

Lothian Disability Sport news

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Connor Wins Silver at National Event

The second annual 4 Nations Disabled Badminton Championships took place recently in Cardiff and it was this stage that saw 15-year-old North Berwick resident, Connor McFarlane win his first international cap. Connor was selected to compete in the section for ambulant physically disabled players in his first ever competitive badminton tournament, playing in both men's singles and men's doubles with partner Alan Oliver (Alloa).

East Lothian Council's Badminton Development Officer Christine Black has been coaching Connor on an individual basis but in the build up to the event he increased his training by participating in a three day Badminton Development Camp. She commented, "he has a fantastic attitude, works hard on his fitness levels and is highly motivated to improve every aspect of his game. Connor is an all round athlete with immense talent and, having already represented Scotland at football, he now has an opportunity for a new challenge and even more successes in badminton."

Connor was the youngest participant at the event and, proving that age is no barrier, he won a silver medal in the men's doubles with partner Alan Oliver who had already reached the final of the men's singles. Scotland finished a creditable second to England winning in total, 7 gold and 11 silver medals.



Photograph:
East Lothian News

Resounding Success for Lothian Athletes in China



On Monday 15th October eleven athletes, three coaches and an assistant team manager from Lothian proudly arrived in Edinburgh Airport – all who awaited them could hear them before they could see them!

This was nothing to do with the athletes being noisy but because of the number of medals they had won at the 2007 Special Olympic World Summer Games held in Shanghai.

This event was the biggest sporting event the World will see this year with 7,000 Athletes from 169 countries, 40,000 volunteers and 3,500 event officials taking part. China were determined to put on a performance which would show the world that they were capable of staging a World Class event but also show how committed they are to the Special Olympic movement and what that means for people in China with a learning disability. And what an event it proved to be. Not only did the athletes take part in great sporting competition in some of the best sporting venues in the world but they had a real opportunity to experience Chinese culture, food, entertainment and the warmest welcome and hospitality you could ever hope for - we were made to feel like royalty! *continued overleaf >*





SDS National 7-a-side Football for players with a learning disability

Lothian seniors

On Wednesday 3rd October Lothian took 2 senior squads to Little Kerse in Grangemouth for the Scottish Disability Sport (SDS) 7-a-side football Championships for participants with a learning disability. We were represented in the 'B' and 'C' categories at an event that had a huge turnout on a day of mixed weather conditions.

The squad competing in the 'C' band category won all three of their group matches before beating Killie Wanderers 5 – 1 in Semi-Final. Unfortunately, the Lothian team could not overcome Firhill in the final and were beaten by 2 goals to nil in a tense affair. The squad were disappointed with their performance but recognised a tremendous achievement by making it to the final unbeaten.

The Lothian 'B' band squad played in a round robin tournament, playing each team twice, but unfortunately did not perform to their full potential. The team only managed to win two of the eight games played and finished an overall 4th in the competition.

Lothian coach Jamie McDonald stated "both squads enjoyed the occasion immensely and a special thanks goes out to Gary Fraser (LDS Sports Development Coordinator) who accompanied us on this trip as a coach and got his first insight of the players under tournament conditions".

Lothian schools

After a schools football event was held previously at the Hearts Academy, Riccarton, two squads were selected to represent Lothian Schools at the same tournament. These teams were selected and managed on the day by Midlothian Active Schools Coordinator, Mark Gaffney. Both teams competed in the 'B' and 'C' band categories and on the day were extremely successful as each team walked away with Gold medals.

Celebrities

The event was attended by ex Blackburn Rovers, Rangers and Scotland player Colin Henry; ex Hibernian, Rangers and current Falkirk captain Russell Latapy and Falkirk Striker Pedro Moutinho. The attendance of these household heroes really added to the occasion, as they were more than willing to mix with the competitors, sign autographs and have their pictures taken which was greatly appreciated. Once again top SFA official Kenny Clark showed his support for disability football by attending and refereeing some of the games, including Lothian 'B' bands semi-final against Killie Wanderers.

Resounding Success for Lothian Athletes in China *continued*



For Lothian to have had such a high representation in the GB team is a tribute to the ongoing support from coaches and families the athletes receive year in year out. These athletes and coaches have returned home to their families with not only an impressive medal haul but with life long memories and extraordinary stories from one of the World's most amazing cities.

Powerlifters Christina McSherry, Scott Bruce, Chris Maxwell and Francis Skiftesvik, all from West Lothian, returned home with an impressive 9 gold and 7 silver medals amongst them. As if that wasn't good enough Francis Skiftesvik also won the overall best female lifter in the competition – quite an achievement.

Edinburgh swimmer David Fergus, at his first World Games, swam a nail biting 100m freestyle race to clinch Gold and a PB of 1.18. His achievements were made even more rewarding by the fact that his mum and dad had travelled there to experience that win with him. What an emotional day.

