

Rothestay **CLASSIC**


BIRMINGHAM



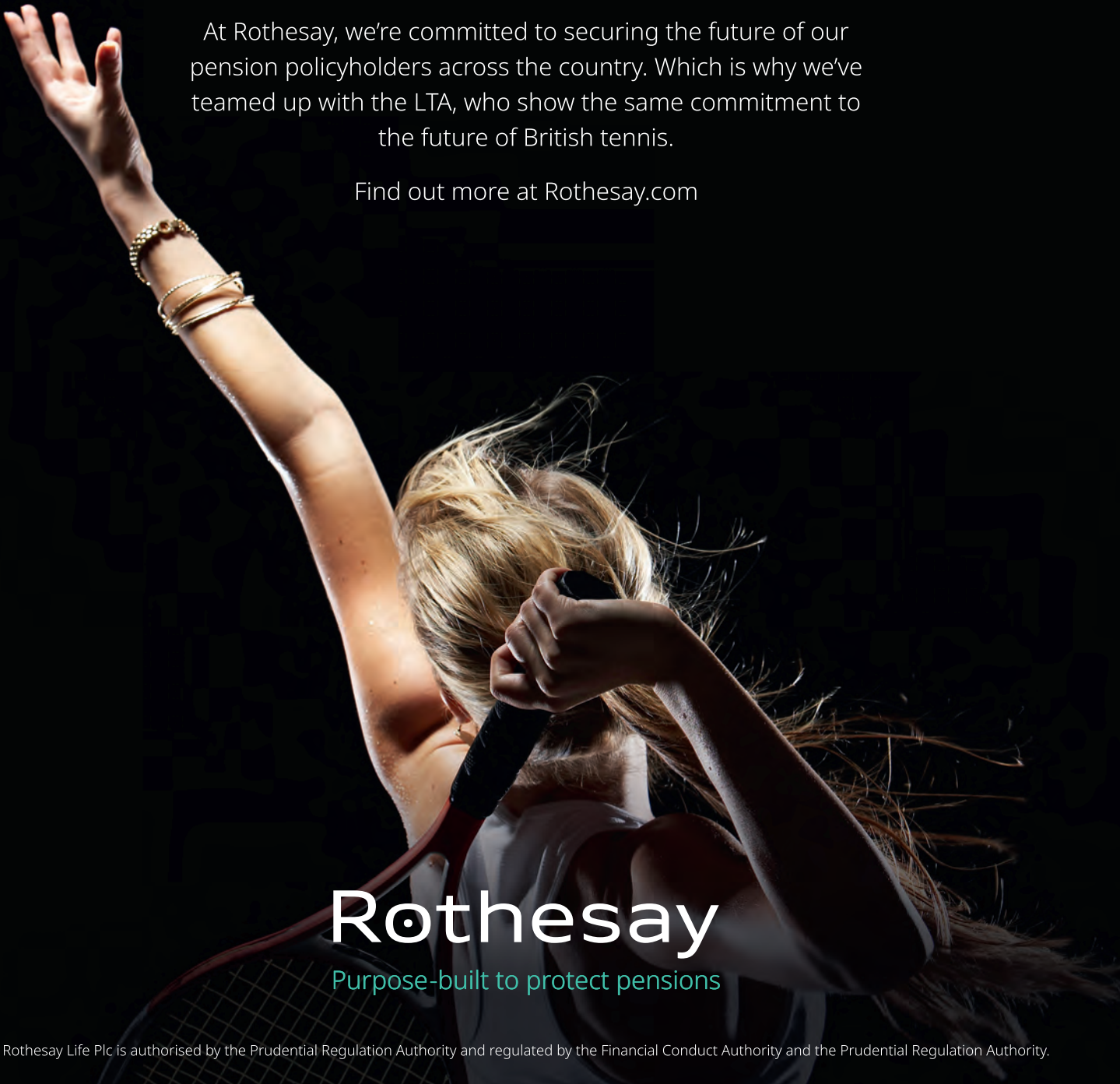
OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

11-19 JUNE 2022





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We're delighted to welcome you to the LTA's Rothesay Classic Birmingham. With the British grass

court season upon us once again this is a particularly special one for this tournament, with us celebrating 40 years of what is the biggest annual women's only tennis event in Britain.

It's brilliant to welcome full capacity crowds back to our LTA major events this summer, with excitement in our sport growing after a year of success for our elite players.

Our five-year mission to promote our 'tennis opened up' agenda has made progress on so many levels, with our drive to ensure tennis is relevant and accessible to all enhanced by the success enjoyed by our elite players in the last year.

Emma Raducanu's inspiring win at the US Open last September captured the imagination of the nation, with the continued success for Joe Salisbury, Britain's ATP world No.1 doubles player, and Alfie Hewett ITF men's wheelchair world No.1 together with his doubles partner Gordon Reid, adding to the momentum.

Continued success for players at all levels has ensured the profile of the

British game remains at an encouraging high and this period of the season allows us to highlight the positivity around tennis in Britain.

The grass courts are always a delightful sight in the British summer, and we are all looking forward to witnessing some top-class action in Birmingham once again this year – with particular thanks to our hosts, the Edgbaston Priory Club for their support this year and throughout the past four decades.

Over the years this event has proved to be a tremendous showcase of top-class women's tennis and has played its part in helping tennis lead the way for women sport. Additionally, this year also sees the Classic host the first ever wheelchair tennis ranking tournament to be played on grass for Quad division players outside of Wimbledon. Whether this is your first time here in Birmingham or you have been at every event throughout our tournament's 40-year history, we hope you enjoy being part of our LTA grass court tournaments as we continue to spread the 'tennis opened up' message throughout this summer.

Scott Lloyd
CEO, LTA

I am delighted to welcome you to the Rothesay Classic. We are very excited to bring people together to enjoy the Rothesay Summer Series: the Rothesay Open (Nottingham), Rothesay Classic (Birmingham) and Rothesay International (Eastbourne). The grass court tennis season is one of the great traditions of the British summer. These events provide an opportunity for top British players and emerging talents to compete against the best players from around the world and are a showcase of international tennis in Britain.

As a business purpose-built to protect the pensions of our policyholders across the UK, Rothesay is proud to play a role in supporting the future of British tennis through both the Summer Series and our wider work as the exclusive pensions partner to the LTA, the national governing body of tennis for Great Britain.

The LTA's passion for innovation and excellence is shared by Rothesay. It is these values which have led us to become the UK's largest specialist pensions insurer and a significant

investor in some of our country's most important assets such as social housing, infrastructure and real estate.

We provide long-term security for over 830,000 pension policyholders and we look forward to working with the LTA to help to open up tennis to older people. We are committed to exploring exciting and innovative ways of both connecting tennis fans to our business and promoting access to tennis in local communities across the country.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the LTA, the players and all the event staff for making the Rothesay Classic a success and such an important part of the British grass court summer.

Thank you for joining us today. I hope that you have a great time!

Addy Loudiadis
Chief Executive Officer,
Rothesay





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DEAR TENNIS FANS

On behalf of the WTA, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Rothesay Classic Birmingham.

The 2022 tennis season is once again providing action, passion and inspiration through the performances of our amazing athletes at WTA tournaments all over the world.

The WTA boasts an incredibly diverse array of players and personalities, many of which you will see here at the Rothesay Classic Birmingham, from established global super stars to emerging new talent ready to make their mark on the sport.

The Rothesay Classic Birmingham would not be possible without the hard work and support of their dedicated tournament team - from sponsors, local suppliers, staff and

volunteers – and I would like to thank them all for their collaboration and continued commitment to women's tennis.

Finally, I would like to thank you, our loyal fans, for all you do in making the WTA the leading global sports league for women. Thank you for your wonderful support either from the stands at our events, watching on TV or following the WTA Tour through our digital platforms.

I hope you enjoy your time watching the Rothesay Classic Birmingham and we look forward to continuing the WTA story with you.

All the best,

Steve Simon
CEO, WTA



DEAR TENNIS FANS

On behalf of the ITF, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to what is part of another exciting summer for international wheelchair tennis.

This is the first time that three of the LTA's grass court tournaments have each featured a UNIQLO Wheelchair Tennis Tour ranking event. Some of the world's top men's wheelchair players return to The Queen's Club in London, the Rothesay Classic Birmingham hosts the first grass court ranking event for quad division players outside of Wimbledon and the Rothesay International Eastbourne welcomes some of the world best women's wheelchair players for the first time.

Since the launch of the ITF Wheelchair Tennis Tour in 1992, the ITF has been at the forefront of promoting and developing wheelchair tennis opportunities across the world. The UNIQLO

Wheelchair Tennis Tour boasts 160 tournaments in more than 40 countries showcasing a diverse array of talented athletes to inspire an ever-expanding fan base.

None of these tournaments would be possible without the hard work and support of their dedicated organisational teams, sponsors and volunteers and I would like to thank them all for their commitment to the continued development of wheelchair tennis and its place within the wider tennis family.

I hope you enjoy your time watching our wheelchair tennis stars this summer and we look forward to continued collaborations and innovations that allow more and more fans the opportunity to enjoy the sport and its amazing athletes.

David Haggerty
ITF President



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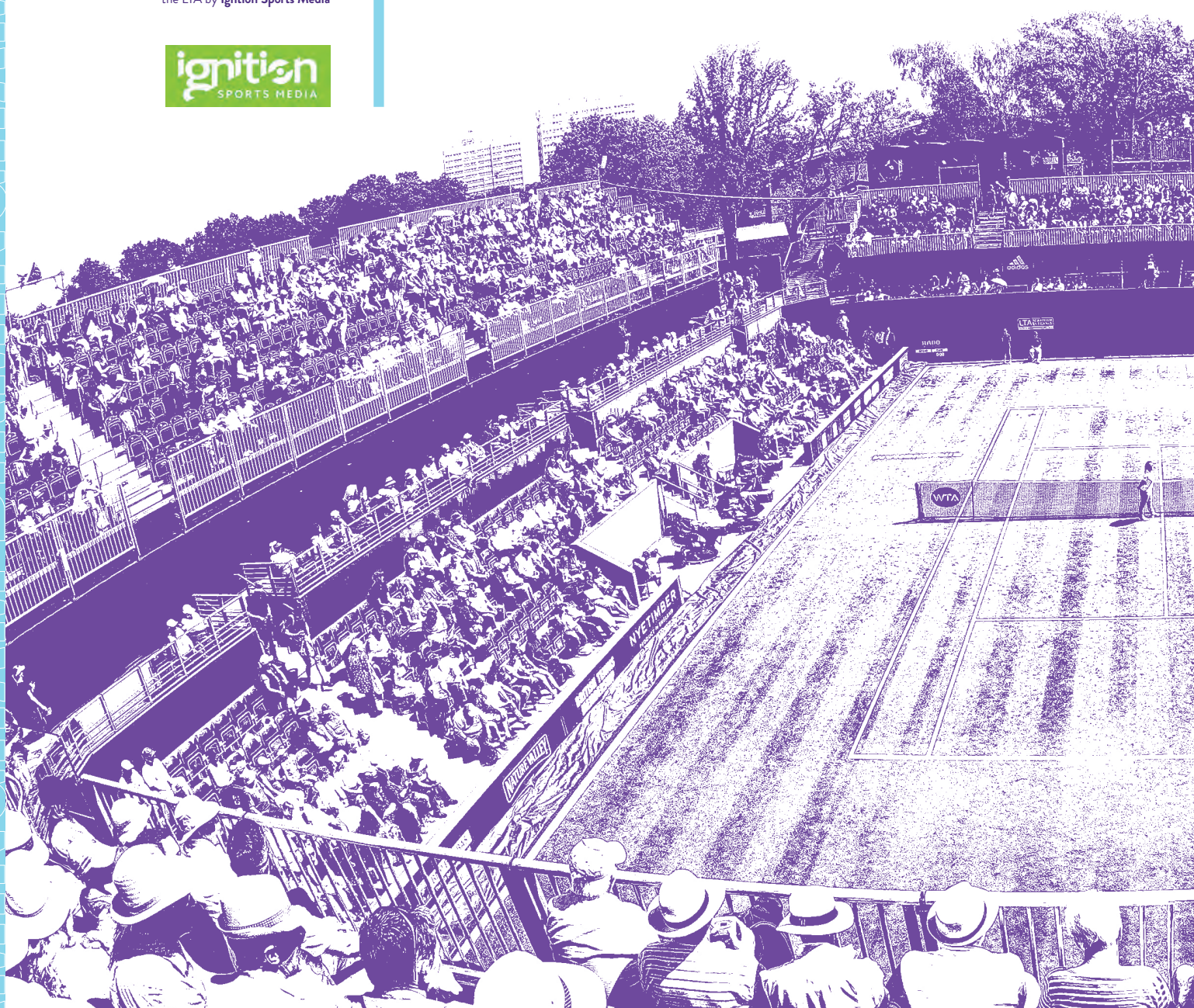
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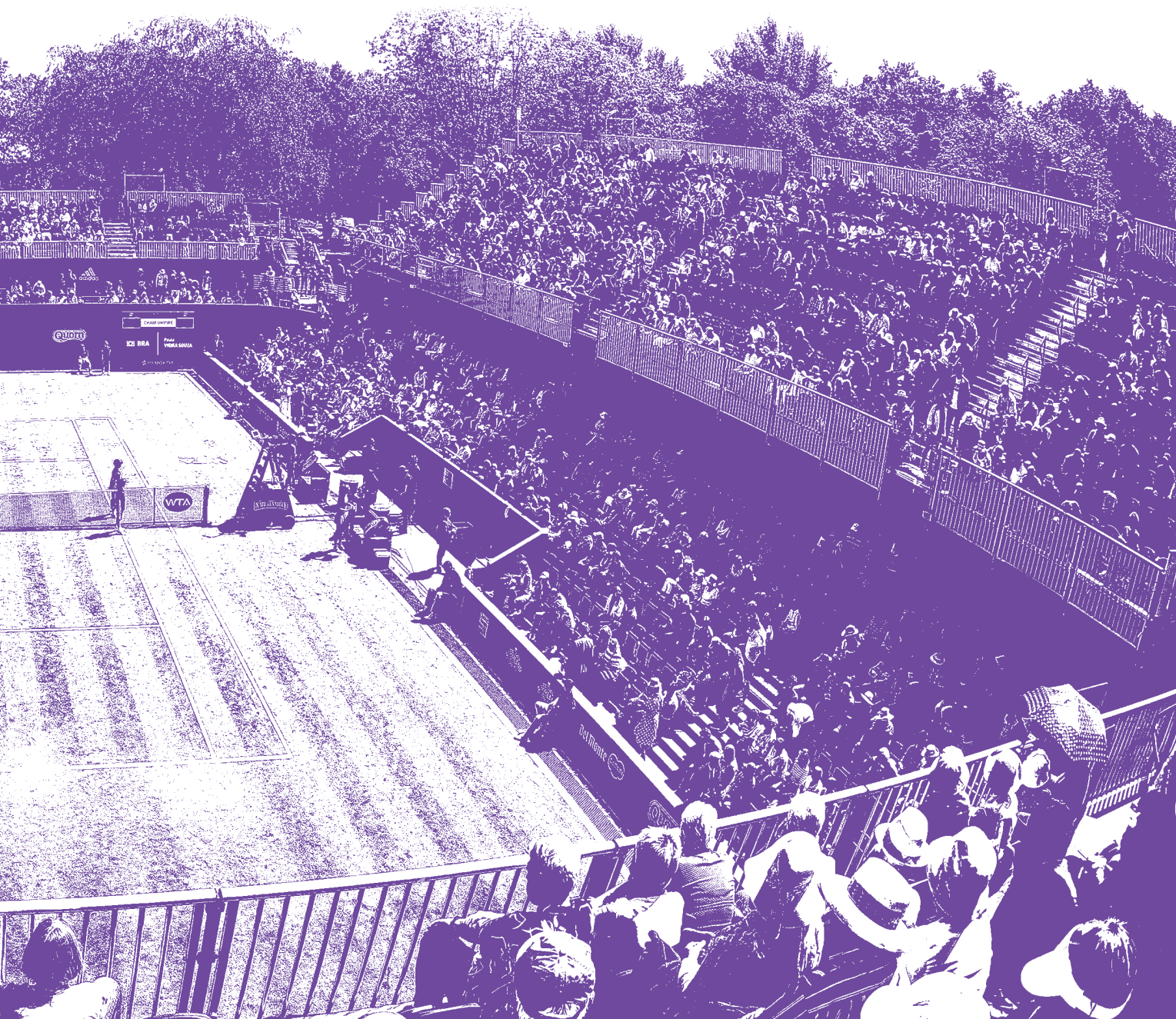
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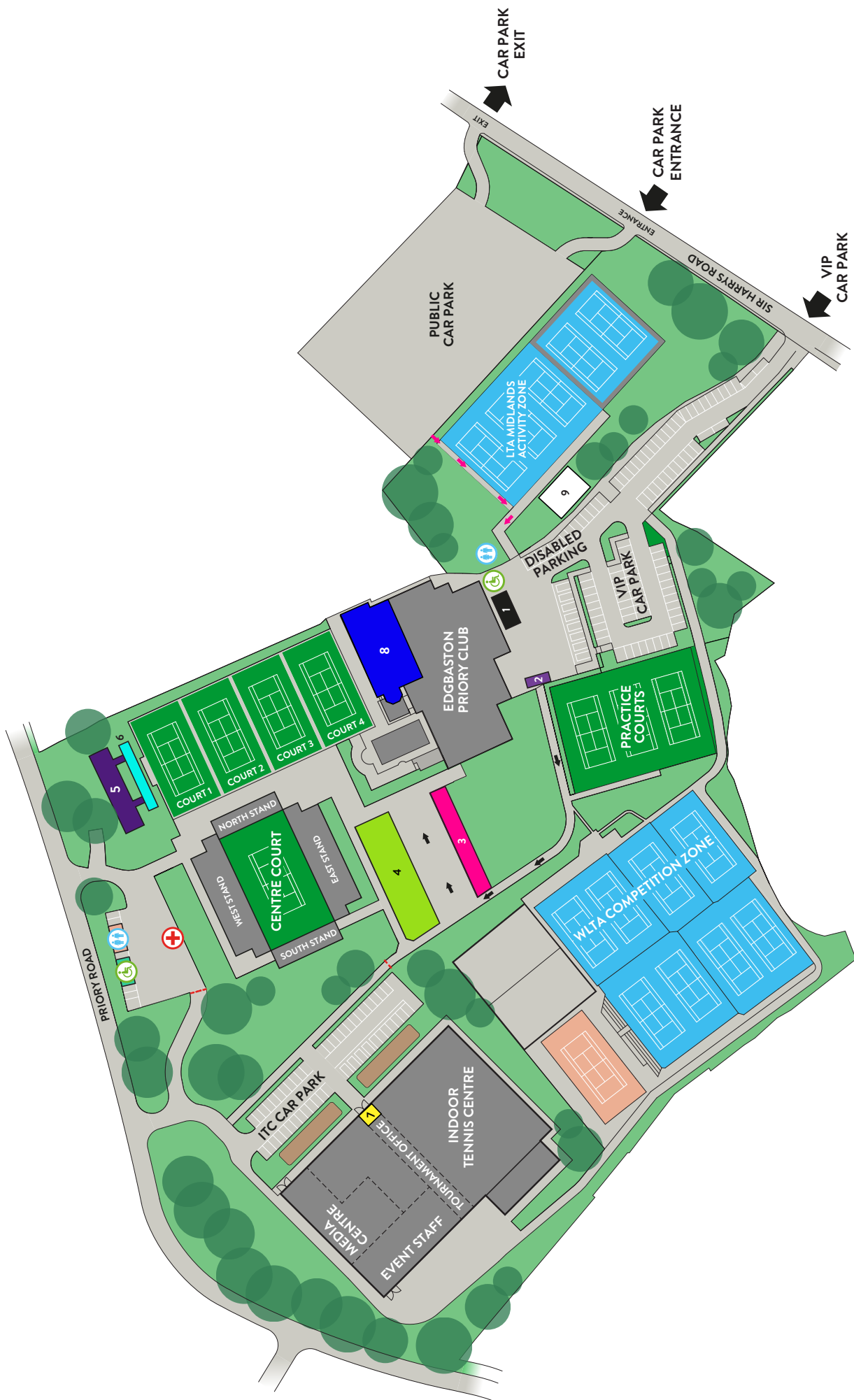


