

# 3 TOUCH VOLLEYBALL

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF VOLLEYBALL ENGLAND



## NATIONAL CUP FINALS

*Results and Photos*

## SUPER 8s FINALS

*The Teams who put the  
SUPER in Super 8s*

## STRATEGY 2024

*Launch of  
Volleyball England's  
Long Term Plan*

  
**VOLLEYBALL  
ENGLAND**





Cover photo  
Action from Under 18 Men's Final  
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Volleyball England is committed to customer service and its continued improvement. We have produced a Customer Charter, which puts the importance of customer service levels at the forefront of the way volunteers and staff carry out their duties.

You can download the charter here <http://volleyballengland.org/~media/docs/Customer%20Charter.pdf>

[www.volleyballengland.org](http://www.volleyballengland.org)



# Welcome



**Geoff Allen**  
President

## **PRESIDENT'S UPDATE**

### **Welcome to 3Touch.**

By the time you're reading this, the indoor season will have wrapped up and everyone will be looking forward to sand and grass matches ... or a bit of a break! I hope you enjoyed your season, even if not necessarily some of the results. Congratulations to all teams that won their competitions or achieved promotion.

I attended the National Finals once again and can confidently say that the standard of play continues to improve, at both adult and junior levels. Although we older players like to think we were just as good in our youth, I'm afraid that's just wishful thinking!

For those people running clubs, now is the time when planning for next season takes place. Which players, teams, coaches, venues, competitions, administrators will your club have next season or even this summer? Perhaps you should consider what you can personally contribute to this process.

Hopefully you have seen the 2024 Strategy video or read the booklet by now. This is an exciting time for English volleyball and we all have an important role in moving the sport forward in order to achieve our goals.

Have a good summer,

Best Regards  
Geoff Allen



**Rob Richardson**  
GB Men's Sitting Team Captain

## **GUEST'S WELCOME**

**Another great season of domestic Sitting Volleyball has come to a close and I'm delighted to report that the health of the game remains positive, with new teams coming in each year.**

It's so important that our standing volleyball clubs follow the likes of Malory Eagles and London Lynx into the Sitting discipline, as Manchester Marvels and Newcastle Staffs have this year. See the game not as a disability sport, but as an opportunity to work on key technical volleyball skills. I urge all clubs to try a few sessions - you'll soon see the benefits in so many areas!

As Captain of Great Britain, I'm delighted that our national team is again making progress, shown by them receiving a silver medal in Latvia earlier in the year. Next up is Canada and Latvia at Stoke Mandeville in June. Once again, the future looks bright for Sitting Volleyball. Long may it continue!

Best Wishes  
Rob Richardson



# Volleynews

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY SANDBANKS

Sandbanks Beach Volleyball Festival 4 & 5 July

### Volleyball couple tie the knot



**Two well-known names from the world of volleyball 'tied the knot' back in April.**

Rachel Laybourne, East London and Essex Volleyball Relationship Manager and former GB Women's team player at London 2012 and Darren Lewis, Head Coach at Boswells Blaze and England Boys Under 19's, were married in Essex at Smeetham Hall Barn on 2 April. The couple had been concerned about the weather: "The forecast was wet and windy for about a month leading up to the wedding and then on the day itself we had brilliant sunshine!" said a delighted Rachel.

Rachel described the event as a "relaxed country-style wedding" and the many guests included volleyball names such as Audrey Cooper, Ian Goswell, David Goodchild and most of the GB Women's Indoor Volleyball Squad.

Mr and Mrs Lewis have planned their honeymoon for later in the year, with a trip to Indonesia.



will be celebrating its 21st year and will be including some additional competitions to complement this fantastic event.

Once again Sandbanks will be part of the Junior VEBT (Volleyball England Beach Tour) with Under 14's, 16's & 18's competing for the title of British Junior Open Champions, along with Division 2 competitions for less experienced players. The Under 12's have their own Division 1 & 2 events. After last year's amazing success, places are expected to fill up quickly with returning teams.

The usual Adult four-a-side competitions will also take place and this year an Elite Adult competition will run alongside the Sandbanks Festival, organised by Chris Gregory and Jake Sheaf, the GB Men's No. 1 Beach Volleyball Pair, who have qualified for the European Games in Baku!

This year the Sandbanks Beach Volleyball Festival

This year the organisers are also proud to announce an exclusive as they will also be hosting the UK's first ever UK Beach Paravolley (Sitting) Competition.

This event is free for spectators to come along and support the UK's finest young volleyball talent and experience world class volleyball from the brilliant elite players.

For further details and entry forms go to [www.wessexvolleyball.com](http://www.wessexvolleyball.com)



## 100% me

**On Wednesday 3 June, UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) celebrated the 10th anniversary of its education programme, 100% me. To commemorate this achievement, here are a few facts about the programme**

- In excess of **25,000** athletes have been educated through the 100% me programme since 2005
- Comprehensive Major Games athlete education programmes were conducted for Delhi 2010, Vancouver 2010, London 2012, Sochi 2014 and Glasgow 2014
- 15,000 school children have been educated as part of the School Games
- Over 50 sports receive direct, ongoing support for education through the 100% me programme annually
- All British athletes competing in Rio will receive values-based, risk management education through the 100% me programme
- The 100% me programme is supporting the GB target of **187 medals** at Rio 2016

For more information on 100% me, you can download the Clean Sport App from the iTunes App Store or visit [www.ukad.org.uk/athletes](http://www.ukad.org.uk/athletes).

# LONDON LEGACY VOLLEYBALL CUP

## Save the Date – 12-13 September 2015 World Class Volleyball Returns to London

On Saturday 28 March, the Volleyball England Board of Directors approved the creation of a club based invitational volleyball tournament, where high profile club teams from Europe and England will play in a pre-season friendly tournament at the Copper Box Arena in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The event will be headlined by Polish powerhouse and Champions League Final Four Club PGE Skra Belchatów. Reigning French Women's Ligue A champions, RC Cannes, and elite German women's team, Schweriner SC, lead the women's section. The English teams comprise Team Northumbria, reigning Volleyball England Super 8s champions for both men and women, CBL Polonia London men and Polonia SideOut London women.

**So be sure to save this date.**

London Legacy Volleyball Cup  
Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 September 2015  
Copper Box Arena  
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park  
Stratford, London E20 3HB

**Tickets are now on sale via Ticketmaster, with discounts for all affiliated clubs, registered members and group bookings.**



Use the QR code below to go directly to the ticket page.



# Volleynews

## Volleyball England announces an official kit and footwear relationship **WITH MIZUNO**

**Volleyball England has now partnered with Mizuno UK for the supply of performance sports kit and shoes. Volleyball England squads, coaches, key volunteers and staff will start to be outfitted by Mizuno from this summer. Mizuno will become the Official Sports Kit & Footwear Supplier to Volleyball England.**

Lisa Wainwright, Chief Executive of Volleyball England said of the relationship: "We are delighted to welcome Mizuno into our family of commercial partners as our official supplier of sports kit and footwear. Mizuno are not only renowned within the volleyball community, but they are synonymous the world over with high quality and innovation. We look forward to working with Mizuno to

increase the profile and appearance of our squads, key volunteers and staff. The relationship will be a significant component of the roll out of our Strategy 2024 commercial partnerships.

