

# National Volunteer & Coach Awards 2022



The winners of the National Volunteer & Coach Awards 2022 were presented on finals day at the YONEX All England Open Championships in Birmingham on Sunday 20th March.

To recognise the phenomenal work of our voluntary workforce, Badminton England present two awards annually; Volunteer of the Year (sponsored by YONEX) and Geoff Rofe Young Volunteer of the Year (sponsored by YONEX). These prestigious titles are awarded to two volunteers who have stood out in demonstrating undoubted passion, commitment and dedication to badminton in the last twelve months and had a positive impact and influence on others' experience within the sport.

The new Grassroots Coach Award was only introduced this year and celebrates coaches who are working tirelessly in the community to provide a positive experience to a large number of players through their clear passion for the sport. We are truly grateful for the number of grassroots coaches in our sport as these coaches make a positive difference in their local communities, providing the first experience of our sport, and driving badminton participation forwards across the country.

Congratulations to all three winners, as well as all the nominees and runners up, Badminton England are so proud of every single individual who makes badminton happen and our annual awards are intended to applaud those who have gone over and above in their roles.



# National Volunteer & Coach Awards 2022

Volunteer of the Year 2022 Runners Up:

- Ian Johnstone (Surrey)
- Margaret Sinclair (Yorkshire)

## Volunteer of the Year 2022 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Jess Canfield

Jess' hard work has resulted in Liskeard Junior and Inclusive Badminton Club, and all other feeder sessions linked to the main club, successfully returning to play after the pandemic. She has been completely focused and dedicated in not only ensuring the club was able to resume when restrictions were lifted, but also that all COVID regulations were followed with additional policies adopted to put the players' safety first and making everyone feel safe and comfortable within the club environment. She is the Club Secretary and a Level 2 coach but has gone above and beyond in this role as she has increased the number of sessions and playing opportunities, successfully applied for additional funding for the club, established a new team for entry into the local league, increased club participation with taster sessions and advertising through social media, helped to run a Disability Festival and set up a new session for over 55s, in partnership with the local Leisure Centre and Active Cornwall.

Jess has liaised with Rethink (a Mental Health Charity) who the club now work closely with to obtain funding to supply new equipment and contribute to new playing opportunities to support players' mental health and well-being.

She also attends Cornwall County Badminton Association meetings to represent the club, mentors young leaders and Foundation coaches, recently set up a new Essentials course to teach the basics of badminton to beginners and has just been accepted onto Badminton England's Female Leadership and Performance Programme.



## Claire Reed (Liskeard Junior and Inclusive Badminton Club Member & Administrator):

*"Jess is an extremely popular member of the club, supporting everyone around her whether it be player, young leader or coach. With her expertise with social media, she has supported the admin committee members, developed best practices for COVID safe sessions and is relentless in striving for high standards which is reflected in such a high demand for opportunities to play from our members. With her knowledge and passion for supporting and promoting good mental health through her association with Rethink, she is helping all our members continuously."*

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Geoff Rofe Young Volunteer of the Year 2022

Runners Up:

- Anna Kroon (Durham)
- Nicole Ng (Kent)

## Geoff Rofe Young Volunteer of the Year 2022 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Oscar Butler

Oscar is a truly inspiring young man who, at only 14 years of age, has shown huge potential as a volunteer in Norfolk. He regularly supports 8 hours of badminton activity each week by assisting at Eaton Eagles junior session, the Under 14 and Under 12 county squad sessions, North Norfolk Junior Club sessions as well as supporting his school badminton club during lunchtimes and after school.

He has also volunteered at his local Under 14 County Restricted Tournament, acted as Deputy Coach for Under 14 county matches and travelled to Milton Keynes to volunteer at two national events (Badminton England Under 17 Nationals and the Senior County Champion of Champions Tournament).

Oscar also attended the virtual Young Leader Academy in 2021 (delivered by Badminton England) as well as the face-to-face Academy in March 2022.



### Julie Pike (Badminton England Relationship Manager):

*“Oscar is a brilliant role model for the young players within Norfolk and helps at a number of settings – for the younger players in his school, at a local junior club and with juniors in the younger age group in the county set up. He has thrown himself into volunteering and has enjoyed learning new skills, which has provided him with greater confidence. Not only has he enjoyed supporting others to improve their badminton, but it has inspired and motivated him to continue to develop and improve his own badminton.”*

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## Grassroots Coach of the Year 2022

### Runners Up:

- Sheila Boyes (Yorkshire)
- Phil Hall (Northumberland)

## Grassroots Coach of the Year 2022 Winner: Keith Burns

Keith has dedicated himself to Abbey Badminton Club in Hertfordshire for over 14 years. He channels his love of the sport plus his skill, time and effort to coach juniors and adults. Keith's technical expertise helps develop beginners into intermediate players, juniors into county players and adults into excellent club players. Keith also arranges social and competitive matches to assist players in their development and runs grassroots badminton sessions in St Albans, Watford and surrounding areas. His energy and commitment is an inspiration to the young people he coaches and he is a positive role model for them. He is always happy to give advice to help players to improve and his patience, encouragement and approachable nature makes even the very new players feel confident in their abilities. The club has grown from strength to strength over the last few years as Keith has taken the initiative to encourage and support adult members of the club to become coaches themselves and supports these Level 1 coaches by making sure they're comfortable with their role in the club. When lockdown eased, the club's normal venue stayed closed, but Keith put a lot of time and effort into finding alternative venues that were taking bookings.

### **Richard Dickinson (Member of Abbey Badminton Club):**

*“Through Keith's personality and skill as a coach, he has promoted a culture within the club where everyone interacts in a friendly, open and welcoming manner. This has undoubtedly resulted in a significant number of people entering and continuing the play the sport of badminton.”*



### **Rukayya Muraj (Level 1 Coach at Abbey Badminton Club):**

*“Keith has coached me and my own children and I qualified as a Level 1 coach in 2021. I was diagnosed with depression during the pandemic and Keith gave me a focus to achieve something. He is the type of person that leads with kindness and empathy and this is fully evident when he interacts with his club members and coaches.”*