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ROTHESAY CLASSIC BIRMINGHAM EDGBASTON PRIORY CLUB SITE MAP

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| First Aid | 1 Box Office |
| Disabled Toilets | 2 Main Entrance |
| Public Toilets | 3 Tournament Village - Retail Units |
| No Access | 4 Tournament Village - Public Catering |
| | 5 Public Bar |
| | 6 Court 1 Seating |
| | 7 Accreditation Desk |
| | 8 VIP Hospitality Suite |
| | 9 LTA Midlands Marquee |





NAOMI OSAKA



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LIVE SCORES & ORDER OF PLAY

Find out the day's order of play at the 2022 Rothestay Classic Birmingham, as well all the latest scores and the singles and doubles draws for the WTA and ITF wheelchair events on the LTA website:

<https://www.lta.org.uk/fan-zone/international/rothesay-classic-birmingham/match-centre>

PLAYER ENTRY LIST

Find out which players are entered for the 2022 Rothestay Classic Birmingham here:

<https://www.lta.org.uk/fan-zone/international/rothesay-classic-birmingham/event-guide/player-entry-list/>

EVENT INFO

Got a question? Check out our 'On the Day' section for key information on everything from courtside etiquette to first aid, and sustainability to the grounds re-entry process:

<https://www.lta.org.uk/fan-zone/international/rothesay-classic-birmingham/event-guide/on-the-day/>

GET SOCIAL

Keep across the latest news, results, highlights and behind-the-scenes features from your favourite summer grass court events by following the LTA on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok.





MOMENTS IN TIME...

Two champions, divided by time. Pictured above are the nostalgic scenes as Billie Jean King was crowned the first ever champion at the Classic here in Birmingham back in 1982. Fast forward nearly forty years, and pictured on the right is the most recent champion and another tennis trailblazer, Ons Jabeur, who became the Arab woman to win a WTA title when she won here in Birmingham last year.

A common thread between the two images is the special piece of silverware the two winners have with them – the Maud Watson Trophy. It's the same piece of silverware that Maud Watson herself received when becoming the first female Wimbledon champion back in 1884, and having later donated it to the Edgbaston Priory Club, it has been held aloft by every winner of the women's singles here since King did so 40 years ago.





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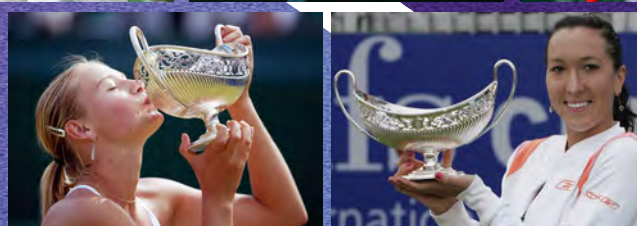
ROLL OF HONOUR – WOMEN –

YEAR	WOMEN'S SINGLES	WOMEN'S DOUBLES
2021	ONS JABEUR (TUN)	MARIE BOUZKOVÁ (CZE) & LUCIE HRADECKÁ (CZE)
2020	CANCELLED DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC	
2019	ASHLEIGH BARTY (AUS)	HSIEH SU-WEI (TPE) & BARBORA STRÝCOVÁ (CZE)
2018	PETRA KVITOVÁ (CZE)	TÍMEA BABOS (HUN) & KRISTINA MLADENOVIC (FRA)
2017	PETRA KVITOVÁ (CZE)	ASHLEIGH BARTY (AUS) & CASEY DELLACQUA (AUS)
2016	MADISON KEYS (USA)	KAROLÍNA PLÍŠKOVÁ (CZE) & BARBORA STRÝCOVÁ (CZE)
2015	ANGELIQUE KERBER (GER)	GARBIÑE MUGURUZA (ESP) & CARLA SUÁREZ NAVARRO (ESP)
2014	ANA IVANOVIC (SRB)	RAQUEL KOPS-JONES (USA) & ABIGAIL SPEARS (USA)
2013	DANIELA HANTUCHOVÁ (SVK)	ASHLEIGH BARTY (AUS) & CASEY DELLACQUA (AUS)
2012	MELANIE OUDIN (USA)	TÍMEA BABOS (HUN) & HSIEH SU-WEI (TPE)
2011	SABINE LISICKI (GER)	OLGA GOVORTSOVA (BLR) & ALLA KUDRYAVTSEVA (RUS)
2010	LI NA (CHN)	CARA BLACK (ZIM) & LISA RAYMOND (USA)
2009	MAGDALÉNA RYBÁRIKOVÁ (SVK)	CARA BLACK (ZIM) & LIEZEL HUBER (USA)
2008	KATERYNA BONDARENKO (UKR)	CARA BLACK (ZIM) & LIEZEL HUBER (USA)
2007	JELENA JANKOVIĆ (SRB)	CHAN YUNG-JAN (TPE) & CHUANG CHIA-JUNG (TPE)
2006	VERA ZVONAREVA (RUS)	JELENA JANKOVIĆ (SRB) & LI NA (CHN)
2005	MARIA SHARAPOVA (RUS)	DANIELA HANTUCHOVÁ (SVK) & AI SUGIYAMA (JPN)
2004	MARIA SHARAPOVA (RUS)	MARIA KIRILENKO (RUS) & MARIA SHARAPOVA (RUS)
2003	MAGDALENA MALEEVA (BUL)	ELS CALLENS (BEL) & MEILEN TU (USA)
2002	JELENA DOKIC (YUG)	SHINOBU ASAGOE (JPN) & ELS CALLENS (BEL)
2001	NATHALIE TAUZIAT (FRA)	CARA BLACK (ZIM) & ELENA LIKHOVTSEVA (RUS)
2000	LISA RAYMOND (USA)	RACHEL MCQUILLAN (AUS) & LISA MCSHEA (AUS)
1999	JULIE HALARD-DECUGIS (FRA)	CORINA MORARIU (USA) & LARISA NEILAND (LAT)
1998	CANCELLED AFTER QUARTER-FINALS DUE TO RAIN	ELS CALLENS (BEL) & JULIE HALARD-DECUGIS (FRA)
1997	NATHALIE TAUZIAT (FRA)	KATRINA ADAMS (USA) & LARISA NEILAND (LAT)
1996	MEREDITH MCGRATH (USA)	ELIZABETH SMYLLIE (AUS) & LINDA WILD (USA)
1995	ZINA GARRISON-JACKSON (USA)	MANON BOLLEGRAFF (NED) & RENNAE STUBBS (AUS)
1994	LORI MCNEIL (USA)	ZINA GARRISON-JACKSON (USA) & LARISA NEILAND (LAT)
1993	LORI MCNEIL (USA)	LORI MCNEIL (USA) & MARTINA NAVRATILOVA (USA)
1992	BRENDA SCHULTZ (NED)	LORI MCNEIL (USA) & RENNAE STUBBS (AUS)
1991	MARTINA NAVRATILOVA (USA)	NICOLE PROVIS (AUS) & ELIZABETH SMYLLIE (USA)
1990	ZINA GARRISON (USA)	LARISA SAVCHENKO (UKR) & NATASHA ZVEREVA (UKR)
1989	MARTINA NAVRATILOVA (USA)	LARISA SAVCHENKO (UKR) & NATASHA ZVEREVA (UKR)
1988	CLAUDIA KOHDE-KILSCH (GER)	LARISA SAVCHENKO (UKR) & NATASHA ZVEREVA (UKR)
1987	PAM SHRIVER (USA)	CANCELLED DUE TO RAIN
1986	PAM SHRIVER (USA)	ELISE BURGIN (USA) & ROSALYN FAIRBANK (RSA)
1985	PAM SHRIVER (USA)	TERRY HOLLADAY (USA) & SHARON WALSH-PETE (USA)
1984	PAM SHRIVER (USA)	LESLIE ALLEN (USA) & ANNE WHITE (USA)
1983	BILLIE JEAN KING (USA)	BILLIE JEAN KING (USA) & SHARON WALSH (USA)
1982	BILLIE JEAN KING (USA)	JO DURIE (GBR) & ANNE HOBBS (GBR)



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CELEBRATING FOUR CLASSIC DECADES OF TENNIS



The 2022 edition sees us celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Rothesay Classic Birmingham, marking four decades of achievement of what is the biggest women's only grass court event in Britain. Here, Matthew Cole, Edgbaston Priory Club's Historian, looks back on four decades of tennis.



The credit for establishing the Classic in 1982 rightly goes to former Wimbledon Champions Billie Jean King and Edgbaston Priory's own Ann Jones, but three key circumstances made their achievement especially important. Firstly, The Birmingham Post's Leon Hickman hailed it as "the end of the Midlands tennis drought" because it restored a showcase in the region for international talent after the demise in the 1960s and '70s of the Midland Counties and John Player tournaments. It was fitting the trophy of the Classic would be the rose basket won by Maud Watson as Wimbledon's first female Champion, and whose first title had been claimed at Edgbaston a century earlier.

Secondly, it offered an opportunity for the Lawn Tennis Association to enhance its campaign to strengthen UK grass roots tennis at recreation and competitive level. LTA President Jim Cochrane wrote: "in supporting this tournament, the LTA is demonstrating its desire to spread major events around the country and give tennis fans more opportunities to enjoy top-level competition."

Lastly, the Classic was part of the Women's Tennis Association tour which King had developed since 1973 to challenge the unequal treatment of, and opportunities for, female professionals. Jones said: "Billie Jean King and I decided that Edgbaston Priory Club should be the venue for this major Ladies' event. Winners like Martina Navratilova and Maria Sharapova have followed their victories here at Wimbledon."

From the outset King and Jones persuaded an array of stars to contest





the Birmingham title – initially called the Edgbaston Cup. The first tournament saw Tracey Austin, Hana Mandlikova and Sue Barker join the order of play. The Classic fulfilled its founders' aim of making Birmingham what four-time winner Pam Shriver called "the perfect Wimbledon build-up," paralleling the men's event at Queen's.

The title has been won 10 times by Wimbledon singles champions, and often by rising stars. Maria Sharapova barely qualified for the Classic when she won at Birmingham at 17, only weeks before taking Serena Williams's Wimbledon title from her. Angelique Kerber took the Classic title a year before winning the US and Australian Opens, then becoming Wimbledon Champion, and Ash Barty first became World No.1 by winning at Edgbaston Priory in 2019. Other Wimbledon singles finalists arriving with the Edgbaston title include Nathalie Tauziat, Sabine Lisicki, and Zina Garrison-Jackson (who lost to fellow Classic winner Martina Navratilova).

Such international legends often formed a strong bond with the tournament, returning to compete, open new facilities at the Edgbaston Priory Club or become Honorary Life Members. Arriving for her eighth Edgbaston tournament in nine years in 2011 Maria Sharapova stated:

"I'm excited to be playing at the Classic once again. It's one of my favourite pre-slam tournaments and I can't wait to get back out on the Priory Club grass courts. I always get such a warm welcome in Birmingham at the event and from the people in the city so I always enjoy going back."

Unsurprisingly, the tournament's status went from strength to strength. At first, arrangements relied upon Edgbaston Priory members providing lodgings for players, taxiing them about and officiating matches. Ball boys and girls were recruited from local schools. Teenager Maria Sharapova even had a trip to the cinema arranged for her. Corporate sponsorship saw total prize money swell from £40,000 to over \$1 million US dollars by the pandemic break, at which point it had been a WTA Premier tournament for five years. Cliff Richard brought a touch of celebrity to the Clubhouse watching the early events, and in 1986 the Maud Watson Trophy was awarded by 90-year-old former Wimbledon Champion Kitty Godfree, whose helicopter landed on the outer courts. That year Channel Four gave TV viewers their first chance to see the Classic, a role later played by ITV and BT Sport, and tournament attendances grew when Ann Jones opened the new 2,500-seater centre court named in her honour in 2013. Even the rather supercilious correspondent of local paper the Sandwell Evening Mail noted the increasing glamour around the Classic by 1989:

"Martina Navratilova came to Birmingham and the Edgbaston Cup threw off its reputation as a modest potboiler for Wimbledon and became a significant event on the calendar. The eight-times Wimbledon champion brought to her rented city house an entourage including her companion Mrs Judy Nelson, friend Billie-Jean King and even Mike Tyson's runaway wife, Robin Givens. There was a time – and not long ago – when the matrons of Edgbaston



Top left: Ashleigh Barty of Australia lifts the Maud Watson Trophy after victory in her final match against Julia Goerges of Germany

Top right: Petra Kvitová of Czech Republic poses with the Maud Watson Trophy in 2017

Above: Madison Keys of United States celebrates with the Maud Watson trophy in 2016

Opposite, top left: Billie Jean King in Birmingham

Top right: Maria Sharapova with the trophy in 2004

Bottom right: Magdalena Rybariková of Slovakia celebrates her win against Na Li of China in the 2009 final

would have tut-tutted beside the greenward courts but in June they were cheering for Martina to win."

"She will", the Mail went on to say, "always be welcome in Birmingham", and 24 years later she was at the Club for an exhibition match marking the opening of the Ann Jones Court.

The Classic has lived through changes and challenges including the increasing demands of the tour on competitors, the interruption of the pandemic and – regrettably, but only once – the cancellation of a final for rain. But starting from scratch it has become a major source of inspiration for athletes and a badge of pride for the Edgbaston Priory Club in the place where grass court tennis began. We thank the LTA as organisers and look forward to the next 40 years with excitement.

BREAKING BARRIERS

How tennis has blazed a trail for women's sport



This year is arguably the biggest ever for women's sport, and tennis, as always, will be a central part of that.

