



Press Release

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LTA 'COLOUR HOLDER' PROGRAMME TO RECOGNISE AND CELEBRATE TENNIS PLAYERS THAT HAVE REPRESENTED GREAT BRITAIN

- Revival of a tennis tradition, with Colour Holder status being the equivalent of receiving a cap in rugby or football
- Marks 125 years since first ever players stepped on to court to represent GB at tennis
- Only 314 players have ever represented GB at tennis – with each player given a personal sequential number
- Wheelchair Tennis players become Colour Holders for first time, alongside non-wheelchair players
- The LTA has worked with former players to develop the new Colour Holders programme

The LTA, the national governing body for tennis in Britain, has today unveiled a new 'Colour Holders' programme, designed to acknowledge and celebrate players who have represented Great Britain at tennis.

The revival of Colour Holders this year, which for the first time now also recognises wheelchair tennis players alongside non-wheelchair players, marks 125 years since the first ever players competed for Great Britain in tennis at the 1896 Olympics in Athens.

Historically, from the early 20th Century up until the 80's, players would receive a 'Colour' when they played for Great Britain, the equivalent of receiving a cap in football or rugby. Becoming a Colour Holder was indicated by a unique shield, which has been given a refresh and will be taken forward as the new symbol of Colour Holders.

As part of the re-introduction of the programme and following the collation of historical records, the LTA has produced a sequential list of all players to have ever represented Great Britain at tennis since those very first ones 125 years ago. There are currently only 314 players ever to have done so, with each player having been allocated their own personal number to reflect their place on the list.

A player becomes a Colour Holder when they first step on court to represent Great Britain in one of the Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup (formerly the Fed Cup), Wheelchair Tennis World Team Cup or the Olympics & Paralympic Games. Players who participated in two past international team tennis competitions - the Wightman Cup and Kings Cup - are also included on the Colour Holder list.

The programme will also provide the opportunity to collaborate and engage with Colour Holders as the LTA continues its work to open up tennis to many more people across Britain.

LTA CEO, Scott Lloyd said: "We are excited to relaunch Colour Holders to the British tennis community. Representing your country in any sport is a special achievement, and tennis is no different. Through the reintroduction of the programme and the allocation of personal representative numbers to each player, it is an accomplishment that we want to ensure is widely recognised and celebrated for players past, present and future."

The reintroduction of the programme has been done in consultation with former players and led by LTA President David Rawlinson: "I'd like to thank all of those who have contributed to the development of the new programme. Representing your country provides a status that a player can carry with them for the rest of their lives, and the new Colour Holders programme allows us to celebrate that in a fitting way and ensure our leading players continue to feel a valued part of the British tennis family."

To celebrate the launch of the Colour Holders programme, the LTA has produced a video featuring contributions from Virginia Wade, Tim Henman and Peter Norfolk. Colour Holder No. 144, Wade said: "It is great that Colour Holders has been revived to acknowledge all the players that have represented Great Britain in tennis. I feel proud to be a Colour Holder - there is great history to this programme and to see so many names on the list is fantastic."

To find out more about the Colour Holders programme and see the full list of 314 Colour Holders and their individual sequential numbers, visit <https://www.lta.org.uk/colourholders>

To view the Colour Holders video, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LY3ktrFQivg>

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Colour Holder Facts

- Colour Holder No. 1 – John Boland (1896 debut)
- First female Colour Holder No. 7 – Charlotte Cooper (nee Sterry) (1900 debut)
- First Wheelchair Tennis Colour Holder No. 187 – Simon Hatt (1986 debut)
- Colour Holder No. 100 – Donald McPhail (1946 debut)
- Colour Holder No. 200 – Danny Sapsford (1990 debut)
- Colour Holder No. 300 – Kyle Edmund (2015 debut)
- Most recent Colour Holder No. 314 – Abbie Breakwell (2021 debut)
- Virginia Wade – Colour Holder No. 144 (1965 debut)
- Peter Norfolk – Colour Holder No. 242 (2001 debut)
- Andy Murray – Colour Holder No. 256 (2005 debut)

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

ABOUT THE LTA

The LTA is the National Governing Body of tennis in Great Britain. We are here to govern and grow tennis, from grassroots participation through to the professional game. Our vision is "Tennis Opened Up" and we're on a mission to grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable. We work with schools, with volunteers, with coaches and with venues across the whole country. We also represent the interests of over 685,000 Members, men and women, girls and boys, 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 four corner-stones of which are the premier grass-court events leading up to The Championships, Wimbledon: the Nottingham Open, the Birmingham Classic, the cinch Championships (at The Queen's Club, London) and the Eastbourne International. For further information about the LTA and tennis in Britain, visit www.lta.org.uk or follow us on Twitter @the_LTA