

OPENING WEEKEND



Saturday 12th October

National Volleyball Centre, Kettering

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME



CONCORVA
RESIDENTIAL

DYNAMIK
MEN'S
SUPER
LEAGUE



WELCOME TO OPENING WEEKEND



Hello, and welcome to the much-anticipated Opening Weekend of the new 2024-25 Super League season!

This weekend marks the start of the journey for all 20 of our Super League teams, each with their sights firmly set on the Final 4, which will be held at the iconic Crystal Palace in London on 5th and 6th April 2025.

Last season we saw tremendous growth across our platforms, with increased engagement on our website and social media channels through dynamic short-form videos, match previews, and game round-ups.

We're excited to continue building on this momentum throughout the 2024-25 season, which promises to be hugely exciting for everyone involved.

The increased exposure we have secured has allowed us to secure an exciting new partnership with DYNAMIK, the official sponsor of the Men's Super League. DYNAMIK is committed to supporting the development of volleyball in England, stating: "We are thrilled to be part of this journey with Volleyball England and to help grow the sport in the coming years."

In addition to our new partnership with DYNAMIK we are pleased to extend our MAAREE partnership, which first started last season. MAAREE also share out passion for the sport with their founder saying: "This partnership means so much to us because it embodies the core of MAAREE's mission – to empower women in sport by providing them with the performance-enhancing support they need."

In addition, we're proud to announce the launch of Super League Live, which will allow us to broadcast 10 feature matches across the regular season, as well as live streams this weekend and then culminating with the Final 4.

A special thank you goes out to the volunteers, referees, and Hub staff for their hard work and dedication in making this weekend possible. We also extend our gratitude to the friends, families and fans of the teams who have travelled to the National Volleyball Centre to support the top players in the league.

Lastly, we'd like to thank the centre staff in Kettering for their continued support in helping us showcase this fantastic sport at the highest level. Let's get the season started!

DYNAMIK
**MENS
SUPER
LEAGUE**

**OPENING
WEEKEND**

10:30

University of Nottingham v Essex Blaze

12:30

Essex Rebels v IBB Polonia

14:30

Richmond Docklands v Stockport

16:30

London Giants v Durham Palatinates

18:30

Malory Eagles UEL vs Newcastle Knights

VOLLEYBALL 101

A whistle-stop guide to the fast-paced and thrilling game!

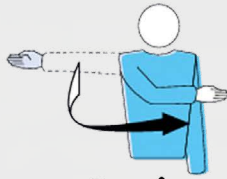
- A volleyball game consists of two teams of six players each, separated by a net. Volleyball positions are Setter, Middle, Outside, Opposite and Libero.
- Two teams will rally - or hit the ball back and forth over the net - until a fault occurs.
- There is a maximum of three touches per side (a block does not count as a touch).
- The objective is to score points by sending the ball over the net, and grounding it on the opponent's side of the court.
- Volleyball matches are made up of sets, typically three or five sets. All matches at Final 4 will be played as best of five.
- Each set is played to 25 points. Sets must be won by at least two clear points. Tie break sets (fifth set) are played to 15 points.

Quick guide rules

- Only six players on the floor at any given time: three in the front row and three in the back row.
- Players may not touch the ball twice in succession (a block is not considered a hit).
- A ball may be played off the net during a volley and on a serve.
- A ball hitting a boundary line is in.
- A ball is out if it hits an antenna, the floor completely outside the court, any of the net or cables outside the antennae, the referee stand or pole, or the ceiling above a non-playable area.
- It is legal to contact the ball with any part of a player's body.
- It is illegal to catch, hold or throw the ball.
- A player concedes the point if they touch the net.
- A player cannot block or attack a serve from on or inside the three-metre line.

