

2017 UK Coaching Awards goes with a bang at The Honourable Artillery Company

Published 01/12/17 by [Blake Richardson](#)

2017 UK Coaching Awards winners

Roll of honour: The 2017 UK Coaching Awards winners

The only thing missing from an enthralling UK Coaching Awards was an evening-ending mic-drop from host Graham Little in fitting acknowledgement of the exemplary achievements of this year's finalists.

Members of the coaching community gathered in their hundreds to pay tribute to those individuals and organisations who have worked tirelessly over the last 12 months to transform the lives of people of every age and from every sphere of society.

The showpiece event, organised by UK Coaching and presided over this year by Sky Sports presenter Little, is one of the most prestigious in the coaching calendar, and for the awards' 20th anniversary, The Honourable Artillery Company in the City of London was the grandest of settings, befitting such a special occasion.

To be in the presence of so many inspirational individuals who have done so much to enrich the lives of so many people was an incredibly humbling experience.

The main accolade of the evening, **High Performance Coach of the Year**, went to the British Athletics Relay Team coaching triumvirate of Benke Blomkvist, Christian Malcolm and Stephen Maguire, who worked with all GB's relay teams for the London 2017 World Athletics Championships.

In a spectacular series of performances, the men's and women's 4x100m and 4x400m teams all won medals, most notably a gold for the men's 4x100m squad.

Former double 4x400m World Championship bronze medallist Donna Fraser must have been especially thrilled. The four-time Olympian, who is Vice President of UK Athletics, was in attendance and was interviewed between awards.

There were luminaries at most of the tables, and they were tracked down during the course of the evening by UK Coaching's Director of Coaching Emma Atkins and Denise Lewis OBE, who is as comfortable with a microphone in her hand now as she was leaving her rivals trailing on the athletics track. Denise also paid a visit to the table of Dame Katherine Grainger DBE, our most decorated female Olympian and now Chair of UK Sport.

Before each announcement of the 11 category winners, the coaching stories of the finalists were brought vibrantly to life in a short video. And while all those shortlisted in 2017, as in other years, will undoubtedly say they are just ordinary people dedicated to their vocation, they have made a habit of doing extraordinary things.

For one night only, it was payback time, when the people whose lives they touch on a daily basis were given the opportunity to shower their sources of inspiration with superlatives and explain to outside observers how the passion and expertise they exude has made such a profound difference, both to them individually and to the wider communities they serve.

Denise Lewis Donna Fraser

Denise Lewis chats to Donna Fraser

Turning lives around

For many of those shortlisted in this year's awards, their principal focus is to engage people from under-

represented groups, who are typically less active and have less opportunity to take part in sport or physical activity, such as women, disabled people and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The winner of the 2017 **Community Coach of the Year**, Marcellus Baz BME, targets all of the above in his position as head coach and founder of the Nottingham School of Boxing, but he doesn't stop there, casting his net even wider.

A reformed gang member whose dreams of a career as a professional boxer were shattered when he was stabbed through the hand in a knife attack, Marcellus brings together people from all walks of life in his free boxing sessions, coaching vulnerable youngsters from the hardest to reach sections of society, including ex-inmates and disadvantaged and disaffected youths who are in danger of becoming trapped in a vicious circle of offending.

Through his intervention as a coach, mentor, volunteer and role model, Marcellus is the life belt that has saved plenty from a life of crime, encouraging his participants to channel their energies in a constructive manner. His efforts to rehabilitate ex-inmates even stretch to supporting them in their quest to find accommodation and sustainable employment.

Last year his achievements – which also include setting up knife crime charity Switch Up – were rewarded with a memorable double, being honoured with the Unsung Hero award at the BBC Sports Personality of the Year and the British Empire Medal for his services to youth boxing.

This latest award for Marcellus is another chapter in a story that reads like a screenplay for a Hollywood feature film. From being on a road to ruin, to performing a dramatic U-turn and embarking on a road to redemption, to the final leg of his journey of self-discovery and successfully turning around the lives of others. It has been some adventure.

Winner of the Community Coach of the Year Award Marcellus Baz [@NottsBoxing](#)
[#UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/5zIVbtdk8E](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Fitmums making lots of new friends

Talking of journeys. In its simplest form a coach is a vehicle that helps transport someone to their chosen destination.

But the metaphor can be stretched far beyond that. A coach is not just the car that gets them to where they want to go; they are the fuel that keeps them going; the GPS navigation system that helps them avoid wrong turns, dead-ends and bumps in the road; the engine that drives their motivation; the brake and accelerator pedals that help to curb their enthusiasm or inject a burst of energy, whatever the situation demands; the passenger that listens, advises, supports, confides and provides a sense of humour; and even the stereo system that generates entertainment and an infusion of light relief when the journey gets tough.

In that case, there were a fleet of Rolls-Royces on show during last night's awards ceremony. Although, in the case of **Coaching Intervention of the Year** winners Fitmums and Friends, perhaps a train would be a more appropriate analogy, in view of the huge numbers of people the England Athletics affiliated club and charity has helped transport to a more physically active and socially active life.

Wow! □□

The 20th UK Coaching Awards were everything we hoped they'd be - great coaching stories with a side of Zumba.

