnings of spatial awareness. As divers progress, their movement patterns shift from conscious effort to unconscious muscle memory. These patterns also become more complex over time. This shift is essential, because divers must be able to perform safely and consistently under competition pressure.

As the demands of diving increase, divers need a solid foundation of strength and conditioning to cope with the greater physical load. Physical development also includes injury prevention (prehab) and injury management (rehab). Careful strength and conditioning programming helps reduce the risk of injury.

Psychological development

Diving is a challenging sport where fear is inherent, but fun and enjoyment should remain central. Divers learn to train in a structured environment, respond to coach feedback and apply basic technical corrections.

As they progress, fear management, resilience and independence become increasingly important. Divers begin to recognise their potential, take greater ownership of their development and work more collaboratively with coaches. By the Performance phase, athletes should demonstrate greater autonomy, such as requesting new skills to prepare for competition and taking an active role in goal setting, with coaches refining and supporting those goals.

Coaches should also develop competition routines and performance mindsets through mock meets, score challenges and simulated pressure. Effective fear and pressure management should allow divers to continue learning new skills while handling the increased stress and demands of competition.



Performance Squad

The Performance Squad represents the intermediate phase of the competitive pathway. The emphasis continues to be on learning how to train at a higher level, with dryland established as an essential component alongside water-based training.

Fundamentals remain important, while greater focus is placed on building and progressing existing skills. Basic dives are developed on 1m and progressed from 1m to 3m, while intermediate dives become a key learning focus on both 1m and 3m. Platform diving is introduced and developed progressively, with appropriate caution given to the increased demands of 5m.

Training becomes more consistent and structured, combining regular dryland, water sessions, and strength and conditioning to support the diver's physical development. Competition becomes a regular part of the program and increasingly influences training structure and load.

The Performance Squad prepares divers for regular competition, with the aim of progressing athletes towards Australian Age and Junior Elite Championships. As the second level of competitive diving at *Pymble* and the highest squad level offered, Performance Squad is where divers are refined and prepared for the demands of higher-level competition and their future diving pathway.

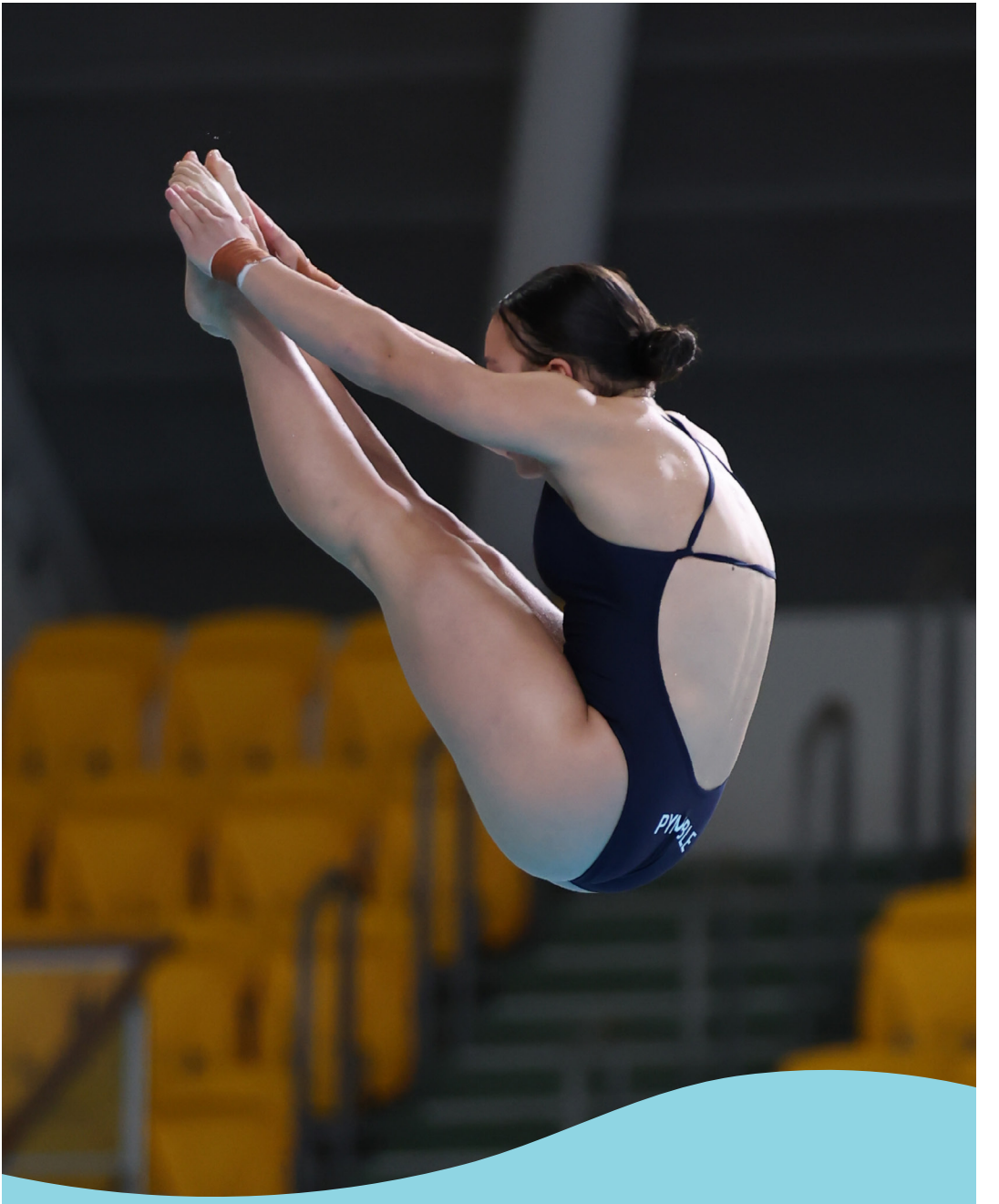
Technical focus: Foundations, building on basic dives, intermediate skills become the main focus and eventually some advanced skills depending on the individual.