"Supporting Volleyball England is a perfect fit for Mizuno" says Rob Henderson Mizuno's UK Marketing Manager. "Our corporate purpose is to contribute to society through the advancement of sporting goods and sport. So we're delighted to get behind Volleyball England's exciting strategy and look forward to the sport going from strength to strength."



**Mizuno is one of the world's leading sports apparel and footwear manufacturers. For more information, go to <http://www.mizuno.eu/gb>**

## **COACHING CONFERENCE**

Coaches from across the country were in Kettering on Sunday 7 June to take part in the Annual Coaching Conference.

Hosted by Volleyball England, and featuring masterclasses from Audrey Cooper on block defence and Keith Trenam on transition hitting, the conference focused on many of the practical aspects of 'building a team.'

Nick Shaffrey from Tettenhall Tigers said: "My hope for the day was that I wanted to confirm that what I am doing is still current and also see what is new and know what is happening at the higher/highest levels. All three things were covered and more, so thank you for a really great day."

Andrew Potter attended from Plymouth Mayflower VC with three members of the club: "The car was buzzing on the way home with so many ideas! We've already decided to bring our pre-season forward by one month so we can do some extra strength and conditioning work."

"Audrey and Keith got it spot on with their sessions – getting us to think how we make ourselves available for the ball at all times. Brilliant day – even the food was great."

The conference also covered sessions from Dave Hembrough and Gary Hutt who are leading strength & conditioning coaches with Volleyball England. They delivered an on court session to show how training can cover speed and agility, robustness and effective warm-ups.

Simon Worsnop from Rugby Football Union completed the line up with a presentation on how to plan for the season ahead. His session covered how to look at your team and critique it before you then put a plan together that targets and measures improvement throughout the season.

The bonus session this year was with two top volleyball coaches, Mark Lebedew from the German professional league and Sue Gozansky from the US, who took part in a Q&A to share their coaching philosophies and insights into what makes a successful team – from both the professional and amateur game. Penny Speers from Leeds Volleyball Club added: "I really enjoyed the Q&A with the two FIVB tutors Mark and Sue. They were a great double act. It was the best coaching conference that I have been to and I could have listened to the presenters all day."

The overall feedback was excellent, although the coaches wanted each session to be longer. More to consider for next year.

# VOLLEYBALL RELATIONSHIP MANAGER UPDATE



**The 2024 vision is in place and the bold ambitions have been published but what does it actually mean for the volleyball community down here in East London and Essex?**

Sometimes the word ‘strategy’ isn’t the most interesting of words but having spoken to players, coaches, officials and volunteers over the last few weeks, it is clear that the volleyball community is in agreement that it’s vital that Volleyball England has a clear long term plan for the sport. The new Strategy 2024 gives a short, sharp, exciting snapshot of what is on the cards and I hope you agree with me when I say that the future of volleyball looks brighter than ever...

Our existing local volleyball community is very successful (just look at the list of annual award winners 2015) but it is nevertheless small. As with the rest of the country, there are numerous clubs across East London and Essex who have a limited number of invaluable volunteers at the helm but the challenge is if these people are removed from post, then the cracks start to show. The 2024 vision is to increase the number of people, across all ages, genders and abilities actively involved in the sport, whether this be playing, coaching, officiating or volunteering. Our volleyball communities are set to grow and flourish (up to 20%) with the increased exposure of the sport in schools, colleges and universities and this can only be a good thing.

Although our zone has a wealth of successful volleyball-playing junior schools locally and nationally –Chadwell Heath, Beths Grammar, Boswells, Tendring to name a few, it is fair to say that the number of schools playing needs to increase across every age group. The Strategy includes designing and developing an education offer that is fun, accessible and easy to deliver. The days when PE teachers turn around and say “we don’t offer volleyball as it’s too technically challenging” are definitely numbered, whilst hopefully also the long journeys across counties to play single fixtures will be long gone!

Nationally there are five Volleyball England Senior Academies and East London and Essex are home to two of them – University of East London and University of Essex.

With the planned increase in talent ID and talent development systems, these institutes should see an increase in the amount of students wanting to access their services and as a direct result the level and quality of volleyball in the local and national leagues should undoubtedly increase. More home grown talented volleyballers in our national leagues would be really encouraging to see and more so when they head for professional contracts abroad and proudly fly our English flag in European leagues!

Iconic events are on the horizon and with the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on our doorstep and other Olympic and Paralympic facilities within touching distance, it can only be described in one word... Amazing! The first in line is the London Legacy Volleyball

Cup which is planned for 12/13 September at the Copper Box Arena. This event will see international high performance club teams compete in our zone and in doing so generate income back into our volleyball community. Please keep an eye out for more event information as it is released and spread the word around your clubs and members.

***It would be naive to say that the strategic ambitions aren’t challenging. Significant changes to current attitudes will need to take place if substantial improvements to the sport are to be made and these may not happen overnight. However, Volleyball England has shown in the Strategy 2024 what the organisation is determined to do and with our support locally we can change the face of volleyball for the better.***





# DORSET AND HANTS VOLLEYBALL RELATIONSHIP MANAGER UPDATE

**The Volleyball England Strategy 2024 brings with it exciting opportunities for the sport and in particular much for the Dorset and Hampshire Volleyball Investment Zone to look forward to as we move into a new era.**

Participation is one of the major themes of this new Strategy and we at Volleyball England want to see more people of all ages, genders and abilities, with or without a disability, play and enjoy the sport of volleyball.

Since Dorset and Hampshire became a Volleyball Investment Zone in 2014, increasing participation levels has been a major focus of my role as the Volleyball Relationship Manager. Working with Clubs, County Sports Partnerships, Schools, Colleges, and Universities, we have already started to embed volleyball within the education sector. With the introduction of nearly a dozen Satellite Clubs for 14-25 year olds we have been able to offer many young people an outlet to play junior volleyball within a community setting on a school/college site. Within Further Education, we currently have a high percentage of Colleges/Sixth Forms delivering regular volleyball sessions and due to the amount of activity have managed to introduce a level of competition. At Higher Education level, we currently have a number of Higher Education Volleyball Officers (HEVO) working in their respective universities, raising the profile of the sport and offering students regular recreational volleyball opportunities.

In order to sustain all of this good work we will need to ensure we have an appropriate workforce in place to support the growth of volleyball and improve performance across the Investment Zone.

One of the major actions of this new Strategy will be to embed volleyball within the Physical Literacy framework at Key Stage 1 in order to start introducing volleyball from Primary School upwards. Working closely with our County Sports Partnership partners, Active Dorset and Sport Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, who manage their local School Games Organiser networks, we will together look to make a real impact in this area over the coming years.