REFEREE 101

Get to grips with the Officials' signals



Service
Hand moves from serving team side to signal the start of a point



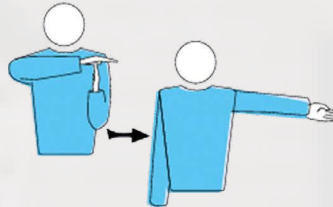
Ball Touched
The ball was touched before going dead



Ball Touched
The ball was touched before going dead



Ball Out
Flag raised vertically to signal ball landing out of court



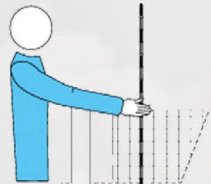
Timeout
A team has called for a time out (30seconds)



Ball In
The ball landed in the area of play



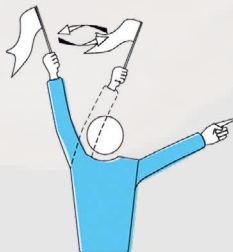
Four Touches
Ball has been touched four times giving the other team a point



Net Touch
A player has touched the net during a point



Ball Out
The ball landed out of the area of play



Crossing Space Fault
The ball has touched an antenna, wall or other surface not in play

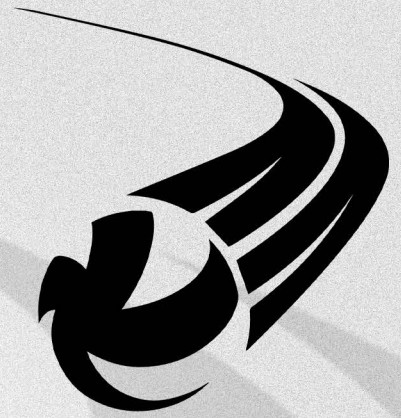


Double Touch
The player has touched the ball twice in a row



Rotation fault
Players are not in correct location at the time of service

OPENING WEEKEND



DYNAMIK Men's Super League



Team Essex Volleyball



University of Nottingham Sport Volleyball

MATCH 1

University of Nottingham

Match one

Children's Brain Tumour Research Centre

10:30 Saturday 12th October

Essex Blaze

Volleyball England Opening Weekend 2024

DYNAMIK MEN'S SUPER LEAGUE



UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

The University of Nottingham (UON) men's volleyball team is gearing up for an exciting new season after finishing sixth overall last year.

Although they faced a tough start, losing 3-0 to Essex in their Opening Weekend encounter, UON showcased their resilience and skill by winning four out of their last five matches, with their only defeat coming against the fourth-place finishing Malory Eagles.

This strong finish highlights the Green and Golds' potential and determination to compete for the top four spots this year.

As they prepare for the 2024-25 season, UON has made several strategic changes to their roster. They have welcomed several new players, including Sonny Casserly, Griffin Walters, Fin Bullivant, Iraj Safee, Sam Peters, and Tom Lycett, each bringing unique skills and experience to the squad.

These new additions are expected to strengthen the team's performance and contribute significantly to their campaign, but they have lost the services of Slater Bird, who was an influential component of the side last season.

A key performer is set to be Lisle Costard, noted for his calm and collected manner on court that helps bind the team together.

This Opening Weekend, UON will face off against newcomers to the league, Essex Blaze, who recently clinched the Division One title. The match-up promises to be highly-competitive, as both teams aim to establish themselves early on with a fast start.

The team's commitment to improvement and their competitive spirit will be key as they aim to rise in the standings and secure a higher finish in the league than they did in 2023-24.

Alongside the Super League, Nottingham will also seek to go one better in the BUCS Championships after finishing with a silver medal at Big BUCS Wednesday last season, losing out in the final to Durham.



Social channels



UONVOLLEYBALL



**University of
Nottingham Sport**
Volleyball

ESSEX BLAZE

The promotion of the Blaze as NVL Division 1 champions means that there are now two teams from Essex – the Rebels the others – vying to be the county's leading team at senior level.

Coached by Chris Frost and Andy Tuck, the Eastern Region club, who play their home matches at St John Payne School's Sports Hall in Chelmsford, will continue to be captained by James Bernardi.

Vice-captain Nathan French, playing for his hometown club, was the youngest member of the GB team to play in the London 2012 Olympics Games and has also played professionally in Spain, France, Germany and Israel.

