

Case Study

Arabella Lewendon

Topcoach Academy was launched in August 2016 with 40 coaches & instructors selected with a variety of qualifications and experience.

The project aims to;

- Create a more diverse coaching network to meet Suffolk's needs.
- Develop a suitably qualified workforce able to respond to the changing sector requirements.
- Raise the profile and demonstrate the impact of coaching across the county.
- Support partners to understand the benefits of matching the right coach to participant group.
- Embed a culture of self improvement within the coaching network.
- Link coaches with appropriate delivery opportunities.

#ExcellentEveryTime



Arabella, pictured at her Topcoach Academy induction.

Arabella talks to us about her coaching journey. Firstly why she wanted to become a coach;

"I wanted to give something back to the club and encourage those who wanted to get into running at a later age. I also wanted to reach out to those who may think running was just for fast competitive runners"

Since taking up coaching Arabella has found enjoyment in many areas of the role. She tells us what she enjoys most and one stand out memory;

"Seeing improvement in people who thought they couldn't run. I love seeing their reaction when they run non stop for a period of time. One of my favourite moments was having a 72 year old in one of my beginner groups asking if we could 'sprint again today' as she enjoyed it so much!"

Along her coaching journey Arabella has picked up some useful life skills that have had a great and positive impact in other areas of her life.

#TopcoachAcademy

"I now have the confidence to stand in front of a group and speak. I've needed to sharpen up my organisational skills in order to plan sessions"

"I run my own business and wasn't finding it very challenging anymore, I am now coaching and it has given me fresh challenges and things to work towards so boosting my all-round wellbeing."

Finally, Arabella comments on how being a member of the Academy has supported her;

"Excellent support, good workshops which have helped in my coaching. The opportunity to meet with coaches from different sporting fields other than running. Being an Academy member gave me the opportunity to lead beginner running courses outside my running club. I have led two of these now and doing these gave me to confidence to start my own running club up. There is someone to email should you have any questions or problems."

Below is a conversation seen on Facebook about one of Bella's sessions;

Suffolk Sport: "Beginner running this Saturday at Whitehouse in Ipswich is FULL to celebrate #WSW16"

Arabella: "Well done to you ladies who came to the session this morning. You all did really well. Hope you enjoyed it and see you next week."

Participant: "It was brilliant this morning, I really enjoyed it! Thank you! "



SUPPORTING WOMEN IN COACHING

What do you coach, to what ages and abilities?

I coach running. With my running club Stowmarket Striders I help coach juniors. They start at age 9 and are a mixed ability group. With my Run Together group The Happy Soles running group I coach a group of beginner adults.

Are you a volunteer or paid?

Volunteer with Stowmarket Striders and paid with my own group and Suffolk Sport.

How did you get into coaching?

I started running by joining the beginners running course held by Ipswich Jaffa. After the course I joined the club. I was then offered the opportunity to take the Leader in Running Fitness qualification and started coaching at the same group I started with. I had empathy with the members of the course as had I started the same way.

How long have you coached for?

I started in 2015 helping with the beginner runners at Jaffa.

