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## FINA Best Female High Diver 2017: Rhiannan Iffland (AUS)



Invited as a wild-card entry to join the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series in 2016, Iffland won five of the seven legs of the competition to become the first rookie in history to win the overall title. This year she retained the overall crown after victories in Ireland, Italy, the United States and Chile. Iffland, who turned 26 in September, came close to winning the World Cup, claiming the silver medal with 312.80 points, less than four points behind Mexico's Adriana Jimenez (316.45).

**“The relationship between the athletes is like no other sport”**

At the biggest event of the year, diving on the shore of the Danube River in the FINA World Championships in Budapest in July, Iffland gained sweet revenge and consigned Jimenez to silver. The most consistent athlete throughout the four dives of the competition, the Australian prevailed with 320.70 points, with Jimenez having to settle for silver on 308.90. Iffland and Jimenez were also the top contenders on the Red Bull circuit, with the Mexican diver again having to give best to the Australian.

The FINA award was indeed a fair tribute to Iffland's outstanding season.

**How important for you is this recognition – FINA Best Female High Diver of the Year?**

It is a great honour to receive this award. Especially being the first Australian in high diving. I believe it's a great opportunity to really show off high diving to Australia and show just how amazing the sport is.

**How would you summarise your season?**

It has been a long season and I'm very proud of my diving and my 2017 season. It's been tough this year with injuries, so it's time to wrap up the season, recover and recoup, and gather ideas for next year.

**Besides your victory in Budapest, what is the strongest image you retain from the World Championships in**

**Hungary?**

It was a great display of sportsmanship and it was great to see the spirit of the championships, especially in all the athletes and people of the city. In the sport of high diving, the relationship between the athletes is like no other sport, all the athletes support each other, which is an incredible feeling and so nice to be a part of.

**“There is really never a dull moment”**

**Do you follow other aquatic sports? Do you look forward to meeting FINA stars from the five other aquatic**

**disciplines?**

Yes. I enjoy all water sports. But, of course, coming from a diving background I'm still very passionate in following the diving. I also love water polo and I have always followed swimming. The atmosphere in the Aquatics Centre during the swimming at the World Championships sent shivers down my spine.

**What are your plans for 2018?**

To continue enjoying my sport and pushing myself to the limits.

**What has changed in high diving since its inclusion in the FINA programme (in 2013)?**

The sport has progressed dramatically since 2013, the level of competition has grown with the dives being much more difficult, and we are seeing the number of competitors increase, which will also push the sport further and further. I'm very excited to see this sport grow even more in years to come.

**To whom would you dedicate this award?**

My father Peter has been a big support in my whole sporting career.

**Imagine I don't know nothing about high diving. How would you describe this discipline and the feelings associated**

It's a very impressive sport, to say the least. With the height of the platforms almost tripling the height of 10m diving, it's quite a rush, even to watch. And as a spectator it's interesting to see. The format is similar to diving and it's nice to see athletes shine in different areas, some very graceful with simple dives and showing off lines and forms, and some performing 5 somersaults, or 3 somersaults with 4.5 twists. There is really never a dull moment, watching high diving.

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