

## Press Release

Wednesday 29 July, 2020

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 11:30AM**

### **Michael Bourne appointed as new LTA Performance Director**

Michael Bourne, currently Acting Director of Performance at UK Sport, has been appointed as the LTA's new Performance Director. In his current role he has oversight and responsibility for UK Sport's Performance Teams and their investment into and support of elite athlete preparations across the full range of Olympic and Paralympic sports.

At the LTA Michael will oversee a national network of coaches and performance support services implementing the LTA's Performance strategy across both the able-bodied and wheelchair programme, which sets out a clear player pathway for tennis players from junior level through to the professional game.

He is a leading figure working in sports performance in the UK and brings with him extensive experience of performance programmes, including a clear understanding of the critical factors for elite player development and recognition of the importance and role of the coach and player dynamic. His work has also focused on how best to transition players through each stage of a performance pathway and the importance of creating the right culture.

**Scott Lloyd**, Chief Executive of the LTA, said: *"Michael is a hugely respected figure within British sport and he will be an invaluable addition to our team. He combines a rare understanding of elite performance culture with a formidable record of helping sports deliver better results across the whole of their performance programmes. These skills will complement the existing tennis knowledge we already have at the LTA and he will bring significant experience, expertise and challenge to our strategy.*

*His main responsibility will be to lead the continued development and delivery of the performance strategy for the LTA player pathway. This management role requires experience of running successful performance programmes at a world class athlete level in order to enable and empower the network of national, regional, and local coaches who work with the very best players across Britain to inspire and develop them to the top of the world's game.*

*I'd like to thank Tim Henman and Sir David Tanner who have been a key part of this appointment process. Their involvement, alongside Jamie Delgado and Clare Wood, in the LTA Performance Advisory Group has proved to be extremely valuable to myself and the performance team and we will be seeking to enhance the remit and the size of the group in due course."*

**Tim Henman**, member of the LTA's Performance Advisory Group said: *"Michael was the standout candidate from a global search. He has a great understanding of performance culture and what can make the difference for the very best athletes. His ability to drive innovation and new performance thinking in our sport is crucial if we are to become one of the most respected nations*

*in the world for player development. The existing performance pathway provides a strong system that caters for players in all age groups, and we feel Michael is the ideal person to continue that journey and take it to the next level.”*

**Michael Bourne** said: *“I am delighted to be joining the LTA and playing a key role in realising the LTA’s vision of ‘Tennis Opened Up’. I look forward to working with the LTA performance team and partnering with players and their support networks, alongside the wider British tennis community to maintain consistency in the player pathway while also building upon its strengths to enable more British players to transition to elite levels of performance, major tournament success and inspiring professional careers.”*

Michael has been at UK Sport since 2014, first as Head of the Performance Advisor team then from 2016 as Deputy Director of Performance Services. In this role he led on monitoring and supporting sports delivery of their performance strategies and had oversight of UK Sport’s teams covering sport case management, the application of data and intelligence to performance and athlete depth and development pathways.

Prior to UK Sport Michael spent five years at the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), first as National Lead for Performance Analysis and then as Head of Science and Medicine. His career began supporting British Shooting into the 2004 Athens Olympics followed by five years as a Performance Analyst in the English Institute of Sport. Michael has degrees in Sport Science and Biomechanics from Manchester Metropolitan University and a Ph.D. in visual perception and anticipation from Liverpool John Moores University. Michael also has experience of delivering coach education for a range of UK National Governing Bodies and performance organisations.

Michael will take up his role at the LTA in the autumn.

### **The LTA’s Player Pathway**

The LTA’s Player Pathway is a seamless pathway for tennis champions that nurtures people, teams and leaders. Players on the pathway will start at the National Performance stage which normally covers development from 7-14 years, players are then selected to progress to the Pro Tour Stage which usually starts at age 14. The final stage is for those singles players who reach the world’s top 100 and doubles players who reach the world’s top 32 in the ATP/WTA rankings.

The LTA’s World Class Wheelchair Tennis Performance Pathway provides a route for the highest potential junior players to progress from junior competition to playing major tournaments. National Age Group players receive a wide range of support designed to develop them as they advance to the next stage of the pathway, the World Class Wheelchair Tennis Performance Programme, which currently supports multiple Grand Slam champions Gordon Reid, Alfie Hewett, Jordanne Whiley and Andy Lapthorne.

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**For LTA media enquiries please contact:**

[Media@lta.org.uk](mailto:Media@lta.org.uk)

**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 Nature Valley Open (at Nottingham), the Nature Valley Classic (at Birmingham), the Fever-Tree Championships (at The Queen's Club, London) and the Nature Valley International (at Eastbourne). For further information about the LTA and tennis in Britain, visit [www.lta.org.uk](http://www.lta.org.uk) or follow us on Twitter @the\_LTA

### **Further information on the LTA's Player Pathway and Performance Team:**

- Players start at the National Performance stage, which normally covers development in an age specific training environment from ages 7 to 14 years. It encompasses training from a local level (Local Player Development Centres) to regional level (Regional Player Development Centres). There are currently 48 Local Player Development Centres, and from September, 14 Regional Player Development Centres. These centres run age specific programmes which are supported by the National Age Group Programme for players aged 10 to 14 years.
- The centres provide high-quality training environments with an experienced network of coaches to help players aiming to progress their career. Increased investment means that for players at RPDCs the substantial part of the costs for squad training, individual sessions and support at national and international tournaments will be covered.
- Selected players then progress to the Pro Tour Stage which normally starts at age 13 or 14, with the frequency and intensity of training and competition increasing. National Academies (normally for players aged 13-18) are the first step of the Pro Tour Stage and are supported by the Men's & Women's Programme. This prepares players for the Pro Scholarship Programme, a stepping stone from junior to professional tennis.
- The final stage of the Player Pathway is for those singles players who reach the world's top 100 and doubles players who reach the world's top 32 in the ATP/WTA rankings. These players will become eligible for Elite Support.

### **The LTA's Performance Team will be led by Michael and consists of six departments.**

- **Men's Tennis** led by Leon Smith - Leon has worked for the LTA for 10 years both in Men's and Women's tennis. He has over 20 years' experience of full time tennis coaching, focusing on Elite Player Development, High Performance Coaching and professional team management. He captained Great Britain's winning Davis Cup team in 2015 and formerly coached Andy Murray.
- **Women's Tennis** led by Iain Bates – Iain was a professional tennis player and has worked for the LTA for 16 years. He was appointed to lead Women's tennis in 2013 and has previously also worked in Performance operations.
- **Performance Coach Education and Development** led by Nick Weal – Nick was a professional tennis player and joined the LTA in 2008 as an LTA National Coach, he coached the Davis Cup Team for many years.
- **Performance Operations and the Wheelchair World Class Pathway** led by Helen Reesby – Helen has recently re-joined the LTA as Head of Performance Operations and Wheelchair tennis after five years at Loughborough as their Director of Tennis.
- **National Performance Pathway** led by Ian Yates – Ian joined the LTA in 2018 to lead the new National Performance pathway system. Ian has experience across many sporting disciplines, including British Cycling and Bobsleigh.
- **Performance Medicine and Science** led by Dan Lewindon – Dan joined the LTA in 2016 having been at the RFU for 7 years previously. His is the co-editor of the book 'High Performance Training for Sports'.