In an era when we're seeing women's sport increasingly getting a greater but not yet fair share of the headlines and coverage, and every week there being positive signs contributing to what is hoped will be the unstoppable rise of women's sport, it's worth reflecting on the agenda-setting role tennis has played for well over a century.

Sport can be one of the most powerful platforms for promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls, and tennis has led the way for that. From Britain's Charlotte Cooper winning the first

ever women's gold medal in any sport at the 1900 Paris Olympics, to the likes Billie Jean King, Martina Navratilova and Venus Williams, there have been a

host of women's tennis trailblazers and changemakers – truly iconic names not just in tennis, but in the development of women's sport.

Their legacy is that tennis is now often regarded as the most gender equal sport and the benchmark many other women's sports are aiming for, while it is also one of the few sports that can attract more female fans than male – a position that's been almost 150 years in the making.

Ever since the late 1800's, women have been competing alongside men at tennis' major events, with Birmingham's Maud Watson

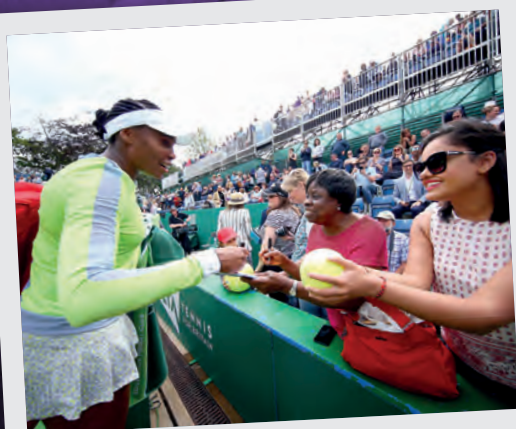


claiming the first ever Ladies' Singles title at Wimbledon in 1884, winning a silver rose bowl valued at 20 guineas. That same trophy is now called the 'Maud Watson Trophy' and is the one held aloft by the winner of the LTA's Rothesay Classic event in Birmingham each year, having been donated to the Edgbaston Priory Club by Watson.

While things were not quite equal (the first men's event at Wimbledon had been seven years earlier, and the men's trophy was worth 30 guineas), the concept of women competing alongside



Rothesay Classic Birmingham 11-19 June 2022



men on the sport's biggest stages that was established back then has been integral to the development of tennis as arguably the leading women's sport on the planet that it is today. It's helped drive visibility, and in turn set tennis apart in terms of earning potential for leading sportswomen, and is a concept that has been gradually adopted by other sports over the intervening decades, particularly more recently as efforts are made to close the women's sport visibility gap.

Tennis is also the original mixed sport. The addition of mixed relay events in sports such as athletics, swimming and triathlon at Tokyo 2020 was much heralded, and rightly so as yet another step forward towards gender equality in sport. Yet in tennis, men and women have been competing on the same side of the net now for well over a 100 years, with mixed doubles played from Grand Slams to the grassroots.

Despite the established presence of women alongside men in tennis, there remained inequality. In 1970, against the backdrop of the women's liberation movement, nine players, known as the 'Original Nine', took a stand to create the first women's tennis circuit. They were concerned not just about disparate prize money, but also that fewer tournaments were available for women to play. It would eventually lead to the formation of the WTA, and was yet another pivotal moment in the history of women's sport.

As a demonstration of the progress that had been achieved, in 1982, Martina Navratilova became the richest tennis player on the planet, male or female. The Noughties

then saw tennis reach a milestone moment for sport, with all four major tournaments paying men and women identical prize money – a stance the US Open had been the first to adopt in the 1970's.

It was as a result of this platform of continued progress that Emma Raducanu's sensational US Open win last year didn't just rewrite the record books on the court, but also set new records off the court. The match generated what is the highest TV audience for any women's tennis match in Britain in at least the last 30 years. Alongside becoming the most streamed tennis match on Amazon Prime Video ever, 12.5 million people also tuned in to Channel 4 for the coverage, seeing them claim a 40% share of the total TV audience including half of 16 to 34 year olds and a 50:50 gender split among viewers.

However, despite all of this, there remain many areas where further progress is needed, with one key area being visibility. Earlier this year, the LTA issued a call to boost the visibility of women's sport by removing the inherent gender bias that exists within the results people see in search engine results about sport.

It follows a report commissioned by the LTA that starkly highlighted the extent to which male focused

content and information dominates results provided for generic search terms about tennis players.

Reduced visibility of women's sport is a situation that contributes to a perception that sport is more for men than for women, and which in turn can lead to lower participation in sport by women, as well as impacting on the earning potential of sportswomen.

The report found that for generic search queries about tennis players such as those regarding rankings or player performance (for example "best tennis players", "best tennis players in the world", or "who is the number 1 tennis player"), the results are shockingly heavily skewed towards showing male information rather than female.

So, while there remains more progress to be made, names like Billie Jean, Martina, Venus, Serena and Emma have given women's tennis a platform to inspire girls to believe in their dreams and show that tennis is a sport that has no limits, whoever you are. Barriers, after all, are there to be broken. ●

From left to right: Charlotte Cooper in action at Wimbledon; Maud Watson, the first ever Ladies' Singles champion at Wimbledon; Billie Jean King pictured in 1968; Venus Williams with fans in Birmingham back in 2019; Emma Raducanu receives her trophy from Billie Jean King after her 2021 US Open Tennis triumph





A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF EMMA RADUCANU

Inspiring a whole new generation to pick up a racket



96 days – the time between Emma Raducanu’s debut WTA match at the Nottingham Open and lifting the US Open women’s singles title.

It’s fair to say that the 19-year-old British star has been on an unbelievable journey since taking her first steps onto the Centre Court at Nottingham to compete against her Billie Jean King Cup teammate, Harriet Dart.

A year on from her first tour match, and having announced her intention to return to play the Rothesay Open Nottingham as well as the Rothesay Classic Birmingham, we look back at her incredible first year as a pro.



FINDING HER FEET ON THE GRASS

We start back in June 2021 in Nottingham, where the highly promising Raducanu – a young LTA Pro-Scholarship Programme talent – received a wild card from the LTA into the main draw at the Nottingham Open to play in her first WTA event.

Drawn against fellow Brit Harriet Dart in the opening round, the young star battled hard in front of the British fans before bowing out 6-3, 6-4. A tough loss to take, but a promising display that gave fans a glimpse of what she was capable of.

She stayed in Nottingham to compete in the LTA’s Nottingham Trophy the week after, where she fought her way past Storm Sanders and Timea Babos. Her run took her to the quarter-finals before eventually losing to Tsvetana Pironkova – next stop, Wimbledon.



A STAR IN THE MAKING

A Wimbledon wild card gave Raducanu the chance to show her talent on the biggest stage tennis has to offer – and it was there that she announced herself on the world stage.

She caught the eye of many of the British public with a straight sets win over Vitalia Diatchenko in the first round, and followed it up with an incredibly impressive 6-2, 6-4 win over then world No.42 Marketa Vondrousova.

The third round took Raducanu onto Wimbledon’s famous Court 1 for the first time in her career to take on Sorana Cirstea. With all the hype and pressure building before the match, she didn’t shy away from the task, winning again in straight sets to reach the fourth round.

The 18-year-old retired in the following round against Ajla Tomljanovic but by that point, she’d become a household name. It was only her first grand slam, but more was yet to come...



WTA FOR THE GAME WTA FOR THE GAME WTA FOR THE GAME WTA FOR THE GAME WTA FOR THE GAME

EMMA RADUCANU



PETRA KVITOVA



**FOR THE PASSION
FOR THE GLORY
FOR THE GAME**

AJLA TOMLJANOVIC



HARRIET DART



WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT EMMA

Tim Henman (former British No.1)

"What Emma achieved at the US Open last year was staggering. I loved being on the side of the court and watching the way she played. It was absolutely incredible. You look at her journey through the three weeks and the ten matches without dropping a set and I felt very privileged to be courtside. Now we all need to be a bit patient with Emma and let her develop because her world has been turned upside down in the last year."

Justine Henin (former WTA World No.1)

"Everything has gone very, very fast for Emma and there was always going to be a lot of digesting to do afterward. Of course, she's in the spotlight now, and that's something she's going to have to deal with. When you win a Grand Slam, especially when you come out of nowhere surprising everyone, it raises a lot of interrogations."

"Emma still needs to get used to the whole situation. Her life has changed completely and I have no doubt that she will have success in the future, but this is a year that she has to get used to being a Grand Slam champion and people looking at her, expecting a lot of her. It is all a matter of experience and learning, but clearly she has amazing talent."

Richard Krajicek (1996 Wimbledon champion)

"I think she is going to be a consistent top five player, a consistent Grand Slam semi-finalist, maybe win a few more. She has so many years ahead of her and I think it will take a bit of time to settle down, but once she gets going again and I think she wants to be a top five player, become No.1 win a Grand Slam. Of course, this might not happen, but she has achieved something amazing."

"There I speak from experience. I won one Grand Slam and maybe I had chances to win more, but even when you are 50-years-old like me, it is great to have won a Grand Slam. She showed also at Wimbledon last year that she is going to have this kind of result or close to it in the near future, so I think this is very good for the popularity of the game."

Mats Wilander (8-time Grand Slam champion)

"I won my first major when I was very young, at 17-year-old. I knew I had beaten the best players in the world along the way and my confidence level got really high. That was because I'd done something before I won the French Open as well. For Emma, it was different. She got to the fourth round of Wimbledon, she won the US Open and suddenly she has to adapt to a new reality. I am convinced she has the talent to have an amazing career, but we all have to give her some time."



RE-WRITING THE HISTORY BOOKS

In the months that followed, Raducanu kept up her brilliant form from SW19, reaching her first WTA Challenger final in Chicago, before heading to the US Open only a day later.

A quick turnaround for the young Brit saw her straight into qualifying where she dominated a talented field, losing only 16 games across three matches.

On her Flushing Meadows main draw debut, she brushed aside Stefanie Vogele of Belgium and from there, the wins just kept rolling.

Next Zhang Shuai, then Sara Sorribes Tormo (who she beat 6-0, 6-1) and then home favourite Shelby Rogers – the then world No.150 was into her first slam quarter-final.

Raducanu then breezed past 11th seed and Olympic gold medallist Belinda Bencic 6-3, 6-4 and backed it up with an even more impressive win over 17th seed Maria Sakkari, who had looked unbeatable all week.

And there she was – the US Open final – the first British woman to reach a major final in 44 years. Her last challenge was fellow teen-star Leylah Fernandez, and with the stage set Raducanu etched her name in tennis history.

She beat Fernandez 6-4, 6-4 in one of the biggest moments in sporting history, becoming the first qualifier, the youngest Brit and the first woman to win a slam without dropping a set since 2014.

In the aftermath of her brilliant achievement, Raducanu returned home to meet with a whole host of kids from the LTA Youth programme at the LTA's Homecoming event – supported by fellow US Open champions Joe Salisbury, Alfie Hewett and Gordon Reid.



LEADING HER COUNTRY AT THE BILLIE JEAN KING CUP

As to be expected after such a huge win, Raducanu's form fluctuated slightly in the months to follow – however a quarter-final appearance in Transylvania and a strong victory at the start of the Australian Open showed that she was gearing up to return to form. Her next biggest challenge would come at the Billie Jean King Cup.

Leading out the nation for the first time – to become LTA Colour Holder No.317 – Raducanu defeated home favourite Tereza Martincova 7-5, 7-5 in her maiden tour-level match on clay in the Billie Jean King Cup qualifier against Czech Republic.

The Brits narrowly lost the tie 3-2, but Raducanu showed she could be a force on the clay – before going on to beat top opponents in Stuttgart and then in Madrid.

A story like no other, Raducanu's first year on tour has been nothing short of a fairytale, with the latest chapter set to be written this summer... ●

Read more:
The Remarkable Rise of Emma Raducanu



INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

LTA Youth Ambassador Paul Jubb on his biggest dream



Every champion instantly becomes a sporting role model and British tennis has been serving them up at a rapid rate over the last year.

Roll the clock back to the summer of 2021 and Emma Raducanu was dreaming of a breakthrough at the highest level of the game and Cameron Norrie was still striving to land his first ATP Masters title, while doubles star Joe Salisbury and wheelchair hero Alfie Hewett were still striving to claim the world No.1 spot.

Yet all four of those British heroes achieved their goals and more in a triumphant year, with Raducanu's US Open win, Norrie's climb into the top 10 of the ATP rankings and Salisbury and

Hewett's ascent to the pinnacle of their respective rankings inspiring others to believe anything is possible.

That is certainly the mentality Paul Jubb is displaying as he eyes some ground-breaking wins over the course of this grass court season.

At the age of 22, York-born Jubb secured his first ATP Challenger win as he highlighted his prowess on clay in Bolivia in March and he admits the inspiration provided by his British compatriots has given him an extra motivation to join the success story.

"There are so many good things happening in British tennis at the moment and when one of the British players does well, you want to try and add to the success story," begins Jubb.

"THERE ARE SO MANY GOOD THINGS HAPPENING IN BRITISH TENNIS AT THE MOMENT AND WHEN ONE OF THE BRITISH PLAYERS DOES WELL, YOU WANT TO TRY AND ADD TO THE SUCCESS STORY"

PAUL JUBB

Below: Paul Jubb trains at the LTA's National Tennis Centre

"All the young guys coming through at the moment are a great bunch and we are all so close with each other. We message and push each other on to succeed and there is a great feeling among the guys that has to be positive for what we are all trying to achieve.

"This is an individual sport, but it feels like all the British players are in this together. We all train together at the LTA's National Tennis Centre and we are all here to make each other better.

"The culture of success we have at the moment in British tennis is really nice and we are all so excited about this time of the year and the grass court season.

"I'm sure all the Brits would agree with me when I say this is our favourite time of the year and we all have a great chance to succeed and try to enjoy it as well."

Raducanu's success at Wimbledon and the US Open last year highlighted how quickly a tennis career can lift off, and Jubb admits his ambitions to be a role



ABOUT LTA YOUTH

model for players aiming to follow in his footsteps is one of the reasons why he became an LTA Youth Ambassador alongside Emma Raducanu and Lucy Shuker.

"I'd love to be in a position where I could inspire kids to play tennis," continues Jubb. "I need to win more matches to do that, but I've always felt it was important to think about the way you handle yourself so that people look up to you and maybe follow in your footsteps. You want to present yourself and tennis in a good light and I've always tried to do that."

"It would be nice to think that young kids would see me or one of the other British players on TV this summer and decide to give tennis a try and that's what happened to me when I started."

"Tennis was just a fun sport for me when I was learning the game and it was only when I was about 14 that I decided I could try and make a career out of the sport. Thankfully it has gone well for me so far, but I want to achieve so much more."

"It is an exciting time for the sport in this country and it also feels like tennis is reaching out beyond the traditional fans and players we have had in Britain down the years. We are seeing so many more people from different communities getting involved in our sport and that has to be a good thing."

Inspiration is one of the great legacies all champions leave when their achievements are quantified and Jubb is hoping to join the growing collection of British heroes who have been fulfilling that role in recent months.

The LTA Youth Programme is designed to introduce children as young as four to tennis. Fun, dynamic sessions will help kids get to grips with the basics of the game, improve their co-ordination and make some new pals along the way.



BLUE STAGE TENNIS LESSONS FOR AGES 4-6

This is an introduction to tennis. Here, we'll help kids improve their balance, agility and co-ordination while teaching them about the sport we love. At this stage it's not about winning or losing, it's just getting to grips with the basics.

RED STAGE TENNIS LESSONS FOR AGES 6-8

This will look a bit more like the tennis you know. You'll see overarm serves, rallies and volleys. Coaches will help children to further develop their co-ordination, balance and speed. We'll introduce relaxed competition here too.

ORANGE STAGE TENNIS LESSONS FOR AGES 8-9

Time to throw in some tactics, problem-solving, and guides to sportsmanship and leadership. At this stage children will know all of the rules and will be serving and returning in matches.

GREEN STAGE TENNIS LESSONS FOR AGES 9-10

This is the big one. It's time for kids to play on full size courts. Now it's all about growing their game by fine tuning and refining the techniques they've learned so far.

YELLOW STAGE TENNIS LESSONS FOR AGES 10+

Time to find your game. Playing on a full size court with the same size balls the pros use, kids will continue to explore different styles on the court, and start to choose their own.



LTA YOUTH SCHOOLS

Designed specially for schools and to support the curriculum, our programme brings together inclusive PE lesson plans, personal development resources, teacher training and much more. It's all been designed by teachers, for teachers, and it's all free.

Take part and complete online training to receive a £250 reward voucher for your school – Find out more here: www.lta.org.uk/schools



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 **SUPERGA®**

EMILY RATAJKOWSKI

YouTube, Instagram and TikTok are growing platforms for tennis clips, training videos and coaching guides, with Ashley Neaves leading the way with his Tennis Mentor channels.