He and Sonny Chaney are cited by the club as the team's standout players to watch this season due to their blend of experience and on-court chemistry "added to a wealth of knowledge that few players can match".



Social channels



TEAMESSEXVOLLEYBALL



TeamEssexVC

Chaney's dynamic playmaking and French's strategic insight have, say the Blaze, created a synergy over the summer that elevates not only their own performances, but also those of their teammates. The pair have also inspired others by demonstrating sportsmanship and leadership that has further set them apart as key components of the side.

While the club has lost the services of Nico Gajkiewicz, who has left for Richmond, and Nathan Hall, who has joined Essex Rebels, the club has made a quintet of signings to strengthen their ranks.

In addition to Chaney, new faces include Devon Gleave, Max Norton-Steele, Erif Rahmani and Ho Tak Tank.

Although recognising it is a big step up to the Super League, the Blaze are determined to give their all as they look to consolidate their status at the higher level.

"Our goal for this season is to reach the top five teams in the league," said Frost and Tuck. "The level of competition is incredibly high, and while we have set ambitious targets, it's important to remember that this is our first season back after a few years away.

"We are fully committed to the challenge and are looking forward to the experience, both on and off the field," said coaches Frost and Tuck. "Enjoying the journey and learning from each match will be just as important as the results. Here's to a great season ahead!"

Sponsors

Franco's Ices
South 57 Recruitment
Gokan Logistics
Interfoam
Trinacria
Wrapit
Bestpol Delicatessen Bedford
Sports Management



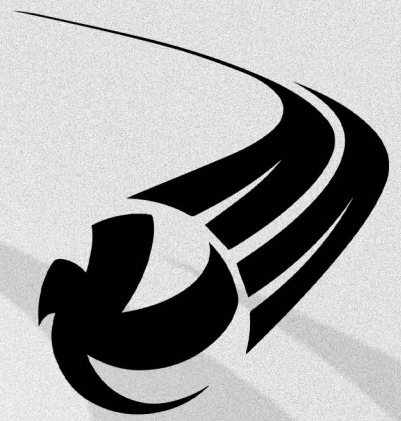
MEN'S SUPER LEAGUE TITLE SPONSOR

DYNAMIK

- Sports Flooring
- Acoustic Walling
- Track & Gym
- Maintenance & Protection



OPENING WEEKEND



DYNAMIK Men's Super League



MATCH 2

Volleyball England Opening Weekend 2024

Essex Rebels

Match two

12:30 Saturday 12th October

IBB Polonia

CONCORDIA
RESIDENTIAL LTD

DYNAMIK MEN'S
SUPER
LEAGUE



ESSEX REBELS

Essex Rebels are preparing for another strong season as they aim "to surpass the bronze medal they won last season".

Last year, the Rebels finished third in the league after triumphing in the Bronze Medal Match at the Final 4. In a dramatic showdown against Malory Eagles, they fell two sets behind before pulling off an incredible reverse sweep, battling their way back to win 3-2 and spark jubilant celebrations.

They will be hoping to repeat last year's Opening Weekend victory, when they celebrated a 3-0 victory over the University of Nottingham, as they get their new 2024-25 season underway this weekend.

Although Essex were defeated twice by Polonia in league encounters last season, suffering a 3-1 loss away and a 3-2 reverse at home, they can take heart from the fact that they did overcome their rivals 3-2 in a dramatic National Cup tie at the Essex Sports Arena.

Alex Porter's Rebels have bolstered their squad over the summer with what they hope with key new signings and are also welcoming back the 2023-24's squad.

New recruits include the Canadian Kern brothers: former professional player Jacob (6'5"), who has a wealth of experience from playing in Germany, Holland and the Czech Republic, alongside sibling Cameron (6'3").

They will be joined by fellow countryman Daven Pascal (6'6"), England Junior player Jacob Lloyd-Williams (6'6"), Oscar Curzon-Hall (6'8"), Nathan Hall, who is making the switch from Essex Blaze, and Troy Simpson, signed from Wessex.

