

2024/2025 SEASON



### WELCOME TO PRESENTATION EVENING 2025

First of all, a warm welcome to everyone joining us this evening as we come together to celebrate the 2024–25 season. It's hard to believe how quickly the season has passed—it feels like it only just began. Thank you all for being here to honour the achievements of our teams throughout the year.

Once again, our players have embraced a season of intense competition across the country, all while successfully managing travel, school, and other responsibilities. It's been fantastic to witness the progress and development across all our age groups.

Several of our teams have enjoyed success on the court this season, with special recognition going to the U12 Boys, U16 Boys and Division 2 Men for winning their respective divisions. Whilst the U14 Boys, U18 Men and D2 Women all finished second in their leagues, which is a fantastic achievement for each of those squads.

The 2024/25 season welcomed the introduction of a second U18 team, offering strong competition for players beyond the Premier squad and giving high-performing U16s the chance to challenge themselves at the next level. This year also marked our first entry of a U15 team into the U16 National League—a valuable step that greatly supported their development.

This season, our Kestrels City League has continued to grow. Building on the foundations of the past two seasons with U12, U14 and U16 divisions, doubling our capacity across two courts. As a result, more than 150 children have been able to access the game and benefit from the structured, entry-level competition the league provides. It has also proven to be an effective pathway for talent identification, with several players making the step up to our National League teams.

Our mini basketball and girls' introductory sessions have continued to grow throughout the year, and we've also offered our club players valuable one-on-one training opportunities with National League coaches and senior team members.

Our senior teams continue to inspire our junior players, with many club members regularly coming together on Saturdays to cheer them on. A clear reflection of this vibrant support is the Division 2 Men being awarded the Best Game Day Experience in NBL Division 2.

The club continues to thrive thanks to the unwavering dedication of our incredible volunteers, whose efforts are especially visible on junior game days. Their support reflects the strong sense of community we foster within the Kestrels Family. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has contributed this season, no matter how big or small—your efforts are truly appreciated. Enjoy this evening's celebrations!

### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U12 GIRLS









Tilly Goddard Faith Mcdowall Aimee Nwabisi Anna Idiata Mendez Amber Bartlett



**Dan Mayer** – Big thanks to Dan the van driver, always organised and goes the extra mile, even using his own time to get things sorted. Becoming a photographer for the girls and buying them all ice cream to celebrate. A true team player and the perfect mascot in his Kestrels outfit – had everyone laughing. Legend!

**Sue Mayer** – Thank you for stepping up and going away on the mini bus when we need the extra adults and stepping up and organising the kit when our Team Manager was unavailable!

**Hannah Baker** – Thank you for being another mother to all the girls. You became a water women, I'm glad I could help you get your steps in! Thank you for taking the kit and balls when I needed the extra pair of hands!





#### **Best Moment/Game?**

Coming back in the Essex charge game and winning in overtime, the girls played so well to fight back and go to overtime eventually winning!

### **Most Funny Moment?**

Dan Mayer turning up to our last home game in his mascot blow up suit, a lot of laughs for everyone.

#### **Standout Individual Performance?**

In the Essex game, Mea missed her layup but worked really hard to get a steal back on defence and give Tessa an assist to win the game! A true show of never giving up and not letting any mistakes get you down.







### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U12 BOYS







Dropped into the country's toughest U12 league – Region 1 – where Richmond, Southend and Sussex were pencilled in as likely winners, our boys flipped the script! We capped a remarkable campaign with a 22-point dismantling of Southend, finishing 14-2 and lifting the title.

A fast-paced, well-balanced offence set the tone. DeAndre (16.2 ppg) mixed ankle-snapping handles with unstoppable drives; Max (14.8) attacked the rim relentlessly and never hesitated in clutch time; Elijah (13.7) was Mr Consistent, stacking points, assists and rebounds; Elliott (13.7) blended scoring flair with bruising hustle and a never-say-die attitude; and Finn N (10.2) punished any defence that dared to sag with outside shooting. Orchestrating it all, Archie G marshalled the back line and the huddle with poise, setting the standard for the full-court pressure that became our trademark.