Neaves was LTA British Tennis Coach of the Year in 2017, with the respect he commands in the tennis community boosted by his impressive YouTube and Instagram channels promoting the game to a huge follower base.

Head coach at The Avenue Lawn Tennis Club in Havant, Hampshire, Neaves used the unwanted spare time he was presented with during the Covid-19 lockdown to boost the flow of content on his social media channels in his guise as The Tennis Mentor, with his one-minute coaching tip videos proving to be a big hit.

With well over 30,000 followers on Instagram and a growing audience on his polished YouTube platform, Neaves says he is keen to spread the message of the game around the world rather than become a 'tennis influencer'.

"Influencer is a funny word," begins Neaves. "Although my influence on different platforms has grown, I wouldn't class myself as an influencer."



"In the tennis world, those of us putting out coaching tips on our social platforms are doing it to help players to improve their skills, helping parents to get a better understanding of the tennis landscape or even helping other coaches for ideas on drills."

"As tennis coaches, we have an influence over people in being role models and there is a really positive thing happening online with coaches putting lots of positive content out there. I'm not sure how I feel about being a tennis influencer, but maybe it will grow on me."

Above:
Neaves' YouTube content is proving popular

GONE VIRAL

It is a rapidly expanding tennis community that is taking the sport to a whole new audience, with tennis influencers attracting growing follower numbers and an engaged social media audience.





“IF IT MEANS MORE KIDS ARE SEEING TENNIS ON SOCIAL MEDIA, THAT COULD BE A GOOD THING FOR OUR SPORT”

ASHLEY NEAVES

“The account has also been great for coaching talent to promote their work and for young players and I know some junior players have been spotted by agents on Functional Tennis account and signed up, which is a wonderful sideshow of this.”

With tennis lacking media exposure outside the main events on the ATP and WTA Tours, a growing audience has gravitated towards social media platforms promoting the game and The Tennis Mentor suggests that interest is good for the game.

“Tennis is tricky to find on television now, so kids growing up these days will see most of their tennis online on TikTok, Instagram and YouTube as opposed to seeing full-on matches,” added Neaves.

“While that is sad, if it means more kids are seeing tennis on social media, that could be a good thing for our sport.”

As tennis looks to open its doors to new audiences, fresh avenues are now presenting themselves that could be crucial to the future growth of the game. ●

Neaves’ success with his loyal follower base highlights the power of social media platforms for a tennis coach, yet there are some social media accounts that have reached impressive follower numbers in recent years by following a very simple formula.

The Functional Tennis Instagram account is an example of a sporting success story based around the fascination of tennis fans around the world to watch tennis clips that take them behind the scenes in our sport, with practice sessions and quirky clips proving to be a big hit with almost half a million followers.

The Instagram account that is admired by Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic is run by Irishman Fabio Molle, who admits he is surprised by the success he has enjoyed.

“I really didn’t see this coming when I started posting a few videos on Instagram of people hitting tennis balls in practice and suddenly, they started to get a big reaction,” Molle told us.

“We started Functional Tennis back in 2016 and six years later, we have nearly 500,000 followers and have a real presence in a sport I have always loved.

“Tennis has always been my passion. I played a lot as a kid and a few junior tournaments, but injuries affected my ambition and now I find myself working full-time in the sport running Functional Tennis. I found a lot of great videos that could help players develop their game and I didn’t think it would take off as it did.

“I don’t know why or how they got so much traction. I haven’t advertised or promoted the account and it just kept growing and it was just a case of right time, right place.

“What the Instagram account has done is open so many doors for me in the sport and our podcast has benefited from that as we have some great names joining us on there.

Below:
Fabio Molle
pictured with
Novak Djokovic





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TENNIS UNDOUBTEDLY CONTRIBUTED TO ME SAVING MY LIFE...

Across the whole of June, we will be marking Pride Month by raising awareness and showing our support for LGBTQ+ communities in tennis - with a special focus on 'Friday Pride Days' as a platform to raise visibility. The activity is an opportunity to celebrate inclusion in tennis and show that it's a sport where everyone can feel accepted and welcomed.

It is an integral part of the inclusion strategy for tennis in Britain published by the LTA last year, with an ambition for tennis to lead the way on inclusion and diversity in sport and an ultimate goal of ensuring the people playing, working and volunteering in, and watching tennis reflect the diversity of the nation's communities.

The Pride Month celebrations build on the launch at the LTA's National Tennis Centre earlier this year of Pride in Tennis, the LGBTQ+ network for Tennis in Britain. Here, we speak to founder of Pride in Tennis Ian Pearson Brown who reveals his battle with loneliness, and the vital role tennis has played in helping him.

My name is Ian Pearson Brown, my pronouns are he/him, and I work in tennis as a full-time coach in the Northeast of England.

I'm proud of my Geordie routes, and the fact that I've worked in the industry for 22 years, helping to develop and grow tennis, my first sport, and my first love. I am also the founder of Pride in Tennis, which is the LGBTQ+ inclusive network in partnership with the LTA's inclusion and diversity strategy.

As a child growing up in the Northeast in the late 80s and early 90s, I was that typical sports mad Geordie kid. P.E. was my favourite subject at school; I'd always be that kid on the yard at break time with a ball of some description - whether it be a football or tennis ball - and that was me growing up.

When I was 13 and I realised I was gay, and my world turned upside down - I didn't think you could be involved in sport and be gay. That created a lot of

mental health problems for me - only at a later age did I have the confidence to come out that I was gay in the sporting environment.

As I had taken up tennis as my full-time profession, I always worried about how I may be perceived. I was openly gay teaching children, and I bought into a lot of the stigmas and stereotypes that were in my environment around that time, so the conflict of that caused me stress, anxiety, and depression.

In fact, my mental health improved significantly when I did come out - all the issues that I thought I would have just didn't materialise, and the more people I told, the better I felt.

When I came out in sport and I realised that, actually, it can be an environment where people can thrive as their authentic selves, I felt the need to give something back to a sport that I felt had saved my life through the dark times. That's why I founded Pride in Tennis as a



network, and I am now working with the LTA to try and help the next generation of athletes, coaches, players, and fans realise that you can be your authentic self in tennis and there should be no problem with that!

Realising I was gay at 13; three months later I made my first suicide attempt. That was how much of an impact it had on me. When it dawned on me that I was gay, I felt that my body was at odds with my brain, with my mind, and my environment. I thought I can't be gay; I do sports, I'm from the Northeast, I have these types of friends around me, and I do these types of activities.

As a young kid, I thought that if you were gay – particularly in the 80's – you were somebody who was very dirty, very nasty, horrible, or you were some sort of flamboyant character on the TV like Julian Clary, Elton John, or Freddie Mercury and I guess I was buying into a lot of the stereotypes of the age. I just couldn't square that circle within myself, so it tore me apart. I internalised everything; I didn't share that information with anyone, and that's where the loneliness developed. I had a lot of people around me who I connected with on a superficial level, but in terms of mental health, I just assumed I was the only one with this problem and nobody would ever understand it, so why bother? So, I isolated myself in that time, and didn't want to be a part of the world anymore.

I still carry the mental health scars today from that 13/14-year-old very confused child. At an impressionable age like that – when you have that level of mental health trauma – I don't think it ever leaves you, so I still suffer with anxiety and depression to this day.

I'm still on medication, I still occasionally attend therapy sessions, but that is nothing to do with my sexuality now. Here today, I am a proud gay man and happily married to my husband. So, from that perspective, the scars I carry today derive from suffering with mental trauma from a young age and experiencing a difficult coming out as a young gay athlete.



Above:
Rainbow
colours on
court

Top right:
Ian Pearson
Brown (front
centre) at the
Pride in Tennis
network launch
event at the
National Tennis
Centre

Bottom right:
Ian Pearson
Brown on court
as a coach in
the North East

The first person I ever told was my girlfriend as I felt she should know, with the bottom line being no, really, it's not you, it's me. I felt at the time – coming back to that element of loneliness – I was never going to have a long-term relationship. I felt I had to choose between sport and being gay. Initially, I chose sport and threw myself into it as a player, as a career coach, and as a volunteer at my local tennis venues.

It was only when I came out to my family, my friends, and then eventually in my own workplace, that I actually started to connect with other people that were gay. It was then that I happened to meet my husband who has been the most supportive person in the world, and undoubtedly changed my life for the better.

That was a huge turning point for me – being able to be open with myself and be comfortable with my sexuality enough to be holding hands with another man down my local high street. Things like that, from a generational

point of view, that may seem quite normal now, but when I was younger it certainly wasn't the case. That's why now I try to do as much visibility work as I can. That's the reason why we do Pride and try and do things like LGBTQ history month, and Pride month, and Pride marches, to show young people that you can be your authentic self and you don't have to create barriers in your own mind.

The advice I would give anyone struggling or experiencing a similar journey to that of my own: you are not the only one. You're not the only person who is having these feelings and worries about being different, and this doesn't just have to link in with sexuality or gender identity; you can be different in many ways.

Getting onboard with the LTA's inclusion strategy, Open Court disability tennis programme, our Pride in Tennis groups; supporting things like that can help a lot of people in improving their mental health, and occasionally – in my case – it can save lives.

Tennis undoubtedly contributed to me saving my life. I don't know where I would have been without that bubble of joy that I had at the tennis club when I was able to play on court freely, and just go and release all my pent-up stress by going down to the court and hitting a couple of shots in the fresh air with my friends. So, by opening tennis up to people from different backgrounds, we could improve everybody's mental health. ●

**For more information
about the Pride in Tennis
network click here**





COLOUR HOLDERS ETCHED INTO TENNIS HISTORY

Representing your country in any sport is a special achievement, and tennis is no different.



As well as being a highlight of a player's career, Great Britain teams also connect with, enthuse and excite tennis fans in Britain like nothing else in our sport. That is why in 2021, to mark 125 years since the first player stepped on court, we revived what was once a tennis tradition – the LTA Colour Holders programme.

Historically, in the same way a player might receive a 'cap' in football or rugby, when a player represented Great Britain in tennis, they received a Colour.

If players compete in the Davis Cup, Wheelchair World Team Cup, Billie Jean King Cup, Olympics or Paralympic Games, they become Colour Holders.

Colour Holder status was also achieved previously for players who competed for Great Britain in the Wightman Cup and Kings Cup, two competitions that have since ceased.

From the early days of the programme, Colours have been awarded to both females and males who have represented Britain. In addition, following the creation of wheelchair tennis and its subsequent growth to become a professional sport, World Team Cup representatives and Paralympians have been included as Colour Holders for the first time alongside Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup and Olympic players – all together on one list.

A sequential list has been created depicting when a player gained their Colour Holder status in relation to their peers, meaning each player to represent Great Britain will have their own unique number.

Since 1896, 319 tennis players have become Colour Holders. The list was started by John Boland, who became the first at the inaugural modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896. World No.1 doubles player Joe Salisbury, wheelchair tennis players Greg Slade, Abbie Breakwell and Ben Bartram and US Open Champion Emma Raducanu are among the most recent players to achieve this status having been selected to play in the Billie Jean King Cup and World Team Cup competitions respectively this year.

Wheelchair tennis player Ruby Bishop is our most recent Colour Holder at number 319 and there will be plenty more joining this exclusive club in the years to come.

The ultimate achievement of representing your country should be recognised and the LTA's Colour Holder programme ensures each and every name on the list is reserved their own special place in British tennis folklore. ●

▶ **WATCH...**

Reintroducing GB Colour Holders





From top: left to right: The joy of victory for Johanna Konta; Danny Sapsford was Colour Holder 200; 1935 – The presentation of the Davis Cup to the winning British team at Wimbledon with Fred Perry and Bunny Austin in attendance; Jordanne Whaley celebrates winning the bronze medal after her victory over Aniek van Koot at the 2020 Paralympic Games; Captain Anne Keothavong with the GB Fed Cup team for a match against Croatia in Tallinn in 2017; First female Colour holder Charlotte Sterry; Tim Henman and Neil Broad won silver medals at the 1996 Olympic Games; Andy Murray led Britain to Davis Cup glory in 2015



SETTING NEW PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

In conversation with LTA Performance Director, Michael Bourne

Michael Bourne was appointed as the LTA's new Performance Director in July 2020 and here, he outlines his vision for supporting the best talent in British tennis.



CAN YOU OUTLINE THE VISION OF THE LTA'S PERFORMANCE STRATEGY?

We want to become one of the most respected nations in the world for player development. In order to do that, our focus is on ensuring we identify the best talent we have in the UK, partner them with world-class coaching, make sure they have brilliant training environments, give them the right exposure to competition and the performance support that allows them to grow and develop.

“WE ARE TRYING TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS AND THAT IS TOUGH IN A SPORT LIKE TENNIS, BUT WE ARE GETTING THERE. WE KNOW WHAT WE'RE GOING AFTER AND WE'RE STARTING TO SEE THOSE GREEN SHOOTS OF SUCCESS”

MICHAEL BOURNE



WITH THAT IN MIND, HOW IMPORTANT IS THE INTRODUCTION OF MORE TOURNAMENTS IN BRITAIN THIS YEAR WITH THE LTA'S ENHANCED PERFORMANCE COMPETITIONS CALENDAR?

That initiative is a big win for us because it allows our players to get great development opportunities and progress their rankings domestically. It allows

some of our more senior pros to earn as well as gain ranking points domestically and it runs from 10 & under right through to the elite. So overall, we're really happy in regard to how that's helping to facilitate the idea of getting competition exposure.

IN A YEAR THAT HAS SEEN BRITAIN PRODUCE A GRAND SLAM SINGLES CHAMPION, THE WORLD NO.1 IN DOUBLES AND THE WORLD NO.1 IN WHEELCHAIR TENNIS, WOULD YOU SAY WE ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK WITH THE LTA'S PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME?

We have had a good year, but I don't think we should get ahead of ourselves. We've had successes and we've had players progress, for sure. We still have a long way to go to hit our goals and this is only year four of a 10-year strategy. Whilst we're currently on track with our



work over the coming year, we should always strive for more. This is not just about hitting our targets. We are trying to build sustainable success and that is tough in a sport like tennis, but we are getting there. We know what we're going after and we're starting to see those green shoots of success.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE INSPIRATIONAL FIGURES LIKE EMMA RADUCANU AND ANDY MURRAY INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION TO PLAY TENNIS?

A big part of our player pathway is you've got to see it to believe it. On the singles Top 100 we've got Emma Raducanu and Cam Norrie, Dan Evans and Andy Murray. We are also so strong in Mens Doubles with Joe Salisbury at No.1 in the rankings and Neal Skupski leading the ATP Race for 2022. Then we have Alfie Hewett reaching No.1 in the wheelchair rankings and it is great for young players to look up to them and try and emulate them. We want players coming through at each age and stage, from any background, to be able to see somebody they can relate to on that journey. Also, all our senior players are really good in terms of supporting the juniors and giving them advice on how to get to that elite level.

HOW WOULD YOU REFLECT ON YOUR FIRST YEAR WITH THE LTA?

I joined the organisation because I was really inspired by what the LTA was trying to do, both on the performance side and the Tennis Opened Up vision, led by chief executive, Scott Lloyd. We as a performance team can play a big part of that, by the inspiration our elite players can provide. If we can do our bit and players have got places to train and there are good routes for the youngsters to come into our system, then we will have a thriving ecosystem for players to come through for years to come.



THE LTA'S PLAYER PATHWAY



The LTA's Player Pathway is dedicated to nurturing the most promising players toward the elite levels of the game. Learn more about the support available from the LTA for professional players to take the next steps in their tennis careers.

PLAYER PATHWAY

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE:

Support performance-minded players to become nationally competitive by age 10 and prepared to effectively transition to the National Performance stage of the Player Pathway

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE:

Support players aged 10+ who are capable of becoming competitive in Europe and transitioning effectively to the International Junior stage of the Player Pathway by 14

INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR:

Supporting our highest potential juniors to become internationally competitive by 18 and well prepared to graduate onto the Pro Transition stage of the Player Pathway

PRO TRANSITION:

Support our highest potential young players to become elite level professionals and Davis Cup and Billie Jean King Cup squad players

PRO:

Support our top British professional players to perform at the elite level and as part of Billie Jean King and Davis Cup squads with excellence

WHEELCHAIR PERFORMANCE PATHWAY (WCPP)

POTENTIAL:

Inspire, attract and support performance-minded players to become nationally competitive and prepared to effectively transition to the Progression stage of the Pathway'

PROGRESSION:

Support our highest potential juniors and adults to become internationally competitive and well prepared to graduate onto the Pro Transition stage of the Pathway

PRO TRANSITION:

Support our highest potential players to have success on the ITF Wheelchair Tennis Tour, become elite level professionals and World Team Cup squad members

PRO:

Support our top British professional players to achieve success at the Grand Slams and Paralympics, and to perform with excellence

KONTA CALLS TIME

As the final month of 2021
dawned, a great British tennis
career came to an end





Johanna Konta's tennis journey came to an end with a brief announcement on her social media platforms and this understated champion would not have had it any other way.

