

National Volunteer & Coach Awards 2025

Badminton
ENGLAND



The four winners of the 2025 National Volunteer & Coach Awards were presented on semi-finals day at the YONEX All England Open Championships in Birmingham on Saturday 15th March.

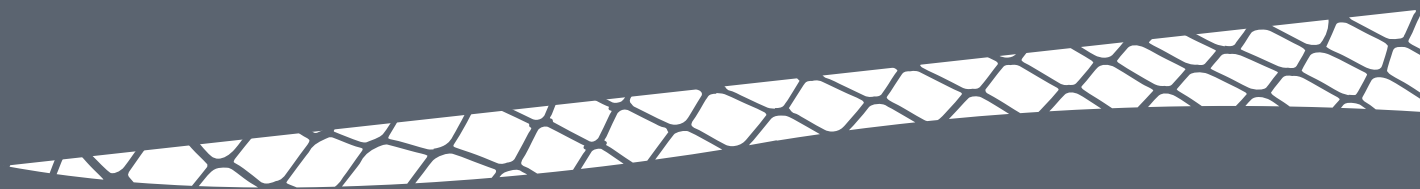
We were excited to announce a change to the National Volunteer & Coach Awards for 2025. This year, there were four Awards which were open for nominations.

- Geoff Rofe Young Leader of the Year Award
- Grassroots Coach of the Year Award
- Committee Member of the Year Award
- Technical Official of the Year Award

The Committee Member of the Year Award & Technical Official of the Year Award were brand new for 2025 and replaced the existing Volunteer of the Year Award to allow us to recognise more volunteers in the badminton community for their hard work and branch out further to celebrate more voluntary roles in the future.

The Geoff Rofe Young Leader of the Year Award replaced the existing Geoff Rofe Young Volunteer of the Year Award. The only change is the name of this Award, the criteria remained the same as previous years.

These awards are presented annually to recognise the phenomenal work of our voluntary and coaching workforce. The awards are for those 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.



Congratulations to all four 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.



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Geoff Rofe Young Leader of the Year 2025 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Oliver Swales

Oliver was part of the Badminton England Young Leader Academy in 2023 and began volunteering at Thornaby Badminton Club in Yorkshire where he has been a player since the age of 9. Oliver now volunteers for 4 hours each week at Thornaby Badminton Club sessions, helping out with coaching younger children and acting as a Manager for team competitions. He is a sports leader at his school and also a fabulous advocate for the after school badminton club.

In 2024, Oliver received a milestone certificate for logging 100 hours of volunteering and also obtained his Foundation Coaching Award. He helps out at various local tournaments as well as being part of the Badminton England National Youth Voice Forum in the role of Communications Officer.



THORNABY
BADMINTON CLUB



**Geoff Rofe Young Leader of the Year Runner Up:
Zoe Cheung
(Warwickshire)**

"Oliver's passionate professionalism in helping others play better, increasing their enjoyment and interest in badminton and helping badminton to retain young players is selfless. He is an absolute star!"

Sheila Forbes, Thornaby Junior
Badminton Club coach

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Grassroots Coach of the Year 2025 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Abu Siddique

Abu is the Head Coach at Ocean Badminton Academy in South Shields, County Durham. In the last 12 months, Abu has volunteered at the club providing free coaching to 6–15-year olds for six hours each week. Abu has won the heart and the trust of the locals as he is always fair and creates a fun, safe and inclusive environment for all players attending the sessions.

To date, Abu's club has 73 registered juniors, of which 21 are girls – often it is a challenge to engage young Muslim girls in sport – and he has recently launched a 'No Strings' session aimed at over-60s which has a turnout of 12-15 players each week.

Abu has helped three juniors and two adults to complete their Foundation Coaching Award and they are now assisting him in the weekly sessions.

He is also a national board member of two BME badminton organisations, Independent Badminton Federation UK and Friends Cup Badminton Association UK. Abu has organised, sponsored and volunteered to run six badminton tournaments across the North region for these organisations, promoting grassroots badminton for all.



“Abu has helped two junior girls with building their confidence. When Abu was approached by their parents looking for a solution to some psychological issues their families had been dealing with, he offered to help the girls via badminton, using team-building exercises, involving them in decision-making, making them feel calm and working towards a goal. He brought them out of their comfort zone and pushed them past the boundary which has impacted their lives positively. Abu created an environment where laughter is just as important as lunges!”

Mohoshin Ali, Ocean Badminton Academy player

**Grassroots Coach of the Year Runner Up:
Emma Vento (Yorkshire)**

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Committee Member of the Year 2025 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Felicity Preston

Over the last 12 months, Felicity has taken on the role of Chair of the Badminton England National Youth Voice Forum, leading and advocating for the group and being the main point of contact between the Forum and Badminton England. She has attended the Club & Coach Conference and the International Women's Day event at the National Badminton Centre as well as leading on various projects during 2024 and helping with the restructure of the National Youth Voice in early 2025.

At the age of only 19, Felicity has approached this role with maturity, confidence and amazing leadership skills. She is friendly, fair and always willing to listen to the other members of the Youth Forum and balances this role exceptionally well with her university studies and being an active badminton player herself.



"It's been a joy to work with Felicity over the last year! She's been so helpful and responsive, and she has a great skill of engaging her peers and motivating all the members of the National Youth Voice Forum!"

Holly Robson, Badminton England
Volunteer Manager

Committee Member of the Year Runner Up: Alan Adkins (Essex)

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Technical Official of the Year 2025 (sponsored by YONEX) Winner: Amanda Balaam

Amanda is the Honorary Secretary of the Badminton Umpires Association of England. In her role as Secretary, Amanda arranges all meetings for the Association, is responsible for producing and circulating Minutes of these meetings and annually produces a report detailing all aspects of the Association's activities during the year.

As the Badminton Umpires Association of England main point of contact, Amanda has been involved in meetings with Badminton England to improve systems and processes, continuously monitoring any problems with the Umpires Association database.

As an umpire, Amanda has officiated at a total of 18 events in 2024 travelling a total of 3,460 miles to achieve this. This year, she has umpired 95 matches and service judged 62 matches, a total of 157 duties and these included officiating in a total of 18 finals!



"Amanda's outstanding attribute is the sheer amount of time she devotes to this volunteer role. Her fellow Officers are constantly amazed at the amount of work she achieves in addition to her full time employment in the NHS. She is active virtually every day on our behalf!"

Phil James, Umpire

**Technical Official of the Year
Runner Up:
Himanshu Anil Shah
(Middlesex)**