Our depth swung the tight games. Big men – Archie M and JJ guarded the paint and crashed the boards at both end; Finn "Down(town)" supplied long-range fireworks; Gabriel and Julian injected instant tempo; Brody linked every play – always putting the team first; Martin turned 50–50s into 100–0s with lightning quickness; and Will flashed exciting promise of what's to come with some fantastic finishes. No surprise that Archie G, DeAndre, Elijah, Finn N, Max and Will earned Aspire Programme call–ups – proof of the talent on show every session!

A few well-earned shout-outs: Rob, our Bus Driver of the Year, steered us through five six-hour round-trips without a hitch; Jules kept everything running smoothly as a brilliant team manager; and Coach Carl moves on after three seasons side by side – going to miss you, mate!! To the parents and families, whose lifts, cheers and unwavering support powered us from the first tip-off to the final buzzer: thank you.

See you next season!

Coach Jon

**Rob Nicholson** – (CDOTY) Coach Driver of The Year! **Jules Nicholls** – (TMOTY) Team Manager of The Year!

#### **Best Moment/Game?**

Moment: DeAndre hitting the half court three to win the game against Richmond (please share a video for this, if possible! Let me know if you need one)

Game: Away to Southend. Title decider – best performance I've ever seen from an Under12 team.

Phenomenal game at both ends of the floor.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

Finn Nicholls locker-room celebration after we won the league!

### **Standout Individual Performance?**

JJ Bowens having the game of his life away to Southend in final game of the season. Locked up the 'best player in the South', snagged 15+ rebounds and poured in a season high 13 points.







### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U14 GIRLS







The season was full of ups and downs this year – as you would expect in any U14 age group! We lost games we shouldn't have – Kingston at home, Bristol and Reading away – but we learnt from these games and continued to get better game by game. With our last game Vs Ipswich (a team we lost by 20 away) being our best game of the season. Moving the ball, finding open looks and playing best team basketball of the season to gain the win. Unfortunately this left us joint 4th with Ipswich in the league, they won the head to head so advanced to play offs and we missed out.

However, I know this group is going to come back stronger and will continue loving the game and enjoying playing basketball together. This team is so fun to coach, they compete, they challenge me to ensure training sessions push them to the next level and they have fun while they do it. You can see in every session players improving and supporting each other to get better. They celebrate each others success, whilst not accepting their spot in the team – they want to get better than each other but it's done in the right way!

We had new additions to the club this season with Ruby, Willow and Dulce – all three of these have improved no end and I look forward to seeing what they can do next season in U14s.

We had leadership from those more experienced players – Myah, Immy and Ava. All played a part in our success this season by taking on scoring load, communicating with younger players and showing heart while on the court.

Brooke and Bobbi's passion to compete and win shown throughout all games and both supported the three above in scoring load and locking in on defence. We had a tough game Vs Oaklands away (never won there until this season) and both these two were influential in winning that game.

Looking forward to seeing them progress further as U14s next season! I could talk about all 15 of our players – everyone contributed amazingly this season and all could be up for a MIP award! I have loved coaching this group this season and look forward to seeing their progress next season and beyond!

**Chris Sheldrick** – Thankyou for stepping in as assisting coach and helping with the tough games and rotations. We do not get to the games without you as well – so Thankyou for driving the mini bus – much appreciated.

**Martene Sheldrick** – Thanks for taking on the role as team manager, sorting transport, leave times and communicating throughout! Makes my life so much easier.

**Glory Uzomefuna** – Thanks for assisting this year, not many people your age would commit to 2 training sessions a week and games. You never missed anything and we appreciate you for that. You did it in your style, you grew as a coach and the girls appreciate you being about! Keep coaching!

**Parents** – Thanks for your support at games! It always helps when we have noise – sixth man effect! Thanks for letting me coach the girls and trusting me to get the best out of them.

#### **Best Moment/Game?**

Last game of season Vs Ipswich. The girls played the best team basketball I had seen them play all season (it's a shame it took us until last game of season!). Transition offence was lead by Trinity and Lucy making sure they found the runners out wide. Once they stopped the transition offence Myah and Brooke put on a shooting display – scoring strongly from outside. While Immy continued to take the ball to the basket and score through traffic. Mia Blunt continued her offensive form, coming in and making key baskets to keep the score board ticking along. Whilst Bobbi and Dulce helped us control the boards and put in a defensive display any coach would be proud of. It was a real TEAM performance! To do it against Ipswich was a bonus!

