

THE  
DEVON LTA  
COUNTY AWARDS

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE  
AEGON BRITISH TENNIS AWARDS

27<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2016



## County Awards 2015 presented 27 January 2016

All the nominees are so well deserving that we felt it was important that the reasons for their nominations should be shared with you. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to make these nominations and help us to recognise and honour those people and places that make your experience of our sport that much better.

### 10U Player of the Year

**Nominees: Jessica Johnson, Zac Brown, Victoria Syms**

**Jessica** - nominated for her dedication, attitude, work ethic and in recognition of a great year competitively in which she represented the County at 9U, reached the semi-finals at several grade 3 tournaments, became the 9U County Champion and finished as number 1 on the LTA Summer County Leaderboard.

**Zac** - nominated for his great attitude to training and sportsmanship and his continued development and performance leading to another great year. Represented the County at 10U County Cup, 10U County Champion, grade 3 tournament wins and invited to LTA Regional Training Camp and ranked in the top 20 of the summer LTA National Leaderboard.

**Victoria** – has made huge progress this year, developing into a national level player in her age group. Selected for LTA Regional training camps at 9U and 10U. Represented the County at 9U, came 3<sup>rd</sup> on the summer LTA Regional Leaderboard, competed at several grade 2 tournaments with a highest finishing position of 7<sup>th</sup>. Won the Torbay Open grade 3, runner up in another 3 and semi-finalist in a further 6 grade 3s. Visited Florida during the summer and had some great results. Victoria's aim now is to concentrate on grade 2 9U tournaments whilst building her development at 10U through grade 3 and 4 competition.

### Junior Player of the Year

**Nominees: Abbi Skelley, Patrick Daykin**

**Abbi** – 18U girls County Champion. Abbi had successful summer tournament season with 18U wins at Penzance, Taunton and Ivybridge grade 3s. She was runner up in Women's Singles in the Senior County Closed and had a good 18U County Cup contributing to Devon coming 2<sup>nd</sup> in group 3b. Abbi made her debut for the Senior Ladies in Winter County Cup 2015 where she was extremely unlucky in her matches as 3 out of 6 of them were very close, ending in nail biting long three setters where Abbi was unfortunate to come out on the losing side. Captain's comment, 'a delight to have in the team and showed both maturity and professionalism both on and off the court.'

**Patrick** – 18U boys County Champion and unbeaten in the 18U County Cup. Patrick has had a very strong year and has improved dramatically since moving to train at Exeter University where he is now a student and has been selected for the University first team. Patrick was a semi-finalist at the Senior County Closed and he won the men's doubles with Steve Wood. He then played a superb County Week where he was 6 from 7. He lost on the first day with Steve Wood in a close 3 setter, the only set that the pair lost all week. He then teamed up with Jack Findel-Hawkins and was 6 from 6. He featured in Winter County Cup for the second year where he won 4 of 5 (had match points and partner missed a volley!).

### Senior Player of the Year

**Nominees: Kate Brown, Emma Hurst**

**Kate** – Kate has continued to build on her veteran successes. She won the Over 35s national grass court tournament, the doubles at the National Indoor Championships and was selected to represent Great Britain in the World Team Championships. She captained the Devon Over 35s ladies team that gained promotion to division 1. She won the doubles and mixed doubles at the Senior Closed and captained the Senior Ladies team With distinction. She has recently assisted at the 18U girls' academy training sessions where she has been a great role model.

**Emma** – Emma continues to perform at the highest level in tournaments and at university but still finds time to represent the County and supports her home club Seaton. She has recently been selected for the national university team and has achieved some great British Tour results.

## **Young Coach of the Year**

### **Nominee: James Temple**

James is very much the lynchpin of tennis at Exeter Golf and Country Club (EGCC) on whom the captains, committee and section members in general all rely for the co-ordination and smooth running of tennis. Through him and his coaching team junior tennis at EGCC has been established as a significant reputational and playing force within Devon. James organises and runs junior tournaments and arranges all the club junior teams. On top of this he also captains and co-ordinates all the senior league teams, winning both Men's A and Mixed A 1st divisions of the winter season. He acts as secretary to the tennis section liaises with club management over sporting and social event arrangements, produces the advertising for them and always takes part himself. This year he has overseen the arrangements for replacement of 4 of the 6 club courts and put in place an interim booking structure to keep members happy to allow all to continue playing their regular sport with minimal disruption. James puts in far more hours than he is remunerated for and such is his enthusiasm for tennis that he is always willing to make up the numbers for social tennis in addition to his commitments to coaching and team matches.

