

## **Northumberland Sport Coach Grant Award Scheme 2008-2009**

Northumberland Sport is committed to increasing the number of trained and qualified people involved in the organisation of sport in Northumberland. In 2007 Northumberland Sport produced our first Workforce Development Plan which drew on the results of a Regional Workforce Survey, showing that there was a key shortage of coaches particularly those with Level 2 awards in Northumberland.

Through support from Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport, Northumberland Sport was able to offer people living or actively involved in clubs in Northumberland the opportunity to improve and/or gain their level of qualification within their chosen sport. The scheme was called Northumberland Sport Coach Grant Award Scheme.

The scheme offered financial support to individuals up to 100% of their coach award cost. Through the scheme 299 coaches have either improved or gained coaching qualifications in their chosen sport, of which 37% of were female. Northumberland Sport's commitment to the development of sport was initially in 15 priority sports however, partnerships were formed and a further 8 sports were allocated funding through the scheme.

The Northumberland Coach Grant Award Scheme has created meaningful partnerships with National Governing Bodies involved in this scheme. One example includes the work with *Badminton*. This partnership has helped the identification of coaches included within the scheme and has helped increase the delivery of *Badminton* to local communities.

### **Northumberland Badminton Association**

#### **Norma Waterfield Northumberland Badminton Development Officer**

The funding which has been allocated this year has been very well received by the successful coaches and has certainly made a difference to the number of people applying for places on my courses. Two years ago when we changed to UKCC, I believe that I only organised one Level 1 course. During the last year, as a result of the WFD Funding, I have organised a course every couple of months, with each course filling up within a few weeks of my advertising it.

This has been most encouraging and has led us to be able to deploy the coaches in specific areas to do their voluntary hours – which in turn has led to many of them remaining involved in that area. The fact that in our County we now have two BADMINTON England Performance Centres (open to children from all over the County) is another bonus as new coaches will be able to assist at these Centres and learn from the more experienced coaches who are leading the sessions there.

## **Watt Academy, Blyth**

Bill Sharpe works for Blyth Valley Arts & Leisure as a Centre manager. As a Badminton player, Bill competed at a county standard.

Throughout his involvement with the John Watt Badminton Academy, Bill got involved with the Northumberland Badminton schools set up. As there was a need for the academy to be supported with more coaches, Bill decided to take his Level 1 coaching award when he heard that he could access funding from the Workforce Development grant award and get support from the Northumberland County Badminton Development Officer.

## **Coach Profile: Bill Sharpe**

1. Length of time involved in the sport? 25 years as a player, volunteer and a coach.
2. Level of qualifications attained through the scheme? Accessed both level 1 and level 2 Badminton qualifications during the past 12 months.
3. How has the Coach Grant Award Scheme been supportive? Bill had been considering getting involved as a coach and once he became aware of the funding available to support this ambition he jumped at the chance to gain the qualification.
4. Future coaching aspirations? If so what are these? Bill plans to use his award to support the girl's only group and the county squad in the future. He also expressed an interest in being a mentor to younger coaches and also completing his tutor training qualification which would enable him to become a Level 1 tutor.

Bill also paid credit to the Tutor who had provided an excellent course which he found very challenging compared to his level 1. The standards that the tutor set were very high and Bill said that he had been inspired by his experience on the course and would endeavour to continue to these high standards throughout his coaching career.

Bill's enthusiasm for the sport and the club provided the motivation and inspiration to progress with his coaching awards and also enabled Bill to support his club and provide some much needed support to the coaching team.

Bill is currently working with the High Performance centre in Newcastle and is keen to learn from the coaches and bring ideas back to Northumberland and his club in Blyth. Bill is also the club treasurer to add to his coaching.