### **Most Funny Moment?**

When you coach this group there are a lot of funny moments! We have some jokers – led by Immy, who likes to encourage the young ones. – The blessing of the boots before the game, was an interesting one – The videos made to tell us they are starving and really need to stop at a service station – Of course Karaoke on the bus – led by Myahs vocals

#### Standout Individual Performance?

Myah Sheldrick has had many! I couldn't pick one out. She has carried us in scoring this year, scoring 30 plus every game, good game or not she puts the ball in the basket! Without this we don't win game. Ipswich was her redemption game! Away she play well but not up to her expectations. The home game she lead the charge. Scoring from the inside and outside. Locking down on defence and rebounding the ball well. Last season, rebounding was something she was not doing automatically. This year because she had to, and she likes winning! She rebounded better and better with every game. I would say the majority of games she had a double – double. A talent – if she keeps working on the lateral speed, defence and IQ – she is going to be great.







### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U114 BOYS



We had a solid year with plenty of success and growth as individuals and as a unit. We finished second in the league, just behind Bracknell, who we lost to twice. Unfortunately after dropping a third game to Brighton, our playoff hopes disappeared. Despite this, the boys have grown a lot, especially with becoming better competitors.

#### **Thank You's**

**Melanie Lyons** for going above and beyond as a team manager.

**Neil Gillespie** for his long days driving the bus after coming to/from Weymouth.

James Moth for helping with bus driving.

**Sarah Powell** for stepping in as team manager when Melanie wasn't available.



Brighton Cougars – Home. Struggled to find a rhythm all game and the game went to overtime. Something sparked inside the boys and they dominated the overtime to win by double figures.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

Albert somehow making it through the changing room, and sitting through half of the girls game before us, before it being pointed out that he has the wrong colour kit on.

### **Standout Individual Performance?**

Koani Moth during our second game against Brighton and his second game overall with us due to his late joining of the team. Koani was still a big question mark at this point as he was so new to the squad. We started the game slow with 1 basket in 5 minutes. Koani came in and scored immediately, then got 2 free throws the next possession. His tenacity changed the energy of the team. He likely had near 10 rebounds by half time, and finished as our top scorer in what ended up being a close loss. He catapulted himself straight to being a key player for us, all in one big game.





### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U16 GIRLS







This season has been a journey from the first moment we stepped on the court until the very last game of the season. Both myself, Chris and all of the girls knew it wasn't going to be an easy journey and that we would have to work extremely hard throughout to be successful.

For us, success wasn't about how many games we were winning it was about the smaller goals which we set for the girls each game. Some games they paid off, some they didn't.

Overall, we are extremely proud of what the girls achieved throughout the season in U16 Prem. We set them a target to remain in the league which was definitely tough in moments, but when the girls needed to step up they did and we succeeded in that goal and finished 8th overall.

The girls worked extremely hard throughout training sessions and it was great to see them not only develop as a team but as individual basketball players. We have been extremely grateful to work with such a fantastic bunch this season.

To those who are moving on, it has been a pleasure coaching you during your time at Solent. For those of you staying, let the hard work continue in the 25–26 season!

#### Thank You's

Firstly a huge thank you to **Steve Houlton** who has quite literally driven across what feels like the whole of the South of England, driving the bus for every single one of our games. We have had a lot of early get ups and even earlier get ups for him. It is hugely appreciated all what you have done! Not sure what I will do next season without you! Second, a huge thank you to **Rachel** for being my team manager this season. Whether that be listening to me rant about teams changing tip times or me sending messages checking where the kit is. Thank you for all you have done! Lastly, I want to give a shout out to all of the parents! This year I have been blown away with the amount of support we have had at our home games but also our away games this season. It has meant the world to the girls but also to us that you have joined us on our journeys to Ipswich, Southend or into London and have you cheering loudly on the sidelines.

### **Best Moment/Game?**

There are a few games which pop up into both mine and Chris' mind when we think about the 'best game'. All for very similar reasons, the way to describe it was how they battled to grind out the game.