Collectively, these additions will make the Rebels the tallest team in the league.

Those who have moved on ahead of this season are Cohen Banks, Nico Gajkiewicz, Devon Gleave and Max Norton-Steele, the latter two having switched to Essex Blaze. Additionally, Kyle Vom Steeg and William Ragland have returned to the US after a year with the Rebels.



Social channels



ESSEXREBELSVOLLEYBALL



ESSEXREBELSVOLLEYBALL



ESSEXREBELSVB

Sponsors

University of Essex
Hunters
R&B Refurbishments



IBB POLONIA LONDON

It was a case of so near yet so far in IBB Polonia's quest to become Super League champions last season – falling at the Final 4 final hurdle in losing 3-2 to Durham Palatinates.

The team, based out of Northolt High School, did not play as many matches as some of their rivals in the early stages of last season, but once they caught up in that regard, they quietly assumed leadership of the Super League, relentlessly winning matches while those around them were beating each other.

Not until well into the new year did they lose their only regular season game of the season, and by that time their place in the Final 4 was all-but assured, as they proved to be particularly strong on the road, relative to their rivals.

Grzegorz Niski remains at the helm as Head Coach as Polonia bid to go one better in 2024-25 and they will once again be able to count on the experience and versatility of Italian Andrea Maggio, who captains.

Brought in to bolster the squad are Ryan Dickson, who was part of Durham's double-winning team last season, Ignas Motuzis, who has a first-class degree in chemistry, and Khadeem McKoy.

IBB, however, will no longer be able to call on England international Ephraim Mills, who has left to join Danish club ASV after five successful years in London and Mihail Stoev, who was in the Errea Team of the season and statistically ranked as Super League's best server.

Polonia pick out George Ivanov as their player to watch after an excellent 2023-24 where he showed great potential. "It's exciting to see how he's growing and developing, and I think he could take his game to the next level this year," they say.

The club is also encouraged by some of the talent emerging from the Pro Volley Academy, and hopes some of those players will be pushing hard for first team involvement.

Head Coach Niski is relishing the challenge ahead in the coming months and said: "This will be another season for me with IBB Polonia London, and I am extremely happy about it.

"As with every year, our goal is to compete for the highest trophies – the National Cup and the Super League title. Of course, sports can be unpredictable, and things don't always go as planned. However, I have complete trust in this group of people I work with.

"I know they will fight for every ball, every point, and every set to achieve our common goals."



Social channels

 **IBBPoloniaVC**

 **IBBPoloniaVC**

 **IBBPoloniaVC**

Sponsors

IBB
Grip Active
Star Mentality
ADP Windows



HUNGRY?

Fresh pizza available outside

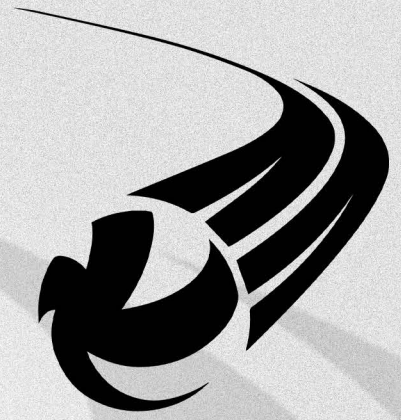
The Wood Oven

Local Artisan Pizza



MENU

OPENING WEEKEND



DYNAMIK Men's Super League



MATCH 3

Richmond Docklands

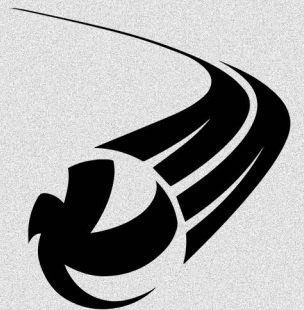
Match three

14:30 Saturday 12th October

Stockport

Volleyball England Opening Weekend 2024

DYNAMIK MEN'S
SUPER
LEAGUE



RICHMOND DOCKLANDS

The Richmond Docklands are preparing for another competitive season after a solid performance last year, where they finished fifth in the Men's Super League, just missing out on a spot in the Final 4 after a narrow 3-2 defeat to Team Sunderland.

