

Sitting Volleyball Report 2017-2018

Since the last AGM there has been a great deal of activity relating to sitting volleyball. In September, the HVA hosted a highly successful mini-league competition that was held at the University Technology College, Portsmouth over the weekend of 9/10 September and which included teams from Essex, Guernsey, South Hants and GB Women, plus a Danish team called Lavia Copenhagen. The event had been very closely competed throughout but South Hants emerged victorious having won all of its matches over the two days. Regrettably, due to other commitments it has not been possible to organise a second competition during the reporting period but there is a firm aspiration to host more in 2019.

There has been a strong community engagement programme consisting of free taster sessions, principally in schools, that have been delivered throughout 2017/18. The sum of this effort has resulted in over 550 students receiving a session which it is felt has assisted greatly in promoting awareness of the sport.

More broadly, at the request of Volleyball England a small group of enthusiasts volunteered to undertake a review of sitting volleyball across England. The team was led by Ken Edwards, who had project oversight, while I took the lead of a work stream that looked at securing the core market. The work is covered in Volleyball England's Annual Report, "Driving towards a brighter future", which is linked here: <https://www.volleyballengland.org/~media/docs/2018%20VE%20Annual%20Report.pdf>. As a result of the work, some £14K has been allocated to the development of sitting volleyball clubs and the running of the Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix.

Other highlights over what has been an exceptionally busy year include: the delivery of a Volleyball England sanctioned SV Workshop; attendance at the Hampshire School Games; and hosting a SV Awareness Workshop on behalf of Energise Me.

The ongoing challenge is the establishment of more sitting volleyball clubs in the region. Efforts to engender enthusiasm for a club at The Hub, Eastleigh did not come to fruition and initial discussions about working in partnership with Portsmouth in the Community to scope interest in a SV satellite club have thus far not resulted in anything meaningful. The imminent opening of a new community centre in Clanfield may be the catalyst for something enduring. A series of 6-8 taster sessions will be delivered to gauge interest in a new club. More coaches are needed to coach sitting volleyball, though, as without them it will always be a struggle to create and, more importantly, sustain clubs.

Richard Osborne