Another major action of the new Strategy will be continuing to increase recreational adult participation through providing quality and sustainable Go Spike opportunities. Over the last year we have introduced new Go Spike volleyball sessions as well as branded, existing open club sessions as Go Spike, with the sole aim of attracting new players of all abilities to the game of volleyball. We in Dorset and Hampshire will be looking to raise the profile of the Go Spike brand and continue to work with both clubs and volunteers to increase the amount of adult volleyball activity.

It will also be a major action under the new Strategy to develop more opportunities for athletes with a disability to play all forms of volleyball from indoor, beach to sitting. It is my hope as we move forward that we will be able to increase the sitting volleyball workforce locally in order to provide opportunities for players with a disability as well as non-disabled to experience sitting volleyball.

I firmly believe that working together we will continue to grow and develop the sport of volleyball in the Dorset and Hampshire Investment Zone and look forward to being involved in this next exciting chapter for the sport.

**For more information on Satellite Clubs, FE Sessions, HE Sessions, Go Spike and Sitting Volleyball opportunities within Dorset and Hampshire please do not hesitate to get in touch with Mark Simmons, Dorset and Hampshire Volleyball Relationship Manager at: [m.simmons@volleyballengland.org](mailto:m.simmons@volleyballengland.org)**



# VOLLEYBALL RELATIONSHIP MANAGER UPDATE



**How the North East will support the implementation of the Volleyball England Strategy 2024 delivery:**

The North East has a solid platform of open and welcoming community clubs which continue to allow volleyball to thrive in a variety of environments. The launch of the Volleyball England Strategy 2024 demonstrates the direction for volleyball for the next nine years which will further benefit and support the growth of North East volleyball with a continually strengthening relationship.

**Participation** in volleyball in the North East has gone from strength to strength and is now in a place where a volleyball enthusiast of any age or ability can find an outlet for their playing ambitions. The Strategy 2024 places a particular focus on schools and curriculum development of volleyball whilst still supporting the Sport England funded aspects of delivery (funded until 2017). A stronger implementation of curriculum based volleyball will further provide North East clubs with a pool of future players for local and national league teams, not only growing the number of young players but also young officials, coaches and club volunteers as a result of this.

Claire Shorting of Monkseaton School and Volleyball Club is working with Schools and Youth Commission President (and former Team Northumbria libero) Maria Bertelli, sharing her

teaching and coaching experience and lending her support to the development of our schools' directive resources.

The volleyball community in general and particularly in the North East have the added benefit of the entrepreneurial endeavours of Peter Bakare and Nathan French. They are combining their 'Sport Pledge' and 'Just Ace It' programmes to give primary school children the opportunity to develop their understanding of living a healthy lifestyle, keeping fit and being a good citizen all with volleyball as the underpinning vehicle.

**Performance** volleyball in the North East is prolific and increasingly underpinned by a growing talent development programme that is directly connected to senior performance opportunities for those capable of performing at the highest level. The personnel leading on these programmes are not only world class in their delivery but are committed to the development of North East volleyball and England volleyball as a whole. Team Northumbria BUCS and Super 8 players have also worked hard this season to inspire the next generation of volleyball players from clubs and schools around the North East via a series of engagement days prior to Super 8 games.

The Strategy 2024 will give us all some clear parameters around which we can start to select the next generation of potential England

volleyball players with a stronger talent identification process. This will be applied via our Junior Academy and Middlesbrough College and remotely at other development sessions and targeted talent identification days.

World class coaching, coupled with world class facilities at Team Northumbria Senior Academy, create a fantastic environment for the country's top male and female players to push the standards and support our mission of junior and senior European indoor qualifications and to establish our presence at the World Championships.

Volleyball England's Strategy 2024 will provide further support for this development pathway and will not only create a more robust way of identifying talent but also generate opportunities for players at the top flight to put on a white shirt and represent England whether that is via indoor, beach or sitting volleyball.

**Commercial Activities and Events:** With the two highest performing teams in the UK right here in the North East we have worked hard and will continue to work hard to increase the visibility of volleyball throughout the region with new and existing associations. We hope that the increase in profile and infrastructure will attract major volleyball and/or sitting volleyball events to the North East in the coming years, helping us to take volleyball to as many people as we can and inspire our future generations of players, coaches, officials and volunteers.

Next season Team Northumbria will work with "Made in Tyne and Wear" TV, with pre and post-match conversations at each home game and highlights on the channel's dedicated sport programme 'SportBase'. Regular domestic television coverage of this type will be the first of its kind for volleyball in the UK and we are very proud to be leading the way here in the North East. (Made in Tyne and Wear TV is available on Sky 117 and Freeview 8).

**By maintaining strong connections, an open-minded approach and open communication lines, volleyball in the North East will continue to go from strength to strength with the direction and support of the Volleyball England Strategy 2024. Onwards and upwards!**





# GREATER MANCHESTER VOLLEYBALL RELATIONSHIP MANAGER UPDATE

**Having read the Strategy 2024 from cover to cover about three times, I couldn't be more excited and pleased by its focus. What I like about the strategy is that it concentrates on successful measures based on evolution and not revolution!**

Greater Manchester volleyball is in a strong position to support the Strategy 2024, with an increase in community clubs that are continuing to develop on and off the court. I believe that the launch of the Strategy 2024 will help support North West volleyball, strengthen existing relationships and develop new avenues to promote and grow the sport.

Participation has clearly grown across Greater Manchester, particularly around grassroots juniors and recreational adult volleyball. Embedding more volleyball into schools and the curriculum will only help strengthen our delivery structures from school to satellite club, and into junior volleyball clubs. I'm always surprised by the number of schools that want to try volleyball, and I'm pleased to see that there is a consideration to embed volleyball in Physical Literacy at Key Stage 1, with the sport being offered to at least 60% of Key Stage 2

students. This will ultimately lead to more secondary schools taking up the sport, with our clubs benefiting from juniors looking for volleyball. With an increase in secondary schools delivering volleyball with local clubs, I'm particularly looking forward to seeing the tools that will help improve and sustain delivery in secondary schools.

Continuing to develop and grow the Go Spike brand will only help strengthen our position as a sport and I'm pleased that there is an emphasis to continually drive adult participation. In the last two years Greater Manchester has helped develop 12 new Go Spike sessions, with more notable sessions like Intervolley, Blackley VC, and Marvels Sitting having grown into affiliated clubs.

Performance volleyball is improving in the North West with many new teams and clubs joining the National League. City of Salford Ladies recorded their highest position in Super 8's, with a third place

finish, whilst Manchester Marvels Men gained promotion to Division 1. A structured pathway from participation to performance will help identify talent, develop potential and strengthen the performance clubs locally. The development of a sustainable pipeline of local talent will start with the launch of a Junior Academy and I'm looking forward to seeing talented athletes from the North West access opportunities locally.