One of the team's stand-out achievements last season was a 3-1 away victory over eventual Super League champions, Durham Palatinates, proving they have the raw talent and ability to challenge the top teams, with their hopes to make it to the Final 4 this time.

As they begin their 2024-25 season at Opening Weekend, Richmond will face Stockport, a team they beat in both league meetings last year - 3-0 at home and 3-1 when they travelled to Greater Manchester.

This season, Richmond has welcomed some exciting new additions to their roster, including Ihor Slota and Elias Watts, both new to the NVL, along with Nico Gajkiewicz from Essex Rebels. These new players are set to bring fresh energy and talent to the squad.





One player to watch this season is Abdimalik Shukri. After making his debut in the Super League last year, Shukri is expected to step up into a leadership role and fully showcase his potential on the court.

Richmond feel his development will be crucial to the success of the team this season, as well as developing himself as a player at national and international level.

The club's vision is clear: "to build a pathway for players from grassroots volleyball all the way to the top of the English league". This season, Richmond feel they have a strong mix of experienced players and younger talent, many of whom have come through the club's own junior programme.



Social channels

-  **Richmond_vball**
-  **RichmondVB**
-  **RVB_London**
-  **Richmond.volleyball**



STOCKPORT

Stockport is set for the the new season with renewed energy and determination after finishing in seventh place last year.

They made a strong impression following promotion at Opening Weekend last season, decisively defeating the Malory Eagles 3-0. This year, they aim to build on that success and demonstrate their competitive spirit against formidable opponents Richmond.

To strengthen their squad, Stockport has welcomed several new players, including England libero Chester Searle from Malory Eagles, Nicolas Zamblera from Chester Titans, Milosz Budzilko from Intervolley Manchester, and Connor Banister from Manchester Marvels.

These additions, Head Coach Rafal Lojewski hopes, will help the club push for the play-offs.

However, the team has also had to deal with some departures, with key players like Tymoteusz Zadeberny moving to Missouri Valley College in the US, Adam Mitchell retiring to focus on work, Marcin Wielogorski returning to Poland and Ting Him Ng also retiring.

Despite these changes, Stockport feel the core of its squad is composed of experienced players who are eager to prove that age is just a number.

Players to watch this season include Haydn Lawson and Matt Birch, who are expected to attract the attention of the national team coaches with their performances.

Searle also brings valuable experience after leaving Malory Eagles in the summer, while Bartosz Baran aims to rise to the top of the setter rankings.

As the season unfolds, Stockport is committed to fighting for points in every match, demonstrating their resilience and ambition. With a blend of experience and fresh talent, they are ready to take on the challenges ahead.



Social channels



Stockportvolleyball



Stockportvolleyball

Sponsors

Funfit
Marlow Bride Solicitors
Life Leisure
Chic Bite Catering



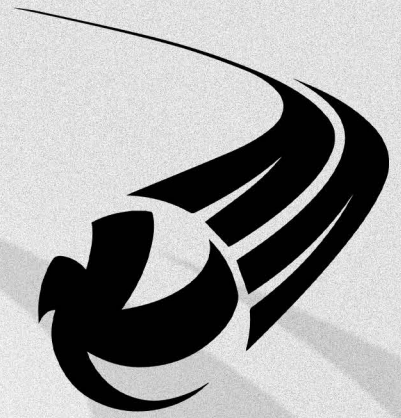
SOMETHING SWEET?

Sugar Rush have a plethora of sweet treats for you to get your teeth into!

