



Lothian Disability Sport

LOTHIAN DISABILITY SPORT

SPORTS REVIEW 2017/2018

REGIONAL/NATIONAL SCHOOLS CALENDAR

With 21 events populating the Regional and National calendar over the academic year, this continues to be a significant area of work for Lothian Disability Sport (LDS) and the role of the Disability Sport Officer. The working relationship between LDS and Active Schools & Sports Development teams in all local authorities is crucial to the success of the calendar with many of the events being coordinated and delivered by the professionals in each region. The calendar is further strengthened by the notable input from local clubs and coaches. This input is highlighted by one particular event in the calendar – the East of Scotland Para Sport Festival which is delivered by Scottish Disability Sport (SDS), in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council and Lothian Disability Sport (LDS) with the aim of introducing young people with a physical, visual and / or hearing impairment to sport. The event has grown each year and had its largest attendance in 2018 with 81 young people taking part on the day. 44% of the participants in attendance were newly identified young people, which demonstrates the work being undertaken to encourage new people into disability sport.

PRIORITY SPORTS

ATHLETICS

Athletics has remained a strong sport within the region with large numbers of young people accessing events within the Schools Calendar. Always a very popular event, the Sportshall Athletics hosted by West Lothian again attracted the largest entry in the calendar with 170 young people attending from all over the region. Other athletics events within the calendar continue to be well attended with 55 athletes taking part in the Lothian Regional Athletics Championships and similar numbers accessing each leg of the Cross Country series, which had three of the four stages, held within the region.

At club level, Edinburgh Eagles remain one of the strongest clubs in Lothian and continue to operate at capacity with 18 young people attending each week to develop their motor skills through athletics. Lead coach Celia Peerless was awarded Scotland's BBC Unsung Hero Award for 2017, recognising many years of dedication working with athletes with and without disabilities. Celia has been instrumental in the success of the Edinburgh Eagles Athletics Club, creating an environment for all young people to come along and hone their athletic skills while also building friendships and developing social skills. Celia is also involved with mainstream club Livingston AC where she coaches two disabled athletes who have transitioned from Eagles highlighting the robust pathway in place.

In East Lothian, a new club has been created following the huge success of a RaceRunning 'Come and Try' day. The day, organised by East Lothian Athletics Development Officer Lynda Gilroy, was a huge success with 11 athletes attending and trying RaceRunning for the first time. A specific RaceRunning club has now been developed and will run at Meadowmill Sports Centre on a Monday beginning in the coming weeks.

East Lothian athlete Maria Lyle has cemented her place amongst the leading athletes in Scotland and Great Britain. Maria recently returned from the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia with a silver medal for her performance in the T35 100m. Maria trains with Team East Lothian with coach Jamie Bowie and continues to be a huge inspiration for the younger generation of athletes.

BASKETBALL

Basketball continues to thrive within the region, with Lothian Phoenix remaining one of the largest clubs in terms of members. Phoenix has gone through a transitional period this year following its relegation to the British Wheelchair Basketball NL Second Division but continues to provide a great opportunity for players to progress up the pathway. Phoenix once again reached the Scottish Cup Final where they faced off against fierce rivals St Mirren Warriors as part of BasketballScotland's showcase event of the season. Unfortunately, the team lost out in a thrilling encounter but it served as a fantastic demonstration of the fast-paced excitement of wheelchair basketball.

On a national scale, a number of Lothian athletes represented Scotland U15 & U19s at British Wheelchair Basketball's National Junior Championships whilst Josh Manson was part of the Scotland team which won the Bronze medal at the UK School Games. Josh has long been an advocate for the branch and has had a very successful year. Alongside his national achievements, Josh's club team Tees Valley Titans reached the national final fours and his game was broadcast on the BBC Red Button for the first time. Josh has also recently been employed by BasketballScotland as ASN Basketball Development Officer and it is great to see an athlete with a disability progressing into employment in this way.

Another long-time supporter of the branch, former Napier University student Robyn Love has continued to impress on the world scene as the Rio Paralympian has recently been

named in the GB team for the upcoming World Championships taking place in Germany in August.

