

National Volunteer & Coach Awards 2024



The winners of the 2024 National Volunteer & Coach Awards were presented on semi-finals day at the YONEX All England Open Championships in Birmingham on Saturday 16th 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 Grassroots Coach Award (sponsored by YONEX) was introduced in 2022 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.



The three 2024 National Volunteer & Coach Award winners with English Badminton Recipient, Jenny Abbott

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Volunteer of the Year 2024 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Thomas Feilding

Tom is the Club Secretary at Bristol Swifts Badminton Club which has seen substantial growth over the last year. The club manages a waiting list for sessions, with over 250 people on the player management system. Tom has managed this growth with efficiency and friendliness to ensure the club is a welcoming, friendly and safe space for members of the LGBT+ community to play badminton.

As well as being welcoming to all members and new players at the club, Tom has set up a strong governance structure for the club and is also proactive in building club capacity for play. The club now plays five times a week, and Tom was the driving force behind the addition of the fifth weekly session. He arranged the facility and recurring bookings, managed the organisation and coordination as well as generally advocating the new session which is now at full capacity each week.

Through the voluntary commitment Tom has given to the club, his efforts have transformed the landscape for badminton in Bristol and beyond, especially in reaching a community that might not otherwise engage in the sport.



Members of Bristol Swifts Badminton Club:

“We love the man who helps to create a safe space for the LGBT community in Bristol”

“You have created a community and family where people can call home”

“You’ve helped make everybody here feel welcomed, I know I certainly felt that”

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Geoff Rofe Young Volunteer of the Year 2024 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Sophie Girgis



The 2024 Geoff Rofe Young Volunteer of the Year Award was awarded to Sophie Girgis who has volunteered every week at Affinity Badminton Academy in Buckinghamshire for over a year. She organised the 24 hour Badminton and Games Marathon for the club which had a footfall of over 150 people and raised over £2,750 for Booker Park School. Sophie also attended and supported the club's Live in the Park event where she encouraged the public to get involved in outdoor badminton.

Sophie has also been a team captain at Affinity Badminton Academy where she has organised her team, budgeted the team allowance, collected fees and dealt with any problems in a mature and fair manner.

Coach and nominator, Sue Rutson:

"Sophie has given confidence to all the young players she interacts with, she is articulate, quick to step in when she sees someone who needs help, and is positive and outgoing!"



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Grassroots Coach of the Year 2024 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Stephen Kiernan

The 2024 Grassroots Coach of the Year Award was presented to Steve Kiernan.

Steve is the Head Coach at Tudor Grange Badminton Club in Warwickshire. The club has gone from strength to strength in the last year and now has over 200 members. Adult coaching for beginners has grown from one weekly session to two, the number of junior sessions has increased to meet local demand and Steve has also created a singles league for competitive members. Steve is always looking for additional opportunities for his players such as entering teams in the Solihull Badminton League, organising trips to Loughborough University for a training weekend and to the All England as well as encouraging club members to become coaches and helping to fund their qualifications.



Jaidev Chagger, player in Steve's sessions and nominator:

"Steve provides a friendly, relaxed environment to enjoy playing badminton, and by constantly giving and receiving feedback, his sessions really do cater for all!"