

National Coach of the Year: Maria Ingles

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Posted On: **February 27, 2013**

It gives the ETTA great pleasure in announcing Maria Ingles as the deserved recipient of the National Coach of the Year award. Maria has been instrumental in the development of the Eastern Region throughout 2012, working in partnership with her peers and ETTA staff to greatly improve the infrastructure, quality of sessions, access to training, and communication within the region; quite simply she has done a marvellous job.



Maria Ingles being presented with the Eastern Region Coach of the Year Award by Stephen Gertsen (Regional Coach)

Maria has been the Regional Coaching Coordinator (Voluntary ETTA position) for the past couple of years and her commitment to helping players and coaches develop plus her networking skills deserve to be recognised. She is a current UKCC level 2 coach (aspiring to complete the UKCC level 3 shortly), and has developed significantly this year and is well respected amongst the players, coaches and members of Eastern Region. Despite being based in Hertfordshire Maria travels the length of the region to help with regional squads and club visits. Her regular coaching is at BATTs, Hitchin and the Greenhouse Bushey project but she is in regular contact with everyone across the region.

Maria has been highly dedicated in helping the region move forward. Not only has Maria helped with coaching players, but she has also spent numerous hours creating communication links with players and coaches through social media such as Facebook/Twitter and producing a quarterly newsletter keeping everyone informed of the latest news in the region. It is this type of effort that is helping to build the Eastern region into one of the strongest across the country. Embracing new technology and ensuring that all participants are informed and kept up to date with progress has created a genuine community of practice, within which everyone seeks to improve.

Mark Dare (Wensum Table Tennis Club and ETTA Coach Educator) says *'The Eastern Region now has a framework in place by which there is a player pathway between clubs, regional development centres and regional training that has never previously existed. This pathway will be in place for years to come and is a direct*

legacy of the work of Maria and Stephen Gertsen. The clubs Maria has coached at are strong and well run, with volunteers involved, and will develop further as the years go on. Maria will always go the extra mile to help players, clubs, schools and the region. This could involve just providing transport for players to events, coaching players at tournaments and other events, helping with administration (her IT skills are excellent) and anything else she is called upon to do that will benefit table tennis.'

During this time Maria has also sought to learn and improve her skills as a coach, completing her aforementioned UKCC Level 2 qualification, but also going that bit further, attending Coach Education days to learn more about all aspects of the sport, and has also taken advantage of the fantastic Talent Breakfast Clubs (offered by Sports Coach UK and the County Sport Partnership Network). Additional work with Sports Psychologists and Strength & Conditioning leads has only helped to further Maria's understanding and the quality of support that she is offering everyone across the region.

Regional coach Stephen Gertsen said *'Maria has been an inspiration this year and the amount of work she puts into the region on voluntary basis is astonishing. The region is in a healthy position at present and this has much to do with Maria's dedication and enthusiasm, which hasn't gone, unnoticed, not just in the region but also the country. I couldn't ask for a better coaching coordinator to work alongside and I have no doubt she would support the region even without this additional title. I would like to thank Maria for all her help this year on behalf of all Eastern table tennis members.'*

Final congratulations to Maria on winning the award this year, wishing her all the best in continuing this excellent work and it will be exciting to see how the Eastern Region continues to develop in the years to come.

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