



Eastern region rowing council – junior representative report November 2021

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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 which also limited opportunities during 2020/21. However, events resumed during summer 2021. Both clubs and schools have worked hard to maintain momentum and training during what has been a most difficult and extended period and should be congratulated for all their hard work.

The impact of covid has been not only on existing juniors but also on the introduction to the sport in terms of learn to row. Some clubs have extensive backlog of those wanting to begin the sport and have had to respond creatively.

It remains to be seen how this extended period of disruption impacts on the number of juniors in the sport and their continued participation.

Junior interregional trials and event

Both the Junior Inter Regional Regattas for 2020 and 2021 were cancelled. This event for 14-16 year olds is the start of the performance pathway for juniors. The Eastern region plans to send a full team of juniors to represent the region.

The date for the national event is April 23rd 2022 at Nottingham. The eastern region guidance on the selection process has been developed and is available [here](#). Coaches are invited to indicate intention to enter on to a googlesheet along with any evidence of fitness and race experience in advance of the planned selection dates in gather evidence for selection if there is disruption from weather or covid.

National junior rowing committee NJRC

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

- **State school forum** – the aim being to share and develop rowing within state schools. This forum links with State schools that have involved in rowing (maybe as part of community club) are invited to contact ashley.wyatt@britishrowing.org. The forum has been looking at diversity and inclusion and the role of outreach. Love Rowing is aiming to support the development of rowing in state schools.
- **Competition for juniors.**
 - Various discussions have taken place to aim to broaden the opportunities for challenges and racing for juniors across the ability spectrum. For the performance pathways the timetabling of key events and the way that racing could be organised to provide high level challenge were discussed.
 - For those in the early stages of rowing/ development then invitation events with local clubs/ schools in a way that allowed for participation using alternative formats was discussed as being a way forward. These require local clubs, coaches and event organisers to consider how these might work in their area. 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)
 - The cost of competition has been raised at the NRJC as this year has seen some significant increases in entry costs to some events. It was suggested that in general the costs of national competitions bear similarity with other sports but also that it would be worth

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approaching event organisers if there are individuals where this is a significant barrier to entry.

- **Development of the junior rowing leader course** for 16 – 18 to be more practical, club based and offered to 15- 18 yr olds. This work has lost some momentum but is still felt to be important by the NRJC and is to be reinvigorated so that it can be rolled out.

Communication within the Eastern region

Online meetings with local coaches have been held and those that have attended have been able to share experiences with other coaches. As well as the usual updates, there has been some useful discussions around diversity and inclusion – of those with physical or learning challenges.

Within the region there are a number of outreach initiatives. Seb Walker (ERRC member) is leading a local initiative to promote rowing within a small number of schools.

Going forward

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.

Areas for development with the region could include:

- Development of challenges / local invitation events?
- Local leagues/ collaborations at local level to reduce costs, travel and organisation time.
- Support for outreach
- Coaches sharing good practice focused on junior rowing