Never one to court the spotlight or seek out attention, Konta's retirement from tennis at the age of 30 took many by surprise, but she believed she had reached the end of her sporting journey as a player.

A champion at the LTA's Nottingham Open last summer, this grass court summer will feel very different for Konta as she looks in on the action as a fan and expectant mother, with her new life already well underway.

Here, we look back on a playing career that saw her inspire and delight a generation of tennis fans, with Konta leaving a long list of unforgettable moments that are etched into memories of British tennis fans.



BREAKING THROUGH ON THE WORLD STAGE

Konta had long shown promise, but it was a break-out second half of 2015 rising a hundred places in the rankings, when she first served notice of belonging on the biggest stages. That October, she assumed the mantle of British No.1 for the first time, a position she would hold for just shy of six straight years, thus beginning a run of records not seen since the days of Virginia Wade in British women's tennis.

In January the following year she reached the semi-finals of the Australian Open, becoming the first British female to make that stage of a major since

Wade at Wimbledon 1978. In July 2016 she captured her first WTA title at Stanford in the United States defeating Venus Williams in a three-set final. That was the best tournament victory by a female Brit since Jo Durie won in Sydney, 33 years earlier. Konta also represented Great Britain at the Rio Olympic Games that summer, reaching the quarter-finals.

After finishing runner up in the China Open in October, she became the first British woman to be ranked in the WTA World Top 10 since Durie in August 1984. This would also mark the first time ever in rankings history that Britain had a man (Andy Murray) and a woman inside the Top 10 at the same time.



REACHING A CAREER HIGH OF WORLD NO.4

In 2017 the Eastbourne resident continued her rise with her second WTA title at Sydney in January and soon after won the biggest tournament of her career at the Miami Open in April, successively defeating Simona Halep, Venus Williams and Caroline Wozniacki on her way to the winner's prize. This form propelled her onto a memorable run to the last four at Wimbledon, the first home female player to do that since Wade's centenary win in 1977, taking her to a career-high of No.4 in the world.

The following year, Johanna secured an historic win over Serena Williams in San Jose, handing Williams the heaviest defeat of her career, losing 6-1 6-0 in 51 minutes. Konta won the last 12 games of the match without reply to secure what would be one of 10 wins over current or former world No.1 players.

WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT JOHANNA KONTA...

Scott Lloyd, Chief Executive of the LTA, said:

"On behalf of the LTA and everyone involved in British Tennis I want to express my appreciation to Johanna for her hugely impressive career. To reach the semifinals of three slams and spend more time as British number one than any other woman since the WTA rankings began, shows the level of her achievements. We wish her well in the future, and hope that she will continue to play a role in British tennis in the years to come."

Iain Bates, LTA Head of Women's Tennis, said:

"Johanna is a tremendous inspiration for so many in British Tennis and everyone at the LTA and involved in the sport is immensely proud of what she has achieved. It has been a great privilege for me personally to watch her evolve into the player she became. She leaves a legacy of perseverance, determination and professionalism that will be carried forward by the current and next group of players."

Great Britain Billie Jean King Cup Captain Anne Keothavong added:

"What Johanna accomplished on the court was incredible, but her professional aptitude is what set her apart. As a Billie Jean King Cup player representing her country, she laid it all out there, led by example and who can forget her marathon performances in 2019 during our first home ties in more than quarter of a century. More than anything she is a kind and caring person, and we wish her all the best in the next chapter of her life."

Opposite page: Top: Representing Great Britain;
Centre: Celebrating with British fans in Nottingham;
Bottom: Winning the Miami Open in 2017

Right: Celebrating at Wimbledon

“WHAT JOHANNA ACCOMPLISHED ON THE COURT WAS INCREDIBLE, BUT HER PROFESSIONAL APTITUDE IS WHAT SET HER APART”

ANNE KEOTHAVONG



BREAKING THROUGH ON CLAY

In 2019 Konta showed her best form on clay and at the majors. Having never before won a main draw match at the French Open, went on a charge to the semi-final at Roland Garros, the best since Durie's feat in 1983. This was off the back of a strong clay court swing that saw her finish runner-up at both the Estoril and Italian Opens.

Johanna rounded out her year reaching the quarter-finals of the US Open to become the only WTA player that season to reach the last eight or better at the year's final three majors.

CHAMPION ON THE GRASS AT NOTTINGHAM

In her career she demonstrated her versatility on all surfaces by reaching the quarterfinals or better at all major tournaments including the Olympic Games.

However, it would be on grass where Konta would claim the first title of her career in winning the Nottingham Open last summer, her fourth WTA singles title. In doing so she became the first British woman to win a Tour event on home soil since Sue Barker did so at Brighton 1981. She finished her career by completing 5 years and 11 months consecutively as British No.1, the longest period any individual has held that achievement since the start of the WTA rankings in November 1975. ●

WATCH...



Johanna Konta - Matches & Moments

Above: In full flow at Eastbourne; Right: Konta's last title on the grass at Nottingham







BY MARSHALL THOMAS

ANDY LAPTHORNE LEADING THE WAY

Quads ready to make their mark in Birmingham



The advent of quad singles and doubles wheelchair tennis events at the Rothesay Classic Birmingham is the latest in a long-line of 'firsts' for the quad division in recent years – breakthroughs that Britain's two-time US Open singles champion and two-time Wimbledon doubles champion Andy Lapthorne has long been involved in campaigning for when it comes to inclusion and equality.

A landmark summer for wheelchair tennis will include three world ranking events being held for the first time alongside three of the LTA's summer grass court tournaments, with the cinch Championships at The Queen's Club hosting a men's wheelchair event for the fourth year, the Rothesay International Eastbourne hosting a women's wheelchair event for the first time and the Rothesay Classic Birmingham hosting the first grass court ranking event for quad players outside of Wimbledon.

"I've had a lot of wins on the court and they're obviously really important, but some of the wins off the court have been more important in terms of playing at Wimbledon and now the change at Roland Garros, where we had an eight draw for the first time this year," says Lapthorne, who started 2022 by claiming his 15th Grand Slam title.

"Unfortunately, they went to a 12 (draw) for men and women, but for the first time we have equal prize money at Roland Garros for the three winners of the three wheelchair events. That's definitely a big step forward and I've played my part in that change."

Players are eligible to compete in the quad division if they have a permanent physical disability that results in significant loss of function in three or more extremities, while also fulfilling the wheelchair tennis minimum disability criteria.

"To just get the opportunity to play at Wimbledon during The Championships was a massive thing and it's continued to lead to better things for the quad division and wheelchair tennis as a whole, really," says Lapthorne as he reflects on the dream he had as a 10-year-old visiting Wimbledon for the first time and sharing a lift in the players' area with Serena and Venus Williams because disability access was still under development.

Fast forward to 2019 and Venus watched courtside as Lapthorne beat her fellow American and second seed David Wagner in the semi-finals of the inaugural Wimbledon quad singles draw.

"When you are in a lift with these two, what looked to me like two giant athletes, and I had watched them so much on the TV and stuff, to see them in real life was just really inspiring," said Lapthorne at the time.

Born with cerebral palsy, Lapthorne was a decade into his senior playing career before the opportunity to play a quad doubles exhibition at Wimbledon came around in 2018, leading to quad singles and doubles championship events being added to the competition schedule a year later.

Having played Wagner in his inaugural singles semi-final at Wimbledon in 2019, Lapthorne and Wagner combined to win the quad doubles title at the All England Club in 2021, earning the 31-year-old Londoner the latest in his collection of historic achievements. Scheduled to pair up at the Edgbaston Priory Club this summer, Lapthorne and Wagner became the first quad doubles

partnership to complete a career Grand Slam together. Their fourth Australian Open crown together in January earned them their third doubles title in four majors.

If not making history on the court, Lapthorne enjoys learning about the history of tennis off the court and he's taken inspiration from one of the sport's greats, a former two-time Birmingham champion and Eastbourne runner-up, when it comes to making his dreams and those of other fellow players a reality.

"For me, from watching lots of documentaries and reading books about people like Billie Jean King, the thought of how do you approach making change for the better, is an important thing," he says. "Wimbledon's the reason I got involved in tennis. If it hadn't been for Wimbledon and going as a kid I wouldn't have played tennis, I'd have gone and played basketball.

"So, using the example of the likes of Billie Jean, who is an inspiration in terms of how to make change and how she went about making change, is something that has stuck with me. I just want the quad division to have the same as the men's and women's divisions.

"Given the nature of our tour calendar, where players are coming in from and the timing that's optimal for grass court preparation, it's not as easy as you might think to schedule a tournament on grass, so we're grateful for this opportunity to extend our grass court season," adds, the three-time Paralympic medallist Lapthorne, referring to the new quad event at Devonshire Park. ●

FACTFILE ANDY LAPTHORNE

AGE: 31

LIVES: EASTCOTE, MIDDLESEX

CAREER TITLES: 20 (SINGLES); 41 (DOUBLES)

GRAND SLAM TITLES: 15 (2 SINGLES, 13 DOUBLES)

PARALYMPIC MEDALS: 3 (SILVER – QUAD SINGLES RIO 2016; BRONZE – QUAD DOUBLES RIO 2016; SILVER – QUAD DOUBLES LONDON 2012)





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CALLING THE SHOTS

Tennis is recognised as having been a pioneer for women, but one area often overlooked is officials. In the 1980's, mum-of-five Georgina Clark led the way by becoming the first woman to umpire a Wimbledon Final.

Fast forward to 2022 and this summer will see the likes of Jane Harvey working as Referee at the LTA's Rothesay Open Nottingham and Ilkley Trophy as well as Chair Umpire Evaluator at The Championships, Wimbledon, with Denise Parnell acting as Referee at the cinch Championships at The Queen's Club and as Assistant Referee at Wimbledon.

However, when it comes to modern day female officials in sport, one name stands above them all – Alison Hughes MBE.

While there have been British champions and household names on the court, one of the most successful and respected British figures in tennis sits just off the court – indeed, no Brit has been to more Grand Slam finals, Billie Jean King Cup finals or Olympics than Hughes.

Born in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and now based in Dorset, Hughes (née Lang) is among the most influential figures in the modern game and regarded as one of the greatest chair umpires to have officiated in the sport.

Last year at the Australian Open, Hughes umpired her 22nd Grand Slam final between Naomi Osaka and Jennifer Brady, adding to an illustrious resume that also features multiple Billie Jean King Cup Finals and Davis Cup Finals, including the 2021 events in Prague and Madrid. Last year at Tokyo 2020 she became the first woman to



“I SAT IN THE UMPIRE’S CHAIR AFTER THE COIN TOSS AND REALISED ONE OF MY BIGGEST DREAMS HAD FINALLY COME TRUE”

ALISON HUGHES

oversee an Olympics Men's Singles Final. Prior to that she already had the Women's Singles Finals at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and Beijing 2008 and the Men's Doubles Final at Rio 2016 under her belt. Perhaps most impressively though, she is one of only two people, male or female, to have chair umpired singles finals at all four Grand Slam events.

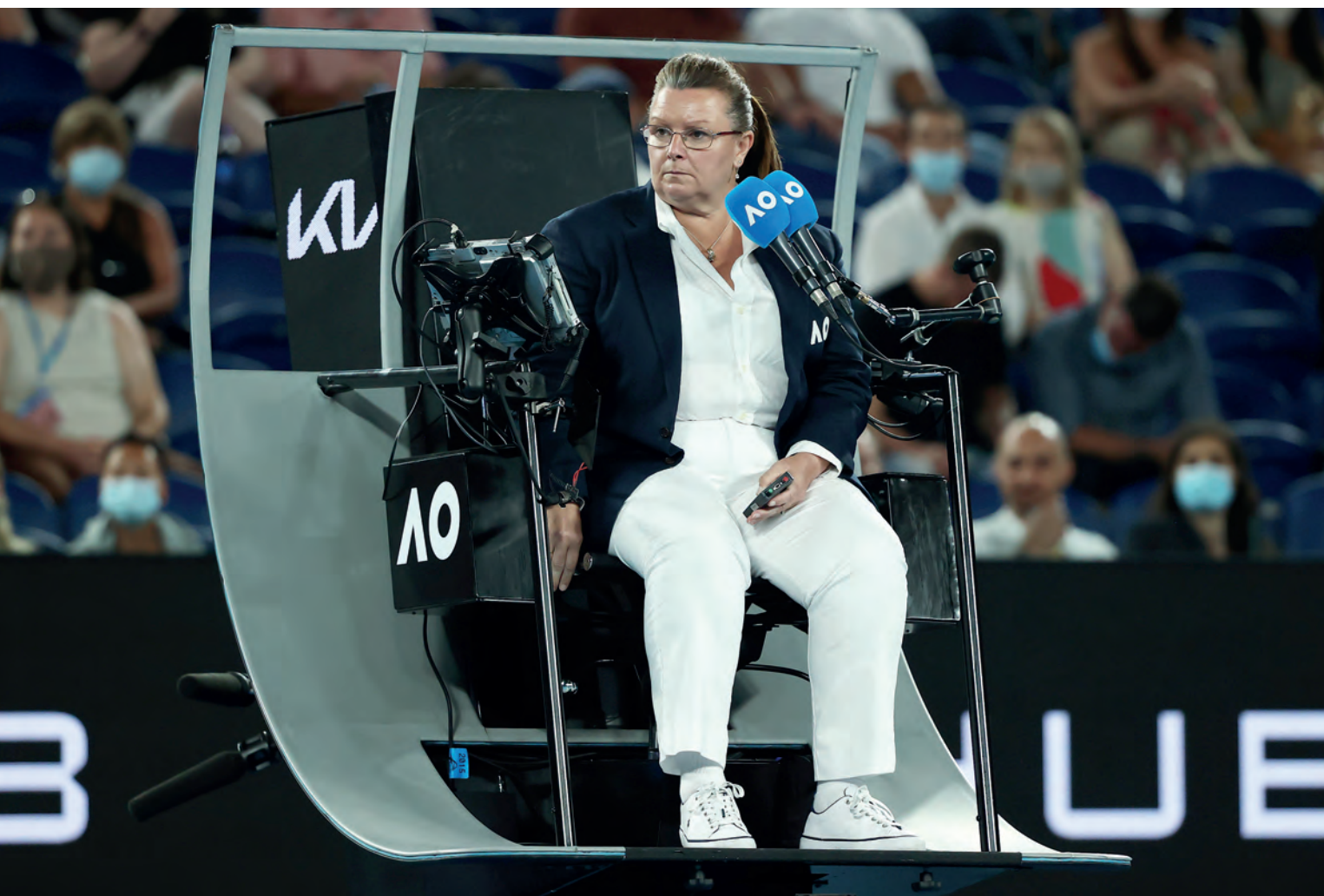
Having grown up around tennis, Hughes started playing as a child before taking up coaching. She represented her county, Northumberland, at U18 level as her love for the game continued to grow.

In 1991, Hughes made a decision that changed the rest of her life. In a bid to develop her tennis knowledge, she joined the Association of British Tennis Officials and LTA Officiating.

She completed a day's training to learn the basics of becoming a line umpire and immediately caught the bug. Soon enough, she had finished a year's worth of on-court experience and started working at world-renowned competitions such as Wimbledon, making her debut in 1993.

Roll on to 2003 after a decade of working, training and exams and she

Above:
Alison Hughes is presented with an award following the Women's Singles Final at the 2021 Australian Open



became a Gold Badge Chair Umpire – the highest qualification you can obtain – before joining the ITF and Grand Slam Team.

The following year all the hard work paid off as Hughes was named chair umpire for the Women's Singles Final at Wimbledon. Labelled as one of the biggest upsets in Wimbledon history, Hughes played her part in Maria Sharapova's triumphant 6-1, 6-4 victory over Serena Williams.

In an interview with Metro in 2019, Hughes said, "I sat in the umpire's chair after the coin toss and realised one of my biggest dreams had finally come true.

"I felt so proud to have been chosen for it and did my best to concentrate on not tripping over as I collected my medal from the Duke of Kent after the match."

In 2014 Hughes became a Chief Umpire, and the following year she chair umpired her sixth Wimbledon Women's Singles Final as Serena Williams lifted her sixth of seven titles. Two years later

she also officiated the last Grand Slam final between the Williams sisters at the Australian Open.

In 2018 Hughes was promoted to Gold Badge Chief Umpire, and that September became only the second woman to chair umpire the US Open Men's Singles Final between Novak Djokovic and Juan Martin del Potro. In doing so, she joined a list of what was only three women to have chair umpired a Men's Grand Slam final alongside Sandra de Jenken and Eva Asderaki-Moore. Marija Cicak (2021 Wimbledon Men's Singles Final) and Aurelie Tourte (2021 Roland Garros Men's Singles Final) have since joined that list.

Hughes has been a regular occupant of the best seat in the house for some of the most high-profile moments. Her contribution to the sport was recognised with an MBE for Services to Tennis in The Queen's Birthday Honours last June. When the news was announced, Hughes commented: "I am very honoured, proud and excited to have received an MBE – it is a huge

privilege. I never thought that doing a job that I love would bring me such an amazing award."

