

# YORKSHIRE & NORTH EAST HOCKEY

25/26 SEASON NEWSLETTER



## England Hockey Awards

**Club of the Year** - Morpeth HC

**Emerging Club of the Year** - Tynedale HC

**Unsung Club Hero** - Sarah Sykes

**Volunteer of the Year** - Claire-Jane Newcastle

**Official of the Year** - Geoff Riley

**Coach of the Year** - Heather Macdonald

**Lifetime Achievement** - Brian Murfield

**Open/Mens Team of the Year** - Sheffield University Bankers HC

**Outstanding School Engagement of the Year** - James Swinscoe

**Women's Team of the Year** - Driffield HC Ladies 1's Team



## YNE Hockey AGM

The AGM of Yorkshire and North East Hockey Ltd ("YNE") will take place on Wednesday 8th July 2026 at 7.00 pm. This will be a virtual meeting on Teams/Zoom, please use the link below to register attendance: <https://forms.office.com/r/TY91D4bvmN>



## A word from the Chair

This time of year is always very busy for the YNE Management Team particularly as we make preparations for our AGM on Wednesday 8th July. I am particularly excited this year as immediately following the AGM we will be having feedback from the Player Survey and also an update on the YNE 2028 Strategy. As some of you will be aware, this will also be my last AGM in the Chair as I am stepping down from the position - I have included a few reflections on this below.

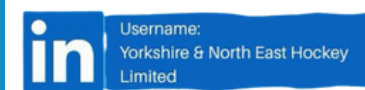
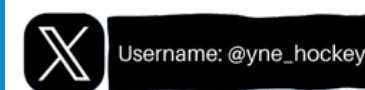
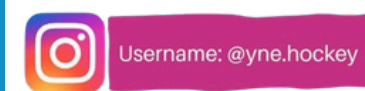
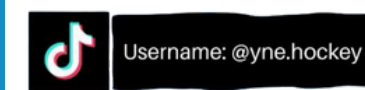
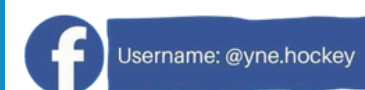
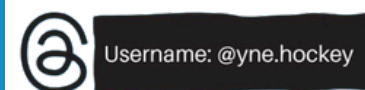
I would like to start with Safeguarding - I hope you all picked up on the note from England Hockey CEO Rich Beer (<https://www.cm.com/en-gb/app/email-campaigns/viewinbrowser/f1d98836-8a9e-415c-a87d-3591e1c6de1c>) which demonstrates how seriously England Hockey (and YNE) take this matter. Similarly, the EH Spirit of Hockey Code of Conduct Spirit of Hockey | England Hockey explains exactly how we should conduct ourselves in regards of hockey related activities.

Whilst it is not possible for me to cover everything I would like to, I must pay special tribute in two areas in which I am directly involved. As the YNE Director linked to Juniors, I must highly commend Maggie Coombe and her team for their achievements in what has been a rather testing year. Also, as a player, I am indebted to Gordy Gray and his team for the flourishing Masters activities in YNE - I am very much looking forward to representing YNE at the Men's Over 65's National Areas Championships in Folkestone in mid-June and know how much it means to so many people to fly the YNE flag across 16 of these events each year. Finally, my congratulations go to the various YNE Area Award Winners and England Hockey winners.

So to finish with a few reflections on my two years as YNE Chair. We are in a position of strength and well thought of by EH. My personal circumstance is that I have volunteered full time unpaid in various roles for 13 years so it is time for a change. I will be staying on as a Director subject to due process as is the appointment of new chair. I feel that our 2028 Strategy is a singular success and I have certainly enjoyed my time as chair and working with YNE and EH folk. Most appropriately as at the time of writing it is Volunteers Week, I would like to thank all those across YNE, Counties and Clubs who give so selflessly of their time including for your support during my time as Chair.

Peter Frost, Chair YNE Hockey

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# ADULTS LEAGUE

Congratulations to Sheffield University Bankers 1s and City Of York 1s, who won the Open/Men's and Women's Premier Divisions, respectively. Both now head for the National League for the first time. Ben Rhydding Open/Men's 1s, Sheffield Women's 1s & Wakefield Women's 1s return to the Area Leagues next season.

Congratulations to Phoenix Women's 1s & Louth Open/Men's 1s on two successive promotions. Several promotion & relegation fights went down to the final matches, well done to those who succeeded, & commiserations to teams who were relegated, or missed out on promotion.

