

THE Dukinfield-based Xarifa underwater hockey club has had double cause to celebrate in the last fortnight.

Having seen their under-16s become national champions, the club's 17-year-old player Sam Hall has been called up for Great Britain's under-19s squad.

He becomes the second Xarifa player to receive a GB call-up following Emily Hett's selection.

Like her, Hall will have his first outing for the GB squad at an event

Hall going to plan for Xarifa club

in Rennes, France, between July 11 and 14.

A trainee electrical engineer, Hall represented Manchester in last weekend's national finals.

Also successful were the club's under-16s who emerged victorious as 20 teams competed to become national champions.

Twenty teams were in action at Loughborough, some coming from as far afield as Devon and the Orkney Islands.

A very close game against the team from Orkney sealed Xarifa's victory with a draw, leaving the Orkney team in second place overall.

The next nearest competitors were from Solent as the last match of the day saw them pushed into third place and allowed Xarifa to carry the gold medals away.

Team coach Phil Thompson said: "It was a magnificent victory. The work they have put in over the last few years has paid off."