



John Craig – Scotstoun Badminton Club – Community Champion

Scotstoun Badminton Club (SBC), based at the National Badminton Academy within Glasgow Club Scotstoun creates opportunities for young grassroots players to participate and progress in badminton within a safe, inclusive club environment. The club provides playing opportunities for 6 - 17-year olds, attracting 37% females and 40% BAME membership while offering a coaching pathway for young developing volunteers.

Initially established in 2008, John Craig's involvement with the club began in 2011 as a parent. When the club faced a challenging time, John's commitment and passion to supporting young people to get involved in sport coupled with his approaching retirement, allowed John to take on the leadership of the club as a personal project where he could apply his personal skill set.

On paper as the club secretary, John exceeds this role like many volunteers, going over and above doing anything and everything that is required to drive the club to the success it is today.

Like many, 2019/2020 presented John with a new challenge. After months on lock down and no club activity John worked effortlessly to ensure that the club was back up and running when the doors to the National Badminton Academy reopened in April 21. Covid restriction and guidelines presented challenges with accommodating existing club member. SBC were the first junior club to restart in the regional and within Glasgow resulting in a surge of enquiries from young people with a passion for badminton keen to get involved. The club were unable to accommodate the demand. John personally found this difficult "it hurts when you can't help or make a difference".

Rising to the challenge John was successful in securing funding from Glasgow Sports 'Sport and Physical Activity Fund' to launch Scotstoun Mini's in August this year. Working in partnership with Glasgow Sport the club secured additional court-time allowing the club to expand to accommodate existing and new members through a strengthened internal player pathway.

The success of the growth has seen a 150% increase in members from 35 in 2019, to around 80 young people who attend the Friday evening club sessions organised by John and the team of coaches led by Aidan Delaney.

John's covid safe delivery was used as a model of good practice, building the confidence and foundations for the restart of Glasgow and North Strathclyde Junior League Competition and other Glasgow-based clubs to follow.

Reflecting on the past year, additional club achievements can be easily identified through the club hosting their first summer camp, attracting both club and non-club members. A success John wishes to replicate and build on. The club was successful in achieving Badminton Scotland's Shuttle mark *Bronze Award*. *A club accreditation scheme to help support clubs to develop and strengthen their infrastructure, plan and in turn increase capacity and grow.*



John's aspiration to continue to build the club is clear through the desire to increase the offer to accommodate young adults from 16-21 who traditionally fall out the sport as well as re-establishing a pathway for talented players to partner clubs and the School of Sport.

When asked 'why do you do what you do?' John believes that every person can and should do something for their community to make a difference 'Choose something that interests you and that you can make a small difference in, give as much or as much as you can, it all helps'.

John initially committed to the club for five years with or without his kid's involvement in the sport. Nine years on John admits that he 'makes mistakes and gets fed up with the daily grind but no matter what it's fun and the people make it worthwhile'. The coaches, parents and the kids 'learning about their talents is motivational, watching friendships develop and of course seeing their badminton improve.

John is working hard to ensure the club is self-sufficient without his daily input and drive and always on the lookout for willing volunteers.

In addition to his club role, John commits time to support local Glasgow & North Strathclyde adult and junior events, leads on their social media and manages their junior teams as well as helping Badminton Scotland. So, Glasgow Sport would like to say thank you to John for being a Community Champion.

