



Eastern region rowing council – junior representative report

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Junior membership

As of October 2020 there are 715 junior BR members in the eastern region. Representing 27% of the region total membership. The under 16s have shown the sharpest decrease in BR membership – undoubtedly reflecting the situation under COvid restrictions with the added complication of the need for close supervision of youngest juniors.

Impact of covid

Juniors were severely impacted by the poor water and weather conditions during the winter of 2019/20 and similarly with the covid restrictions. Going forward this does mean that J14s and other new starter in 2019 will have had very limited water time and precious little race experience. All major junior events were cancelled. The import of this going forward is that both J14 and J15 will have minimal race experience assuming that regattas go ahead during 2021. Event organisers may wish to bear than in mind.

However despite the covid restrictions, clubs, schools and their coaches are working hard to maintain motivation and progress using a number of online sessions for land training, competitive challenges and use of small boats when water sessions allowed. We thank them for their considerable efforts in these challenging times.

Junior interregional trials and event

The 2020 selection event was severely impacted by the wind and weather and the main event was cancelled due to Covid.

Plans are progressing for Junior Interregional planned for April 2021. Interim guidance on the selection process to represent the eastern region is available on the errc website; the approach to selection will need to be pragmatic taking into account the prevailing pandemic situation. Coaches are invited to indicate intention to enter on to a googlesheet along with any evidence of fitness and race experience (e.g. erg times, timed pieces, race offs). The idea will be gather evidence for a slimmed down race off process in March 2021.

National junior rowing committee NJRC

Part of the role of the eastern region junior rowing representation is to attend and communicate with this committee. This committee links the regional junior reps to through the BR sport committee to the BR board.

Some of the work of the NRJC in the past year has included:

- [3.14 Junior Athlete Recruitment Guidance 2020](#). This provides guidance for clubs and schools on what factors to consider when juniors transfer.
- **Development of State school forum** – the aim being to share and develop rowing within state schools. State schools that have involved in rowing (maybe as part of community club) are invited to contact ashley.wyatt@britishrowing.org
- **Competition working group** (NB very much work in progress). The competition structure for juniors has significant limitations for all levels of juniors. Consideration has been given to promoting better opportunities at three levels of competition:

Beginner	/	Events that develop skill and watermanship and engage both new and
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recreational level	recreational rowers. Consider use to develop certification – (ready to race) Provide opportunities for junior volunteer roles Promote social interaction within junior rowing community Local events, committee boats possibly.
Intermediate	Heads and regattas to develop racing. Local. Includes private matches for small number of clubs. Could be league format. Could be blended head and regatta style within small events and mixed boat classes.
Performance	Better performance options to ensure good higher level racing with the appropriate spacing between designated events and greater chance of high level competition

Clubs, coaches and event organiser are requested to consider what they might be able to do to promote a wider range of competition opportunities for juniors. A summary of possible events that could be run for fun/ recreational is available (email errcjuniors@gmail.com) . The ERRC committee would be interested to know about and provide support for any such initiatives. Please contact the junior representative in the first instance (contact details at the top of the page)

- **Development of the junior rowing leader course** for 16 – 18 to be more practical, club based and offered to 15- 18 yr olds. This is again work in progress.

Communication within the region

Meetings and forums open to junior coaches and coordinators have been organised throughout the year providing the opportunity to share ideas about how junior rowing is progressing and can be developed within the region.

An initial scoping meeting was held in January and a number of areas considered – but these ideas have mainly been put on hold due to covid for this year.

Online meetings have been held over lockdown – useful especially as there has been little opportunity to share conversation on river banks. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday December 7th 7.30 pm. Please contact errcjuniors@gmail.com if you wish to attend.

I welcome contact from clubs and schools - maybe there is something to feed through to the local or national committee or maybe a local initiative that I am able to support or share with others or you have ideas that could promote junior rowing in the region.