Hughes is now Assistant Chief Umpire at The Championships, Wimbledon – a role she will perform again this summer. She has been at the fabric of the professional game for over 30 years and is a pioneer for all aspiring female umpires, referees and officials across any sport.

Beyond her own career, Hughes has voluntarily dedicated many hours to helping officials develop, including by providing support, advice and mentoring to the LTA's Development Group, passing on her knowledge and experience to the next generation of young tennis umpires and officials.

A testament to the game, British tennis, and herself, Alison Hughes' legacy is undoubtedly one that will continue to grow and live on for generations to come.

Find out more about tennis officiating by clicking here





TOASTING THE HEROES OF BRITISH TENNIS

LTA Tennis Awards crown worthy winners

The 2022 LTA Tennis Awards were staged in May, with US Open champion Emma Raducanu claiming the Player of the Year prize alongside so many other heroes of the British game who were given recognition for their contributions.

The winners of this year's awards were announced by a host of special guest presenters, including Judy Murray OBE, Sally Bolton OBE, HRH the Duchess of Gloucester and TV personality Bear Grylls.

2022 LTA AWARDS WINNERS

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

JENNY FROW (HEREFORDSHIRE & WORCESTERSHIRE)

①

Jenny Frow has helped transform her local club, Bewdley. Jenny has taken on many roles including Chair and President, and was instrumental to a big clay court development which proved the catalyst for turning around the fortunes of the club. She's inspired many women and girls to pick up a racket and was the brains behind Term Time Tennis, aimed at mums.

CATHIE SABIN AWARD FOR VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

SUSIE GRIFFITHS (WALES)

②

Susie Griffiths has transformed tennis in two venues in Anglesey. She has increased members from 60 to 200 at Bangor, transforming the website and social media profile. Then, despite personal adversity, she raised over £25,000 through crowdfunding and grants to establish a new club in Rhosneigr, which now boasts a successful coaching programme.

YOUNG PERSON OF THE YEAR

RUBY BISHOP (NORFOLK)

③

Ruby Bishop is a true ambassador for tennis who not only represents Great Britain as a wheelchair player, but has shown relentless drive as a volunteer to raise disability awareness for other young people.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

EMMA RADUCANU (KENT)

④

Emma Raducanu became the first British woman to win a Grand Slam singles title for 44 years and the first qualifier to win a Grand Slam title in the Open Era in winning the women's US Open singles title. At 18-years-old, Emma became the youngest British woman to reach the fourth round of Wimbledon in the Open Era and jumped 324 places in the rankings to reach the world's top 20.

JUNIOR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BEN BARTRAM (NORFOLK)

⑤

Ben Bartram started off 2021 by becoming the new World Junior No.1 in the ITF wheelchair tennis world rankings, before going on to win three gold medals at the School Games National Finals, and the singles and doubles at the prestigious British Open Wheelchair Tennis Championships ITF Junior Series in July.

PADEL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

TIA NORTON (WARWICKSHIRE)

⑥

Tia Norton became the first ever winner of the LTA Padel Player of the Year. Tia started playing padel aged 12, and after six years in the sport turned professional in August last year after becoming the first British woman to compete on the professional circuit.

PERFORMANCE COACH OF THE YEAR

BEN HARAN (SURREY)

Ben Haran is the current coach of Hannah Klugman, William Jansen and Sophie Bekker, helping Hannah to wins at the LTA 14 & Under Nationals and Tennis Europe Super 12 event at Ayr. He coached William through qualifying to win the LTA 18 & Under Nationals, gaining a wildcard into Wimbledon qualifying.



DEVELOPMENT COACH OF THE YEAR

JIMMY SMITH (SUSSEX)

⑦

Jimmy Smith delivers high quality programmes across multiple venues. No-one in Sussex has deployed more LTA Youth courses and his innovative disability programmes involve local charities delivering tennis to children, people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health problems.

CLUB OF THE YEAR

GRANTHAM TENNIS CLUB (LINCOLNSHIRE)

Grantham Tennis Club's membership has increased by 44% to over 1,200. Inclusion sits at the heart of the club and their vast programmes include coaching for all levels and ages, walking tennis, box leagues, LTA Youth and one of largest disability programmes in the UK.

SCHOOL OF THE YEAR

DEAL PAROCHIAL PRIMARY SCHOOL (KENT)

Deal Parochial Primary School enhanced their free, in-school tennis provision for all 200 pupils. Following the relaxation of COVID restrictions, they quickly recommenced after-school tennis with staff attending LTA teacher training for LTA Youth, improving and broadening the school's capacity to deliver consistent, quality tennis.

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD (YORKSHIRE)

⑧

The University of Sheffield doubled membership with a club record of over 300 members and court hours up 130% on the previous year. To satisfy the demand for competitive tennis, Sheffield created two men's development teams and one women's team, offering players exclusive coaching and match play to develop their games.

COMPETITION OF THE YEAR

SUFFOLK TENNIS GRAND PRIX (SUFFOLK)

Suffolk Tennis Grand Prix saw a collaboration between 10 coaches and their venues. To bridge the gap in young players competing regularly, they created competitions for beginner and improving players, providing monthly competitions for Red, Orange, Green and Under 18 categories.

OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR

MIKE CROSSLEY (SUSSEX)

Mike Crossley officiated at Wimbledon qualifying and in the main draw, meaning three weeks in a secure bubble away from family. His performance as a Line Umpire culminated in his selection for the Women's singles final.

DISABILITY AWARD

LUSU SPORTS (CHESHIRE)

LUSU Sports was set up to change the attitudes, techniques and skills of people within educational and sporting environments. They have designed a washable kit bag with activity cards to become a "lesson in a bag", specifically for people with a wide range of disabilities.

COMMUNITIES & PARKS AWARD

G TENNIS AND CHRIS MARSHALL (SURREY)

The G Tennis programme led by Chris Marshall has been a pioneer in providing free and affordable tennis coaching sessions to those on low incomes. Chris has embraced a diverse community, presenting a positive image for tennis and delivering a comprehensive LTA Youth programme.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

SARA BUTLER (WARWICKSHIRE)

Sara Butler was undoubtedly the saviour of the Seniors Tennis GB programme in 2021! With Covid threatening the cancellation of the Seniors circuit, Sara stepped in. She swiftly took on the whole ITF Covid response for every day of four week-long tournaments, from Wimbledon to Wrexham, volunteering 29 days in total.

SENIOR PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

MARJORY LOVE & CHRIS ORNSTEIN

Marjory Love was winner of the 2021 Over 70s Singles and Doubles at Wimbledon and the Over 70s Singles at the British Indoors at Wrexham. Marjory is currently top of her GB age group and captain of the GB 70s team for the World Championships in Florida. Chris Ornstein had an exceptional 2021 reaching his first World Championships Singles Final in Mallorca, having defeated both the world No.1 and the 3rd seed.

SERVING A WHOLE NEW AUDIENCE

Ground breaking programmes reaching out to the masses

British icons Andy Murray, Emma Raducanu, Joe Salisbury, Alfie Hewett and our other elite players make all the headlines in the national tennis media, but there are also unsung heroes at grassroots level who are helping to ensure we are capitalising on the surge in interest in our sport.

SERVES is the LTA's leading sport for development programme, it takes tennis into the heart of local communities, and to children and young people who may have never picked up a racket or thought tennis was a sport for them. To date LTA SERVES has reached over 35,000 children and young people from some of the most deprived communities and has big ambitions to open tennis up to even more.

Across England, Scotland and Wales over 1,000 trusted community leaders have been trained to confidently deliver tennis sessions as part of the SERVES programme, to the children and young people that attend community venues (youth clubs, community centres and faith venues) regularly. Tennis Activators take centre stage and are the glue that brings it all together. Nari Sohal from SWAT (Sikh Welfare Awareness Team) Youth Club in Slough is one of those passionately delivering tennis to the masses.

"Our youth club was newly opened, and we were looking for fresh activities to

put on, and tennis was something we might not have thought about until the LTA approached us," said Nari.

"It was free to get involved, which was amazing because many of the children and young people have never played before and can't afford to join tennis clubs. We were given rackets, pop up mini nets, resources for social change activities, and access to Tennis Activator training"

"We play indoors at our youth club, and we have outdoor facilities. SERVES has shown us that tennis can be played anywhere, you don't just have to play on a tennis court.

"Implementing tennis into our activities, and being able to deliver as part of camps has helped us to create a sense of belonging to children and young people who have never had the opportunity to play or never saw anyone like them playing"

"We have seen a big surge in interest in our tennis sessions since Emma Raducanu's US Open win last summer, there was a buzz, and the children look up to role models that they can see a bit of themselves in. So many children are now playing tennis at our Youth Club, and they may have never got involved if it wasn't for SERVES"

"The LTA has given us the opportunity to take our group to Wimbledon. For so many children, going to a world class event like Wimbledon is simply



“OUR YOUTH CLUB WAS NEWLY OPENED, AND WE WERE LOOKING FOR FRESH ACTIVITIES TO PUT ON, AND TENNIS WAS SOMETHING WE MIGHT NOT HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT UNTIL THE LTA APPROACHED US”

NARI SOHAL, TEAM LEAD - SWAT YOUTH CLUB



LTA SERVES

- Provides FREE access to tennis, removing barriers like cost and travel
- Targets children and young people (aged 5-18) working with community organisations in England, Scotland, and Wales, ensuring tennis can be delivered in any space or venue they have available, and in a way that is right for their community
- Trains up those aged 16+ to feel confident and empowered to facilitate their tennis sessions
- Takes tennis to more places, children, and young people

GET INVOLVED:

- If you're from a community organisation or venue (youth clubs or groups, community centres or venues, or faith venues or organisations) you can register your interest in signing up by completing the online form

a dream come true. It really is a life changing experience, one that they will never forget".

SERVES Tennis Activators are given equipment and guidance by the LTA, as they deliver tennis to new audiences, with the range of activities on offer ensuring this is not just a programme for those looking to reach a high level of tennis excellence, it's supporting

to tackle inequalities in the sport and paving the way to get more children and young people involved in tennis for the longer term no matter their background.

"There are so many fun activities you can do.

We have managed to deliver tennis to a wide range of people in our community. The SERVES programme isn't just about hitting a ball back and

forward, it supports children to become more confident and to make better and healthier life choices, which can be more difficult when you live in communities where crime rates and obesity levels are generally higher"

"We offer fun activities for anyone who is looking to do some fitness, have some fun, meet new people and enjoy a new sport.

"I loved tennis as a kid, but my brothers would never play with me and it meant I had to hit a ball against a wall on my own. I loved that, but if we had a programme like LTA SERVES around when I was young, it would have been perfect for me on so many levels and I would have been able to progress further. You meet new people, get familiar with a new sport and hopefully start your journey in tennis."

It's fantastic to see more children from a diversity of backgrounds, and those from more working-class families get involved in tennis, it really is a sport for everyone. ●

**Read more:
The LTA SERVES
programme**





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PARK LIFE



When Arum Akom first made the short journey from his home in Camberwell to Burgess Park tennis courts as a young child, he had no idea just how big a part the sport and those courts would play in his life. Nor could he have envisaged the role he himself would go on to play in helping others in his community to progress in tennis and enjoy the benefits of the sport.

“I grew up on these courts”, says Arum
“It’s like a family here.

“My earliest memory of tennis was coming to this club,” recalls Arum, who followed his older brother in picking up a racket. “I only live two or three minutes from here – I just came along and wanted to learn how to play. I then started just coming down and doing squad classes with the other kids – I did that on a regular basis and then started playing consistently.”

Arum, now in his twenties, is a student at the University of East London and LTA Level 3 Accredited Coach who was a national runner-up at this year’s LTA Tennis Awards in recognition of his work

Right:
Arum Akom





to promote diversity within the sport through working with disadvantaged children. He has delivered sessions for talented local juniors on the same park courts where he himself first picked up a racket, and is passionate about increasing the numbers of young black players and making positive changes in the community.

Park tennis courts are one of the most crucial parts of the tennis infrastructure in Britain. Owned by Local Authorities, they are vital community assets that can help widen the impact of the physical and mental health benefits that being active through tennis can bring. As Arum's story highlights, the access they provide to the sport can positively change and shape lives.

In particular, park courts are the place where many who play tennis at least once during the year choose to pick up a racket and get on court, and they help

make the sport feel open and accessible to new audience groups.

There are currently 1.7 million adults and many more children who play tennis in a local park every year, with a significant proportion being from lower socio-economic groups. Female participation is also heavily driven by park tennis facilities, with park tennis courts the most popular venue for women to play after they have left education.

Not far away from the park courts where Arum developed his passion, Melissa Sack is a regular player at Ladywell Fields park courts in Lewisham, and enjoyed returning to the court after the COVID-19 lockdowns. "I started playing tennis at this park three years ago," she said. "It's been great for my health and social life. Having a public park court in walking distance from my house is so valuable for me."

“THE PERCEPTION OF TENNIS IS THAT IT’S JUST FOR RICH PEOPLE, COMING HERE YOU CAN SEE IT’S FOR ANYONE”

MAYA DODDS

Also on the Ladywell Fields courts was teenager Maya Dodds, who added: "When I first started coming to tennis sessions I wasn't very confident at all, but tennis has given me a lot more belief in myself and I'm now leading sessions here. The perception of tennis is that it's just for rich people, coming here you can see it's for anyone."

However, in many areas of the country park courts have become dilapidated. Currently across England, Wales and Scotland around 45% of park courts are categorised as being in poor, very poor or unplayable condition, preventing many from picking up a racket and getting active. Critically, half of unplayable venues are in the most socially deprived areas of the country.

That's why, over the next two years, the LTA is leading the delivery of a multi-million pound investment programme into public park tennis facilities across Britain as part of a project that is being seen as transformational for the sport.

The move will see the UK Government commit a total of £22m together with an investment from the LTA of £8.5m via the LTA Tennis Foundation, and will result in thousands of public park tennis courts in poor or unplayable condition brought back to life for the benefit of their local community.

The ambition is to drive participation across park tennis sites, as well as ensuring the future sustainability of these facilities. Crucially, in addition to paying for the refurbishment of public park courts, the new investment will also pay for the implementation of sustainable operating models for the facilities, with specialist programmes and support to ensure courts are both affordable and utilised.

The approach has already been successfully trialled over the past three years, including in cities such as Manchester and Sheffield.

For example in St Mary's Park in Bury where the local authority and LTA went into partnership to renovate the courts in 2017 and introduce new tennis programmes, bookings have since quadrupled and there are now nine times as many registered users as before the work began. If that success can be replicated across other sites, the national investment into parks facilities over the next two years truly will be transformational for tennis. ●

WATCH...

The human value of park courts





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COACHING THE COACHES

The LTA has set out on an ambitious mission to revolutionise coaching qualification courses in Britain in recent months, with the new programmes being rolled out for thousands of candidates.

Following the inspirational successes for British tennis over the last year that has included Emma Raducanu's US Open win, Cameron Norrie's victory at the Indian Wells Masters, as well as Joe Salisbury's rise to the top of the doubles rankings and Alfie Hewett's rise to world No.1 in the wheelchair rankings, the drive to build on the momentum behind tennis in Britain has included a bid to increase the numbers entering the coaching pathway and the quality of those graduating from it.

Here, Merlin Van de Braam (right), Head of Coach Development and Support at the LTA, guides us through the evolution of the new-look coaching qualification programmes on offer...

CAN YOU TAKE US THROUGH THE JOURNEY OF CHANGE FOR THE LTA COACHING PROGRAMME?

About two and a half years ago, we conducted a systematic industry review to look at what was good, where coach education could improve and what were the key challenges moving forward that may act as a barrier to quality coaching and ultimately participation growth. We listened to coaches, coach developers, employers and deployers and asked them what they needed from a coach or assistant coach to run a thriving tennis business. We then set out to develop qualification courses and products that

serve the needs of the tennis industry now and for the future. This was a systematic review to understand also what employers wanted and from that, we have put our courses together that fits their needs.

WHAT HAS CHANGED ON A LEVEL 1 COACHING COURSE COMPARED TO THE START OF 2021?

The most common role for an assistant coach is helping run a larger session, or a smaller session with more quality and input from a trained expert. To be a great assistant you need to be a great communicator, inspiring and motivating. You also need to be able to give support to the lead coach as they implement the lesson plan and structure of the session. Communication, demonstration, organisation and feeding were all key aspects that employers told us are required to be a great assistant, so we have put that at the core of the LTA Assistant (Level 1) qualification. For example, being able to organise large groups in small spaces is key to ensure a child remains active and engaged. The qualification works hard to ensure coaches don't revert back to the old fashioned 'queue method' whereby children stand around waiting to hit a ball every 45 seconds from the coach. A great assistant will keep everyone active and appropriately challenged, with exercises that look and feel like tennis.