BOCCIA

Boccia has long been a point of emphasis for both LDS and SDS and this has led to a very strong network of club opportunities throughout the region. East of Scotland Boccia Club & Edinburgh Leisure High Flyers (Edinburgh), Beeslack All Stars (Midlothian) and No Limits & Lothian Special Olympics (West Lothian) continue to provide ample opportunities for athletes to access the sport. Funding from the Big Lottery Fund has also led to an additional club being developed with the Engage Boccia Club now catering for around 8 regular attendees at their Friday sessions within ENGAGE Sports Centre, Napier University.

Regular competitions are held to provide the players attending these clubs with consistent competitive opportunities. The annual LDS Boccia Championships are due to take place at the end of July with entries being opened up to other regions to increase participation. Players competing in this event will also access SDS National Events with 2 Lothian players taking part in the recent BISFED Championships in May. There have also been boccia opportunities within the schools calendar, with the regional boccia festival continuing to grow in attendance with the majority of ASN schools in Lothian accessing the event.

In August, Lothian Special Olympics boccia players had considerable success at the Special Olympics GB's National Summer Games, hosted in Sheffield. The all female team claimed gold and silver medals in both the singles and pairs competitions. Head Coach for the games Christine Gifford also volunteers with the aforementioned Engage Club.

Musselburgh boccia player Sean McCann continues to progress within the sport and has been selected as the sole Lothian representative in the Scottish team set to compete at the CPISRA World Games in Sant Cugat, Spain this coming August. The event is seen as an ideal opportunity for aspiring world class athletes, with Cerebral Palsy, to compete in a high performance event. Sean has also been invited to compete at the SDS National Boccia Invitational in October. We wish Sean all the best in these upcoming competitions.

The branch, in partnership with SDS, has continued to provide education opportunities within the sport of boccia which has seen the delivery of Boccia Leaders and UKCC Level 1 courses take place in the region this year.

BOWLS

The bowling year got off to a bad start with the cancellation of the Inter Area Bowls event which was due to be hosted by LDS in Musselburgh last June. Torrential overnight rain flooded the greens and it was decided it was unsafe to play. As no alternative date could be found we are now looking forward to hosting this competition at the end of June 2018.

The weather then took a turn for the better and both our own regional lawn bowls championships and the SDS National Lawn Bowls Championships took place in glorious sunshine. Entries were up for the regional event, held at Longniddry BC on 20th August, with a total of 18 participants, several from other branches. Thanks are due to the home club members who helped with the event and went out of their way to make us welcome. Following this event a team of 12 bowlers was selected to represent the branch at the SDS Championships in Aberdeen on 2nd September and we were delighted when Carole Martin won the Sandy Fraser Memorial Trophy in the Ambulant PD Ladies section (Restricted) and Amanda Craig and Richard Morrison were runners up in the LD ladies and Ambulant PD Men (Restricted) sections respectively.

The bowlers then moved indoor and the branch Carpet Bowls championships were held on 14th January at Meadowmill SC with a total of 25 players. This was followed soon after by the SDS National Carpet Bowls Championships in Dundee on 3rd February. A smaller than usual team of 8 was selected but we were delighted to again have three finalists. Amanda Craig mirrored her performance at the lawn bowls by taking the runners up spot in the LD Ladies section and we had another runner up in the LD Mens section through Alan Gordon who just missed out on a successful defence of the trophy he won the previous year. We had one winner in Neil Shirley who received the SSAD Trophy for Ambulant PD Men (Unrestricted), the third time he has held the trophy.

Lothian bowlers also took part in the SDS & SIBA Invitational Indoor Bowls Championships in Falkirk and enjoyed success there too. Euan Wright won the Downs Syndrome (Mixed) , Amanda Craig was runner up in the LD Ladies section and Gary Clelland was runner up in the section for Ambulant PD bowlers B6 (Male).

Over the year LDS has continued to support the post of East Lothian Bowls Development Officer, held by Billy Mellors. In return Billy has been running coaching sessions for people with a disability, mainly to try and attract new people to bowling. There is, however, discussion currently taking place about running a tournament towards the end of the season, possibly involving both disabled and able bodied bowlers and we hope this becomes a reality.

FOOTBALL

Football has traditionally been a sport which features heavily across the calendar of events with five events delivered between regional and national level. With participation numbers high for these events, LDS is working to reintroduce a series of round robin tournaments into the school calendar with the support of the team at Spartans Connections.

Spartans Connections are one of many strong clubs within the region with 54 players across 4 teams competing in the SFA Pan Disability League, where 3 of their teams are sitting top of their respective leagues and their 4th team sitting joint 2nd of their league. Spartans Connections are also very active within the community where they are currently delivering sessions within Edinburgh Special Schools each week.