Attendance: Minimum two water and two dryland sessions. Ideally four water and three dryland.

Competitions: *Pymble*/Diving NSW State/Diving Australia Junior Level/Australian Open Level.

Examples of Pathways skills:

- **Poolside** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 101c, 102c, 401c wedge, 201c wedge, 301c wedge, 102c, 202c, 302c, 402c
- **1m springboard** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 101c/b, 102c/b, 103c/b, 104c/b, 105c/b, 106c, 401c/b, 402c, 403c/b, 404c/b, 201c/b, 202c/b, 203c/b, 204c/b, 301c/b, 302c/b, 303c/b, 304c,b, 102a, 202a, Development of Twisting focus: 5123d, 5134d, 5233d, 5235d, 5152b
- **Depending on skill level** – 3m 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 103c/b, 105c/b, 107c/b, 203c/b, 205c/b, 303c/b, 305c/b, 403c/b, 405c/b, 5132d, 5231d, 5233d, 5134d, 5152b, 5235d.



Pathways

Pathways represents the beginning of the competitive pathway. Emphasis is placed on learning how to train at a higher level. Dryland becomes an essential training environment and is used in conjunction with water sessions. Fundamentals still play a key role, however more focus is placed on learning new dives and competitions are introduced to the diver. Basic dives are developed on 1m and then progressed to 3m. Pathways represents a commitment to training on a regular basis, combining dryland and water sessions. Pathways prepares divers for an eventual transition into the Performance program. Diving-specific strength and conditioning is introduced to assist the diver's physical development. Ideally, divers in Pathways have built a strong foundation of skills, physicality and psychological attributes to allow them to handle higher level skills.

Technical Focus: Foundations, building on basic dives becomes the focus.

Attendance: Minimum two water and two dryland sessions. Ideally four water and two to three dryland sessions.

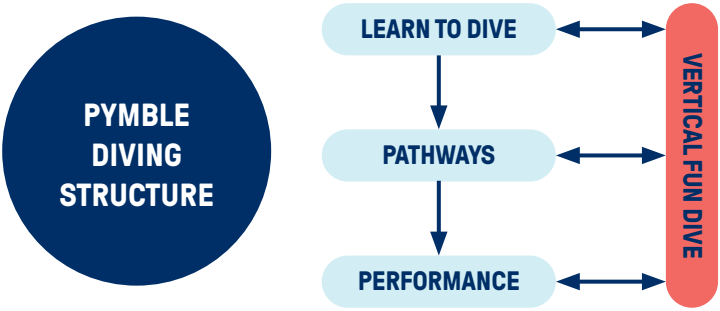
Competitions: Introduction to *Pymble,* Diving NSW (club) and State competitions.