**Volleyball England's Strategy 2024 will also help develop coaches and create more opportunities for young people and talented athletes to gain the best coaching experiences. Perhaps the success of the two clubs above is down to the continual investment in their respective coaches, who both gained FIVB Level 2 qualifications earlier in the year. The Strategy will continue to invest in coaches and that can only mean more volleyball, more often, with better players!**



# **BLACK COUNTRY AND STAFFS** **VOLLEYBALL** **RELATIONSHIP** **MANAGER UPDATE**



### **What does Strategy 2024 mean for the Black Country and Staffordshire?**

Wanting to see more people of all ages, genders and abilities, with or without a disability playing volleyball and enjoying all that the sport can offer, the Black Country and Staffordshire Investment Zone has already begun expanding its geographical spread, engaging with key partners within the Birmingham and Shropshire regions to identify areas of development. Building on the successes of the past 18 months, work has already started in order to achieve this target by 2024.

Therefore, to maintain the influence and direction of the investment zone, the management group has now been split into three sub-groups to allow more focused delivery on the road to achieving Volleyball England's 2024 vision:

- North Staffordshire and Stoke
- South, Central and East Staffordshire and Birmingham
- Black Country and Shropshire

### **How do the 2024 strategic actions relate to this investment zone?**

**To embed volleyball in schools, further education and higher education (starting at primary school)** by ensuring the longevity of existing participation infrastructure developed within Staffordshire and the Black Country through the further and higher education sector and within schools via Satellite Clubs, Premier League 4 Sport and School Games programmes. Also to work with key partners to support growth of volleyball participation within Birmingham and Shropshire, ensuring the sustainability of any new provision.

**To continue to increase Go Spike recreational adult participation** by supporting existing and new community clubs across Staffordshire, the Black Country, Shropshire and Birmingham by providing appropriate opportunities to take part in volleyball. In addition, to work with leisure providers and community groups to establish sustainable Go Spike programmes in community parks and spaces.

**To develop routes to market for athletes with a disability to play all forms of volleyball** by sharing the good practice displayed within Staffordshire, which has established sitting volleyball, and by working with key partners such as clubs, community groups and leisure providers, to establish sustainable sitting volleyball opportunities, supported by a knowledgeable workforce within the investment zone.



# STRATEGY 2024

## Lisa Wainwright updates us about the launch:



***“Building a sustainable long term future for volleyball in England” – not the catchiest title I must admit but it says it as it is! This is a volleyball strategy, by volleyball for volleyball and has huge ambitions for our sport’s future.***

It was innovatively launched during the Cup Finals at the National Volleyball Centre, Kettering with me speaking to the packed crowd, followed by an army of volunteers handing out the Strategy 2024 document and “Spikey” helping to drive up the noise and engagement, with goodies for eager spectators!

Simultaneously, we went live with the video of Strategy 2024! This is a first for Volleyball England, with volleyball enthusiasts young and old leading the way to the future and our very own Peter Bakare, GB Volleyball Olympian doing the graphics! A creative narrative talks through the 11 Strategic Ambitions around Participation, Performance and Commercial/Events. A huge thank you to all who helped in this leading production for our industry! If you have not seen it yet, check it out at: [www.volleyballengland.org/strategy2024](http://www.volleyballengland.org/strategy2024)

It seems to have hit the mark, as feedback from the responding key stakeholders and partners shows below! Now the really hard work starts....time to bring it to life and deliver the Strategic Outcomes. I know that with such vision and talent we have an exciting future ahead!

Some of the positive feedback included:

**Timo Kenakkala – President NEVZA**

Congratulations, nice work. I am sure that you will have a growing number of enthusiasts in your volleyball network. Can I distribute your video as an example of how to bring the future vision to life? All the best, Timo

**John Driscoll – Sports Coach UK**

Two impressive pieces of work!

**Ali Oliver – CEO YST**

Many congratulations on the launch of your strategy. I know how much hard work, negotiation and vision goes into these things so a personal well done to you for the leadership and drive behind it.

As you know we are a proud partner of Volleyball England and look forward to supporting the implementation of this strategy.

**Catherine Baker – Sport and Beyond, Thomas Sport Associate**

It seems like the way you have approached this should set a very good example for other sports, and the strategy is clearly innovative and ambitious. Good for you. Good luck with it. I have tweeted the link as I’m sure will many others!

**Joel Matheus – President, Namibia Volleyball**

Congratulations on this very impressive strategy. I went through it quickly and also watched the video. It is amazing to see what England Volleyball has planned for the future of volleyball in England. I am very much delighted to receive this strategy as there is a lot we can learn from it here in Namibia. I wish England Volleyball all the best.

**Melissa Bennett – Sport England**

I like the video to share the key messages. An exciting time for volleyball.

**Katy Tuncer – Portas Consulting**

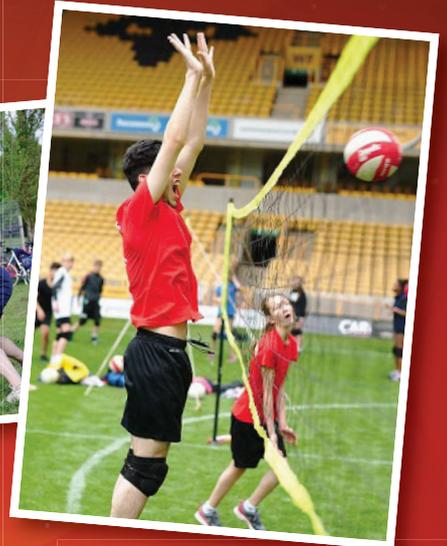
Go Volleyball England! Fantastic to see you embracing video comms too ☺ Thanks for sharing this and good luck.

**Paul McPate – Chair, BUCS Volleyball Advisory Group**

The accompanying video is a fresh and innovative way of communicating the strategy, which itself is ambitious and progressive.

I think that the potential development of the sport within the student community is significant and welcome the opportunity to work closer with you and your staff to ensure that the student volleyball sector continues to be a key component in delivering success across your strategy outcomes.





**go spike!**  
**BIG WEEKEND**  
23-25 MAY

**2015 sees Two Go Spike Big Weekends!**

*Two Weekends – Twice the Fun!*

*The first Go Spike Big Weekend of 2015 took place over the late May Bank Holiday weekend (23rd, 24th and 25th May).*

*39 events took place with around 2000 people experiencing volleyball. All of our Event Organisers were vital to the success of Big Weekend and we wish to build on that for our second Big Weekend of 2015.*

*Big Weekend 2 – August Bank Holiday – Saturday 29th to Monday 31st August*

*However big or small your event may be, it will make a difference by showing your local community why volleyball is the best team sport to play this summer.*

*All Event Organisers will receive a free Event Organisers Pack with posters, flyers, a Volleyball England banner and other resources to ensure you can promote your come and try event. All events will be added to the Go Spike, Volleyball England, and external event finder websites. To register your Big Weekend Come and Try event go to [www.gospike.net](http://www.gospike.net).*



# National Cup Finals

# 2015

*“The standard of volleyball increases year on year.” (Lisa Wainwright, Volleyball England Chief Executive). Every Cup Final match was fiercely fought out to the end.*

## CONGRATULATIONS GO TO:

- Men’s Shield winner: Tendring
- Women’s Shield winner: Ashcombe Dorking
- Men’s and Women’s Cup winners: Team Northumbria

## Men’s Shield

The MVP was Tendring number 5, James Baker.