What's more, you can now relive the spectacle by watching our cool highlights video. □□□

Congratulations once again to all our winners and finalists. pic.twitter.com/VbAKKegBsx

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [December 5, 2017](#)

The coaching network that has spread and taken root across Yorkshire and Lincolnshire supports an incredible amount of activity, with nearly two thousand people participating in running, cycling and athletics sessions every month.

That is a far cry from its humble beginnings in 2009, when founder Sam Barlow put a flyer in the book bags of her son's classmates inviting other parents to join her for an evening run.

As a full-time working mum, she wasn't getting to meet other parents in the playground and was missing out on making crucial social contacts.

Five people turned up that first night but interest snowballed, and membership swelled to 850 members by the end of 2016-17.

As well as the 10 running groups there are four junior athletics sections, two cycle squads, Buggy Bootcamp & Buggy Walk Workouts, to enable parents to exercise with their children, and an In the Pink Support Scheme, offering one-to-one support for anyone who needs a helping hand to be active.

All clubs have a team of trained run leaders, supplemented by a network of assistant coaches and a dedicated volunteer coaching workforce who, in addition to the above, provide a number of spin-off initiatives such as coached athletics sessions, taster sessions in schools, sports days for adults and track sessions for children.

Suffice to say, there are a growing number fit mums (not to mention fit dads and fit children) in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire since Sam relayed her intrepid spirit and ethos to an ever-expanding pool of coaches, who have been only too pleased to take up the baton.

A very happy Sam Barlow after winning the Coaching Intervention of the Year award with Fitmums & Friends [@FitmumsF #UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/tmhV5cFrBv](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Thanks a million – or rather three million!

These are the stories of just a few of last night's awards winners, which serve as glowing examples of the positive and transformational effect that can be achieved by engaging and empowering traditionally under-represented groups in our communities.

But while they and the other winners, listed below, may have been singled out for praise this year, let us not forget the 3.1 million other coaches operating in the UK today – who are impacting on over nine million people and who also contribute a meaningful and measurable difference to the lives of people inhabiting every section of our society.

Whether it is individual coaching interventions or the collective approaches of organisations, last night's awards were a celebration of coaching in its many forms, and so a massive and well-deserved thank you to each and every coach who has taken up the call to arms to build a healthier, happier, more cohesive society.

This year's full list of 2017 UK Coaching Awards winners:

Awards in support of coaches:

Community Coach of the Year: Marcellus Baz (Boxing)

Children's Coach of the Year: David Walsh (Multi-Sport)

Children's Coach of the Year recipient David Walsh [#UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/nVSPRz6H9R](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Disability Coach of the Year: Anna Jackson (Wheelchair Basketball)

Anna Jackson with a few words after winning the Disability Coach of the Year award [@ALJ2372 #UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/5IjHEgglho](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Heather Crouch Young Coach of the Year: Samuel Tuck (Rowing)

A delighted Samuel Tuck following his win in the Heather Crouch Young Coach of the Year category [@USBCRowing#UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/IjFukcgylf](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Lifetime Achievement Award: John White (Swimming); Malcolm Brown (Triathlon)

Joint Lifetime Achievement Award winner John White has a few words following his achievement [@thanetsc](#)

[#UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/fZ4DG24tKN](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

For all the years he's dedicated to coaching Malcolm Brown is a joint winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award [@Malcthecoach #UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/YgsGWMcMI7](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Talent Development Coach of the Year: David Unsworth (Football)

It's a winning week for David Unsworth who who picks up the Talent Development Coach of the Year award [@Everton #UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/iaMjFrP6b3](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

High Performance Coach of the Year: British Athletics Relay Team Coaches (Benke Blomkvist; Christian Malcom; Stephen Maguire)

Two members of the winning trio of [@BritAthletics](#) coaches, Stephen Maguire & Benke Blomkvist following their win in the High Performance Coach of the Year category [@hurdlesub13#UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/Zn9tytT1XO](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

The Coaching Chain: Stuart Hogg (Rugby Union) – John Hogg; Mark Wright; John Johnstone; Bryan Easson; Iain Monaghan; Sean Lineen; Gregor Townsend

A few words from the Coaching Chain Award winners Mark Wright, John 'Rocky' Johnstone,

Bryan Easson, Iain Monaghan & Sean Lineen [@StuartWHOGG_ #UKCoachingAwards](#)
[pic.twitter.com/4j0L2Ap1bl](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Awards in support of coaches

Coaching Culture of the Year: British Weight Lifting; England Rugby

The Coaching Culture of the Year joint winners [@England Rugby#UKCoachingAwards](#)
[pic.twitter.com/hqIznPBIOU](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

British Weight Lifting after winning the Coaching Culture of the Year award [@GBWeightLifting](#)
[#UKCoachingAwards pic.twitter.com/9q18YEeIgl](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Coach Developer of the Year: ConnectedCoaches member [Rus Smith](#) (StreetGames).

Coach Developer of the Year award winner Rus Smith [@RusSmith0907 #UKCoachingAwards](#)
[pic.twitter.com/IouvGpSVdG](#)

— UK Coaching (@_UKCoaching) [30 November 2017](#)

Coaching Intervention of the Year: Fitmums and Friends (Athletics)

For a list of all this year's finalists, including a round-up of their achievements, [click here](#).

Login to follow, share, comment and participate. Not a member? [Join for free now](#).

tags : uk-coaching-awards