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THE COACHING PATHWAY

LTA Assistant (Level 1)

This two-day qualification is ideal for tennis parents, enthusiasts, or keen players looking for the knowledge and skills to support group coaching sessions, alongside a lead coach.

Learning outcomes include:

- Communication, organisation and differentiation skills for group coaching
- Basic tactical, technical, physical and mental development frameworks
- Other key assistant skills; from safeguarding to LTA Youth delivery



LTA Instructor (Level 2)

This five-day qualification (split into four core and one elective day), is ideal for those looking to build on the coaching foundations of LTA Assistant (Level 1), enabling you to lead in the delivery of group coaching. This is the equivalent of a group exercise instructor for tennis.

Learning outcomes include:

- Develop more advanced skills in communication and organisation
- Have introductory knowledge of 'observation and analysis' of players
- Be able to provide general coaching advice across physical, mental, tactical, and technical domains
- Plan and deliver structured lessons from official LTA Adult and Junior coaching products e.g., Cardio Tennis, Tennis Xpress, LTA Youth
- Understand basic principles of skill acquisition, safeguarding and player development

Coach qualification (Level 3)

The level 3 coach qualification course is for people who want to work full time within the tennis coaching profession. On successful completion of the coach qualification candidates will be trained to:

- Coach beginners and improvers in groups and as individuals
- Gain an expert understanding and ability to apply the coaching process in tennis
- Understand the basics of business management
- Manage the work of level 1 and 2 coaching assistants

Senior Coach and Senior Performance Coach qualifications (Level 4)

The LTA Senior Coach and Senior Performance Coach (SPC) qualifications (Level 4) are for coaches committed to developing their on and off court coaching skills beyond Level 3 Coach competencies across technical, tactical, physical and mental development frameworks. Business management, leadership and communication become a key focus to enable graduates to navigate the industry and their career with success

Master Coach qualification (Level 5)

The master club coach qualification is for coaches who are or who aspire to work at the very highest level of grass-roots and development coaching.

On completion of the course, a master coach will be trained to:

- Deliver on court sessions of the highest quality and expertise
- Design, implement and evaluate the process and outcome of club programmes
- Display leadership skills to create and manage change in dynamic club environments
- Mentor a team of coaches to ensure delivery of a quality programme

Coaching is exciting, active, flexible and rewarding. If you are interested in getting involved in delivering tennis coaching, you can find more information on LTA coaching courses, [click here](#)



WHY DID YOU NEED TO CHANGE THE COACHING COURSES?

The industry insight suggested that it was too easy to pass Levels 1 and 2 and also that coaches were not 'deployment ready' when they graduated. This meant we had to go further, faster with our qualification curricula. There was a real perception that you could just move through the course, fill in the forms properly and you would get through. That's how I felt when I re-did the Level 1 course a few years back, to get a flavour for what the LTA were offering at the time.

WHAT CAN CANDIDATES EXPECT IF THEY SIGN UP FOR A COACH QUALIFICATION COURSE?

We have bolstered the curriculum through our LTA Learn online platform that has invaluable coursework and video content on there for students. In the past, you could fill in forms and say you have done certain tasks, but you didn't need to provide evidence on video so that is a key area we have changed. The industry research told us that communication, demonstration and feeding balls were the areas that were weak in the previous Level 1 and 2 courses, so we have focused on making them a priority now and you can expect lots of helpful tips on how to feed, communicate and demonstrate with excellence, alongside fun drills and exercises.

DO WE NEED TO TRY AND ATTRACT MORE FEMALE COACHING TALENT?

We absolutely want to grow the number of females who choose a career in coaching and we know we have a lot of work to do in this area, with just 23% of LTA Accredited Coaches being female. After Emma's win in 2021, we reached out to 3,500 female players who have experience in coaching and encouraged them to consider starting a journey on our coaching pathway. Delivering tennis to players of all ages and standards is a lot of fun and it would be great to see more female coaching talent coming with us on that journey. Through our LTA Coach Development Centres, we are funding a free pre-Level 1 taster course for females to have a look at tennis coaching to see if it is for them and it is an area we are keen to promote. We also have modules within our pathway now that cover off how best to coach males and females, and what the similarities and differences are from a tactical, technical, physical and psychological perspective. ●

▶ WATCH...

LTA Coach Development Plan



THE UNSTOPPABLE RISE OF PADEL



LTA leading the drive to promote a whole new ball game



“WHEN I FIRST CAME ACROSS THE SPORT, THERE WAS AN AIR OF MYSTERY ABOUT IT”

**TOM MURRAY –
LTA HEAD OF PADEL**

Roll the clock back to 2018 and there were just 30 padel courts in a UK market still largely unaware of the sport’s potential – but how that has changed.

Since the LTA brought padel under its wing three years ago and became the official national governing body for the sport that was once reserved for its hotbeds of Spain and Argentina has lifted off in Britain at an exhilarating pace.

‘New’ sports rarely get a platform of this magnitude to launch themselves, but padel is being driven by a momentum that excites British padel pioneer Tom Murray, who is Head of Padel at the LTA.

“When I first came across the sport, there was an air of mystery about it,” says Tom. “I have always loved tennis and any variation on the game is interesting, so I wanted to have a go at padel and as soon as you play once, you will never give it up.

“You see this little bat with no strings and it looks like a combination of squash and tennis. Then you go on to YouTube and type in world padel tour and you see all these mental rallies, with balls being hit out of the box, people running through gates to retrieve rebounds, and you realise just how exciting it is.

“It has elements of squash as we play shots off the wall, but it’s clearly much more closely related to tennis. Squash is more of a game that relies on the use of the wrist, but with padel, you play volleys as you would in tennis and a lot of the shots are similar.

“Obviously, we play shots off the wall in padel and that takes a little getting used to, but the sport is a lot easier to pick up than tennis. If you tried to play tennis for the first time, it would take a little while to get a rally going, but after a few minutes on the shorter padel court, you will be starting to enjoy some lengthy rallies as it is easier to master.”

Britain’s top padel star Tia Norton is the shining star of the game in Britain, and she believes padel is about to become a mainstream sport for the masses.

“The UK has huge potential to be a massive marketplace for padel and one of the main things I would like to achieve is to get a lot more younger people into the sport,” states teenager Tia, who is eager to compete on the world stages of padel.

“Padel courts are being installed in tennis clubs and that is allowing people who play tennis to transition and play both sports, but I would like to see young players starting in the sport earlier as that will allow them to develop their skills and reach the top

Below: British padel star Tia Norton





of the game. If I can help to promote the sport in any way, I'd love to do that. "Once people get a better understanding of the game and see it on TV, that will really help. There is a real drive behind the sport now and it feels like the momentum is with us, so I'm excited to see where padel will be in five years' time."

Padel already boasts some high-profile amateur players, with Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp and his assistant Pep Lijnders relishing any chance to spend their spare time on a court, while former Scotland rugby star Max Evans and ex-England captain John Terry are regular padel rivals at their holiday homes in Portugal. In addition, Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta is a padel fan and soccer superstar Zlatan Ibrahimovic is also an investor in a padel business in his native Sweden.

Few sports looking to make a breakthrough in a crowded marketplace have promoters of that calibre driving the message, but they are not alone in appreciating that this is a sport ready to move to another level.

What comes next for the sport is setting the pulse racing for all those who have yet to take to a padel court – don't leave it too long to jump on this sporting bandwagon. ●

Read more:
Padel Tennis &
Where to play





New names took centre stage at the 2022 LTA Junior National Championships in April, as the cream of Britain's best young players gathered for the 18 & Under and 16 & Under Championships at the National Tennis Centre.

Two weeks of competition at the LTA's base at Roehampton offered up a demonstration of the quality of the junior talent emerging through the ranks in Britain and for Bridgend-born Mimi Xu, 14, the two events proved to be a showcase for her promise.

Xu won both the 18U and 16U titles in impressive fashion to secure a place in qualifying for the Wimbledon main draw, as well as entry to Wimbledon's Girls' Singles event that is staged during the tournament fortnight at the All England Club.

The provision of the wild card entries for finalists and winners at the LTA's 18U and 16U Junior National Championships is part of a move announced by the LTA

and supported by the All England Lawn Tennis Club to enhance the continued development of Great Britain's junior players.

"I enjoyed every moment of it. I have been playing well and I'm so happy to come through," said Xu. "I feel like I played the big points well in both tournaments and now I have so much to look forward to in the next few weeks."

Katie O'Brien, who is a former British No.1 and is now LTA Women's National Coach, watched the finals at the NTC and offered praise for the players involved.

"The standard was excellent and that is the most pleasing aspect of the week," stated O'Brien. "It has all been played in a good spirit. The quality in this group coming through is great this year and they all get along so well. There is great camaraderie among them, so hopefully they will all push each other on."

"Staging the Junior National Championships at the National Tennis Centre this year has been great and it highlights that we are all one big family in British tennis at all levels of the game."

All four of the Girls' semi-finalists in this year's 18 & Under Junior National Championships are part of the LTA's National Academy set-up, with Xu and her final opponent Talia Neilson-Gatenby both training at Loughborough, as part of the programme delivered by Nick Cavaday and his team.

National Academies are generally for players aged 13 to 18, providing high quality, high-intensity daily training environments with world-class science and medical support, working in partnership with a local school, to help them successfully develop into emerging tour professionals.

The academies are led by a team of world-class coaches together with specialist sport scientists, medics, personal development and welfare practitioners and Xu and Neilson-Gatenby are benefitting from that support, with the new champion relishing the best win of her career so far.

The same is true of the 18 & Under Boys' champion Luca Pow, with the Solihull-born teenager also working at Loughborough Academy and highlighting his potential with a win

Above:
The LTA's base at
Roehampton

MEET THE 2022 LTA JUNIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Mimi Xu

BORN: 2007

BIRTHPLACE: BRIDGEND, WALES

WINNER: 18U AND 16U FINALS

TENNIS IDOLS: BELINDA BENCIC
AND IGA SWIATEK



Henry Searle

BORN: 2006

BIRTHPLACE: WOLVERHAMPTON

WINNER: 16U FINAL

TENNIS IDOL: NICK KYRGIOS

Luca Pow

BORN: 2005

BIRTHPLACE: SOLIHULL

WINNER: 18U FINAL

TENNIS IDOL: RAFAEL NADAL



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against defending champion Will Jansen in a high-quality Boys final.

"It feels good seeing my name on the trophy," said Pow. "It was tough playing outside after playing our last two matches indoors and Will started off strong. I went 4-2 down in both sets and managed to come back to win."

"It has been amazing to play at the National Tennis Centre. When you walk around this place and Joe Salisbury strolls past you, the world No.1 in Doubles, it's crazy."

"The backing we are getting from the LTA and the coaching team at the National Academy is giving us a massive help and we are grateful for the support we get."

Martin Weston, LTA Men's Tennis Manager, paid tribute to both finalists after a successful week of tennis at the National Tennis Centre.

"It was exactly the sort of match we want to see in a final," said Weston, as he reflected on Pow's win over Jansen.

"They both played the kind of tennis we want to see, aggressive and brave and Luca did well to come back from 4-2 down in both sets."

"It has been an encouraging week for the boys and staging the event at the National Tennis Centre has been a big success. To be around the NTC in a week when a lot of our players are here and to walk past the US Open trophies won by Emma

Raducanu and Joe Salisbury every morning was an inspirational experience for our junior players."

The 16 & Under Boys title was claimed by Henry Searle, who beat Viktor Frydrych in the final, and he along with many of the young players who shone at the LTA's Junior National Championships have been playing in ITF events in Britain in recent weeks.

These tournaments are part of the LTA's expanded Performance Competition Calendar of Pro Level International ITF World Tennis Tour events staged in Great Britain this year, with the number of events rising from seven men's events and eight women's events in 2019 to 16 for both men and women in 2022. This is in addition to the grass court season playing opportunities already in place.

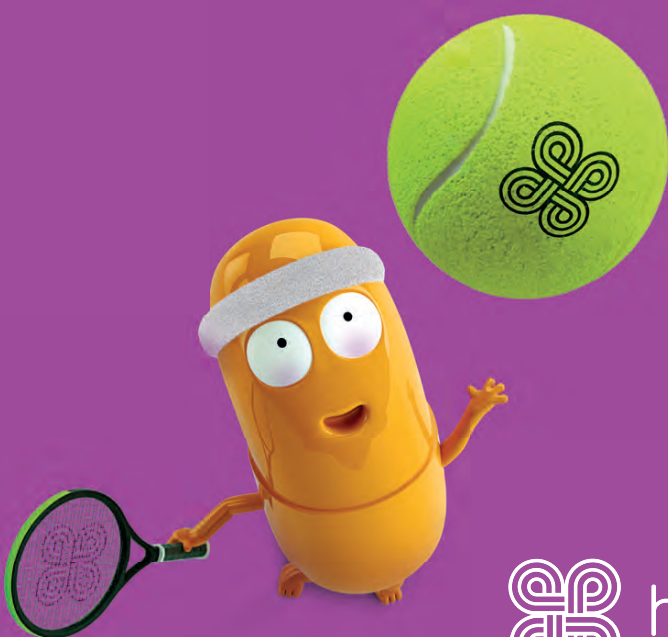
The aim is to provide more opportunities for players to compete more regularly at a higher level and make progressive ranking gains at the early stages of their careers. The increased calendar means that there will be over 40 weeks of either international ranking points or prize money-earning opportunities in Great Britain this year.

With opportunities to play more competitions, the best young players in Britain are getting a chance to take their game to the next level and that can only help in their mission to play in tournaments of this calibre sooner rather than later. ●

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ESAH HAYAT'S WINNING FORMULA

Introducing one of the world's best deaf tennis players



LOVE THE GAME



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Success stories are flowing in British tennis and Esah Hayat is adding to the narrative. As the leading deaf tennis player in the country, the 20-year-old Cambridge University student has achieved impressive results, winning his fourth title at the National Deaf Tennis Championships at the LTA's National Tennis Centre last November.

Yet his ambitions on the court will not stop there, with Esah aiming for the stars as he lays out his vision for a bright tennis future.

TELL US HOW YOU STARTED YOUR JOURNEY IN TENNIS?

It began with watching my older brother's tennis lessons on Saturday mornings, while not having any interest in the sport myself. That carried on for a couple of years until a switch flicked in my head and I just decided to join in. The coach thought I had potential and suggested I join in more often. From there, I went from 15 minutes of tennis a week, to an hour a week, and multiple lessons a week.

HOW HAVE YOU OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATING INTO A HEARING TENNIS ENVIRONMENT?

Tennis is an individual sport, so I actually think it's one of the best sports for deaf people to play, since the communication barriers many deaf people face aren't as big an issue. That being said, there is still an element of communication with the opponent/officials/coaches that can be challenging. I always found it difficult to hear my coaches if they were on the other side of the court. The main way I overcame this was simply building the confidence to inform people around me (coaches and hitting partners) of my difficulty and ask that they make an extra effort to make sure I can hear them. Everyone I've met has always been happy to help, so I would advise that to any younger deaf players who may struggle with the same issue.

OPEN COURT: MAKING TENNIS A SPORT FOR ANYONE

You might think it's not for you, but tennis is a sport that can be adapted for any level of ability, as well as for players with different disabilities. We can supply all the equipment and aids you need – we've got sports wheelchairs if you have a physical impairment', and tennis balls that make a noise when they bounce if you're blind or partially sighted. There's nothing stopping you from giving it a go and having just as much fun playing the game as everyone else.

Great Britain is one of the leading nations in the world for disability tennis, and the LTA's Open Court disability tennis programme is one of the largest of its kind across any sport. Since its launch following the London 2012 Paralympics and with the support of Sport England, it has helped a record number of disabled people and those with long term health conditions people pick up a racket and enjoy the benefits of being active through tennis.

As part of the programme, the LTA supplies over 400 Open Court venues with adaptive equipment, training, grant funding and resources to increase opportunities for disabled people to get involved in tennis, as well as dedicated support and advice from the LTA team.

We also support and run local, regional and national disability tennis competitions for any and all abilities, and for the very best players there are opportunities to play for Great Britain too!

If you want to find out more about playing disability tennis, visit <http://www.lta.org.uk/play/inclusion-disability>

GETTING TO KNOW... ESAH HAYAT

Born: 13.03.2002

Achievements: 4 National Deaf Tennis Championships singles titles in six years

Tennis idols: Andy Murray, Rafael Nadal and Lee Duck-Hee.



To find out more about how to get involved in deaf tennis, please [click here](#).



Above: Esah in 2015 when he won gold at the Junior World Deaf Tennis Championships

EXPLAIN THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE IN YOUR EFFORTS TO REACH YOUR POTENTIAL IN THE GAME.

Reaching my full potential in tennis is down to a variety of factors, both within and out of my control. I like to think of reaching potential as a matter of having the right mindset, before anything. Only I can control my attitude towards tennis, and so I always try to be as committed as I can to improving. I think that any player who has the right mindset is halfway there to reaching their potential, before considering any external factors.

WHAT ARE YOUR BIG AMBITIONS IN TENNIS?