The following Awards form part of the **Aegon British Tennis Awards**. The County winners of these awards will be put forward to the LTA Regional level judging panel and thus potentially on to the National level.

## **Coach of the Year**

### **Nominees: Sue Wiltshire (Sidmouth TC), Madeline Ramsey (Ipplepen TC), Liam Storey (Exmouth Tennis & Fitness Centre), Paul Butcher (South Devon Tennis Centre), Ryan Bougourd (Bovey Tracey LTC)**

**Sue** – Sue is an outstanding coach and instils confidence in the juniors she coaches, as well as making the sessions fun. She is also a brilliant coach with adults, bringing on people who have never held a racket and giving them the confidence to enter our in-house tournaments and some going on to play in our local league. Sue also mentors our young members who wish to become coaches and helps them achieve their coaching levels. She is an inspiration to all. She has been instrumental in increasing our club membership and is an asset to our club.

**Madeline** – Madeline is an inspirational coach for children and adults alike. She has encouraged many youngsters to play in the local area and has numerous thriving weekly training sessions for all ages. My son loves his tennis lessons with Mads and now goes 3 times a week. I attend an adults 'Rusty Rackets' session and my husband has even been encouraged to join and has individual lessons now as a result. Madeline is especially good with the youngsters with a great sense of humour and always manages to get the best out of them even if they are having a bad day for one reason or another.

**Liam** – Liam's enthusiasm for tennis is contagious and he is on court for more than 12 hours a day often without a break. Liam has a long term focus with his juniors and he works hard on the life lesson aspects such as discipline, courtesy and focus. Liam works with over 10 performance players 4 of whom have achieved outstanding levels of performance in national or international competitions. His players have progressed from top county/regional players to being national/international competitors. Liam has designed a performance programme which imparts an excellent balance of S&C, technical instruction, matchplay, and psychological well-being. In addition to providing top-coaching at Exmouth, Liam networks with other larger international performance centres, such as West Hants and Bath to ensure that his players get a variety of experience. Liam is in constant contact with the players and parents and ensures that their coaching programme and tournament schedule is balanced to suit the player. Bespoke programmes and individual attention is never lost despite the fact that 3 of these national level players are often competing against each other. Liam's coaching encourages players to play to their potential, and to focus on their long-term development. He commands complete respect from his players without putting undue pressure

on them; a perfect balance of expectation and encouragement. Most important of all, Liam makes sure his players are always enjoying their tennis. Liam has also had a significant effect on raising the profile of mini tennis in the region and now attracts players from all over the County. Liam is very modest about his achievements and is very much the unsung hero!

**Paul** – Paul is an inspirational coach who works tirelessly to promote youth tennis. He gets to know each individual player, their strengths, their areas for development and their personalities. He has helped my son not only to become number six in Devon but on a personal level after we have been through a traumatic two years as a family. He has mentored him, taken him on tour, coached him and re-built his self-esteem and positivity. Paul is a fantastic coach and deserves recognition for his commitment to youth tennis.

**Ryan** – Ryan is our Head Coach at Bovey Tracey and is a great inspiration for all young players. He is also closely involved with Blackpool Primary School and South Dartmoor Community College, where children are able to participate in coaching and tournaments. Ryan has really raised the profile of the club at Bovey and engages so well with all the youngsters there. He is very popular.

## **Community Venue Award**

### **Nominee: Okehampton Tennis Club**

The Club is welcoming, sociable and friendly, and a safe environment where both children and adults have the opportunity to meet and get involved in Tennis at an affordable price and which is very inclusive of our community. The Club has devised a great programme which enables people of all ages and abilities to play, including their 'rusty rackets' session. Adam and Robert have organised a Great British Tennis Weekend which has encouraged more people to get involved with the club. This club is a real asset to Okehampton and a real credit to the Robert and Adam who are an inspiration to our young people.

