

SUFFOLK BADMINTON ASSOCIATION

JUNIOR COMMITTEE REPORT FOR A.G.M.

JUNE 2025

Chairman's Remarks

The curtain has closed on the 2024/25 season, and despite there being lots of challenges, there were lots of great moments too. Some particular highlights included the U19s winning 11-9 away to a strong Essex team, our U13 team finishing a very credible 13th in the league, our ICT team beating Norfolk in their final match of the tournament, And a very young team finishing 7th out of 12 team at the 2025 Herts Team Challenge.

The coaching sessions this season have been a great success and were very well attended all season, and we saw some great improvements among players in both squads. We have two squad sessions planned over the summer whereby we have invited some triallists of differing age groups as we look to bolster the squads ahead of the 2025/26 shires season.

This season has also seen the launch of a new junior club in Ipswich which has already hit full capacity with a wait list. This was the first new club in our drive to offer more opportunities to players at a grass roots level.

A massive thank as always to the coaching teams of David, Clive, Adrian, Pauline, Janet and Martin who have done an outstanding job all season.

Ben

Chair, Junior Committee

1.0 : 2024/25 Season review

In the 2024/25 season Suffolk entered teams into the U13, U15, U17, U19 age categories.

Suffolk U13

The U13 team finished a very credible 13th out of 27 teams and ended the season with wins over Cambridgeshire & Leicestershire and draws against Essex and Middlesex. The two losses came at the hands of Kent 1 and Kent 2.

The team performed well and were extremely competitive throughout the season. Due to having a very small squad we had the misfortune that we had to forfeit rubbers in two matches which if we had been at full strength we would have won (instead of a draw/a loss). This meant we just missed out on the Finals however the standard of the team's play and continuous improvement were clear to see.

To put things in perspective my highlight of the season was actually an 18-2 loss to Kent, who went on to win the overall league. This could have been a lot closer with two rubbers lost 15-13 in the third set and excellent performances across the whole team. We also managed draws against Essex and Middlesex whilst recording convincing wins versus Cambridgeshire and Leicestershire 2.

Adrian

U13/U15 Team Manager

Suffolk U15

Our U15s finished 22nd out of 33 teams and despite early season losses to Cambridgeshire, Herts, Kent and Essex, the team finished the season with an 11-9 win vs Norfolk and a 20-0 win over Bucks who decided to forfeit the match.

With a team including a number of U13 players we performed admirably against some very strong counties. We finished the season with a 11-9 win against Norfolk and are strongly positioned for next season as we keep the majority of the squad.

For the 2025/26 season, due to a lack of girls with sufficient experience we have decided to not enter an U13 team and instead play friendlies at that age group. We will invest the time building a stronger base for the following year.

My thanks to all the players in the Group 1 squad for their efforts and enthusiasm, to the coaches who have helped make the squad sessions so successful and to the parents for their commitment and support.

Adrian

U13/U15 Team Manager

Suffolk U17

The U17 team finished the season 20th out of 32 teams with the solitary win coming against Northants, a draw with Norfolk and defeats to Beds, Essex, Bucks and Cambs.

It was a tough season for our U17s. We only managed to get our full strength team out on a couple of occasions due to injuries and unavailability. We therefore had to borrow players, from the U15 and U13 teams on occasions.

Suffolk U19

The U19 team finished the season 15th out of 30 teams with wins against Essex, Beds and Essex and a draw against Cambs. The matches lost were Kent and Herts.

It was a case of so close for our U19s. If we had managed to convert the 10-10 draw to Cambridge into a win, this would have given us a chance to compete in the play-offs.

2025 Inter Counties Tournament (ICT)

The 2025 Inter Counties Tournament was played during the Easter Holidays at the David Ross Sports Village in Notts and was once again a great experience for our players – especially those who hadn't played the tournament before.

On day one Suffolk were in a group with Cheshire, Lincolnshire and Bucks. Despite some battling performances both Bucks and Cheshire were just too strong. And unfortunately, against Lincs we had to play a girl short due to illness and therefore forfeited two games – we ended up drawing the match but lost out on games.

The second round saw us in a group with Sussex, Lancashire and Norfolk – and despite picking up wins against both Sussex (who topped the group), and Norfolk, we once again missed out on the top two places on points difference.

Round Three saw us in a group with Devon and Cornwall – a convincing win against Cornwall set up a head to head against a strong Devon team, which ended in a 6-4 defeat.

This meant our final match was a head to head with Norfolk. The team put on a great display to win comfortably – but also meant we finished in 25th position.

But the 25th place doesn't really tell the true story – twice we missed out on points difference and had this gone in our favour – we would have been in the top half of the draw rather than the bottom. The team all played their hearts out in every match – and I couldn't be prouder.

Very special thanks go to Adrian and Jodie who did a great job organising everything before and during the week – and also to our coaching team of Janet, Chloe and Kayleigh who brought with them a calmness and experience of competing in the tournament previously.

2025 Herts Team Challenge

The 2025 Herts Team challenge took place on Sunday 15th June at the Herts Sports Village for those players born in 2010 or later. We took a squad of four boys and four girls, 50% of whom were three years below age. Despite this, every player put in outstanding performances on the day. Their attitude both on and off court were a credit.

We played a total of five matches, with three wins against Northants, Herts 2 and Herts 3, and losses against Essex and Yorkshire. This left us a very credible 7th out of 12 teams.

The IDBL Junior Tournament

It was great to see so many county players entering the tournament this year – both in the U15 and U18 age category – showing their support for the league, but also giving other players the opportunity to see what they can aspire too should they desire.

A big well done to Glenn, Louise and Linda on running the tournament given it was a much larger entry this year.

2.0 : Other news

Training

The winter block of training has now concluded, and we have had our first summer training session – with a second taking place in July. The first sessions were well attended, despite being in the middle of GCSEs and mocks for the older players.

We have also seen a number of trialists who either came to the May session or will be coming to the July sessions which is great and hopefully we will have some new players to add to the squads in September.

Ipswich Junior Badminton Club

This January saw the launch of a new junior club in Ipswich based out of Inspire. The initiative was spearheaded by Adrian Cook, and with the help of Janet and Mike, has been a brilliant success to date. The sessions are split into two groups – based mainly on age with Adrian leading the younger players and Ben leading the older group. The purpose of the sessions was to encourage more juniors to pick up a racket and play, as well as giving those with a bit of experience more opportunity for more court time.

The sessions are held on a Friday night between 17:30 – 19:30.

Senior Team participation

We continue to see junior participation within the county senior teams which is brilliant. Both Kayleigh (2007) and Anastasiia (2009) have formed part of the 1st team who made it through to the Division One play offs for the third successive year, but once again finished third.

Amelia (2010) has played all matches for the senior second team.