During the Southend game, we went away to them having lost at home by 5. We didn't make it easy in the first half that's for sure, but the girls continued to battle hard and they put in quite possibly one of the best 3rd quarters I have ever coached to pull away and seal the game before we had even got into the fourth quarter.

BAD Thunder and Ipswich also. The girls knew they had to go out and get the job done at home to keep our hopes of staying in the Prem division alive. They fought defensively, they listened carefully and executed more consistently offensively whilst battling for everything else.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

It would have to be Chris' Christmas Extravaganza training session just before we broke up for Christmas. It was full of a lot of laughs and Christmas spirit, but who knew a bunch of girls could get so competitive for some small prizes (chocolate coins and celebrations).

Alongside this, all of the journeys we have shared throughout the season. We have spent a lot of time on the bus travelling and the laughter and singing (whether or not it is in tune) has just been great to hear.

### **Standout Individual Performance?**

For us, it has to be Isabelle Lee's solid second half defensive performance vs BAD Thunder at home. We needed someone to come up and defend to the best of their ability to shut down problem players whilst keeping certain players on the court without them getting in foul trouble. And boy was she up to the task! It was a coaches dream to have a player go out and execute a job in the way that she did which in turn led to us walking away with a huge win at the end of the game.







## TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U116 BOYS



Team competed at a high standard all year with a 20–0 league record and reaching the last 16 of the national cup. All improved throughout the season despite the lack of competition. Unfortunately unsuccessful in the Promotional Playoffs losing out to a strong Brent Panthers team by 7 points.

### Thank You's

Claire Payne (Minibus Driver)

Jo Quester (Team Manager)

### **Best Game/Moment?**

National Cup win versus Huish Taunton Tigers on the road.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

Just a fun season!

#### Standout Individual Performance?

Javen Owusu vs. Huish Taunton Tigers (National Cup) – 33 Points





### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U16 BOYS II



Tough season but showed great progress and probably finished where we deserved.

### **Thank You's**

Ian Dunn - Team Manager

Tim Ludlow & Simon Groves - Bus Drivers

### **Best Game/Moment?**

Off the backboard dunk - Ahaan to Sunny.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

Junior hanging off ring and breaking it at Salisbury!

### **Standout Individual Performance?**

**Sunny Ludlow** – 32 points v Portsmouth





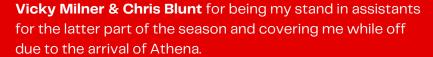
## TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U18 MONEN



Positive season, these ladies have been stretched across multiple competitions this year and fatigue has shown throughout. However, they have battled through and given it their all!! I would say the effort and determination they have shown throughout has been nothing short of incredible! I'm very happy with how this season went! Disappointing end having narrowly missing out on final fours. However, the manor in which they fought in this game was absolutely amazing!

### Thank You's

**Sarah Goddard,** and **Jen Murfitt** for helping out with Logistics!



**Kath Blandford, Chris Blunt & Chris Sheldrick** for giving up their time to drive the minibus to away games at a moments notice!



My favourite moment as a coach this season came in the game where we hosted COLA. The game in itself was a game of two halves. What made it the best for me is the fight and desire that these young women played with! They really started the game off hot and they did not have any fear of the opponents! Unfortunately the second half, the opponents started to get hot from 3pt territory and that was too much for us to pull back in the end! But for me that was up there as my favourite game.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

I think elbow gate from Aimee is my funniest moment of the season by far.

### **Standout Individual Performance?**

Faith McDowall getting hot in the London Thunder game right in from of the heater and laughing about it during the game! Faith couldn't miss!





### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U18 MEN





This has been a really successful season for our group, we finished 2nd in the U18 Western Premier with an 18-4 record, we reached the semi finals of the National Cup losing by just 3 points to Charnwood and the quarter

finals of the playoffs, where we lost by 4 to Sussex Storm.

The season started with a handful of victories for us before we dropped our first game on the road at Reading, followed by one of our best performances of the season at home to MK Breakers which kick started a 9 game win streak for us in the league and cup. Along that run of games to take us into the Christmas Break we knocked off Sussex Storm on the road (Eastern Premier Winners) in the National Cup, before beating London Westside Rangers in the quarter finals in another contender for game of the season. We toughed out a really gritty win at Brighton Bears before closing 2024 with a vintage road performance at London Elite, taking us into the break 8–1 in league play with a semi final to come in January.