My two young daughters have always been very welcome at the Tennis club and Adam & Robert have a great way with young children to engage them in Tennis by playing fun games. The treat afterwards also helps. They really enjoy coming and it was great to play as a family in the Great British Tennis Weekend too. I've also noticed a great improvement in numbers and my daughters hand/eye coordination is really coming along. It's a great place for kids to get into the game.

## **Education Award**

### **Nominees: Lance Chatfield (Plymouth), Nick Gillard (Torbay)**

**Lance** – Lance is a School Games Organiser in Plymouth and works tirelessly to improve the provision and opportunities for the children of Plymouth to be involved in competitive sport whether this is as a performer or through volunteering and leadership. In Lance's role as a School Games Organiser he has increased the numbers of children/schools involved in Competitive Tennis and at both Level 2 and Level 3 Events. Lance has also been integral in ensuring that Tennis is represented at the Plymouth Ability Games as an inclusion event. Lance works closely with other professionals including our Leadership and Volunteering Co-ordinator, Clubs and Schools in order to develop leadership and competitive opportunities in Tennis. Lance is thoroughly deserving of receiving recognition for all his hard work in developing School Games Competitions, particularly in Tennis.

**Nick** – Nick managed to drastically increase participation in tennis in his SGO area over the last academic year. In 2013/14, Nick only managed to have 12 young people taking part in the Mini Red Tennis competition within his SGO area. By putting tennis as a focus sport in the primary partnership in the bay area, and by teaming up with Torquay Tennis club, we managed to have a qualifying round and a competition final round. From having 12 it went to a huge 524 thanks to schools bringing a class full to a qualifier and teams of 4 to the area finals. His links to Torquay Tennis Club meant that the teacher training and an affiliation to the club for all schools, led to a greater success in schools transitioning to the club. In terms of secondary schools, Nick initiated the conversations between his host school and the local club to set up the satellite club at Paignton Academy, run by a former student from the Academy. Nick also managed to get a number of new schools affiliated to Torquay Tennis club and attending the teacher training to up skill each school.

## Young Volunteer of the Year

**Nominees:** Tom Slack (Exeter Golf & Country Club), Roxanne Marshall (Hill Lane TC)

**Tom** – Tom has been dedicated to helping with junior tennis squads and tournaments for the last two years, just after he took up tennis. He has grown in confidence and developed a great relationship with the juniors in the groups to the extent that he is missed by them on the rare occasions he is unable to help out. He has helped out weekly with after-school groups and the busy Saturday mini tennis sessions where he has become a valuable member of the team. He is always happy to help score mini red matches in tournaments. He has taken up a position on the tennis committee and as a result of his dedication to the tennis section was made junior tennis captain for 2015. Tom is keen to work towards his level 1 qualification when he reaches his 16th birthday in order to continue to develop and learn more about the sport. Tom has been committed to helping out for the last two years where he is developing from a quiet presence to a more confident authority on court. The largest praise that I can give Tom is that he has become respected and appreciated by all of the coaches, committee, parents and juniors. Many of the 12&U players have enquired about the possibility of helping out having seen the role that Tom has taken on.

**Roxanne** – Rox is a level 1 coach and her coaching skills have really improved this year. Not only does she assist with coaching sessions but she has taken on the responsibility for organising the club's newsletter and looks after the social media. Rox is an outstanding young person and we are very lucky to have her at the club.

## Volunteer of the Year

**Nominees:** Max Halford (Hill Lane TC), Ben Miller (Hill Lane TC), Gary Tovey (Ilfracombe TC)

**Max** – Max has held the club together in the past year after the chairman of many years' standing had to stand down. He took over the running of the club, formed a new committee and has worked hard to grow the club all whilst being a busy man in his own career. Hill Lane is once again thriving with over 200 members, 150 of which are juniors.

