



# Press Release

For immediate release

31<sup>st</sup> October 2017

## **LTA PATRON HRH THE DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE PAYS MAIDEN VISIT TO THE NATIONAL TENNIS CENTRE**

***The Duchess of Cambridge is the Patron of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and took part in a Tennis For Kids coaching session***

HRH The Duchess of Cambridge took to the court today with junior players during a visit to the National Tennis Centre (NTC) in Roehampton, London.

The Duchess is the Patron of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), and took part in a Tennis For Kids coaching session, playing tennis games with young players from five local schools.

Tennis For Kids has introduced more than 30,000 5-8 year old children to tennis for the first time since it was set up following Great Britain's historic 2015 Davis Cup victory. The Duchess was joined by British No.1 and Wimbledon 2017 semi-finalist Johanna Konta, a Tennis For Kids ambassador.

Following the visit, Konta said: "It was fantastic to meet Her Royal Highness today. She is an incredibly kind and gracious person and that really came through with the interaction I had with her. She asked about my season and the Tennis For Kids activity on court. Having someone like her visit today, with such a passion and interest for the game, brings only good things for our sport.

"To have someone like The Duchess, with such a high profile and influence, here today to bring such positivity to the sport and interest in activities like the Tennis For Kids programme is great for the sport. The more opportunities we have to shine a light on the sport and instil that passion for playing from an early age the better.

"The children today were so excited to meet a 'princess' and to see them enjoying themselves on court is exactly what this is all about."

The Duchess, who is a keen tennis player, was greeted by the LTA President Martin Corrie and introduced to LTA colleagues from teams that are helping grow the grass roots game, as well as Sports Science staff that support high performance athletes in areas such as physiotherapy and nutrition.

The Duchess also met: Jeremy Bates, Head Coach of Women's Tennis, Anne Keothavong, Great Britain Fed Cup Captain, Leon Smith, OBE, Head Coach of Men's Tennis and Great Britain Davis Cup Captain

Speaking after the visit, LTA President Martin Corrie said: "We are delighted to have welcomed Her Royal Highness to the National Tennis Centre today. We are honoured to have her as our Patron and to be able to give an insight into the work the LTA is doing to get more people playing tennis more often. Our Tennis For Kids programme has been a great success and it's been fantastic to see Her Royal Highness on court and interacting so enthusiastically with the children."

The Duchess then took to the court with Alfie Hewett, Paralympic Silver Medallist and three-time Grand Slam winner, for a wheelchair tennis training session. Speaking on his meeting with The Duchess, Hewett said: "It was a real honour to have The Duchess here today and for us to demonstrate different aspects of tennis. It was great to showcase wheelchair tennis alongside the Tennis For Kids and Junior coaching. For The Duchess to get involved in all of these shows real respect from her and her presence helps show the nation that there is so much more to tennis."

In addition, The Duchess also met with coaches and administrators from the Coach Core programme. Coach Core is an apprenticeship programme that looks to support young people to build a career in sports coaching, giving them the qualifications, skills and expertise to be successful and more employable, whilst also becoming role models for their students and the wider community. Coach Core is run by The Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry.

Upon departure, The Duchess was presented with flowers and gifts from Olivia Lake, Children's Heart Federation, and Ethan Ralph, a patient of the Royal Marsden Hospital.

**IMAGES-** [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/1h6yged0ge3ncqh/AAbaxdqYQqr6HfDIz4\\_2qn-a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/1h6yged0ge3ncqh/AAbaxdqYQqr6HfDIz4_2qn-a?dl=0)

Please credit 'British Tennis'

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#### **Notes to Editors:**

*The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the National Governing Body for tennis in Great Britain, responsible for developing and promoting the sport, with a mission to get more people playing tennis more often. It does this under the consumer brand of British Tennis, by working with a broad range of partners and over 25,000 volunteers, to grow the game in communities, clubs and schools. The LTA represents the interests of over 590,000 British Tennis Members, men and women, girls and boys across the country, playing on more than 23,000 courts. The LTA runs and supports a network of 11,500 approved tournaments for players of all ages, the corner-stones of which are the premier grass court events leading up to Wimbledon, held in Nottingham, Birmingham, Queen's Club-London and Eastbourne, all title sponsored by Aegon. The LTA works with many delivery partners to grow the sport across the country. One of these is its charitable entity, the Tennis Foundation, to provide a tennis provision for more than 20,000 schools, disadvantaged youth as well as promoting tennis as an inclusive sport for anyone with a disability. For further information about the LTA and British Tennis, and to review the British Tennis strategy for 2015-2019 visit [www.lta.org.uk](http://www.lta.org.uk) or follow us on Twitter @BritishTennis.*