11 Aside footballers Marc Barnes, Andrew Brown, Kenneth Bryson, William Clark, David Dodds and Richard Hendry all played in a tense and extremely exciting final match against Russia to win Gold in a penalty shoot out situation. This was probably the most exciting and emotional Gold medal for Lothian as the 11 aside in two previous World Games had just missed that glorious medal opportunity. At last the hard work, fantastic team spirit and belief in themselves paid off. Thanks must also go to the ongoing coaching support of Elaine McKenna and Keith Noble both of whom were part of the winning team and celebrations after!

As the saying goes "success breeds success" and lets hope that these amazing athletes are the role models for our future aspiring young athletes in Lothian.

Well done Athletes and thanks to your coaches and families for getting you there.

Jane Moncrieff
Assistant SOGB Team Manager



Archery Course hits the Target...

On Saturday 22nd November 2007 a group of 20 archers and potential archers met at Meadowmill Sports Centre to attend a course on the delivery of archery to people with disabilities. The course was the first of its kind and attracted people from Dunbar in the East to Linlithgow in the West. Active Schools Coordinators, PE teachers, sports club coaches, day centre leaders and people from special needs youth groups were all attracted to the course. After introductions the group shot arrows for a while with the novices being helped by the experienced archery leaders, who in turn got the opportunity to refine their coaching skills.

After lunch the group entered into a discussion, sharing experiences of working with people with varying abilities and disabilities and how archery can be incorporated into their programmes in a safe, fun and exciting manner. Following these discussions, the group were instructed to draw large target faces to be shot at and the LDS Archery Coordinator was heard to say, "there were some very interesting pieces of art work on show". Later in the afternoon the group learned about the concepts of shooting as well as setting up and maintaining the equipment.

The day ended with a chat about the possibility of attending an Archery Leaders Course and there was a huge interest with 10 people expressing their desire to become qualified. With this in mind Lothian Disability Sport will look to set up a course in the near future as it is very clear that archery is becoming ever more popular.

A big thanks goes out to everyone who came along on the day but especially to Archery Leaders Julie Haston, Andy Wilson, Jim Blewitt and Jimmy Berry who helped make the course such a success.

Richard Vallis, LDS Archery Coordinator

LDS Swimming Gala – Time Trials

On 22nd September Saltersgate School played host to the LDS regional swimming gala in order to gain qualification times for the national event to be held at Grangemouth on 7th November for blind, deaf and physically disabled swimmers.

On the day there were seven clubs represented from Lothian with 38 swimmers competing. The gala was also attended by 2 of our top swimmers, Jennifer Somerville and Sean Fraser, who now represent mainstream clubs. It is hoped that this will increase their chances to realise their potential by hopefully competing for Great Britain in forthcoming International events.

It was another successful gala with some memorable performances. In particular, Cassie Gunn and Becky Crossan from

Saltersgate School and Josh Hadland, Michael Kear, James and Stephen Clegg from the Loanhead Dolphins. A particular mention must go to the Lothian Waves team whose swimmers improved on their entry times in almost all of their races. As always our MC Heather Lowden, who managed exceptionally well despite not having a PA system, kept everyone up to date.

Lothian Disability Sport would also like to take this opportunity to thank Pat Agnew for all her hard work in organising the many swimming galas over the years. Pat has decided to stand down in her role as LDS Swimming Coordinator to concentrate on her coaching work with the Loanhead Dolphins. We will no doubt see her at many swimming events in the future.

SDS National Gala for Sensory Impaired and Physically Disabled Junior Swimmers

At the SDS National event, Lothian entered 9 swimmers with everyone thoroughly enjoying the competition. This event was remembered for a memorable performance by our very own Sean Fraser, from Lasswade High School, who set three national records for 100m Individual Medley, 50m free style back and 50m butterfly. Sean however failed to break the 100m freestyle junior record

set by Gordon McDonald of Linwood High back in 1999. Sean needless to say expressed his disappointment at not taking the record for the flagship event.

Another notable achievement for Lothian was that both Sean Fraser and Jennifer Somerville were voted the outstanding junior boy and girl swimmer of 2007 and were awarded a trophy at the end of the championships.

Bowled Over

73 players, from Lothian and beyond, took part in the Bob Moffat Bowling Competition on 10th November at Meadowmill Sports Centre. Played in the carpet bowls format the standard was exceptional this year and it was no surprise that the final went to the very last bowl of the last end before the team of Robert Kelly (Prestonpans Disabled BC), Tony Porter (McLeod St ATC) and Andrew Harrison (Harry Smith Complex) emerged as winners. The runners up - skip Nora Hogg (Prestonpans Disabled BC), Michael Arnott (McLeod St ATC) and Bill Smith (Musselburgh) - will count themselves unlucky to lose by just one shot but they can take credit for one of the best finals in recent years.