**Ben** – Ben organises the club's monthly mini & junior competitions which have grown significantly over the past 2 years due to the commitment and effort that he puts into the running of these competitions. Ben encourages the parents to be involved on a Sunday morning making it a family atmosphere. He encourages new members to be involved and to start taking part giving them valuable match experience and confidence. Through Ben's efforts we have seen a number of players progress competitively and are now starting to enter external tournaments. Within the last few months our yellow ball boxes have tripled in numbers with now having just under 30 players involved. Along with this Ben is a very valued volunteer and is always happy to help and get involved in any way he can.

**Gary** – Gary is at the club all the hours of every day and is always enthusiastic and supportive. He does so much for the club and in engaging young children into the sport. His dedication provides a safe and inspiring venue for the young people of the local community with the added health and social benefits afforded by our sport. He also devotes a lot of his time to tennis in North Devon in general, organising, co-ordinating and running junior competition in the area.

## The Award for Outstanding Achievement

**Nominees:** David Williams (Plymouth & District League and St Budeaux TC), Ricky Palmer (St Budeaux TC)

**David** – Dave has a long history of involvement as a volunteer in Plymouth from match captain at Carhullen in the late 60's then at Mannamead before being asked to form a Club at St. Budeaux. He was responsible for improving the site with clubhouse, floodlights and a third court. He has been Chairman for over 33 years. The Club runs 4 Men's, 3 Ladies and 2 Junior teams with 60 senior members and 25+ Junior members. It has been a very well run club under his Chairmanship, actively taking part in the P&D League. His latest venture is to upgrade the court surfaces. Significantly for Plymouth tennis, he became the Secretary of the P & D League in the mid 80's and has managed to obtain sponsorship every year. The number of teams involved has grown and the League has proved to be very successful every year with the annual Presentation Evening always attracting big attendance. The League has also benefitted from Dave being the Tennis Correspondent for The Evening Herald providing publicity and weekly reports and tables on both the P&D and the Mannamead Winter League, in spite of his self-confessed lack

of computer skills! Dave's excellent organizational abilities has ensured that the League has continued in an untroubled manner for about 30 years, and the P & D League owe him an enormous debt of gratitude. He is passionate about local tennis in the Plymouth and District area, as well as St. Budeaux. He finds his hard work most rewarding and enjoyable, whilst deriving great satisfaction that his efforts are truly appreciated by everyone.

**Ricky** – Ricky, our club's coach, has made tennis part of the local community scene accessing hard to reach clusters of all ages and abilities within a low wage earning area. There is a high proportion of social housing in St Budeaux where tennis was viewed as a middle class activity. Ricky has brought the club together with the local residents and schools. He has encouraged the participation of children with autism and special needs. He works hard to offer a range of activities both social and tennis to the community and is always welcoming and friendly with a great way with children. He has brought new life into the club which promises a bright future for tennis in this area.

## **Club of the Year**

### **Nominees: Budleigh Salterton TC, Plympton TC, Exeter Golf & Country Club**

**Budleigh Salterton** – Budleigh are a long standing member of the Exeter & District League and have a reputation of being one of the friendliest clubs around. Their hospitality is well known around the league. They have 2 astro courts and 3 grass courts which are definitely the best maintained in the Exeter area. As well as successful league teams they have a thriving junior programme.

**Plympton TC** – 2015 saw the fruition of many months of hard work and fund raising by the committee and club members with the grand opening of the newly resurfaced courts in June coinciding with an extremely successful Great British Tennis Weekend. The club is always looking to the future and is working to ensure it continues to thrive and provide opportunities to the community. It has embraced the new technology available in the booking and access system, ClubSpark which it hopes will encourage and facilitate more public use on the courts. The Club committee and coaches are really passionate about the future of the club and getting more people playing tennis. This past year has shown what a joined up group of active committee, dedicated coaches and supportive membership can achieve.

**Exeter Golf & Country Club** – This summer the club hosted a very enjoyable and successful junior tournament for the East Devon League. The tournament was very well organised attracting a good entry from a range of clubs. In addition Exeter Golf and Country Club have made a significant contribution over the years by running a number of teams in both the East Devon summer and winter leagues. Additionally they have provided a venue for the league's Annual General Meetings. The club has a young and enterprising coach who is a great asset.