

## **North-East Junior Squad Report Oct 2023 – Oct 2024**

Francis Shillitoe / Kim Sanderson

### **Training weekend**

The squad held a training weekend in the Lakes (23-24 March), staying as usual at Braithwaite Hall in Far Sawrey. This time, on the Saturday we trained at Rusland Beeches alongside Lakeland Orienteering Club, who hold monthly club training on Saturdays. Julian Simpson set the juniors off on their exercises, and Rachel Baker's attendance helped enthuse the younger juniors.

On Sunday we trained on Tarn Hows, 'piggybacking' on the permissions and maps LOC had arranged for their previous month's training. Again Julian Simpson ensured the juniors all had a challenge.

This was the widest spread in ages (10-17) and experience (up to international standard) we have had on an NEJS weekend for some time, and we hope the younger juniors will continue to be enthusiastic members of the squad for some years to come! Several parents also helped ensure their juniors had a positive experience.

### **Summer training camps/'tours'**

The Junior Regional Orienteering Squads run training camps for promising juniors in various age categories. Some camps require an application to be submitted by the junior squad coordinators.

- Isla Simpson was selected for the camp at Lagganlia. The coaches returned a promising report with areas in which she has improved, and pointers for future development.
- Rebecca Mayes was selected for the Czechia camp in the summer and more recently for the Talent North squad (part of the GB Talent Squad)

### **Junior Inter Regional Championships**

Nine juniors attended the JIRCs in the south-west in September. We entered three competitive relay teams: two boy's and one girl's.

Whilst our overall position was second to last (just ahead of Northern Ireland), this was largely down to having insufficient juniors to fill the 24 places available for the squad to enter.

The girl's relay team did well placing 11<sup>th</sup> out of 25. There was lots of running up age categories in order to maximise points. Of particular note were two M12s from NN who are relatively new to orienteering running as M14 at TD4 technical difficulty; they completed their courses on both days with no mis-punches. No doubt this has a lot to do with NN's weekly training programme as well as the boys' natural abilities.

### **Hawkshead Training for M/W 16**

We have several eligible juniors, and have confirmed that Rebecca Mayes, Isla Simpson and new member William Rowan will attend the training weekend based at Hawkshead youth hostel on

22-24 November. They will be coached by Julian Simpson, alongside Carol Lovegrove and some younger trainee coaches from South East Junior Squad.

This weekend should help the juniors and coaches mix, compare notes and learn from one another!

### **Future**

With Duncan Archer having left the North-East we've had a temporary gap in a squad coach. Rebecca and Julian Simpson are keen to develop their coaching skills; Julian coached at the training weekend in the Lakes and will be our coach at Hawkshead. Rebecca is getting her licence to coach this year.

Frank and Kim's children are now sixth-formers so they are looking to hand over the role of NEJS co-ordinators to parents with younger juniors.

