



## Lothian Disability Sport

### Annual General Meeting Report 2017/2018

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2018

The Lothian Disability Sport (LDS) Annual General Meeting (AGM) for 2017 / 2018 was held at Meggetland Sports Complex, Edinburgh, EH14 1AH on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The AGM was followed by the Annual Awards Ceremony as LDS continue to recognise the considerable achievements of athletes, clubs, coaches and volunteers over the previous twelve months. LDS are proud to work alongside and support such a host of talented and inspirational individuals and are delighted to continue to recognise these achievements.

The evening got underway with LDS Chair, Helen Bruce delivering a report of the year which championed the success of the branch during this time. The report touched upon the ever expanding range of activities and clubs available across the region such as the nation's first paraclimbing club and recent Powerchair Football National League winners Lothian Wolves, both of which were set up with the support of LDS. The report also recognised the hugely significant achievements over the previous 12 months on the world stage, amongst which were the two Lothian athletes were selected to represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Games – Maria Lyle who claimed silver in the T35 100m and Mickey Yule who came 4<sup>th</sup> in the heavyweight powerlifting category. Helen continued to promote the importance of partnership work between LDS and organisations such as Scottish Disability Sport, FABB Scotland and Lothian Special Olympics and emphasised her appreciation of the continued support towards the funding for the Disability Sport Officer post from the four local authorities across the Lothian region. A full version of the Chair report is attached.

Jack Brodie, the LDS Disability Sport Officer, then presented the 2017 / 2018 Sports Review which highlighted the ongoing development of clubs in the region and the considerable work that is being delivered on a consistent basis from a committed band of coaches and volunteers across the region. The review was based on the LDS Strategic Plan's Priority, Development and Participation sports. Highlights included boccia player Sean McCann being selected as the sole Lothian representative to compete at the CPISRA World Games in Sant Cugat, Spain and the success of Lothian athletes at the inaugural SDS National Archery Championships. Events continue to act as a route into more regular activity for athletes and players who wish to become engaged in sport. The numbers accessing the school calendar of events continues to rise with around 800 young people attending a range of events, showing the appetite to access local opportunities in a host of sports. In addition to local events, Lothian were able to enter teams into all SDS National events this year, experiencing a significant level of success. A full version of the Sports Review for 2017 / 2018 is attached.

The evening concluded with the LDS Annual Awards, with LDS committee member and talented badminton player Ross Foley and multi Paralympic medallist Jim Anderson OBE presenting the awards to the following athletes –

**Senior Sports Person: Maria Lyle (Athletics)** – This year's winner is a previous recipient of the LDS Young Sports Person of the Year Award and has since gone on to win multiple World, European and Paralympic medallist, even though she still a teenager. Maria was one of only a handful of Scottish medallists at the Commonwealth Games in the Gold Coast earlier this year, adding a silver medal in the T35 100m to her already impressive collection. Over the past year she also competed as a GB athlete in the 2017 IPC World Athletics Championships, held in London last August, winning a bronze and a silver medal in the T35 100m and the T35 200m respectively. The Dunbar Grammar 6<sup>th</sup> year pupil has diplegic cerebral palsy is a member of Team East Lothian and is now coached by ex Scotland and GB athlete Jamie Bowie. We wish Maria continued success as she now looks forward to Tokyo 2020.

**Young Sports Person of the Year Award: Luke Turnbull (Tennis)** - Although only 14 years old Luke has been playing tennis for over 7 years. It is, however, only over the last 12-18months that he has become involved with the learning disability programme and his progress over this period has been stellar, culminating in his selection for the GB team playing in the upcoming INAS World Tennis Championships in Paris next month. The championships are being delivered as part of the INAS European Games which will welcome around 1000 participants in a variety of sports, just one of the variety of competitions the International Federation for Athletes with intellectual impairment organises for their best athletes every year. Such is his talent Luke was ranked at no 5 in Scotland at u14 level and, despite his age, he currently plays in the North Berwick Men's 1<sup>st</sup> team and for St Serf's u16 and u18 teams. Now a member of the GB Performance Squad for players with an intellectual impairment Luke surely has an outstanding tennis career in front of him.