Examples of Pathways skills:

- **Poolside** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 101c, 102c, 401c wedge, 201c wedge, 301c wedge
- **1m springboard** – 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 101c/b, 102c, 103c, 401c/b, 402c, 201c, 202c, 301c, 102a, 202a
- **Depending on skill level** – 3m 100a/b/c, 200a/b/c, forward entry, back entry, 101c/b, 401c/b, 103c/b, 201c, 301, 403c.

Before a diver can progress into the Performance squad, they must satisfy the skills listed above and/or have been identified by the Head Coach as suitable for upwards progression.

A brief overview of our program



What are our values?

Pymble Diving values are:

Patience – the quality of enduring life and all its phenomena with calmness and composure. Patience entails acceptance that things can often happen in a different order from what you had in mind, while remaining unyielding in character.

Courage – the quality of exhibiting a certain firmness, stopping short of rashness, which allows a person to overcome difficult physical or psychological challenges in the face of fear.

Self-discipline – the quality of controlling one's impulses and desires, forgoing immediate satisfaction in favour of long-term goals. Self-discipline in training can look like steady, mindful action that focuses on quality and process over speed. It can also look like taking care of yourself by knowing your boundaries and limits.

Grit – the quality characterised by perseverance and passion for achieving long-term goals. Grit entails working strenuously to overcome challenges and maintaining effort and interest over time despite failures, adversities and plateaus in progress. Grit is more important than talent in any sport.



Two beliefs and two practices

Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR) for athletes and coaches

UPR refers to a universal attitude of caring, acceptance and prizing towards another individual, which is neither possessive nor dependent on personal gratification. It involves complete acceptance of an individual, without judgement or criticism, regardless of our own personal standards or what a person believes, says or does.

Self-actualisation

In one way or another, all athletes are striving towards the complete expression of their potential, capabilities, talent and gifts. As coaches, it is our responsibility to always support and encourage athletes in a way that enables them to self-actualise.

Goals

Goal setting allows athletes to give themselves a self-chosen 'diving curriculum'. Self-determination gives athletes ownership over their careers. By setting goals, athletes are essentially setting training expectations for themselves, which ideally should lead to higher levels of motivation, accountability and effort given. What does this mean? If an athlete has said their goal is to compete at the Olympic Games, their training sessions will look very different to an athlete who enjoys the sport at a social or recreational level. With guidance from coaches, we can tailor programs to suit the goals of any athlete in our program. Like an optometrist, a coach is responsible for guiding athletes, and providing them with the right 'lenses', so they can see the world clearly and act with intuition and agency.

Socratic method

The Socratic method is co-operative dialogue, used by teachers to draw out knowledge from students. The teacher does not directly impart knowledge, but asks probing, thought-provoking questions to examine the values, principles and beliefs of students. Through guided dialogue, students can formulate and justify answers for themselves. By coming to the answers themselves, students better remember both the answer and the logical reasoning that led them there than they would if someone had simply announced a conclusion up front. In coaching, this looks like asking questions that guide athletes towards recognising the technical corrections you wish to implement. By understanding the cause and effect of technical actions, athletes can apply corrections successfully because they understand the mechanics of the dive.

Meet the team



Lead Coach

Maddi Pullinger

mpullinger@pymblelc.nsw.edu.au

Qualifications

- Level 1 and 2 Diving Australia Coaching Accreditation
- NSWIS Scholarship Athlete 2011-2019
- 10+ years of experience training and competing in the Australian Elite and American College system
- 5+ years of coaching experience across a range of ages and abilities at Pymble Ladies' College.

Coaching experience

Maddi has coached diving at *Pymble* since 2017, returning in 2022 after four years studying and competing in the US. As Lead Coach, and Senior Lead Coach since September 2026, she oversees the program and its competitive pathway. Under her leadership, 12 *Pymble* divers qualified for the 2026 Australian Age Championships and won 14 medals. Drawing on her elite diving career and mentoring from Chris Lang, Chava Sobrino and Nunzio Esposto, she develops divers from their first day through to National level.