Next season, we welcome 10 teams to the League: Morpeth Open/Men's 4s, North Shields Open/Men's 3s, Thirsk Open/Men's 3s, Northallerton Women's 4s, Stockton Women's 2s, Boston Spa Open/Men's 3s, Sheepscar Rams Open/Men's 1s, Adel Women's 6s, Kingston-upon-Hull Open/Men's 6s & Scarborough 2s.

Leeds Adel HC are becoming Adel HC, Ramgarhia HC are becoming Ramgarhia Leeds HC, Appleby Frodingham Ladies HC are becoming Scunthorpe Ladies HC.

Summer Leagues are now in progress, players across the Area are enjoying more relaxed hockey, mostly on weekday evenings, mostly in the sunshine.

The new Rules Of Hockey take effect from 1st September. Both Premier Divisions tried playing some matches, last season, in quarters. Those divisions will be playing in quarters next season.



# MASTERS

As we move into a crucial stage of the Masters hockey season, it is an excellent opportunity to reflect on the successes and achievements across the region so far.

## **O50s Midweek Mixed Masters**

The O50s Midweek Mixed Masters programme has proved extremely popular this year, with three to four fixtures taking place each month at a variety of venues across the YNE region. The matches provide players with a strong standard of competitive hockey in a friendly and sociable environment, with post-match gatherings continuing to be an important part of the experience.

Fixtures will continue throughout the summer, and anyone interested in playing or assisting with organisation is encouraged to look out for further information on our Instagram and Facebook pages.

A special thank you goes to Chris Randall, who has been instrumental in coordinating fixtures and ensuring the continued success of the programme.



## **O40-O70 Women's Scotland Weekend**

Seven YNE women's teams took part in the annual Scotland Weekend, competing against Scotland and the North West across their respective age groups. The O50s also enjoyed a fixture against a special "All Stars" side.

The O40s and O50s tournaments were hosted at Ben Rhydding, while the O55s to O70s travelled to Glasgow. Fortunately, the weather conditions were excellent throughout the weekend, and the standard of hockey was exceptionally high.



The tournaments provided valuable preparation ahead of the Area Tournaments and, as always, proved to be an enjoyable and successful weekend for everyone involved.

Special thanks must go to all organisers and officials whose hard work ensured the smooth running of the events.

## **Area Tournaments**

The Area Tournament season is now underway, with four age groups having already completed their competitions. Results so far are as follows:

O35 Men - 5th place

O35 Women - 6th place

O45 Women - Silver medal (2nd place)

O55 Women - 5th place



# JUNIORS

There has been lots to be pleased about this season for YNE junior hockey.

**School's hockey** has been particularly successful. The winners of the U13G area competition were GSAL who had a really good year, they represented YNE at national finals for independent schools and finished in the top 4 in the country. They then went on to win the National EH In2 competition in May!! Absolutely fabulous, the first winner at National level for YNE for quite a while. They're a talented group of hard working players, who are looking forward to doing great things going forward.

GSAL first XI boys made national finals and came second in their tier 3 competition, they are looking forward to competing in tier 2 next year.

Scarborough 1st XI boys, which has a great core of home grown players, also had a great year, their first year playing in tier 1. They beat Millfield school on shuffles in the quarter-finals of the plate which is a fabulous achievement and only narrowly lost in the semi-finals to the eventual winners. They won their play-off to finish 3rd overall.

RGS 1st XI girls, after losing all their games in tier 1 in last season, had a much more successful time, finishing fourth and so qualifying for the plate quarter finals where they beat Wellington College. They then lost out in the semi-final to a stand out Surbiton team containing U23 GB players. They were rightly very proud to be able to say that they are top 12 in the country.

Other schools which qualified for national finals:

U13 boys Yarm

U14 T2 girls Hill House

U14 T2 boys Hill House

U16 T3 girls Dame Allans

U18 T3 girls Ampleforth

U18 T3 boys GSAL



***GSAL U13 girls In2 winners.***

We had really good participation in our NE U14 state school festival held at Northumbria University despite the nearly apocalyptic conditions. By opening it out to middle schools and encouraging year 8s to enter we ended up with over 100 players. We were also able to run a state school festival in Yorkshire.

**Indoor hockey** is definitely on the up in our area. We are now offering hockey at different tiers to allow more schools to gain some indoor experience. We are also offering indoor hockey to U12s and U14s which is going down really well.

Yarm U18 girls beat Scarborough in a very close final in our regional round and then represented YNE at indoor national finals.

Scarborough U18 boys dominated the regional round and then went onto beat Repton in the Indoor finals which was something really to be proud of.