MENU



OPENING WEEKEND



MEN'S SUPER
DYNAMIK Men's Super League

LITTLE GIANTS VOLLEYBALL

PALAT NATES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

MATCH 4

Volleyball England Opening Weekend 2024

London Giants

Match four

16:30 Saturday 12th October

Durham Palatinates

DYNAMIK | **MEN'S
SUPER
LEAGUE**



LONDON GIANTS

In just a few, short years, the London Giants have come a long way – and they aim to keep that momentum going now they have reached the Super League.

Formed as recently as 2016, the club only entered the NVL for the first time in 2019-20 season, but their progress since then has been impressive and swift.

While the men have reached the club's top flight, the women's team have the same lofty ambitions, having won promotion to Division 1 for the 2024-25 season on the back of winning all 14 Division 2 South matches to finish 13 points clear of their nearest challengers.

The men, who play out of Clapham Leisure Centre, have Simon Roscoe as their Head Coach, while Vincenzo Agrillo, who joined midway through last season, has continued in the role of captain.

Though Adam Barr has left for London Aces the club has been boosted by the signing of Noah Lassandro, a former college volleyball player, who brings a wealth of experience and, the club says, a big personality to match.

Roscoe steered his side to play-off victory over then-Super League side Newcastle Staffs in April, guiding them to a 30-28, 25-15, 25-23 at the Ashcombe School.

He is relishing the challenge of taking on the country's best and insists the club will be striving to take the next step and not settle for second best.

"Following on from the success of the team's recent seasons in the NVL, we've set some high goals for the season and looked at how we can collectively achieve these with the support of the club," he said.

"The team know we have a gap to bridge to the top teams in the country, but have the belief to achieve this.

"We are not content at merely being part of the Super League and have set ourselves the target of arriving at the Final 4 come the end of the season... we're looking forward to the new season ahead!"

One thing the club will be able to rely on is excellent - and noisy - support for their home games, as demonstrated last season.

The Giants are also looking forward to hosting the inaugural Super League Live broadcast at Crystal Palace on 24th November.



Social channels

 **LondonGiantsvolleyball**

 **Londongiantsvolleyballteams**

 **LondonGiantsvolleyball**

DURHAM PALATINATES

As the reigning Super League champions and National Cup holders – not to mention a brace of BUCS titles – Durham Palatinates' 2023-24 season could hardly have gone better.

And while they are well aware those twin successes in Volleyball England competitions will mean they are the team everyone wants to beat, they are quietly confident that they can mount a meaningful defence of both those crowns.

It was the National Cup win that came first at Cup Finals Weekend as the North Easterners held off a strong comeback from Malory Eagles to win 3-1.

A week later, 'Purple Power' was again evident as they overcame regular season table-toppers IBB Polonia 3-2 in an epic final that had supporters both at the National Volleyball Centre and watching on the live streaming on the edge of their seats.

As in previous years, there is a high turnover over players from one season to the next for Durham, as a number of scholars have moved on, but there is also an element of continuity, with five players from last year's squad returning.

They include Ace Backer, who played a pivotal role in the team's success last season as one of the Super League's top middles, Joe Linder, Joe Kobylarz, Jakub Graczyk and the experienced Max Gibbins, who now also doubles up as a coach.

Newcomers include exciting talent American talent Chey Cooper, who the Palatinates hope "will bring a new dimension" to their offence, having previously played for Fort Valley State University and George Mason University on the other side of the Atlantic.

He will be joined in the squad by fellow overseas players Jack Troy (Carnegie Mellon University and Steel City Surge), Alexei Walisser (MacEwan University), Owen Wienczkowski (Penn State and Behrend) and Andrew Boyle (UC San Diego),

English players who have joined the club this summer are Jack Baldwin, who has returned home following a spell with Solna Volleyball Kubb in Stockholm, Sweden, and Max Horsley, who previously played for Urmston Grammar.

For Durham, as Gibbins explains, the aim for the season is clear. "We want to match what we did last year," he said.

"It will be a tough ask, as the league continues to get stronger each year, but we're looking forward to the challenge and playing some fast, exciting volleyball along the way."



Social channels



Durham_volleyball



HER CALL

Supporting every female referee in England to develop, grow and further enhance their knowledge and experience of refereeing.

