

South Ribble Sports Awards 2018

Well it is that time of year again when South Ribble Borough Council announce the nominations shortlisted for their annual Sports Award presentations which take place at the end of June.

We had an amazing year last year as most of you will remember with Katie Wood, Vicki Pickup and Pia Murray each winning in their nominated categories. Our Chief Coach was awarded 'Highly Commended' against very stiff opposition in the Coach of the Year category and the Club was presented with the overall Community Club of the Year Award.

So how do we follow that? Well, we are delighted to say that we have got five more shortlisted nominations for this year's awards. They are -

- **Tom Arkwright** - Rising Star Award category
- **Thomas Pearce** - Rising Star Award category
- **Ellie Cameron** - Young Volunteer Award category
- **Judith Dutton** - Adult Volunteer Award category
- **The Masters Squad** - Team of the Year category

The **Rising Star Award** *is in memory of Lewis Balyckyi and is awarded by his parents to recognise the most talented performers across the County, who show exceptional dedication to their sport and have the potential to perform at the highest level. Nominations are encouraged from those who have represented their County/Region/Country in their chosen sport* so for this reason we made two nominations. We have nominated **Tom Arkwright** for his North West English Schools' and North West Talent Pool selection. Tom has been a consistent achiever at age group level and the feedback from the North West Talent Pool coaches is always positive. He is a stalwart member of our swim teams, never worried about being asked to compete up an age group. Winning Gold at the Welsh nationals in the 12yrs 200m Breaststroke is a real mark of Tom's potential and we are pleased that this is being recognised.

Our other nomination for this award is **Thomas Pearce**. It is quite unusual for a disabled athlete to be nominated for this award but we believe that in his field Thomas is just as much a rising star and we are delighted that South Ribble have recognised his nomination. Thomas has overcome many hurdles to now be in the position of being recognised by the national Down Syndrome squad and is due to compete at the European Down Syndrome event next week in Southampton.

Earlier in the year Thomas was invited by Down Syndrome Swimming GB to put himself forward for selection for the Down Syndrome International Swimming Organisation World Championships being held in Canada this July after him having achieved qualifying times in four events. Unfortunately, Thomas wasn't able to take up this offer but has been working hard in preparation for the European event.

The **Young Volunteer Award** *is made to recognise the young person who has given up their free time to volunteer in sport. Sport in Britain depends on volunteers and these young people will be the backbone of sporting opportunities in the future.* This year we have nominated **Ellie Cameron** who, in addition to her own training and competition, and on top of studying for four 'A' levels, she has become an essential part of the Club's teaching force. Ellie successfully completed the Young Aquatic Volunteer Award which included gaining the ASA Level 1 Teaching qualification and becoming an official ASA Timekeeper. She gives up 2 hours of her time each week to teach our young Barracudas and without commitment like Ellie's and all our other volunteers, our young swimmers would not have the opportunity to develop.

The **Adult Volunteer Award** *is for those adults who have given up their free time to volunteer in sport in a non-coaching capacity. Again sport in Britain depends on volunteers and these people help to sustain sporting opportunities for all.* Our nomination this year is **Judith Dutton** who many of you will know from coaching but that is not all that Judith does. Since joining the club 9 years ago Judith was initially responsible for the swimmers award badges but then quickly took on the job of Club Secretary. Having decided that life was much more interesting getting involved on the poolside rather than sitting on the balcony so she went about gaining the ASA qualifications to enable her to officiate at swimming events. So in addition to supporting her own daughters' with their 18 hours per week training she also coaches for four hours and puts in countless hours undertaking the Secretary role. Then on top of this she represents the Club at regional swim meetings and officiates around the County.

The **Team of the Year Award** *is given to a club, organisation or school team that has achieved success over the last year. Either as a team that trains hard and inspires other teams or has competed at a high level and achieved success over the last year.* For us, Team of the Year is not just about competitive achievement it is about a group of people coming together as a team to achieve a common goal. No more so is that the case than in Masters swimming so this year we have nominated our **Masters Squad**. Whilst members of the squad have achieved success at regional, national and World levels it is a common

misconception that Masters swim teams are just about competition. It is much more. Whilst one of the aims is to keep swimmers in the sport for longer the benefits to the individuals and to the club as a whole stretch far wider and this is the approach we have taken with this nomination and are delighted to have been shortlisted.

We are pleased to be able to make these nominations and delighted that all five of our nominations have been shortlisted for the final awards. They will be flying the flag for the Barracudas and for our sport so we hope you will join us in wishing them all luck as they join the many other shortlisted candidates at the awards presentation evening on Friday, 29th June at The Hallmark Hotel in Leyland.