Coaching philosophy

"My coaching philosophy is built on guidance, empowerment and partnership. I work alongside athletes to help them understand their capabilities, make decisions and own their development. Fear and uncertainty are a natural part of diving, and being scared does not mean you cannot do something difficult. I help divers work through those anxieties, knowing when to challenge, when to support and when to give them space to work it out. I want divers to leave training as better athletes, and as people more confident facing difficulty and setbacks."

Proudest achievement

"One of my proudest achievements as a coach is bringing together my studies, my experience as an athlete and my love of diving. I use all three to help divers push past what they believe they can do, and build resilience and confidence. I am also proud to have balanced this with completing a Master of Clinical Psychology while leading the *Pymble* program. Watching divers I have coached since 2022 win 14 medals at the 2026 Australian Age Championships was particularly special."

Meet the team



Senior Coach

Rylee McKinstry

rylee.mckinstry@pymblelc.nsw.edu.au

Qualifications

- Level 2 Diving Australia Coaching Accreditation
- 5 years of coaching experience across the Talent, Junior Elite and Age National pathways within Diving Australia
- 5 years of coaching at Pymble Ladies' College across all streams of the program.

Coaching experience

Rylee has coached diving since 2022, following her own career as a springboard diver and *Pymble* Diving Captain. She works with athletes aged six to 17 across recreational, development and high-performance programs. From October 2023 to June 2025, she coached the Diving NSW Project Squad and Junior Elite athletes through the NSWIS National Talent Program, mentored by Olympic Head Coach Chava Sobrino. Alongside Lead Coach Maddi Pullinger, she has helped *Pymble* grow from three to 12 athletes at the Australian Age Championships to 14 medals in 2026.

Coaching philosophy

Rylee believes great coaching develops the whole athlete and person, not just the diver. She builds a positive, supportive environment where athletes feel challenged, confident and accountable for their own progress, and where the coach-athlete relationship rests on trust, teamwork and a shared goal. She emphasises strong technical foundations early, alongside mindset, resilience and habits that support longevity in the sport. Adapting to each diver's goals and learning style, she helps athletes understand the 'why', own their development and enjoy the process.

Proudest achievement

Rylee's proudest achievement as a coach is watching athletes she has worked with progress from development pathways to become national medallists. Seeing *Pymble* win 14 medals at the 2026 Australian Age Championships, many from 13-and-under divers in the 'Maddi and Rylee generation', was a full-circle moment that reflects the confidence, foundations and talent pipeline the program is building. Above all, she finds coaching most rewarding when athletes achieve something they once thought impossible, from a new dive to a national podium.

Meet the team

Coach

Emily Farrall

Qualifications

- Diving Australia Level 2 Coaching Accreditation
- Diving Australia Level 1 Judging Accreditation.

Coaching experience

More than 5 years of diving coaching at Pymble Ladies' College and Diving Connections 'working' with divers of all ages and skill levels.

Coaching philosophy

"I believe every diver is capable of achieving more than they think. My goal is to create a positive and supportive environment where athletes are encouraged to challenge themselves, build confidence, and take pride in every step of their progress."

Proudest achievement

Having the opportunity to represent my school and state to compete at Age and Schools Diving Nationals across Australia is my proudest achievement."

Meet the team

Coach

Olivia Blower

Qualifications

- Level 1 and Level 2 Diving Coaching Qualifications
- Diving Judging Qualification
- Dryland Rig Training
- Experience attending Diving England Training Camps
- Experience coaching a wide range of ages and abilities
- Competition preparation and technical development.

Coaching experience

"I have more than five years of coaching experience in the UK, where I gained my Level 1 and Level 2 diving coaching qualifications. During this time, I coached divers across a wide range of ages, levels and abilities, from beginner and development divers through to elite athletes.

"I moved to Australia in 2024 and have been coaching divers across different levels and supporting their technical development, competition preparation and progression at *Pymble*."

Coaching philosophy

"My coaching philosophy is centred around creating a positive, supportive and encouraging environment where every diver feels confident to develop and challenge themselves."