Tendring’s Captain, Stuart Dove, said *“It meant a lot for the team winning the Essex derby”*.



**Tendring beat Essex Blaze (25-13, 27-25, 25-20)**

## Women’s Shield

The MVP was awarded to Ashcombe’s Dierdre Wilson.



**Ashcombe Dorking 1 beat Chester Amazons (22-25, 25-14, 25-22, 25-16)**

## Women’s Cup

MPV very deservedly went to Angel Beckford.



**Team Northumbria beat Polonia Sideout London (25-19, 25-22, 26-24)**

## Men’s Cup

The MVP was Sam Shenton from Northumbria and it was well acknowledged how much he had developed over the past few years.



**Team Northumbria beat City of Sheffield (25-21, 28-30, 25-20, 19-25, 15-11)**

Coach, David Goodchild, said *“It was certainly not an easy task as there were two really good teams and it was absolute war out there! They are our biggest rivals!”*

Lisa Wainwright, Volleyball England Chief Executive: *“Huge thanks to all our volunteers who collectively contribute to just under two million volunteers throughout sport, a workforce larger than the whole of the NHS.”*

Thank you to all the volunteers and officials at the National Volleyball Centre – today simply could not have happened without you! And also thank you to all the coaches and volunteers who have supported the players in their journey to the Cup Finals.

## CONGRATULATIONS GO TO:

- Girls Under 16 National Cup winners: Academy of Beach Sports
- Boys Under 16 National Cup winners: Boswells Blaze
- Women's Under 18 National Cup winners: Tameside
- Men's Under 18 National Cup winners: Boswells Blaze

# Junior Cup Finals

Another awesome day of volleyball at the National Volleyball Centre! This time the Juniors took to the stage...

## Girls Under 16 Cup Final

Valeria Minaeva was awarded MVP. An accolade she was very emotional about.



**Academy of Beach Sports beat Richmond Volleyball (21-25, 18-25, 25-17, 25-14, 18-16)**



Coach, Denise Austin, felt that the success of her team was in part due to the fact she has coached many of her players since they were only 9 or 10 years old.

## Women's Under 18 Cup Final

Coach, Richard Jump, praised the "commitment of the players" and their captain said they "just took every point as it came" to try and keep composure during the match.



**Tameside beat LeAF Wessex (25-22, 25-23, 25-19)**



MVP was awarded to Alice Kenyon.

## Boys Under 16 Cup Final

Boswells Blaze coach, Darren Lewis, was "incredibly proud of the title."



**Boswells Blaze beat Wessex LeAF (25-19, 25-23, 25-22)**



MVP was awarded to Daniel Sach.

## Men's Under 18 Cup Final

Ryan Poole was awarded MVP which came as no surprise to the crowd!



**Boswells Blaze beat LeAF Wessex (12-25, 25-16, 25-17, 26-24)**

Coach, Darren Lewis, praised the team for their "great decision making" during the match.



Captain, Sam Thompson, realised in the second set "it was then all or nothing" and they adapted their play accordingly. Lisa Wainwright, Volleyball England Chief Executive, said the day

showcased "exciting up and coming talent" and "demonstrated what NGB's do, this is one of over 8,000 organised sports competitions in England today".

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**VOLLEYBALL**  
**ENGLAND**

# Continental Cup

A sensational performance from England's men and women senior beach national teams ensured they both progressed into Round 4 of the Continental Cup – a prestigious CEV competition that serves as an Olympic qualification event.



The men's pairings, made up of Baku 2015 qualifiers Jake Sheaf and Chris Gregory, and Gregg Weaver and TASS\* athlete Phil Smith, secured their passage to the next phase of the competition by defeating Croatia in straight sets.

The women's pairings of Jessica Grimson and Victoria Palmer, SportAid athlete Yasmin Kaashoek and TASS\* athlete Millie Constable had a more eventful path to the next phase. With the score sitting at matches played one apiece, England versus Belarus went to a 'Golden Match'. Palmer and Grimson, who had needed to come back from 13-19 down in their previous match to even take it to the Golden Match, recovered from losing the first set to win 2-1 and qualify the women for the next round. Both the men and the women are still on the Road to Rio. Here are a selection of photos from the weekend.

\* Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme



Pic: Jake Sheaf and Chris Gregory



Pic: Gregg Weaver and Phil Smith



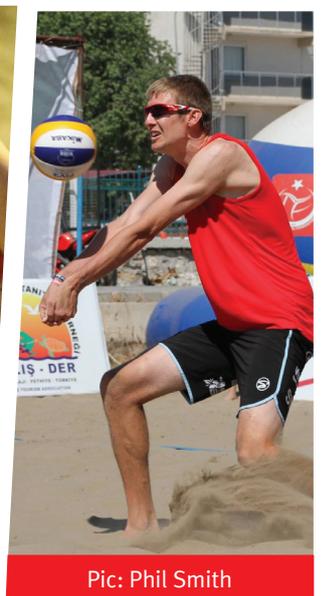
Pic: Players celebrate on the podium



Pic: The girls in action



Pic: Victoria Palmer and Jessica Grimson



Pic: Phil Smith



# VOLLEYBALL ENGLAND **Super 8s** SHOWDOWN WEEKEND

## PUTTING THE 'SUPER' IN 'SUPER 8s'

**The Super 8s Finals were a culmination of fourteen rounds of matches followed by a play-off series featuring the top teams in the division.**

**The Women's and Men's finalists played one match on the Saturday and another leg on the Sunday. If a team won both matches, they would be crowned Super 8s champions. However, if the teams won one match each, regardless of the number of sets for and against or set scores, it would go to a deciding Golden Set!**

### **SUPER 8s WOMEN'S FINAL FIRST MATCH**

Team Northumbria beat Polonia Sideout London (25-20, 23-25, 19-25, 26-24)

### **SUPER 8s WOMEN'S FINAL SECOND MATCH**

Team Northumbria beat Polonia Sideout London (23-25, 25-15, 25-18, 25-16)

Having won the first leg of the final (Saturday), Team Northumbria needed to win this match to become champions, whereas Polonia Sideout London would need to win the match and then it would go to a deciding golden set. Polonia cracked Northumbria – after not dropping a set the whole season, they lost two sets to Polonia. So it was predicted to be an exciting match!

**MVP was Kristina Graven.**

### **SUPER 8s MEN'S FINAL FIRST MATCH**

City of Sheffield beat Team Northumbria (25-19, 19-25, 25-21, 25-21)

### **SUPER 8s MEN'S FINAL SECOND MATCH**

Team Northumbria beat City of Sheffield (25-19, 22-25, 25-19, 25-23, golden set 15-12)

This is the third title-deciding match between City of Sheffield and Team Northumbria this season. Northumbria won National Cup Finals, beating Sheffield 3-2. However, the tide turned for the first match of the Super 8 Finals, with Sheffield winning 3-1. Regardless of the importance of the match for the Super 8s, this was always going to be a grudge match!

Both teams had now won a match so it was down to a golden set decider!