HER CALL



OPENING WEEKEND



DYNAMIK Men's Super League



MATCH 5

Malory Eagles UEL

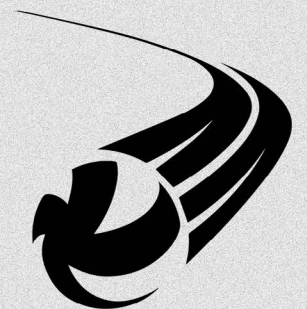
Match five

18:30 Saturday 12th October

Newcastle Knights

Volleyball England Opening Weekend 2024

DYNAMIK MEN'S
SUPER
LEAGUE



MALORY EAGLES UEL

Malory Eagles, the most successful club in the M men's top division history, are prepared for another exciting season after a strong campaign last year.

The Eagles reached the National Cup Final but were edged out by Durham, losing 3-1. They also played their part in a thrilling contest in the Final 4 against Essex Rebels, narrowly losing 3-2 in a hard-fought and highly-entertaining battle for the bronze medal.

This season, the Eagles are preparing for their opening match against the Newcastle Knights, a new team that has taken over from Team Sunderland for the 2024/25 season.

Last year, when Malory faced this weekend's opponents (who were then Team Sunderland), they secured two solid victories—winning 3-1 away and 3-0 at home at Ernest Bevin College. The team will look to carry that momentum forward as they take on the Knights in their new season opener.

The Eagles have added to their squad with several exciting new additions, including David Silva (UWE), Dan Hunter (Wessex), Dan Sampson (Richmond) and two stand-out players from the USA, Dalton Bunde and Bryce Boan. Silva, known for his dedication and tactical insight, brings leadership and positive energy both on and off the court.

Hunter, a former GB libero from the London 2012 Olympic squad, comes out of semi-retirement to add defensive experience and leadership.

Returning stars include Nathan Fullerton, the team's primary attacking threat, and Logan Clarke, whose experience in the middle will be key to the team's success. Dalton Bunde, known for his blistering speed, has earned the nickname "Speedy Gonzales" and promises to bring high-energy play to the squad.

The team has also bid farewell to several key players. Toby French steps away from the court to focus on family and his new role as club Chairman, while Chester Searle has moved to Stockport after qualifying as a pilot.

With a mixture of fresh young talent and experienced campaigners, Malory Eagles are looking to soar even higher this season.



Social channels



Malory Eagles



Malory Eagles Volleyball Club

Sponsors

Envirochem
Athlify



NEWCASTLE KNIGHTS

The newly-formed Newcastle Knights are building on Team Sunderland's legacy in the Men's top division, focusing on developing junior players by surrounding them with experienced postgraduates.

"With top-tier facilities, coaching and support, Newcastle and Northumbria have become a prime destination for players," said Head Coach Sam Shenton.

Last season, the team finished eighth in Super League, securing key wins against Newcastle Staffs, Richmond Docklands, and Essex Rebels in their ultimately successful bid to avoid the drop.

This season, the Knights face a tough opener against Malory Eagles, who defeated Team Sunderland twice last year.

Over the summer, the squad has been strengthened with English players James Ledbury, Isaac Gibbs, and Ryan Waudby, plus there have also been international recruits in the shape of Matthew Milne and Martini Costa.

Other exciting recruits, Neil Rea and Ryan Peace, have also joined the ranks from Rivier University in the USA.

Peace, a 6'8" middle, is a player the club believe is one to watch this season. Known for his mobility, athleticism and constant attacking presence, he is set to make a major impact for the Knights.

While remaining committed to youth development, Newcastle Knights believe they are now ready to challenge the league's top teams in 2024-25 with a well-crafted blend of up-and-coming hopefuls and well-established talent.



Social channels



Newcastleknightsvb



FIND A CLUB

DISCOVER YOUR LOCAL
CLUB WITH OUR CLUB FINDER



www.volleyballengland.org/clubs/club-finder