

# RAF SPORT AWARDS

19 October 2023

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## Royal Air Force Halton

By permission of  
Station Commander, Group Captain Fergus Garwood MA





# WELCOME

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The RAF Sport Awards are held annually to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our people, as individual athletes, in teams, as officials and as administrators. For the second time, we also have the RAF Central Fund Station Award, for the station that has done most to promote physical activity and sport. Really importantly this year, we have created a new category for our Civilian Volunteers, recognising those who contribute so much to RAF Sport from outside the service.



To present the Awards, I am delighted to welcome our new Head RAF Sport, Air Vice-Marshal Ian 'Cab' Townsend CBE MA RAF. A hugely accomplished aviator with operational experience on both Harrier and Typhoon, he also oversaw the simultaneous challenges of the retirement of the Tornado and development of Lightning to its initial operating capability. Appointed Air Officer Commanding 22 Group in May, alongside everything else he does, he is committed to his sport, as a rugby union referee for both the RAF and Buckinghamshire and as an occasional runner.

Understanding that not everyone can get an award, I am very grateful to all of those who were nominated and way beyond, for all they all do in delivering our physical activity and sport, at every level, across the Whole Force, with family members and others. And I want to thank our wider range of supporters, from the RAF Central Fund especially, to myriad others too numerous to mention here. These are exciting times for us all as we look forward to all of us being more 'Fit for Service – Fit for Life through RAF Sport'.

***Air Cdre Rich Fogden***  
***Director RAF Sport***

# PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

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- 1245** Guest Arrival
- 1335** Lunch
- 1515** Awards Ceremony
- 1630** AOC 22GP closing address
- 1700** AOC 22GP departs HHOM  
followed by attendees



# SPORTSMAN

## Nominees

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This award recognises a sportsman who has achieved excellence in his performance, participated at the highest levels or had an outstanding achievement in his chosen sport.



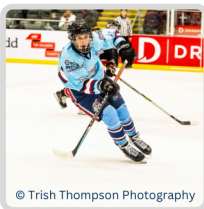
### **CT Mark Collinson - Angling (Coarse)**

CT Collinson has represented the RAF at multiple levels across the service and at high profile national civilian events. He has held the role of team manager for 12 years, showing dedication to an often thankless and time consuming task. A commitment which is to be even more highly commended when working on an operational Flying Squadron as a deployable aircrew engineer.



### **Sqn Ldr Simon Almond - Swimming (Water Polo)**

Sqn Ldr Almond was the 2023 Captain of the RAF Men's Water Polo team. Having finished last in the 2022 Inter-Services Championship, Sqn Ldr Almond has led a resurgence of the team in 2023, setting physical performance targets, developing and delivering tactical plans, producing walk-through videos and engaging with new members. He has been pivotal in determining the positive culture of the team.



### **Fg Off Adam Rosbottom - Ice Hockey**

Fg Off Rosbottom has continued to strive for excellence in his own playing ability, trailblazing as the first ever defence player to reach the National Ice Hockey League Tier 2, captaining and winning the Inter-Services, and delivering total commitment to RAF Ice Hockey.

# SPORTSWOMAN

## Nominees

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This award recognises a sportswoman who has achieved excellence in her performance, participated at the highest levels or had an outstanding achievement in her chosen sport.



### **AS1 Frances Lyall - Boxing**

AS1 Lyall has been a driving force for female boxing within the service. Her dedication and commitment have been second to none which has allowed her to break glass ceilings and become a role model for women of all ranks.



### **Cpl Sarah Toms - Cycling**

Cpl Toms has had a stand-out year in cycling, achieving national-level results, Inter-Service titles, countless wins, and contributing to the sport as an inspiration to female cyclists through various committee positions and volunteer duties.



### **Fg Off Carys Williams-Morris - Rugby Union**

Fg Off Williams-Morris's remarkable achievements as an international athlete and ambassador for her sport make her a deserving candidate for recognition. Her outstanding performances on the field, as seen during the Rugby World Cup for Wales, showcase her exceptional physical and mental resilience, as well as her remarkable teamwork and collaboration skills.

