

EASTERN AREA REPORT

The Eastern Area has just about recovered from the devastating two years of Covid, our membership is still below pre Covid numbers but getting better.

The last year has proved difficult with us having to cancel competitions due to lack of entries and with one competition no officials, fortunately that trend had reversed by the Area Championships and entry numbers continue upward.

Time To Listen and Safeguarding courses were organised by the Area in December ensuring nearly all Area clubs had Welfare Officers in place for the new year.

In January the Area hosted a Yoka Tanabe Masterclass which was free to all Area members, some forty players and coaches attended, our thanks to Yoko for an excellent masterclass.

The East ran both English Opens the Senior Open in May and the Minor/Pre-Cadet/Cadet Open in February, it's thanks to these events that we are able to fund free courses for our coaches and support players aspirations.

The Area now has a proper funding pathway for players in place.

On the player front Niamh Southgate continues to stand out coming so close to a medal at the European Youth Olympics losing for Bronze but taking a well earned Silver in Denmark Matsumai Cup. Black Dog organised an overseas training camp in Italy part funded by the Area attended by Niamh, Jack and Oliver Purllant, Ryan King and Lacas Jurana. Alana Taylor Weedon took Gold at the BUCS and will now have the opportunity to compete at the European Universities Championships.

In August I was privileged to be selected to officiate at the Commonwealth Games carrying on the tradition of an Eastern Area Official at the last three British Commonwealth games.

The Area would not be what it is without the stalwart support of the small band of men and women who turn up to every event to set up and take down equipment, we are very grateful.

We still struggle with officials but have managed to progress a couple of our younger members, but I am grateful for the help of London and the NHC without whom our events would not be as successful.

My thanks to all the Area Officials, Committee Members, Coaches and Players for continuing to support our endeavours in the East

Denise Oates

Eastern Area Chair