We came up short against Charnwood in the cup semi final, after fighting back from down 16, eventually losing 75–78. We then went on to win 7 of the next 8 in the league to keep pace at the top with Reading and London Elite. This set up a nervy finish to the league for us as we needed to win two difficult road games against Surrey Rams and Cardiff and Vale College, to continue to put pressure on Reading Rockets. We lost out in both of those games much to the boys disappointment but due to other results we still finished up 2nd behind the Rockets.



With a renewed focus we headed into the playoffs as the 6th seed, playing host to London Stars (Eastern Premier 4th place). It was one of the best displays of the season from our boys as they weathered a number of Stars runs to control the game for long spells. We would go on to win 85–70 to set up a quarter final on the road at Sussex Storm. This was unfortunately where our season came to an end, as despite a batting effort, we lost out narrowly 65–69.

The group have been a real joy to coach this season, the growth in not just the team but each of the individuals within our squad has been substantial. We demand a lot from the guys at this level and they have responded by showing up ready to work, taking care of their bodies and accepting feedback on a consistent basis. The amount of time they spend with each other certainly helps our chemistry and overall culture within the group and I hope they are able to take life long friendships with them beyond our team. They deserve all the credit for an excellent season and despite a handful of results not going our way, I hope they are able to see just how much they've all grown and that that is the real victory for us.

I want to thank my partner Yasmin, for being so supportive and allowing me to pour everything into my role as a coach with this group and at Itchen. I'd like to thank all of the parents for their unrivalled support this season both on and off the court, you guys are the real reason that the boys get the privilege to play basketball at a high level everyday. My assistant coach Khalid Missouri, who is nothing short of amazing, adding value and energy to our group whenever and where ever it is needed, he is as passionate as anyone about the growth and development of our boys and I am forever grateful for his impact. Our Team Managers Ben Peacock & Martin Wood, I know how desperate you both were to be TM so we let you both do it, thank you for all of your efforts throughout the season! Warren Lotriet and Piotr Ofman who drove the minibuses for us during the season, we really appreciate you giving up your free time to support the boys. I'd also like to thank Matt Guymon, who although we spend almost everyday together during the season, is on hand whenever I need to float a solution, ask advice or just be a sound board for my 100 mile an hour thought processes. And finally everyone at the club, the directors, the safeguarding team, the officials team and all other volunteers, you guys give so much time to make the whole thing tick smoothly and I am grateful for all that you do!

### **Best Moment/Game?**

Sussex Storm (A) National Cup - 64-62 (W) - Huge performance on the road to knock out Sussex on their home floor.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

Big time performances from the guys at the Battle of the Bands Christmas Karaoke!

### Standout Individual Performance?

**Jakub Ofman** at. Sussex Storm (National Cup) – 29 points, 11 rebounds, 3 steals







### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS U18 MEN II



Overcame a lot of obstacles, played very well at full strength but that wasn't often due to multiple reasons. But every single one of them was a joy to be around.

Finished 4<sup>th</sup> I believe but we're in the top of the table all year and I'm proud of the young men for the season they have had.

Thank You's

Zoe Wakefield

**Tim and Sarah Powell** 

SashoYankowlski

**Best Game/Moment?**Anytime Javen dunked.

Most Funny Moment? Aston's in game "dunk"

### **Standout Individual Performance?**

James Powell's 3 point parade when we had 6 players on the road against True Vision Elite Black





### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS D2 MOMENT







The season of 2 halves

After a disappointing season getting relegated from D1 in the 23/24 season and previous seasons where the Itchen Academy players were not getting many opportunities at senior WNBL level we decided to start this season with virtually all Academy players and Chloe Lammas as a returning player to bring some maturity and experience. This very young group performed admirably considering the amount of basketball they were playing but injuries started to build and we struggled to field competitive teams towards the midpoint of the season.

After a really disappointing defeat against bottom of the table Stevenage Royals in mid January we decided to bring in some local senior players to strengthen the team and challenge the juniors in a constructive way. The 'Stay Ready Seniors' Andrea, Jodi & Earla were signed and had an immediate impact in their first game against London Cavaliers 2. And we were off...