## SUPER 8s MEN'S FINAL GOLDEN SET

Team Northumbria beat City of Sheffield in the Golden Set **(15-12)**

A spike from Peter Bakare gave Team Northumbria the first point in the golden set. They then pushed ahead to 4-0. A double touch then cost Northumbria a point. City of Sheffield got back into the game and closed Northumbria's lead to 5-3. There was still a two point gap at change of ends, with Northumbria enjoying a 8-6 lead. Sheffield managed to close the gap to be just one point behind but Northumbria quickly pushed ahead again. An amazing hit from Dami Bakare ensured Northumbria didn't get too far in front. Whilst such closely fought matches, ultimately Northumbria won the golden set and were crowned Super 8s champions!

**MVP was Northumbria Libero John Chapman**



## U18 GRAND PRIX WOMEN'S FINAL

LeAF Wessex beat Graveney & Malory Eagles 3-0  
**(25-15, 25-23, 25-10)**



## U18 GRAND PRIX MEN'S FINAL

Wessex LeAF beat Boswells Blaze  
**(25-12, 25-18, 25-16)**



# ANNUAL AWARDS EVENING

## HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES – CAROL GORDON,



KEITH TRENAM



## SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO VOLLEYBALL - JANET INMAN



## PETER WARDALE AWARD – PAUL BOHANNAN



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Microtrading Performance

Development Coach of the Year  
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M-Hance Referee of the Year  
The London Sports Injury Clinic Services to Refereeing  
BDO Young Volunteer of the Year  
Holiday Inn Express Volunteer of the Year  
SideOut Long Service Award  
Mizuno HEVO of the Year  
SGTV Event of the Year  
Gerfloor Play of the Year  
Sportset Club of the Year

## AWARDS

### TOWERGATE YOUNG COACH OF THE YEAR - MATTHEW RHYMER



Academy of Beach Sports  
'On the coaching front he is both technical and tactical which he combines with an uncanny ability to relate to players of any age, both indoors and on the beach.'

'He always knows how to push players individually and how to get them through tough times. He knows how to connect with players.'

### MAROON PRINT CHILDREN'S COACH OF THE YEAR - JIM KEATING

Wigan Seahawks and numerous schools

'Jim's greatest asset is his passion and ability to motivate children to play.'  
'It's hard to measure Jim's overall impact but what's clear is that there will be a lasting legacy as a result of his work.'

### QDOS CONSULTING PARTICIPATION COACH OF THE YEAR - HOWARD AINSWORTH

Manchester Marvels  
'Howard has an incredible commitment to driving up participation.'  
'Driving force behind Urmston Go Spike and Marvels Sitting Volleyball, which now has 2 sessions per week.'

### MICROTRADING PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT COACH OF THE YEAR - NICK DAVIES



Tendring Volleyball Club  
'Nick is a major asset to Tendring Volleyball Club, helping players to develop their full potential and coaching the team to play top level volleyball.'

### FLUID OVERALL COACH OF THE YEAR - JIM KEATING

### SPORTING EQUALS YOUNG OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR - WILL MCDONALD



Ashcombe Volleyball club  
'He has displayed real enthusiasm and dedication to increasing his knowledge.'

'William took his Level 1 at the age of 16 and his Level 2 at the age of 18. He has taken on the role of 2nd official at NVL Division 1 games and has been praised for his fair officiating.'  
'He is an excellent role model for young players at Ashcombe Volleyball club and is eager to volunteer in the different roles needed to run the club.'

### M-HANCE REFEREE OF THE YEAR - JOHN MICHEAL ROFFEY



'He always encourages other referees to move forward in the sport and get upgraded.'  
'He referees both national league and local league matches, no matter how far he has to travel and has come back to refereeing after overcoming heart problems.'  
'An outstanding referee in both standing and sitting volleyball.'

### THE LONDON SPORTS INJURY CLINIC SERVICES TO REFEREEING – STEVE EVANS

### BDO YOUNG VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - STEPHANIE (HOI KI) FU NOTTINGHAM ROCKETS



'Steph is very committed to her own personal development and during the last 5 years has attended all the professional development courses offered within volleyball.'  
'She is an excellent example of success within the Volleyball England Leadership Pathways.'

### HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - BEVERLEY COOPER SOUTH HANTS VOLLEYBALL CLUB



'She is a valued member of the South Hants Volleyball Club, who holds various positions on the committee and in the playing arena.'  
'She recently completed her Level 2 coaching to further develop her own skills but also to enhance her ability to pass on knowledge of the game to others in the club.'  
'Bev is always part of the committee arranging events and is always helping to organise.'

**SIDEOUT LONG SERVICE AWARD -**

**DAVID SPEERS LEEDS VC**



‘He is involved with developing young players in the Yorkshire teams and has also spent time in the Yorkshire Association, helping shape volleyball in the area.’

‘Been involved with volleyball for 40 years – committed his time coaching younger players, coaching the Men’s team to promotion and creating summer beach tournaments (the driving force behind the tournament).’  
‘He is involved in volleyball because he loves it. A loss is something to learn from, a win a celebration but winning has never been everything, it’s how the game is played!’

**MIZUNO HEVO OF THE YEAR - HOLLY MOWBRAY UNIVERSITY OF DERBY**



‘Holly’s passion for volleyball is contagious – gaining on average 8 novices playing in recreational volleyball sessions each week.’

‘She is versatile and has ensured she is aware of all possible pathways and exit routes for the players. She took it upon herself to develop a link with local side Darkstar.’  
‘Holly shares best practice techniques that have been used by other activators and is always on social media to stimulate interest, communicate within the university and keep people up to date.’

**SGTV EVENT OF THE YEAR - WOLLATON HALL PARK GO SPIKE EVENT**

(Part of Big Weekend)  
University of Nottingham & Nottingham Trent  
‘Designed their own flyers and promoted heavily using social media.’  
‘East Midlands Today, Nottingham City Transport

and Sports Nottinghamshire got involved in advertising to promote the event.’  
‘Ran a mini tournament for confident and experienced players and had 2 courts with UoN volleyball head coach Paul Lamb teaching the basics.’  
‘The support from the community and both universities was outstanding and has helped to build community relationships for volleyball. The event was planned well in advanced and designed to suit different abilities which appealed to all. As a result volleyball has grown and local clubs have seen an increase in recruitment of new members – a positive impact within the community. It was organised and run by The University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent.’

**GERFLOOR PLAY OF THE YEAR – NORTHUMBRIA “KICK SET SPIKE” TEAM NORTHUMBRIA**

**SPORTSET CLUB OF THE YEAR - WOMBOURNE VOLLEYBALL CLUB**



‘Providing strong community links with Dudley College, providing support to the college’s volleyball programme, joint entry with Tamworth VC in the NVL Men’s cup, organising refereeing courses and upskilling the workforce in terms of coaching and refereeing.’  
‘Providing a new pathway for students and helping to inspire new and old players since the club merged with Coseley VBC.’