Alongside Spartans Connections, there are clubs throughout the region providing opportunities for footballers with a disability. Tranent Colts (East Lothian), Broxburn United Sports Club (West Lothian), Salveston Community Football Club (Edinburgh) and Dalkeith Thistle/Lothian Special Olympics (Midlothian) all are running frequent pan-disability sessions whilst Team United are leading the way for young people with ASD in East Lothian, Edinburgh and West Lothian.

Cerebral Palsy football had recently suffered a setback in Scotland with the SFA withdrawing their support of the team in 2017. Since then, Scottish Disability Sport has stepped in and is attempting to fill the void left. The Scottish National Cerebral Palsy Football team recently returned home from the International Trophy CP Football Ciutat de Barcelona organised by the Catalan Sports Federation of Cerebral Palsy (FECPC) with a very creditable third place in their return to international football. Three Lothian players represented their nation in the shape of Blair Glynn (East Lothian), Mark Robertson (Midlothian) and Jamie Mitchell (West Lothian).

POWERCHAIR FOOTBALL

Since the clubs inception at the end of 2016, the Lothian Wolves Powerchair Football club has gone from strength-to-strength. The club started out with around 4 regular members who began training once a week at the Royal High School. Over the course of 2017 playing numbers began to increase and the club now currently enjoys 9 regular members, supported by four coaches, who all train together on a Monday night.

In the summer of 2017, the Lothian Wolves moved to a new training facility, The Oriam at Heriot-Watt. The Oriam is Scotland's National Performance Centre for Sport and the club are extremely fortunate to be in a position where they can train and develop their skills in such a well regarded facility.

The Wolves began their first full season in the Powerchair National league in September 2017 and are exceeding all expectations as they have just been crowned champions of the 6K Division (6k is the speed the chairs are limited to). The players have been drawing plaudits from the Powerchair Community with many amazed at how far they have progressed in such a short space of time.

Additionally, the club now has a full committee in place with player reps also involved. A club bank account is now active and the club is also in the fortunate position of owning a Sports chair for players to use or for coaching staff to join in on the sessions.

The club are currently actively seeking new funding which will not only ensure the club maintains its position but to also allow the club to progress further – as there is no limit to the player's potential.

The players are a credit to themselves and it truly is amazing watching them develop and take so much enjoyment from being part of such a fantastic team.

SWIMMING

Lothian swimmers have again had a strong year at both international and national level. Paralympian Scott Quin, who won silver in Rio, has come into form at the right time as he has been selected for the GB team for the European Championships taking place in Dublin in August where he will be hoping to take home gold in the S14 100m breaststroke. Quin will be joined by Stephen Clegg who has also been supported by the branch over the years. Stephen currently trains in Sunderland and will be competing in S13 100m backstroke amongst other events.

Former Lothian Racer and East Regional Squad swimmer Beth Johnston competed at the Commonwealth Games and performed well in her S10 200m Individual Medley. Unfortunately, this was a very tough event and Beth did not make the final on this occasion.

At national level, a trio of Lothian swimmers received classification and subsequently can now compete at British and International level. Neil Ferguson, Jamie O'Boyle and Sam Downie all swim jointly with Lothian Racers and Musselburgh ASC. Musselburgh have been a real supporter of para swimming in recent times and have provided many Lothian swimmers with the opportunity to train and compete within an inclusive mainstream environment.

Locally, LDS continues to run two swimming galas throughout the year, one in Spring and one in Autumn. The Spring gala was held in March and was attended by 44 swimmers. Traditionally these galas are used as qualifiers for national events which this year saw a team of 6 Lothian swimmers (4 of whom were junior guests) compete at the SDS Senior Championships for those with a Physical Disability and a team of 12 compete at the SDS Senior Championships for those with a Learning Disability.

These achievements are testament to the great club structure within the region with Lothian Racers, Loanhead Dolphins, Lothian Waves and Livingston & District Dolphins (Rainbow Squad) all providing disability specific sessions. The majority of the swimmers within these clubs attend the regional LDS galas twice a year and in turn many represent the region at national SDS events.

DEVELOPMENT SPORTS

ARCHERY

This has been a busy year in archery; just over a year ago LDS ran an Archery Instructors course for volunteers across the three venues used in the region. The newly qualified instructors have been gaining experience and helping at their local groups since. We are now fortunate to have a good cadre of volunteers for all our groups.