Lothian Disability Sport AGM

There was a good turnout for this year's AGM, held on 26 June 2007, at sportscotland. Not only were we joined by friends and family of this year's award winners, our numbers were also boosted by some of the winners in the Great Scottish Walk Prize Draw, invited along to receive their prizes. A presentation by the Chair illustrated to this wider audience the work of the branch and the achievements of our athletes over the past year. The formal business of the evening was then followed by the annual awards, presented by Colin Wheeler of HSBC plc, regular supporters of LDS through various staff fundraising efforts.



Award Winners

Senior Sports Person Award	Christopher Maxwell (Eliburn Powerlifting Club)
Young Sports Person Award	Stuart Gurney (No Limits)
Team of the Year	Lothian Phoenix Wheelchair Basketball
Volunteer / Coach Award	Jack Calder (Lothian Waves)
Endeavour Award	Natasha Thomas (Lothian Waves)





West Lothian Lifters selected for Scotland

Two powerlifters from Eliburn Powerlifting Club, Christina McSherry and Frances Skiftesvik, represented Scotland at the mainstream 4 Nations Powerlifting International on Saturday 27th October at Deans Community School in Livingston. Frances won her class and Christina came 3rd in hers, helping the Scottish ladies to 2nd place overall.

Both competitors have been selected on a number of occasions to represent the full Scotland team for previous

International competitions. Furthermore, Frances was the first person with a learning disability to represent Scotland at full International level in any sport - a magnificent achievement.

Christina and Frances as well as 2 other Eliburn lifters, Chris Maxwell and Scott Bruce, also recently took part in the Special Olympic World Games in Shanghai, China as members of the Special Olympic Great Britain team, winning between them 9 gold and 7 silver medals.



Frances Skiftesvik in action

Scotland's CP team shone in Brazil

Edinburgh's Scott Troup and Midlothian's Mark Robertson were part of the 12-man squad who travelled to Brazil as part of the Scottish Cerebral Palsy, stroke and acquired brain injuries football team for the World Games. Scotland, having qualified for these championships for the first time, reached the quarterfinal stages. The team, who had the lowest average age at the tournament, eventually finished in 6th place.

With the top eight teams qualifying for the Paralympics in Beijing, competition was fierce with many countries fielding fulltime professional players. With this in mind the Scottish team were delighted when Lothian's 16-year-old Mark Robertson's raw talent was recognised when he was voted Young Player of the Championship.

Club Focus – Edinburgh ACERS

The **A**ctive **C**lub for **E**xercise **R**ecreation & **S**port

Realities of modern life mean that young people rarely get a chance to play simple games, run around, and let off some steam. For children and young people who have additional support needs, it is the Edinburgh ACERS launched at the Meadowbank Stadium at the end of October. This is an inclusive sports and activity club set up to encourage children and young people to participate in exercise, sports and games and to enable access to other leisure programmes.

Keen, enthusiastic parents with support from, the City of Edinburgh Council, Fabb Scotland, Edinburgh Leisure and Lothian Disability Sport have joined forces to get the ACERS off the ground. Activities include Football, Basketball,

Dance, Multi-sports and Boccia. The club welcomes children as young as 5 years and up to 18 years.

Volunteer with Us

We are fortunate to have a number of volunteers but would welcome people who have an interest in sport and leisure and the flexibility and patience to work with young people who have a variety of support needs.

Free training and support is provided to all volunteers.

To book a place contact the ACERS club secretary:
Stewart Houston
Mobile: 07802 500150
Telephone: 0131 621 5458
Email: ys-kids@hotmail.com

For more information on Lothian Disability Sport please contact Gary Fraser, LDS Development Coordinator, tel: 01875 619070 or email: gfraser1@eastlothian.gov.uk

Future Events

SDS Cerebral Palsy Swimming Championships

Saturday 26th January 2008
 2:00pm – 5:00pm
 St Margaret's, Livingston

LSO Boccia Championship

February 2008
 (Venue and Date TBC)

LDS Regional Swimming Gala (PD and LD)

Saturday 23rd February 2008
 11:00am – 2:00pm
 Dalkeith Campus, Midlothian

SDS Cross Country Series (PD and LD)

Tuesday 26th February 2008
 10:30am – 5:00pm
 Peffermill, Edinburgh

SDS National Carpet Bowls Championships (PD and LD)

February 2008
 10:30am – 6:00pm
 Dundee

LSO Regional Swimming Gala (LD)

March 2008
 Musselburgh Swimming Pool

SDS Sports Hall Athletic Championships (LD and PD)

Monday 3rd March 2008
 10:00am – 3:00pm
 (Venue TBC)

SDS 5-a-side Football Championships (PD and LD)

Wednesday 26th March 2008
 10:30am start
 Glasgow Green

SDS Senior Swimming Championships (PD and Blind)

Saturday 19th April 2008
 11:00am – 5:00pm
 Fife sports Institute, Glenrothes