**Jim Anderson OBE Bursary: Sean McCann (Boccia)** – East Lothian BC3 player Sean McCann is a member of the Scottish National set up and has recently been selected to represent Scotland at the CPISRA Games in San Cugat, Spain in August – one of only 3 players who have been selected to represent Team Scotland. This will be the first time that Sean has played out with the UK and will provide a great experience, testing himself against players from across the World. The CPISRA Games is a development competition for players with real potential in the sport.

A key member of the East of Scotland Boccia Club, Sean has been playing the sport for a number of years and will be hoping to follow in the footsteps of fellow club member Patrick Wilson by reaching the heights of Paralympic and World level. In the lead up to the CPISRA World Games, Sean will be looking to increase his training to three times per week while also hoping to add to the extensive equipment list a BC3 player requires to compete at this level - the Jim Anderson OBE Bursary will significantly help with this.

**Club of the Year: Lothian Wolves (Powerchair Football)** – Winner of the LDS Club of the Year award is a fairly new club, which only recently became fully constituted. The first and only club in Lothian playing powerchair football it provides people who use electric wheelchairs with the opportunity to participate in a team sport, regardless of age, gender or disability. Wolves completed their first full season earlier this year in the course of which they won the Scottish Powerchair Football Association's MDUK 6k Championship after a very competitive series of league fixtures. Given that

the teams they were competing against have all been playing the sport for over 5 years this was a considerable achievement which exceeded all expectations. Their coach has put their success down to the fact that they all support and encourage each other through good and bad times, all the while retaining a sense of fun and enjoyment in the game.

**Volunteer of the Year: Jacky Yirrell (Lothian Racers)** – A long-serving volunteer at Lothian Racers Swimming Club, the winner of this award has, over the last 18 months, worked tirelessly alongside Pat Agnew to make sure the club's swimmers continue to receive the high level of teaching / coaching after the retirement of previous long serving Head Coach Don McFarlane. Jacky has excelled at bringing swimmers through the pathway from engagement to local, regional and national competition and is adept at catering for the individual needs of all the swimmers at the club. When a full restructuring of the club governance was required – often the most arduous and time-consuming of tasks – she took this on and brought the club up to date and in line with best practice nationally. She also led the development of an extra session to reduce lengthy waiting lists and implemented a system for transitioning existing swimmers to widen provision and fully meet the aims and objectives of the club. Along the way this has involved difficult decisions being made and occasionally some challenging conversations which she dealt with in her unique caring and considerate way.

Jacky also excels as a coach both on the delivery side but also on the mentoring of other coaches, while, in addition to her weekly coaching responsibilities, she is also instrumental in coordinating Lothian teams to attend Scottish Disability Sport National Championships. Furthermore, Jacky recently led the Lothian swimmers at the 2017 Special Olympics National Games in Sheffield as Head Coach in Aquatics. This role requires supporting the swimmers and staff during the week long Games and her calm, welcoming and enthusiastic manner guaranteed that all swimmers had an experience to remember.

**Endeavour Award: Oliver Hewitt (Lothian Racers) & Alex Muir (Lothian Wolves)** – Oliver is a young swimmer with Lothian Racers. Although he has only been with the club for a short time he is already a favourite with the coaches because he listens carefully to what he is asked to do and tries very hard to put suggested changes to his technique into practice. His fantastic work ethic has resulted in significant stamina improvement and development of his stroke technique over a short period of time, all the more impressive because he has a condition which makes his bones very vulnerable to breaking and he has had to endure extensive surgery. After a recent fracture Oliver was back at training after only a week's recovery showing his determination and tenacity, often while enduring considerable pain. Despite this he is always friendly and chatty and takes obvious pleasure in his swimming.

Alex comes from the relatively new sport of powerchair football. Since joining Lothian Wolves he has never missed a training session and his commitment and determination have been second to none. Alex struggled to get game time at the beginning of the season because he took some time to completely understand the rules but, such has been his improvement over the last 12 months and with the skill set he offers the team, he is now virtually the first name on the team sheet. He is a model club member, never complaining, first to welcome new players, happy to offer support and advice to team mates and always with a smile on his face. In addition he and his sisters recently organised a fundraising evening for the club which raised over £1000. He has played a huge role in the success of the club's first season.