# SPORTS COACH / OFFICIAL

## Nominees

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This award recognises someone who has gone above and beyond in the delivery of sport either through the organising of events, managing activities, or coaching.



### **FS Mark Silva - Bobsleigh (BLSA)**

FS Silva has been paramount to the success of numerous RAF athletes competing for their country at multiple Winter Olympic Games. His leadership and exceptional desire to help others succeed, make him an invaluable asset to GB Bobsleigh and the RAF alike. Whether it be encouraging a novice for their first time down an ice track or a seasoned athlete striving for Olympic glory, Silva's unwavering and selfless commitment to sport is undeniable.



### **CT Chris Edgar - Snowboarding**

CT Edgar is integral to the enduring success of the RAF Winter Sports Association. He is a great ambassador for RAF Sport, working across coaching and administrative environments to deliver success. His ability to lead and mentor inexperienced members has been instrumental in the achievements that the team have accrued in recent years.



### **Flt Lt Matthew Butcher - Fencing**

Flt Lt Butcher began fencing in the RAF in 2020, and in that time he has thrown himself into coaching. He founded and nurtured two station fencing clubs, led and coached a team to represent the RAF at the Inter-Services and is now the RAF Fencing Training Manager. For someone 3 years into the sport this is a considerable achievement; his commitment to grassroots and Whole Force access to sport is outstanding and worthy of recognition.

# SPORTS TEAM

## Nominees

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This award recognises individual teams who have either had outstanding success over the past year or had sustained achievement over several years.



### **RAF Hockey Ladies' Senior Team**

The team have had an incredibly successful season. Winning the outdoor Inter-Services competition for the first time in 10 years and achieving the double, winning both the indoor and outdoor, for the first time in at least 25 years, their success has required significant dedication and hard work. A strong team ethos along with excellent training and mentoring has built a superb team that has been able to achieve significant success.



### **RAF Olympic Weightlifting Inter-Services Team**

As the 2022 Inter-Services Weightlifting victors, the RAFOWA Inter-Services Team overcame the well-established Army Weightlifting Team in an incredibly tight and competitive event. In doing so, the team boosted RAFOWA's reputation and prompted a significant increase in association membership.



### **RAF Telemark Women's Team**

The RAF Women's Telemark Team have made lasting history during the 2023 season. Not only did they win the first ever women's Telemark competition at the ISSSC but they have pioneered the way forward, setting the standard and challenging the other teams to diversify and develop women's squads.



# SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR

## Nominees

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This award recognises someone who has gone above and beyond in the delivery of sport at an administration level.



### **Cpl Sharon Hayes - Ice Hockey**

Cpl Hayes has been fundamental in the continued development and advertisement of Ladies Ice Hockey within the RAF, acting as a trailblazer and advocate for the sport, leading to the commencement of wider UKAF recruitment plans with an overall strategic goal of the first Ladies Ice Hockey Inter-Services.



### **WO Chris Slator - Motorsports**

WO Slator is an outstanding RAF Motor Racing Team manager who continually innovates, setting the bar for STEM engagement and continuously improving the Armed Forces Race Challenge and the RAF's team competitive portfolio. His dedication reflects his passion for providing RAF personnel the opportunity to take part in a sport which some might consider beyond their reach.



### **Wg Cdr Natalie Feeney - Snowboarding**

Wg Cdr Feeney has been at the vanguard of RAF Snowboarding since 2008, the Treasurer since 2013, and has represented at UK Armed Forces level for last 12 years. She has been instrumental in the shaping of snowboarding, not only due to leadership on the snow but more importantly, her dedication and commitment off the snow as the RAF Snowboard Treasurer.

# CIVILIAN VOLUNTEER

## Nominees

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A new category for 2023, this award recognises a civilian volunteer who has dedicated their time to the delivery of RAF Sport from outside the service.



### Mr Eamon Geraghty - Boxing

Mr Geraghty has continued to support the RAF Boxing Association since his retirement in 2018. Throughout his Regular Service in the Royal Air Force, and during his retirement, he has been a loyal servant to RAF Boxing. Whether competing at Inter-Service level as a boxer, leading the coaching cohort or excelling as an official, he has demonstrated unwavering commitment throughout.