I have many ambitions in tennis, including getting ATP points and playing on the professional circuit. I play for my university and tennis clubs and have specific goals year by year that I and the team work to achieve. In deaf tennis, I would like to get more medals, including doubles medals with the other GB team members, and to continue doing my country proud.

HOW DO YOU FEEL TENNIS PERFORMS COMPARED TO OTHER SPORTS IN TERMS OF EMBRACING COMPETITORS WITH SENSORY OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES?

Playing sports as a young deaf person can be a tricky experience, especially when it involves communication with other players/teammates. But as I mentioned earlier, tennis was always an easy sport for me to fit into as a deaf player, as communication was less crucial in the game, meaning my deafness was not an issue for me. I was also lucky enough to always be surrounded by people who were both deaf-aware, and very accepting of my situation. I was never made to feel like less of a player in anyone's eyes, and I do think that positive attitude extends to the tennis community in the UK. I think that if more deaf people were aware of how easy it is to get started in tennis, and how their deafness won't hinder them in this sport, the participation rates would increase quickly - it's just a matter of spreading the word.

The National Tennis Centre in Roehampton has become a home for British tennis to be proud of.

Gary Stewart, LTA Head of Operations, takes us on a tour of the centre in south-west London. Fifteen years on from its opening, the LTA's National Tennis Centre has been transformed in recent years as a training and competition base, with new state-of-the-art courts and facilities making it one of the leading national training centres in the world.

"The National Tennis Centre, or NTC for short, is both the LTA's HQ and also the training base for Britain's elite players.

It was opened in 2007 by Her Majesty the Queen and in recent years has seen a number of upgrades and investment in order to bring it up to the highest international standards. Alongside the significant capital investment we have put in in recent years, the center's operation was also brought back in-house in 2018 and is now run by the LTA's own operations team, with tennis at the core of everything we do.

As the home of British tennis the centre has an important role to play

GOLD STANDARD





in giving our players the best possible facilities to allow them to train and prepare for competition.

We have 20 world class tennis courts on all Grand Slam surfaces to the highest specification. This includes six indoor hard courts and six recently re-laid outdoor hard courts that play in a similar fashion to the US Open and Australian Open courts. There are four clay courts (including two under a double skin air bubblecover) which use the same Italian clay as used at the Monte Carlo Masters and, of course, four grass courts, with similar characteristics as those used at the All England Lawn Tennis Club that are very popular at this time of the year.

This way, whatever the time of year or upcoming event there will always be an appropriate surface for our British players to practice on.

There is also a dedicated player lounge, changing facilities, performance gym (containing state-of-the-art athlete strength and conditioning equipment), ice baths, medical suite and on-site café.

The elite players using the centre have access to performance analysis, fitness, psychology and rehab, strength and conditioning, medical support

and nutrition support. For players or support staff who wish to stay overnight, there are 22 overnight ensuite residential bedrooms.

We're always looking to improve the facilities and we've recently added speed guns on the indoor courts, to allow players to monitor their serve speed. We're also increasingly using the centre as a competition base. We hosted Great Britain's behind-closed-doors Billie Jean King Cup tie against Mexico during the pandemic and more recently the Great Britain 16U and 18U Junior Nationals this April. We have also installed mobile scoreboards and new spectator seating ahead of us hosting a women's ITF World Tennis Tour 25K event in July.

We are also keen to use our facilities to help promote padel, one of the fastest growing sports in this country. We have three high-quality padel courts on site. These are used for competitions, padel coach education classes, test and learn session on new products and are available to the local community to book on a pay-and-play basis. We also act as a training base for Great Britain's Padel team. We expect more and more tennis centres around the country to

integrate padel into their operations in the coming years, so it is important we can pass on our knowledge of what works.

Beyond the professional game we have a strong relationship with the local community and currently provide LTA Youth classes to 250 local children on site. We are taking more classes into local schools to expand our reach and our goal is to give 1000 local children the opportunity to pick up a racket and receive coaching.

We also use the NTC's facilities to experiment and innovate with new products that tennis coaches and venues may find useful in growing the game. So we have a specially designed cardio tennis court as well as an interactive hitting wall on site. We are keen to expand this area of our work so we can be a test bed for the tennis community, as we try to open tennis up to more people.

For those who are tennis fans and want to experience the centre's facilities for themselves we offer our LTA Advantage Play+ and Advantage Compete, giving members the opportunity to play and stay at the NTC.

In November 2021, the centre was awarded the ITF's Gold Level status in recognition of the high quality of its facilities. It's only the third centre in the world to receive this accolade, joining the French Tennis Federation's national training centre in Paris and the USTA National Campus in Florida.

It was a proud moment for me and my team, but we know that if we want to carry on offering the best possible support to British players then we need to keep investing in the centre and keep improving everything we do." ●



ALLEYES ON GLASGOW

Tennis fans will have their eyes firmly fixed on Glasgow in the coming months after the Scottish city netted two of the sport's biggest showpiece team events.

Having won a bid to host the Group Stages of the Davis Cup by Rakuten Finals this September, the LTA secured the rights to host the Billie Jean King Cup Finals by BNP Paribas in November.

Both prestigious team competitions will take place at the Emirates Arena in Glasgow – the Davis Cup between 13-18 September, and the Billie Jean King Cup between 8-13 November. It promises to be a mouth-watering period for British tennis fans.

The Billie Jean King Cup finals come at the end of a year in which the LTA is placing special focus on putting tennis at the forefront of women's sport.

Although Great Britain played host to the first ever Billie Jean King Cup Finals, (then known as the Federation Cup) which were held at the Queens Club in 1963 it is the first time the premier team competition in international women's tennis will be hosted in this country since 1991.

Anne Keothavong, Great Britain's Billie Jean King Cup Captain said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to build the profile of women's tennis and focus attention on women's sport. The entire team are very excited about playing in front of a home crowd and hearing some loud support across the whole week."

The LTA plans to capitalise on hosting the event by further raising awareness of tennis as the leading women's sport in a bid to inspire more women and girls to pick up a racket for the first time.

The Billie Jean King Cup is the women's world cup of tennis. Previously known as the Federation Cup and then the Fed Cup, the tournament will see 12 teams compete to be crowned world champions. Joining Great Britain in the Finals will be teams from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Italy, Kazakhstan, Poland, Spain, Slovakia, Switzerland and the USA.

The event will be split into four round-robin groups of three countries, with group winners qualifying for the semi-finals. Each country will be represented by a team of up to five players who will compete in singles and, if needed, a doubles match in each tie.



DAVIS CUP GROUP D: WHO WILL GREAT BRITAIN FACE

USA 🇺🇸

The most successful nation in Davis Cup history, the USA have won an incredible 32 titles, the last of which came in 2007. Great Britain has a long and extensive history against the USA in the Davis Cup, most notably in their 2015 clash (also in Glasgow), where the Brits clinched a 3-2 win thanks to the heroics of Andy Murray and James Ward.

The USA sealed their place at the 2022 Finals by defeating Colombia in the qualifiers, with Seb Korda and Taylor Fritz winning their singles match, and Rajeve Ram and Jack Sock combining to win the tie.

KAZAKHSTAN 🇰🇿

Having competed in the World Group for the first time in 2011, Kazakhstan have since gone on to reach the quarter-finals on five separate occasions.

They last faced Great Britain in the group stages of the 2019 Finals, where Jamie Murray and Neal Skupski edged the deciding doubles rubber. Currently sitting ninth in the world rankings (one behind Great Britain in eighth), Kazakhstan overcame Norway 3-1 in the qualifiers to reach this year's Finals.

NETHERLANDS 🇳🇱

The Dutch team have been in and out of the Finals over the years – qualifying in 2019 but losing out to Kazakhstan in the 2021 qualifiers. Their best result came in 2001 where they reached the semi-finals before losing 3-2 to France.

Like Kazakhstan, they last faced Great Britain in the 2019 Finals group stages, with Murray and Skupski proving decisive once again in the doubles. The Netherlands overcame a young Canadian team in the qualifiers to progress to this year's Finals.

BACK THE BRITS IN GLASGOW

Keep an eye on the LTA website for ticket details for the 2022 Billie Jean King Cup Finals by BNP Paribas and 2022 Davis Cup by Rakuten Finals Group D matches in Glasgow – click below for all the latest news.

<https://www.lta.org.uk/fan-zone/gb-teams/billie-jean-king-cup/>

<https://www.lta.org.uk/fan-zone/gb-teams/davis-cup/>



The LTA will be working closely with Tennis Scotland and local partners to capitalise on another tennis first by boosting engagement and increasing participation across the whole of Great Britain.

Scott Lloyd, Chief Executive of the LTA, said: "We were ambitious to bring more major events to Great Britain and raise the profile of tennis across the whole year. This gives us a great chance to open up tennis to more people and create special memories we hope will inspire the next generation of players."

Following the award of the Billie Jean King Cup Finals to Glasgow, International Tennis Federation (ITF) President David Haggerty stated: "The LTA presented a very impressive bid as part of a competitive hosting process. They have successfully hosted David Cup ties in Glasgow, and we look forward to having the women's World Cup of Tennis take place in front of passionate tennis fans from around the world in an electric atmosphere."

Meanwhile, the Davis Cup Group Stages will see the Great Britain men's team back on home soil for the first time since 2018. Great Britain have been drawn to face the USA, Kazakhstan and the Netherlands.

The 16 competing nations have been split in to four groups, with each group hosted by a different European city. The Emirates Arena in Glasgow will host Group D with the other groups being played in Bologna (Italy), Hamburg (Germany) and Valencia (Spain). Each nation will play the three other teams in their

group over the five-day competition, with the top two teams progressing to the quarter-finals in Malaga in November.

LTA Head of Men's Tennis and Davis Cup captain Leon Smith said: "We as a team, and our fans, experienced some of our best moments of Davis Cup in Glasgow and I know how much the players will enjoy the atmosphere. Any time we go up against the USA, it's always a blockbuster occasion, and who can forget the amazing encounter we had in the same arena in 2015. It's an amazing coincidence that we drew Kazakhstan and the Netherlands again in our group like we did three years ago; both nations are playing really well, but we will be confident of our chances especially in front of our own crowd."

The LTA was awarded a multi-year deal by the ITF and Kosmos Tennis to host the Group Stages of the Davis Cup. The agreement will last five years on the basis Great Britain qualify or receive a wild card for the Finals in each of those years. The ambition is to take the event around the country in future years as part of the LTA vision to open tennis up to new audiences.

In the meantime, all eyes will be on Glasgow, as it becomes the first city to host Davis Cup and Billie Jean King Cup Finals events in the same year. ●

Opposite page: Top: The Great Britain Billie Jean King Cup squad in Prague earlier this year; **Bottom:** The Emirates Arena hosting 2015 action; Great Britain celebrate their 2015 Davis Cup triumph

Left: Great Britain's captain Anne Keothavong; **Top:** GB fans cheer on the Davis Cup squad



LTA TENNIS FOUNDATION

By Tim Lawler MBE – Chair of Trustees, LTA Tennis Foundation



Thank you to the LTA for giving me the opportunity to introduce our new charity, the LTA Tennis Foundation, and explain a little about what we do.

We are a new tennis charity that partners with brilliant people and organisations to improve lives through tennis.

We share the LTA's vision of 'tennis opened up', and we want to use our sport to make a real difference to people across the whole country.

Our goal is to inspire more people from all backgrounds to discover the joy of tennis, challenge the status quo to open the sport up, work collaboratively with existing charities and partners, and invest in people, programmes and places to play.

“OUR GOAL IS TO INSPIRE MORE PEOPLE FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS TO DISCOVER THE JOY OF TENNIS”

TIM LAWLER MBE

In short we want as many people as possible to share in the enjoyment and benefits of taking part in tennis.

The funding we provide is solely for the grassroots of the game, and as the LTA's charity we are committed to working in all parts of Great Britain with a particular focus on diverse and disadvantaged communities where the game is less well established.

OUR BACKGROUND

We are lucky to benefit from the legacy and support of two charities that have gone before us.

Many of you will be familiar with the historical work of the Tennis Foundation and the LTA Trust. The Tennis Foundation was an independent charity which was fully incorporated into the LTA in 2018. The LTA Trust was



the LTA's facilities investment charity and was responsible for grants to venues to expand or improve their facilities. Last year, the Tennis Foundation and LTA Trust were merged to form the LTA Tennis Foundation. We want to build on their success and reach even more people who would benefit from our funding. For this reason we will also be undertaking our own fundraising in the future.

HOW WE WORK

We are a loan and grant giving charity, and whilst we don't deliver programmes ourselves we will work with partners who can deliver projects that match our objectives. We will give loans or grants

to help our partners deliver new projects or to scale up existing work so they can reach a larger number of individuals. We will also sometimes support projects delivered by the LTA if the Trustees feel these meet the charity's goals.

As this is our first full year of operation, we will be working to build partnerships with existing charities and organisations to help understand how we can best support them and use our funding to improve access to tennis facilities, programmes and coaching. Our intention is to build strong relationships with these charities over the coming year, many of whom are or have previously been supported by the LTA.

We are already investing in some key projects. As well as supporting facility developments at clubs and local authority sites, using our existing reserves, we are committing significant funding into the LTA and Government's parks project, which will see hundreds of run-down tennis courts in local parks refurbished and fitted with new gate access systems to allow them to be booked and used more easily.

We are also supporting the delivery of tennis in schools by providing £250 worth of vouchers for tennis equipment to any school that signs up for LTA Youth – the LTA's new and innovative junior programme created to help more children enjoy the benefits of playing and staying in tennis.

In the future, we will support even more new projects and full details of how to apply for funding will be available later this year.

OUR GOAL

I believe the benefits that tennis can bring, both to people's physical health as well as their mental wellbeing, are significant and our charity wants to give more people of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to enjoy and share in these benefits.

Whatever part you play in the tennis family – a player, coach, volunteer, official or fan – we hope you will share this belief, and work with us in the years ahead to open up our wonderful sport to more people. You can find out more at www.ltatennisfoundation.org.uk



A GREEN GAME

Environmental sustainability is high on the agenda at the Rothelay Classic Birmingham this year.

Earlier this month, the LTA announced a long-term commitment for tennis in Britain to addressing issues related to environmental sustainability, protecting and supporting the environment and tackling climate impacts.

As the national governing body for tennis, the LTA has recognised the important role it has to play with the publication of its Environmental Sustainability Plan, which sets out how it will help secure a lasting future for tennis in Britain, through positive action on climate change and leadership in sustainability.

The plan acknowledges that the climate crisis, resource scarcity and changes to the natural environment not only represent global challenges but will also have an impact on tennis in Britain at all levels. Whether it be the impact of more extreme temperatures on grass court tennis at Britain's major events, or rising sea levels and severe weather meaning a higher proportion of tennis venues at risk of regular flooding, it is critical that tennis plays its part in tackling these issues.

The LTA knows it has a role to play in tackling its direct impacts, as a responsible organisation and event owner and operator, and in its Environmental Sustainability Plan has set out some specific actions to do this.

As a result, the LTA's summer grass court events will look a little different this year. Single-use plastic cups have been removed, with the introduction of a reusable cup initiative, and at the same time, visitors are being encouraged to top up their reusable bottles from free water filling stations, again greatly reducing reliance on single-use plastic.

Other eco-friendly initiatives in place for the Rothelay Classic Birmingham will see carbon neutral waste management company, B&S Services, harness energy from waste produced and enhance the commitment to achieving 'zero waste to landfill'.

After removing all recyclables such as cardboard, wood and metals, any non-recyclable waste is compacted into bales and transported to a Combined Heat and Power Facility where energy is harvested to produce electricity, steam and



thermal heating. Discarded food waste is sent to an Anaerobic Digestion facility, which also generates enough renewable electricity to power 4,500 homes. At the same facility, micro organisms break food down into agricultural compost.

In another green move, HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) fuel – made from 100% renewable materials – is used in temporary generators which can produce 90% less greenhouse gases and emissions, reducing carbon footprints significantly.

Cam Norrie, British men's singles No.1 welcomed the publication of plans, saying: "Changes to our climate and environment are the greatest challenge we face globally, and we have already begun to see the impact on tennis.

"I'm really pleased that the LTA are making a long-term commitment to both reduce its own impacts, and work with everyone involved in tennis in Britain to protect and support the environment.

"It's really important that we all play our part, however big or small, to ensure that tennis is here to enjoy for generations to come."

Meanwhile, the LTA are urging visitors to reduce and limit their own environmental footprint when attending summer, grass court tournaments including here at the Rothelay Classic Birmingham.

Here are four positive steps tennis fans can take:

- 1 – Recycle, Recycle, Recycle – look out for recycling bins on site and please use them
- 2 – Free Water For All – take advantage of the taps around the grounds to refill your bottle
- 3 – Return your cups – make sure you return your cup before you leave so it can be washed and used again
- 4 – Green transport – wherever possible, leave the car at home!

You can read the full LTA Environmental Sustainability Plan here: www.lta.org.uk/sustainability





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