# JUNIORS

In the U16 girls RGS reached the national finals playing with their U15 team and came 5th overall. The U16 boys were represented at nationals by Yarm competing really well, their games were all really close and they finished 6th.

Our County hockey schedule has continued to run and facilitate regular, decent competition between our 6 counties. We only had to cancel (because of bad weather) one out of 18 tournaments. More than 300 U12 and U13 players and 400 U14, U15 and U18 players have participated this season. There were 5 different counties represented in the end of season cross-over tournaments with the North West, great to see that depth of talent across the area. The commitment of our County teams is something of which we can be really proud. We have missed David Brereton's organisation as he had to step down from his role at the beginning of the season. We have been very pleased recently to welcome Natasha Railton to our team, David has been really helpful as we try to do all the things he managed to do so incredibly well!

Northumberland is one of 5 counties which have volunteered to participate in a "proof of concept" new competition run by EH. It is for County teams made up entirely of state school players. The interest in the competition in the area has been really encouraging. We have so far run 2 training sessions and they have been very well received. The competition is in Cambridge in June and we know that it will be a brilliant experience for them all.

Club hockey has been offered across our area at tiers 1, 2 and 3. We have 74 teams playing in U14 and U16 leagues in tiers 1 and 2. It's been great to see new team names appearing as more clubs have the ambition to play at this level. There have also been some problems, notably due to the large distances that sometimes need to be covered to complete the leagues. This season EH published an extensive questionnaire asking about how



***Players at first state county training session.***

we could improve our leagues. This may well lead to significant changes in the way we organise our matches in the future.

In the U16 supra league finals day at Nottingham we were represented by Ben Rhydding boys and Leeds girls. This was part of an excellent weekend for Leeds HC, Leeds U14 girls won the tier 1 plate, beating Knowle Park 5-3 and Leeds U18 girls won the tier 2 championship, beating Sevenoaks 4-2. Slazengers were runners-up in the U14 tier 2 girls' plate and Sheffield were runners up in the U16 boys' tier 1 vase.



***Leeds U14 G winners of tier 1 plate.***

# JUNIORS

We have just completed our In2 U10 and U12 competitions. Thirsk girls and City of York boys won the U12 competitions and are going through the national finals to represent YNE. The U10 championships were won by Sheffield boys and Slazenger girls.



***Leeds U18 G winners of tier 2 championship.***



***U12 Thirsk Girls.***



***U10 Slazenger Girls.***



***U10 Sheffield Boys.***

There is a lot to celebrate and lots of reasons to be optimistic about the future of junior hockey in YNE. It however depends on the enthusiasm and commitment of a vast army of volunteers who give up many hours of their time to support our wonderful juniors. So thank you to every parent who drove their son or daughter to a match, to every coach who agonised over selection, to every umpire who took on the responsibility to manage a game and to every helper who entered a result on GMS.

There are a million jobs that need to be done and we are grateful to every person who contributed!



***U12 City of York Boys.***

# OFFICIATING

## Thank You

A huge thank you to all committee members and everyone who umpired or officiated this season. Your time, commitment and support—on and off the pitch—continue to drive the development of umpiring across the area.

## Season Overview

This has been our strongest season yet. We began with a Captains & Officials meeting to set expectations and saw real progress in several areas, including an increase in young umpires both outdoors and indoors. Engagement from some clubs still needs improvement, but overall development has been positive.

## Coaching & Development

- 13 Club Coaching Days
- 3 Evening Q&A Sessions
- 67 Level 1 assessments (up from 55)
- 30 individual club umpire coaching sessions
- 184 new Level 1 unassessed umpires from EH courses (21 assessed)

Some clubs remain reluctant to take up Match Official training opportunities, but more chances will be available next season.

## Appointments

Despite a slow start with availability, coverage was strong:

- 113 Ladies' games
- 107 Men's games
- 425 appointed games
- Only 15 games required club umpires
- Very few double-ups needed

We welcomed several new umpires to the pool and congratulate four who progressed to NPUA: Dan Thompson, James Cowden, Geoff Riley and Cameron Stokell.

## Highlights

- 5 Young Umpires officiated at the July 2025 TA Tournament
- 2 Young Umpires appointed to Junior Champs/SUPRA League, including the U18 T1 Final
- Continued partnership with Durham TA to support Young Umpires
- 51 umpires used at Y&NE Premier
- 77 coaching/assessment sessions
- 73% of umpires seen at least once
- Progressions: 4 to L3 N4/Reserve, 6 to L2
- Nathan Ridsdale has been appointed to the U16s Nations Cup in Poland

### *5 Young Umpires at the TA Tournament.*