### Mr Ian Webb - Gliding

Mr Webb is an Army veteran who served with distinction from 1973 to 1992. His association with RAFGSA took root in 1983, following an incidental encounter with the RAF Gliding Club during deployment to Cyprus. Since then, his unwavering commitment has spanned various clubs, with his present being RAF Cranwell. To date his flying accomplishments encompass an impressive 926 hours, comprising over 4400 take-offs and landings.



### Mr Ian Acey - Telemark

Mr Acey's selflessness is evident in the countless hours he dedicates, sacrificing his personal time off to provide beginner and development coaching. At the RAF Championships, his tireless efforts extend far beyond a single session as he offers 'tele tasters' on nursery slopes after long days of coaching on the mountains. His infectious passion for the sport, combined with his patience and good humour, has cultivated sustained interest in RAF Telemarking.



# THE RAF CENTRAL FUND STATION AWARD

## Nominees

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Recognising that RAF Sport encompasses all sport across the RAF from individual endeavours to Station sports clubs and events, the RAF Central Fund Station Award acknowledges a Station (or Unit) initiative that encourages and enables serving personnel to get physically active.



### RAF Cosford - Archery Club

Introducing new members through 'have a go' sessions and beginners courses, the club has gone from a few passionate individuals to a thriving community. Now meeting three times a week to keep up with demand, the club represent the station and the RAF Archery Association at various events including the Cosford Air Show and RAF Shawbury's Families Day. All made possible through a successful RAFCF Station Grant and the tireless work of a small volunteer committee.



### RAF Odiham - Inter Section Football League

Tackling morale issues and encouraging inclusion across the Station, a mixed gender football league was established at RAF Odiham. Since inception, the committee have remained flexible to Operational commitments and have supported over 60 games so far, resulting in a notable increase in morale and cohesion between sections that previously worked in isolation.



### RAF Akrotiri - parkrun

Delivered by a dedicated volunteer base, parkrun provides not only a demanding physical challenge for those who seek it, but also an inclusive social activity. With an engaged cohort of over 570 individuals, and the last event attracting more than 220 participants, Akrotiri's parkrun has gone from strength to strength, bringing the wider station community together to enhance physical fitness across the base.

# LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

## Nominees

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This award recognises a sportsperson, official, coach or organiser who has made a major contribution to RAF Sport during their employment with or in support of the RAF.



### **Sqn Ldr Damian Clayton - Rugby League**

Throughout his service career, Sqn Ldr Clayton has been involved in enabling others to play Rugby League; he is the current UKAF Rugby League Chief Operations Officer and has held a National Governing Body role as the Armed Forces representative on the Community Board since its creation in 2006. He is nominated for the immeasurable impact that he has had on Rugby League.



### **WO Ann Thomas - Powerlifting**

A multiple World Champion powerlifter, WO Thomas' inspirational example and guidance over the last 20 years has influenced and shaped not only service sport but national and international competitive and organisational frameworks. Retiring from competing in 2008, she focused on delivery and currently undertakes multiple senior executive appointments simultaneously. All of which are commendable on their own but outstanding in unison.



### **Sqn Ldr Paul Goodwin - Sub-Aqua**

Sqn Ldr Goodwin has been a vital part of RAF Sub-Aqua for over 35 years; whether it be organising and leading expeditions across the globe, delivering training or supporting and running unit clubs. He has consistently devoted his time, commitment, knowledge, skill and boundless enthusiasm to promoting and delivering the very best experience for any and all participants.



# RAF SPORTS LOTTERY

## THE VITAL LIFELINE FOR RAF SPORT

**DID YOU KNOW?** Your membership helps to provide the majority of the much needed funding for sport in the RAF.

Show your support by joining or increasing your tickets today. Now hold up to **6** tickets and still only **£1** per ticket!

[www.rafcf.org.uk/sports-lottery](http://www.rafcf.org.uk/sports-lottery)



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**£10,000**
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- 3RD PRIZE**  
**£2,000**
- 4TH PRIZE**  
**£1,000**
- 5TH PRIZE**  
**£500**
- PLUS 15xPRIZES**  
**£100**



# WITH THANKS

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**BAE SYSTEMS**