**LEAGUE WINNERS**

Women’s Div 3 South - Bristol 2

Women’s Div 3 Central - Oxford Ladies

Women’s Div 3 North - DARKSTAR Derbyshire

Women’s Div 2 South - Worthing VC

Women’s Div 2 North - Team Durham

Women’s Div 1 - Tendring VC Ladies

Women’s Super 8s - Team Northumbria

Men’s Div 3 South West - Arun-VC

Men’s Div 3 South East - EBC Greenhouse (London)

Men’s Div 3 Central - Peterborough Harriers Men

Men’s Div 3 North - City of Sheffield 2

Men’s Div 2 South - Solent 2

Men’s Div 2 North - Team Birmingham

Men’s Div 1- Leeds VC

Men’s Super 8s - Team Northumbria

**MVPS**

Women’s Div 3 South - Laura Konopectka – Richmond VB

Women’s Div 3 Central - Sonia De Munari – Oxford Ladies

Women’s Div 3 North - Angela Leo – Manchester Marvels 2

Women’s Div 2 South - Blanka Wood – South Hants

Women’s Div 2 North - Nicola Breaks – Leeds VC

Women’s Div 1 - Andrea Lei – Oxford Students

& Malgorzata Kowalska – Team Birmingham VC

Women’s Super 8s - Mara Mata – Team South Wales, Virag Farkas – City of Salford VC, Megan Jean-Ann Hodges – City of Salford VC & Alexandra Vajdova – Swiss Cottage

Men’s Div 3 South West - Josef Antos – Wiltshire Mavericks

Men’s Div 3 South East - Javier Bello – Richmond VB 2

Men’s Div 3 Central - Michael Grainger – RAF Harriers & Jack Burvill – Nottingham Rockets

Men’s Div 3 North - Mateusz Krzyzanowski – Blyth Valley

Men’s Div 2 South - Aaron Robertson – Solent 2

Men’s Div 2 North - Nick Shardlow – Loughborough Students & Callum Currie – Northumbria/Middlesbrough Academy

Men’s Div 1 - Roland Herczeg – Leeds & Marcio Silveira – London Knights LS KVC

Men’s Super 8s - Nathan French – Team Northumbria, Kieran O’Malley – London Docklands & Taylor Wilson – London Lynx 1

Men’s Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix Most Valuable Player - Darryl Tring

Women’s Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix Most Valuable Player - Danni Hampson-Carroll

Junior Beach Players of the Year - Harry Jones, Ryan Poole & Ellie Austin

Men’s VEBT Champions Race Winner - Phil Smith

Women’s VEBT Champions Race Winner - Jess Grimson

# Sitting Volleyball

*It's been an exciting year in the Volleyball England Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix with a total of 11 teams battling it out during the season.*

East London Lynx dominated the competition, as they went undefeated throughout the regular season. Below them the competition was fierce with a number of new teams competing against well-established clubs. One of the new teams, Newcastle Staffs gained promotion from Tier 2 in the first GP of the season at the Ashcombe Volleyball Centre and from there never looked back, finishing in third place overall behind reigning champions BattleBack 1. Lincoln Imps and Portsmouth also spent time in Tier 1, with Lincoln finishing the season in fourth place to qualify for the semi-finals.

GB Captain, Rob Richardson was delighted with how his club side, East London Lynx performed during the season, "For any team to go undefeated for the entire season is a great achievement. It's reward for the work we put into training under Ian's guidance. We have a real team mentality and that's what has made us so hard to beat this year."

Elsewhere, Essex Pirates returned to the competition having missed the 2013/14 season and had some fantastic battles in Tier 2 with Canterbury City Wyverns and several new teams for this season – BattleBack 2, DRM and Manchester Marvels, who had two teams competing by the end of the season.

In the semi-finals, East London Lynx continued their superb season, defeating Lincoln Imps 3-0 to qualify for the final. In the other semi-final, newcomers Newcastle Staffs beat BattleBack to book their place at the Super 8 Final's weekend.

April also saw the Inaugural Sitting Volleyball Cup take place at the National Volleyball Centre in Kettering. 8 Teams competed in a knockout competition with a cup and shield section giving every team 3 matches and a chance of silverware. In the opening round teams were seeded with

the 3 all progressing to the cup semi-finals in straight sets. The last quarter final saw Portsmouth demonstrate the progress they had shown throughout the Grand Prix season, beating Lincoln Imps 3-0 to progress to the cup semi-final.

In round 2 a draw was made to determine the semi-finals for each competition. In the shield competition, Lincoln bounced straight back, beating Canterbury City Wyverns 3-0 to book their place in the final. The other semi-final saw probably the game of the day. Manchester Marvels raced to a 2-0 lead before Essex Pirates pulled it back to take the match to a deciding set. Essex completed their superb comeback to book their place in the final, taking the deciding set 15-10.

Marvels recovered from their five set match in the semi-final to secure third place in the shield before Lincoln Imps beat Essex Pirates to win the shield.

In the cup semi-finals, Newcastle Staffs continued their impressive season with a 3-0 win over Portsmouth whilst East London Lynx also had a straight sets win over BattleBack to set up the final. In the third/fourth playoff, BattleBack were too strong for Portsmouth and claimed third place.

The final saw Newcastle Staffs put favourites, Lynx, under some real pressure. After going 2-0 up, East London Lynx then lost their first set of the season before eventually taking the match 3-1 to secure the first trophy of the season.

Manchester Marvels have had a fantastic first season in the competition. And we caught up with a few of their players to find out more about their experiences.

Paul Ledward, who was one of the key people behind setting up the team, has enjoyed a range of things about sitting volleyball:



***“Sitting volleyball has given me an opportunity, following my amputation, to play competitive sport again. The sport is so inclusive, able and disable-bodied, male, female, young, old. There’s just no limit to who can take part. The atmosphere of the National Grand Prix matches has been really awe-inspiring. I’ve enjoyed the energy of a team sport and the fact that I can throw myself around like a goalkeeper!”***

Paul’s brother Mark has also joined the team, initially to support his brother but he’s enjoyed making new friends and re-engaging in sport.

For Lamin Manneh, who was injured serving in the armed forces, Sitting Volleyball has given him the chance to get active again, “It enables me to get closer to the amount of physical exercise I was used to before my injuries. Team sport, with these team mates...it’s great. Right now, it’s my favourite sport to play!”

Shaun Carter plays indoor volleyball but is new to the Sitting game and has enjoyed the challenges it brings, “The beauty about a team of players all learning a sport together from the word GO is that, every week, the team’s best player is arguably somebody else. Aspects of the game are clicking for different people at different times.”

One of the key challenges the club faces is promoting the sport to make more people in their community aware of it. They are using social media and attending a number of public events in order to raise the profile. On court, they are still learning some of the required movement skills. Mark commented:

“I can feel myself slowly beginning to get the hang of it and on the positive side, I now know when I should have moved, or where I need to move to. The hard part is executing those movements during a game — at no point in daily life do I have to slide myself across a floor!”

Looking ahead to next season, the team are eyeing up success in the Grand Prix as well as heading to international club competitions! They are also working to

secure partnerships with local universities to encourage new players to attend the sessions.