Two archers who were training with us at Archers' Hall went overseas to compete, Ken was at the Invictus Games and just missed out on a medal, coming 4th in both the individual and team events while James was at the Warrior Games and acquitted himself well. Three other archers, Derek, Robert and John have been collecting quite a hoard of medals both locally

and nationally at V.I. competitions, highlighting their fantastic progression from joining the archery sessions as complete beginners.

For the first time Scottish Disability Sport and Scottish Archery Association ran a national archery championship in March at Armadale Academy. The Meadowmill group sent a team of 7 archers, 3 of whom returned with medals. The Blackburn/No Limits groups sent a team of 8 archers, 4 of whom won medals, thanks to Anne, Elaine and Paul for organising. Everyone involved, both archers and volunteers, thoroughly enjoyed the event. Lothian Disability Sport had a very successful day there.

Richard Vallis, LDS Archery Coordinator commented that "Talking to families and support workers a constant message is that archery is 'the best part of his/her week' and some have said that their family member or client has gained immensely in self confidence and self esteem, some saying that s/he now has the confidence to speak when out in public; in some ways this is more satisfying than people getting medals

We are fortunate now to have a great team of volunteers, none of this would have been possible without them."

BADMINTON

Lothian Disability Badminton Club (LDBC) continue to lead the way in the sport across the region and the country as a whole, boasting a remarkable 70 playing members and 37 non playing members, 17 of whom are qualified coaches. The club is delivered over two venues, Musselburgh Sports Centre and Bathgate Academy with the East Lothian session catering for beginners, developing and performance players. LDBC are always keen to attract and engage new players and aim to support all events that LDS are associated with, including badminton and para-sport festivals.

The club continues to field a fully disabled team within the mainstream Lothian league and again performed extremely well this season. In doing so, the LDBC further enhances the awareness of para badminton in the wider badminton community.

Three of the players within the club, Michael McCraw, Jenny Gray & Daniel Strang attended the Special Olympics National Games in Sheffield and each had both individual and team success. Michael and Daniel will also be attending the upcoming Special Olympics Anniversary Games in Stirling and will be joined by club mates Gregor Hardie and Sharon Munro.

Many of the LDBC players compete on the world stage and they have gained international recognition with the following players achieving places on the most recent world rankings: Mary Wilson - SL4 - No.4 / Colin Leslie - SL3 - No.12 / Fiona Christie - WH2 - No.13 / Bobby Laing - SS6 - No.26 / Alan Oliver - SL3 - No.38 / Andrew Davies - SS6 - No.46. Mary, Colin and Alan continue work towards their ultimate goal of competing at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics at which badminton will be included for the first time.

TENNIS

Tennis is very much a growth area within the region with regular sessions taking place both in East Lothian and in Edinburgh. The East Lothian sessions, taking place at Longniddry Tennis Club, provide an inclusive environment for young people to experience the sport whilst the Advantage Tennis Programme provides a discreet disability only session with the opportunity for both ambulant and wheelchair tennis.

The Advantage Tennis Programme is home to one of wheelchair tennis' brightest stars in the shape of Ruari Logan. Ruari is currently ranked number 5 in the world for juniors and this year won the Cruyff Foundation Junior Masters boys' doubles following in the tracks of the likes of Alfie Hewett and Gordon Reid, who were both previous winners of the title. An achievement that is even more impressive when you factor in that Ruari only finished his school exams the day before the event.

Lothian also has another player set to compete on the world stage with Luke Turnbull recently receiving classification. Luke, who lives in North Berwick, has been selected to represent Great Britain at the upcoming INAS World Tennis Championships set to be held in Paris, 14th – 22nd July 2018.

PARTICIPATION SPORTS

JUDO

Jidel Judo 93 remain the club who offer significant opportunities for individuals with a disability across the Lothian region. Head coach Jo Imrie has a wealth of experience that is reflected in the amount of athletes who access sessions led by the club and the West Lothian coach will lead the team of judo players to the Anniversary Games in Stirling later this year. In addition to the Monday evening session delivered by Jidel Judo 93, the club have also established a session on a Thursday evening at Napier University in partnership with the SGB, Judo Scotland.

Both Jo Imrie and Johnny Imrie will be attending the 2019 Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi as Head Coach and Coach respectively where they will be leading a team of 7 players, including Lothian athletes Philip Brodie and Harrison Lovett.