The team continued on a winning streak to finish the regular season 6-1 including an improbable 35 point win against East London Phoenix at home who we needed to beat by at least 30 to give ourselves the best chance of a playoff berth. Due to other results this led to us finishing 2nd in the league and entering the playoffs in great defensive form and a home draw. Our playoff run started against City of Birmingham Rockets and the ladies locked in holding them to a meagre 30 points for the game and frustrating the Rockets two key scorers. But the miraculous run came to an end in the semi final against D2 Pool 1 winners Milton Keynes Breakers. The final result really doesn't reflect how hard these ladies have worked and how far they have come as a team. The future is bright for these ladies...

Tilly Goddard, Maeve Blandford & Amber Bartlett attending practices and games despite serious injuries.

Jerry Merrill and Sarah Goddard as team managers.

Chris Sheldrick, Matt Bishop, Kris Dennis & Chloe Lammas for driving.

Martene Sheldrick, Aimee Blunt, Silvia Mendez and everybody else who helped with Lotta.

### **Best Moment/Game?**

The 3 pointer to put us up enough to clinch the playoffs/2<sup>nd</sup> place in the last home game of the season vs East London Phoenix.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

On 2 occasions I tried to sub in players who were injured earlier in the game.

### **Standout Individual Performance?**

**Faith McDowall-Dodd** with a near triple double 12 points, 9 rebounds & 8 assists vs. East London Phoenix in the biggest game of the season.







### TEAM SOLENT KESTRELS D2 MEN







This season has been full of challenges, but those very obstacles have helped our group grow tremendously over the course of the year. Coming into the season, we knew we'd be replacing several key players from last year's strong squad. With the additions of experienced players like Andre Arissol and Gregoire Durand, along with frontcourt reinforcements in Wayne Kitenge and Itchen College's Jaidan Dawes, we believed we had the pieces to be successful—it would just take time for everything to come together.

After a preseason friendly against Portsmouth Force, we began our KitKing Trophy campaign with a tough matchup against Division 1 favourites Reading Rockets, where we suffered a convincing defeat. This was followed by another loss to Barking Abbey. Although spirits were low, the team responded with resilience, regrouping to secure a win over Worthing Thunder and advance to the quarter–finals of the KitKing Trophy against Derby Trailblazers. Despite a narrow loss to Derby, we carried momentum into league play and got off to a strong start.

A league loss to NASSA sparked a renewed focus in the group, helping us claim impressive wins over D1 teams Worthing Thunder and London Cavaliers. Our National Cup run eventually ended with a narrow quarter-final loss to Reading Rockets.

In January, we returned to league play and continued to build momentum, battling with Barking Abbey and London Stars for the league title. Although we fell short against both, favorable results elsewhere allowed us to clinch the NBL Division 2 League Championship.

The playoffs began the following week. After a hard-fought win over Manchester Magic and a dominant semi-final performance against London Stars. Last weekend saw us cap off a league and playoff double as we defeated Barking Abbey in the playoff final, in perhaps our best performance of the season.

**Matt Bishop (Logistics)** 

Ash Briggs (Driving)

**David & Amanda Lemarquand** 

**Sean & Zoe Daniel** 

**Molly Clark (Sports Therapy)** 

**SONAR TV & All Game Day staff** 

### **Best Moment/Game?**

We have been fortunate to welcome many different schools this year to home games, which has helped create an amazing atmosphere. Defeating London Stars to progress to the Playoff Final in front of a home crowd. An amazing team performance vs Barking Abbey at home.

### **Most Funny Moment?**

When Kai Johnson put on the Instagram story the reason Ash wasn't able to play the game was because he had his ears pierced.

Standout Individual Performance?
Andre Arissol vs. London Stars (A) 35 points, 12 assists and 7 steals.

Greg Durand vs. Barking Abbey (H) 28 points

Russ Gareipy vs. Richmond Knights (H) 29 Points

Isa Brandon vs. Richmond Knights (A) 33 points and 6 rebounds.

Andre Arissol vs. Barking Abbey (Final) 37 points, 5 assists, 5 steals.









# **EthOss**Grow Stronger

Piccolo Mondo

IIII 5G.

