



CENTENARY

ONE

AWARDS 2026



Welcome



On behalf of the East Midlands Regional Management Team, I'm delighted to welcome you to our 2026 Centenary Festival of Netball and ONE Awards.

It is always a pleasure to bring together our netball family - especially those who have given so many years to the game - to celebrate the achievements of our players and volunteers. Whilst some of you may be new to the sport, many of you here have been part of netball for many decades, helping it grow and evolve into the vibrant community we see today. Because of your commitment, our competitions, clubs, pathways and opportunities continue to thrive. It is also wonderful to see membership in our region rising, with new players joining and new opportunities to get involved continuing to develop.

As we celebrate the centenary of England Netball, we reflect with gratitude on those who have dedicated so much of their lives to the sport. We stand on the shoulders of volunteers who, over many years, have run clubs and competitions, supported counties and regions, officiated and developed umpires and officials, coached generations of players, and quietly kept everything going—managing teams, washing kit, collecting fees and booking courts. Your contribution, often behind the scenes, has shaped the game we love today, and we thank every one of you.

To our ONE Awards finalists, congratulations and good luck. The standard this year has been exceptionally high, reflecting the depth of experience, talent and dedication across our region.

Finally, thank you to Derbyshire County for inspiring this event, and to the Volunteer and Community Development TSG, chaired by Mary Yardley, for your tireless work and passion in bringing it all together.



Rowena Hackwood
East Midlands Netball Regional Chair
25-26

Our Story



1893 - 1901

A Game Made for Women

Began late 1800s - developed from early basketball.
1895: Introduced at Dartford College.
Designed by women, for women.
1907: Polytechnic Netball club founded (oldest club).

1926-1935

Women Take the Lead

Netball widely played by 1920s
1926: AENA formed (first governing body)
1929: Umpire qualifications launched
1932: First Inter-County Tournament (Essex win)

1936-1959

Education & Community Growth

Standardised school teaching across UK
International rule differences highlighted
1956: Australian tour sparks rule unification push

1980-1990

Recognition & Formalisation

Joins British Olympic Association
Liz Nicholls appointed first CEO
1983: Becomes Limited Company
Sponsorship and publicity growth

1964-1979

Expansion & Structure

First paid staff member (Annette Cairncross)
Schools & County competitions expand
National systems strengthened

1960-1963

On the World Stage

1960: First International rules agreed
International Federation (INF) formed
1963: First World Tournament (Eastbourne)

1991-2001

Diversification & Inclusion

New youth and disability formats
Wheelchair netball tested
1998: Commonwealth Games debut (England win bronze)

2002-2019

Potential to Pinnacle

2005: Netball Superleague launches
2006: Sky Sports broadcast deal
2015: Vitality sponsorship begins
2018: Commonwealth Games Gold
2019: World Cup hosted in Liverpool

2021-2026

Rebuild & Lead the Movement

Post-COVID relaunch
10-year Adventure Strategy
2023: NETBALLHer launched (women's health focus)
2026: National movement for women & girls





Regional Competition Winners

Regional Division 1

Winners: Bridgford Navy

Runners up: Northants Storm 1

MVP - Mia Williams

U14 Regional League

Winners: Lincoln City

Runners up: Stamford & Rutland

MVP - Zinachidi Mwamarah

Regional Division 2

Winners: Lincoln City 1

Runners up: Ashby Giants

MVP - Holly Smith

U16 Regional League

Winners: Lincoln City

Runners up: Charnwood Rutland

MVP - Holly Shipman

Regional Division 3

Winners: Foxhall Jets

Runners up: Cliftonettes Navy

MVP - Alice Grieve

Regional Division 4

Winners: Harborough Hornets

Runners up: Hampton Harriers

MVP - Katie Clarke





Jean Perkins Walking Netball and Jean Bourne Back to Netball Award

These awards are presented to a Back to Netball and a Walking Netball participant from the East Midlands whose lifestyle has changed significantly since attending Back to Netball or Walking Netball sessions 🤝✨

Jean Bourne was a lifelong netball volunteer, coach and A Award umpire, Jean Bourne served as Chair of Nottinghamshire and East Midlands Netball and was President of England Netball from 1994–2000. She was a passionate supporter of grassroots netball.

Jean Perkins OBE was a dedicated netball volunteer, A Award umpire, tutor, coach tutor and assessor, and former Chair of East Midlands Netball. A strong advocate for inclusion, she established the region's first netball club for women with learning disabilities and made a lasting impact on the sport through her commitment to development and opportunity for all.

Nominees:

Tilly Wardhaugh
Angela Howatt
Hannah Hitchcock
Hazel McConnell





East Midlands Jean Staley Award

This award was initiated in memory of Jean Staley, who was tragically killed in November 1987, aged 38. Jean's main attributes were her efficiency in administration, commitment to playing and umpiring within her Club, County and Region as well as an overall dedication to netball in whatever role.



Nominees:

Kaylla Driscoll
Kate Garner
Jess Mountford





East Midlands Long Service Award

The East Midlands Long Service Award is approved by the East Midlands Regional Management Board for any registered participant or member of an affiliated school who has given service to the region (not club or county) for at least 10 years (this need not be consecutive) within any capacity i.e., Player, Umpire, Coach, Administrator, Volunteer, Table Official etc. ✨🎉

Recipients:

Robyn Rogers
Kate Mann
Lizzie Saunby
Pam Weatherby
Vicky Otterburn





Rising Star Award

This award recognises emerging leaders in our sport aged 12-25 who make consistent and selfless contributions in our sport 🏆🏐

Nominees:

Holly Smith

Rebecca Bowen

Natasha Callis





Thriving Collective Award

This award recognises a group or organisation that work together as one, achieving meaningful impact and success for the local community through collaboration 🤝💪

Nominees:

The Best Netball Podcast Ever

Long Eaton Junior Netball Club

Lincoln City Netball Club

Adelphe Netball Club

Bingham Netball Club





Outstanding Contribution Award

This award recognises individuals who go significantly above expectations when delivering great sessions and making it all happen ✨🎉

Nominees:

Kerry Gardner
Jenny Williams
Allie Bailey
Tilly Wardhaugh
Jayne Bell
Carla Garey
Kaylla Driscoll
Kate Garner

Alison Smith
Sarah Cottrell
Kimberley Durham
Hazel McConnell
Claire Bowen
Connie Xavier
Jen Newman
Jess Mountford





Special Recognition Award

This award recognises those who have given 25+ years of service to Netball, and have had a long-term impact, legacy and meaningful influence in our sport 🤝✨

Nominees:

Victoria Lane
Mary Yardley
Yvonne Blunt
Liz Alsop
Caroline Richards
Cheryl Naylor
Sue Eaton
Donna Beckett
Carol Hallam





Thank You!

Thank you all for joining us today at the East Midlands Netball Festival. We hope you've enjoyed celebrating the achievements of our netball community and reflecting on the past, present and future of netball across the East Midlands.

Congratulations once again to all of our award winners, Regional League champions and MVPs, and thank you to the incredible volunteers whose dedication, passion and commitment help our sport thrive every day. You are the heart of our netball community and the reason it continues to grow and succeed.

A heartfelt thank you also goes to our County Committees, volunteers, members, coaches, officials, parents, players and supporters. Your contribution, both on and off the court, makes a lasting difference and helps create such a vibrant and welcoming netball community across the region.

Thank you for being part of the East Midlands Netball Festival. We look forward to celebrating with you again in the future!





#EN100