



Young, Mitchell capture CIF Div. 2 diving titles

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Laguna Beach's Mitchell, Crean...



RIVERSIDE **Colten Young** of Crean Lutheran and **Liv Mitchell** of Laguna Beach gracefully soared and somersaulted above the pool Monday at the CIF-SS Division 2 diving championships, their improved technique and maturity on full display.

Young, the reigning state champion, showed more height and body control in defending his title with a high school-best 11-dive score of 590.70 at Riverside City College.

Mitchell, a sophomore, used sharper focus to overcome one miss and edge Crescenta Valley freshman and synchronized partner **Katelynn Shaheen** by 13.65 for the title in the girls competition.

"I knew I had to do pretty good to take first place, but I just calmed myself down and did my dives the best I could," said Mitchell, who scored a high school-best 502.00 points.

Scott Reich, Mitchell's coach with SoCal Divers, said Mitchell stayed "calm-minded and confident" during her victory, which she capped by scoring three 8.0s on an inward 2½-somersault tuck on the 3-meter springboard.

She finished second in Division 2 as a freshman.

Young believes his head and legs positioning have improved since his move to the Trojan Dive Club at USC in September.

"My technique has gotten a lot better," said the junior, who earned three 9.0s on his opening, back dive pike on 1-meter. "When you enter the water, if you're straight, it kind of looks better on me because I'm taller."

The 6-foot-2 Young outdistanced **Jenner Pennock** of Great Oak of Temecula (518.45) and **Cristian Herrera** of Troy (498.35) for his third consecutive CIF-SS title.

"I see him as one of our future Olympians. I think he's that strong," veteran judge **Larry Brennan** said. "Good poise, lot of control."

Young wanted to break 600 points on Monday.

"He sets this high bar for himself," Crean Lutheran coach **Craig Brown** said of Young. "He looks for perfection ... and he also doesn't get flustered. If something is a little lower than he wanted, he just comes back and tries to do better."

NEWCOMER TO WATCH

In Division 3, Western freshman **Jiana Reeves** finished 10th to pace county divers. The former gymnast only started diving five months ago when she took the advice of Pioneers coach **Don Conner**.

Conner recalled Monday that he encouraged Reeves to try diving because he heard she was dealing with an injury in gymnastics. Conner coaches Reeves' older sister, **Jailey**, a CIF-qualifier in swimming.

"I'm just proud she got here," Conner said of Jiana, who now trains with SoCal Divers in Fullerton.

Reeves said qualifying for CIF was her season goal.

"It was pretty exciting and surprising," she said. "I didn't know exactly (the training) you had to put into it."

And with a top-10 finish, Reeves quickly had to adjust her goals for next spring. The new goal? "Top-eight," she said.

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