# BUCS

## Big Wednesday

### TROPHY AND CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

**The climax of the student volleyball season took place at BUCS Big Wednesday in Loughborough on 24/25 March, with both Trophy and Championship Finals concluding the domestic indoor season and showcasing the sport within BUCS' multi-sport event. The presence of HRH The Princess Royal at the men's Championship Final between Bournemouth and Sheffield Hallam added an extra dimension for players and spectators alike.**

#### Women's Trophy Final

In the women's Trophy Final a strong East London team, with ambitions for Premier South status in 15/16, proved too strong for a spirited Liverpool team that competed well throughout the match. After a slow and nervy start to the game from both teams, the hitting power of UEL, particularly from Toth and Zhurba, proved too much for Liverpool, who went down 25-22, 25-12, 25-19.

#### Men's Trophy Final

Northumbria 2 and Imperial College London were next up in the men's Trophy Final and once again unforced errors in both service and handling prevented the match from having any real flow. Despite having a stronger and more powerful attack, UCL did not impose themselves on the match as much as might have been expected. However Northumbria's inability to provide a stable pass for their setter caused them problems throughout the match and ultimately UCL were comfortable victors, 25-16, 25-8, 25-13.



#### Women's Championship Final

The women's Championship Final between old adversaries Northumbria and Durham delivered a match of the highest quality and had the spectators on the edge of their seats throughout. Coach Simon Loftus' recent work with the Durham girls seemed to have a stabilising effect at the BUCS Final 8 Tournament ten days previously and his experience on the bench also seemed to galvanise the players on this occasion.

Having been narrowly edged 25-22 in the first set, strong and effective blocking from Durham brought them back into the match with a deserved and emphatic 25-15 second set win which seemed to rock Northumbria. However Northumbria's response in the third set was equally robust and three consecutive errors from Durham followed by a kill block gave Northumbria a 12-7 lead which they never relinquished, taking the third set 25-20.

Durham's dogged defence and their power hitter Anthony's ability to beat the block brought them back into the match with a deserved 25-20 fourth set win which had their vocal support fired up for the deciding set. However Northumbria's status as the premier women's team in the country is well founded and they took control of the deciding set to close out what was a superb advert for women's volleyball, 15-10.



### Men's Championship Final

Bournemouth's progress to the Championship Final at the expense of Northumbria 10 days earlier had raised expectations that this group of Bournemouth students might achieve an historic result and lift the BUCS title for the first time in their history. The presence of HRH Princess Anne at the start of the match added to the special atmosphere in the hall and she showed genuine interest in meeting and talking to both sets of players. However last year's winners and perennial finalists Sheffield Hallam, had also looked impressive in doggedly disposing of East London in their semi-final and the stage was set for a cracking men's final.

This expectation was met, with both teams trading blows throughout the first set two sets like heavyweight boxers on the ropes! No more than two points separated the teams at any one time during the first set, which Hallam edged 25-23. The second set was going much the same way as the first, when a painful clash of heads between England international Ollie Kimber and team mate Michael Vellutato while going for a ball, left Kimber dazed and clutching his jaw.

The worrying prospect of Bournemouth's inspirational captain having to leave the court was dispelled when he dusted himself down and proceeded to cause Hallam all sorts of problems, with his hitting consistently finding space and helping Bournemouth compete toe to toe with their northern rivals. At 24-23 it looked as though Hallam would steal the set, but Bournemouth held firm in a nerve-racking finale to the second set which saw them tie the match with a 29-27 second set win.

Hallam's captain and international setter, Alex Jenkins, directed his offense superbly in the third set, causing the Bournemouth block problems and providing his hitters with a variety of options in attack. The 25-18 third set win for Hallam suggested that their opposition's

resistance had ended but, led by captain Kimber, whose jaw injury seemed to have acted as a stimulant, Bournemouth passed and hit with a consistent determination to bring themselves back into the match. However a hotly disputed officiating call at 23-23 gave Hallam match point which they duly took to retain their BUCS Championship title and leave Bournemouth with their first BUCS silver medals.

The BUCS Championship finals delivered volleyball of the highest quality, with some exceptional individual and team play and the players and coaches of both teams are to be congratulated on showcasing volleyball so well as part of BUCS Big Wednesday.



# **PROFILES OF NEW** **VOLLEYBALL** **TEAM MEMBERS**



## **Liz Fletcher**

**Volleyball Relationship Manager  
for the Black Country and Staffordshire**

*Having originated from Stoke-on-Trent, I am now residing in Birmingham. Outside of work I like to spend time in the sanctuary of the gym, lifting weights whilst listening to my favourite tunes, usually some form of house music!*

*As well as this, I enjoy volunteering within women and girls' rugby union now that I am retired from playing, but I have also been known to don a sequined dress for some "Strictly" activities, yes ballroom and Latin dancing!*

*I am very much looking forward to working with the volleyball and sport 'family' in the VRM role to grow the sport and increase the opportunities for people to play.*

**Mobile 07595 022516  
l.fletcher@volleyballengland.org**



## **Emma Butterworth**

**PA to Chief Executive and Board**

*I joined Volleyball England having recently moved back to Leicestershire with my fiancé and was attracted to the role as it sounded really involved and exciting.*

*When not at work I spend a lot of time with my family and friends and also enjoy yoga, swimming and running – although I don't do any of them as much as I would like!*

**Direct Line 01509 227732  
e.butterworth@volleyballengland.org**



# 1<sup>ST</sup> BAKU 2015 EUROPEAN GAMES

***With Baku now underway, excitement in the Team Gregory/Sheaf camp is huge! The boys are thrilled to be part of the 153-strong team which has been selected to travel to Azerbaijan.***

The enormity of being part of Team GB has well and truly sunk in, and the organisation Team GB is providing behind the scenes is fantastic.

We have gone from sleeping in the cheapest hostels/hotels we can find to having our own ice bath and warm-up bike in our apartment!

The preparation along the way has been a little up and down. After Lucerne, Jake came down with a virus that kept him out of training for around 10 days, which forced us to pull out of the CEV tour event in Jurmala. Jake was back on court as soon as possible however and the boys were able to train together for the first time since Lucerne.

The NEVZA (Northern European Zonal Association) competition in Denmark provided great preparation as Baku drew closer. Post Denmark we stayed in Bournemouth to run a training camp. This was really important as it gave the team time to be together and move our game on. We were also able to work with our physio Sophia Busfield, S&C coach Ian Wood (who has been working alongside Velocity Sports Performance in delivering our S&C programme) and psychology coach Dr. Emma Kavanagh.

'Kav' has been a key part of our team. She works with the players individually and as a group on the mental side of the game, looking at team dynamic and all the little things that have a big impact on our performance. Kav also finds intervention for Jake and Chris and their individual problems. The psychological side is really important as we strive to be one of the best teams in Europe. Chris and Jake have both expressed their pride at being part of Team GB and as a squad we will compete hard and make a real statement to the volleyball world!

  
**Baku 2015**  
1<sup>ST</sup> EUROPEAN GAMES

**12 – 28 June 2015**

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# LONDON LEGACY VOLLEYBALL CUP



## GIANTS OF EUROPEAN VOLLEYBALL

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