The club are always supportive of events such as the Paralympic Experience and continue to work closely with Active Schools and sports development teams in the region to engage more young people with a disability within the sport.

KARATE

LDS, in partnership with Active Schools, developed a disability karate session which has now been operating for a year and has seen tremendous growth in that time. The club has provided many participants the chance to achieve their belts and there has been opportunity to take part in competition with the club attending a Kickmaster event in

Edinburgh and the Scottish Karate Federation Championships. In both cases, this was the first time that the ASN category has been added to these competitions. Overall, club members achieved 2 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze medals.

TABLE TENNIS

Table tennis is a sport which has developed a very inclusive approach for those with disabilities. Murrayfield and Haddington Table Tennis Clubs both provide opportunities for players with physical and intellectual disabilities to attend their mainstream sessions under the watchful eye of qualified coaches. These athletes are then signposted to competitive opportunities within the region and nationally.

TRIATHLON

Triathlon has experienced a steady growth within the region with West Lothian being home to 2 inclusive clubs. GRC and West Lothian Triathlon Clubs both offer an environment for disabled athletes to take part in the sport. These clubs were involved in the delivery of a Para Triathlon 'come and try' event organised in partnership by Triathlon Scotland, Scottish Disability Sport, Lothian Disability Sport and West Lothian Council. The day was a success with 11 athletes competing, 6 of which were from Lothian and it is hoped that these athletes can be supported into a club environment.

CYCLING

Cycling has seen some exciting developments over the last year with planning underway to build a 1km floodlit cycle circuit in Linlithgow. The circuit will give everyone in West Lothian and beyond an opportunity to access a safe, traffic free cycling environment. LDS are supporting this initiative and have been in discussions to assist a local hand cycling group who are hoping to access the facility.

Edinburgh All Ability Bike Club and West Lothian All Ability Cycling are both delivering inclusive cycling sessions providing an opportunity to try a range of adapted bikes from tandems to running bikes.

MULTI SPORT

In addition to all the sport specific opportunities offered across the region, Lothian also boast some very strong Multi Sport sessions that offer individuals an introduction to a variety of sports. Beeslack All Stars (Midlothian) and No Limits (West Lothian) offer opportunities for a wide range of young people with a disability.

Beeslack All Stars are now entering their 15th year and have been providing sporting opportunities for children from 5 to 16 years of age who have learning and physical

disabilities, and their siblings. The club has expanded to over 50 members and is testament to the hard work of the staff and volunteers involved over the years.

No Limits has been in operation for around 20 years and boasts around 60 members who are given the opportunity to try a range of sports and outdoor education experiences regularly. The club often undertakes residential weekends which this year has seen them journey to Kielder to take part in exhilarating activities such as canoeing and climbing.

PARTNERSHIPS

LOTHIAN SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Lothian Special Olympics (LSO) continue to be a leading force in disability sport across the region with many dedicated and motivated athletes and coaches driving the ethos of the organisation forward. LSO had a hugely successful trip to the Special Olympics National Games in Sheffield where a team of 68 athletes, and 31 volunteers, returned with an amazing haul of 48 medals.

Never an organisation to stand still for long, focus has quickly shifted to the upcoming Special Olympics GB Anniversary Games 2018 taking place in Stirling, August 9th to 13th which celebrates 40 years of Special Olympics in Great Britain. Lothian again will be taking a large team to compete in a variety of sports against nations from throughout Europe and even nations as far afield as Macau.

Lothian have also had a number of athletes and coaches chosen to represent Great Britain at the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi in 2019. LDS would like to congratulate the follow representatives for their selection: Shannon Crosbie – Swimming, Caitlin Dodds – Golf, Michelle Moran - Tenpin Bowling. Michael Stevenson - Tenpin Bowling. Philip Brodie – Judo, Harrison Lovett – Judo, Jo Imrie - Head Coach for Judo, Jamie McDonald – Head Coach for Golf, Johnny Imrie – Coach for Judo.

FUNDING

Through the Grant Award Scheme, LDS endeavour to support the development of athletes and clubs within the region by providing the monetary support needed for an athlete to attend competition or to grow and develop a club. The branch has supported 7 athletes and 1 club, across 7 sports, giving out £1600 through the scheme this year. This has seen athletes attend both national and international events.