

NPC – Player Pathway Report 29 06 2021

Despite all Covid related difficulties the Player Pathway has resumed giving talented young players the opportunity to receive quality coaching across the North.

The four Performance Centres at Durham, Fylde, Manchester and Yorks began the 2020/21 season in September but were forced to close in January, resuming in March to complete the scheduled calendar in July, with some additional sessions. The usual assessment programme was seriously interrupted so all players have been retained.

Cluster competitions were all cancelled but PCs have paired, east and west of the Pennines to provide some competition and combined coaching. The Futures Cup is currently going ahead August 25-28 at the University of Hertfordshire. FC coaches are working with PC coaches on the selection of the Pennine Pumas squads. We await the government announcements on Covid restrictions but plans are continuing for the Futures Cup.

The picture of AC activity is more patchy across the North, some counties have picked up coaching, others are waiting for 2021/22.

The plans for the transition year 2021/22 are developing. EH is taking on direct management of the PCs. The North Performance Committee will cease from August 31st with no equivalent committees in the new areas. From 2022 the Talent System takes on the responsibilities for player development.

In the North we have seen the importance of the Centre Managers for the local management of PCs. This is being adopted by EH for all 16 PCs for the transition year. Consequently we hope that our players will see little difference next season. This is not the situation across the other areas where PCs have been managed very differently and EH is having to try to find CMs to run each PC.

Normally the U15 and U17 players are selected over the summer for the forthcoming season. With little AC activity this will not be possible so players will be assessed at PC in September and October 2021. Most eligible players will be taken forward from current squads to this new assessment period. All nominated players from AC will be given the opportunity to be assessed for PC.

NW ACs are holding a training and standardisation day on 18 July for around 100 U14 players. No selection will take place but it will give players the opportunity to taste the challenge of PC hockey with PC coaches.

The majority of PC Head Coaches are staying in post for 2021/22. Durham Boys and Manchester Boys and Girls HCs are currently being recruited by EH. EH are also working on contracting the other coaches. Many coaches contracts will roll over for another season but there will be opportunities for new coaches at PCs.

With the restructuring of England into the new areas and the introduction of the Talent System focusing on talent development through Clubs, Schools and Talent Academies, it brings to an end of the North Performance Committee. My thanks to all who have worked hard on this committee to support the development of our young players. This applies to all players, whether they be club players or reach the heights of Great Britain. With North players named in both GB Olympic squads, we take pride in the development of all players and hope to see this continue through the Talent Centres.

Ann Marshall
Chair of North Performance Hockey
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