Proudest achievement

"One of my proudest achievements as a diver was winning gold at Nationals and achieving a new personal best in the process. This performance led to me being invited to attend a Swim England training camp in Croatia, which was an amazing opportunity and a memorable milestone in my diving career."

Meet the team

Coach

Charlotte Moore

Qualifications

- Level 2 Diving Australia Accredited Coach
- Level 5 World Aquatics Technical Official
- Bachelor of Primary Education.

Coaching experience

Charlotte has a long record in diving, beginning as a coach at the Hunter United Diving Academy (2013 to 2021) and continuing with the Country Development Diving Camp since 2014. She served as a Technical Official at the 2020 Australian Open Diving Championships incorporating Olympic Trials, and currently coaches at three schools: Head Diving Coach at Trinity Grammar School (since 2022), Diving Coach at Pymble Ladies' College (since 2023) and Diving Coach at Ravenswood School (since 2024).

Coaching philosophy

"Diving is a sport for all.

"I believe sustainable performance is built through a shared love of diving, strong connections and a commitment to the physical and mental wellbeing of every athlete. My goal is to create a fun, supportive and positive environment where divers can develop their skills, build confidence and achieve their personal best."

Proudest achievement

"One of my proudest moments as a coach was seeing Sam Fricker selected for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

"Sam began his diving journey at the Hunter United Diving Academy, and I have had the privilege of watching and supporting his development throughout his early diving years. From his first day, Sam confidently said that he would "go to the Olympics one day." His passion, hard work and dedication turned that ambition into reality.

"Watching a young diver dream big, work diligently towards that goal and achieve it on the Olympic stage is one of the most rewarding experiences a coach can have."

Meet the team

Coach

Méa Shires

Qualifications

Méa has completed the Diving Australia Level 1 Coach Education Course and holds a Bronze Medallion. She has also completed the required certifications to coach within the *Pymble* Diving program.

Coaching experience

Méa has been coaching at *Pymble* since February 2025 through the Learn to Dive and VFD programs. As a Diving Captain, she also mentored younger divers and supports their confidence, skill development and enjoyment of the sport.

Coaching philosophy

Méa aims to create a positive and supportive environment where every diver feels comfortable challenging themselves and making mistakes. She wants athletes to enjoy training, build confidence and continue progressing at their own pace.

Proudest achievement

One of Méa's proudest achievements has been contributing to *Pymble* winning the igsa Overall Champion School for Diving. She is particularly proud of supporting younger divers throughout the season and seeing their confidence and skills improve.

Aquatic centre policy

- No parents on pool-deck of stand within five minutes of a session ending.
- Please refer to *Pymble* Policy.



Calendar dates for 2027

DATE	LOCATION	COMPETITION NAME	TYPE OF COMPETITION
Saturday 16 to Sunday 17 January	Orange Aquatic Centre	NSW Country Championships	Interclub/National Qualifier
TBC (expected Sunday 7 February)	SOPAC	Barnett Family Meet	Interclub/National Qualifier
TBC (expected Thursday 11 to Friday 12 March)	SOPAC	igsa	School Competition
Friday 12 to Sunday 14 March	SOPAC	State Championships	State Championships/ Nationals Qualifier
TBC (expected Thursday 25 March)	SOPAC	CIS Primary	School Competition
Monday 12 to Sunday 18 April	Adelaide, SA	Age National Championships	Club Nationals
TBC (expected Wednesday 28 April)	SOPAC	PSSA	School Competition
TBC (expected Wednesday 5 May)	SOPAC	CIS Secondary	School Competition
TBC (expected Saturday 22 May)	SOPAC	All Schools	School Nationals Qualifier for Seniors
TBC (Early July)	TBC: Sydney or Melbourne	National Skills Championships	National Championships
TBC (End of July)	TBC	School Sport Australia Nationals	School Nationals
TBC (June/July)	SOPAC	1st Interclub	NSW Interclub – National qualifying opportunity
Saturday 21 to Sunday 22 August	SOPAC	2nd Interclub + Junior State Championships	NSW Interclub – National qualifying opportunity
Monday 27 September to Sunday 3 October	Brisbane, QLD	Australian Junior Championships	Elite Nationals
Saturday 6 to Sunday 7 November	SOPAC	Metropolitan Championships	Nationals Qualifier + Metro Championships

Pymble Swimming

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