

SELECTION POLICY

14U NATIONAL AGE GROUP PROGRAMME

1. Introduction

This document describes how players are selected for the 14U National Age Group Programme (NAGP) and how any accompanied financial support will be assessed.

The policy does not cover selection to represent Great Britain for National Team events. Selection for these events is governed by a separate selection process.

This policy is subject to ongoing review and may be updated intermittently. Any amendments shall be published on the LTA website.

2. Programme aims

The NAGP aims to support the development of those U14 players with the highest potential for international junior success and selection for the LTA's Men's and Women's Programme (MWP).

The Performance Team will work in collaboration with each player's coaching team and family to establish a high quality programme and support delivery through the following opportunities:

- Frequent training visits from a designated National Age Group Coach,
- Contribution to and advise on a player's individual development plan (IDP),
- Invitations to attend NAGP Camps and International Trips,
- Key insight captured through camps or following observations at tournaments,
- Advice from the LTA's Sports Science and Sports Medicine team,
- Guidance from the LTA's Performance Lifestyle Advisor,
- Access to a financial award to support international tournament attendance.

3. Eligibility

For a player to be eligible for consideration they must meet 3.1 and 3.2 and either 3.3.i or 3.3.ii.

3.1 Age eligibility. A player must be 12 to 14 years old on the 1 January 2021 – born 2007, 2008 and 2009. Players aged 11 on the 1 January 2021 (born 2010) will only be considered if they sufficiently meet the factors identified in section 5.

3.2 Eligible to represent Great Britain. Players must hold, or be eligible for, a British passport. Those not meeting this stipulation will be considered on a case-by-case basis and such players must contact PlayerPathway@lta.org.uk to confirm they would like to be considered.

3.3 Performance level requirements. In addition to 3.1 and 3.2, a player must fulfil either of the requirements outlined below:

- i. Selected as an U14 NAGP Scholar¹ or U12 NAGP Player in 2019,
- ii. Selected as a Regional Player in 2020 AND nominated by a National Age-Group Coach based on observations at Player Pathway activity or National G1 & G2 events between January 2020 and the selection date.

3.4 Number of places. Up to 36 players will be selected for the NAGP for 2021. There is no obligation to fill every available place or select an equal split of boys and girls.

¹ To reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, for 2020/21 only, all current 14U NAGP Scholars will automatically be given an extension of one year, unless they have a long term injury or illness which means they are unable to return to junior tennis, and as such, are unable to return to a full training and competitive tennis schedule. As part of this extension any funding levels may be reviewed.

3.5 Player agreement. All accepting players must sign the LTA's NAGP Player Agreement in order to receive the benefits identified in section 2.

If a player chooses to decline a place they may still receive invitations to partake in relevant NAGP Camps and International Trips but, they won't receive the other benefits listed above.

4. Selection process

4.1 Selection panel

The Selection Panel (the Panel) will be made up of the Head of the National Performance Pathway (Chair) and at least four members of the National Age Group Coaching Team.

The Panel has complete discretion regarding selection decisions and will be guided by the aims, the process, and the ability (within resources) to effectively support each player. The Panel will exercise their discretion fairly and without bias.

4.2 Evaluation of player suitability

When considering which eligible players have the highest potential of meeting the aims of the programme, the Panel will consider the following factors:

- **Game style:** The player has an all-round game which can be developed into a successful game style.
- **Strengths & Weapons:** The player has emerging strengths which can be developed into successful weapons.
- **Athlete:** The player has a robust athletic foundation which can be developed into physical attributes that could positively influence the outcome of matches.
- **Heart:** The player's drive and attitude in training and competition shows a willingness to learn and a desire to win matches.
- **Head:** The player demonstrates smart decision making, good problem solving abilities and a level of focus in matches, irrespective of the match situation.
- **Performance:** The player has competitive results, ranking and rating (at current year of birth or above) and a capability to beat players of a higher level than themselves.

When evaluating a player against these areas, the Panel will reflect on the activity and timescale identified in 3.3.

4.3 Considerations relating to limiting factors

When discussing the above factors the Panel may also take into account any of the following matters that influences their opinion on the player's potential:

- The player's age and their stage of physical maturation,
- The player's training programme and tournament schedule;
- Any injury and/or illnesses that led to a significant interruption or impact on tennis,
- Any other significant considerations (e.g. examinations, illness in the family).

4.4 Allocation of NAGP financial awards

Selected players are eligible for an NAGP financial award to support the costs associated with partaking in international events. The following standards will ordinarily be applied when determining the level of financial award offered to the selected players:

- Commitment to an IDP and willingness to work with the LTA Performance Team *and*,
- Regular main draw semi-final performances at 12U & 14U G1 and G2 national events within the last 12 months *or*,

- A main draw quarter-final performance at a 14U Cat 1 or Cat 2 international event within the last 12 months.

NAGP financial awards will be between £2,000 and £5,000 however, there is a fixed budget, which will determine the exact figure offered to eligible players.

Players not eligible for an award at the point of selection may be added at a later date if they meet the standards in 4.4. This would typically be reviewed on a termly basis (e.g. April and July).

5 Key dates

The Panel will meet the week commencing 23rd November 2020 with all selected players advised by 4th December 2020 if they will be offered a place on the NAGP.

Players not selected for the NAGP at the start of the programme year (e.g. November 2020) may be reconsidered at a later date if there are sufficient places available. This would typically be reviewed on a termly basis (e.g. April and July).

6 Camp and trip selection for non-NAGP players

It is recognised that there could be additional players who are not selected for the NAGP that may benefit from involvement in NAGP Camps and International Trips.

To ensure that the appropriate players gain these opportunities, the National Age-Group Coaches will be able to make additional selections before each camp and/or trip. These selections will be based on factors listed in section 4, which will then be reviewed and confirmed by the Head of the National Performance Pathway.

Only players being invited to attend activity will be notified. Notification will be provided at least four weeks prior to the NAGP activity that the player is being invited to.

7 Appeals

The LTA operates a formal appeal procedure for challenging NAGP selection decisions. Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons) within 72 hours of receiving the decision and sent to Sophie.Disley@lta.org.uk. This appeal will then be reviewed by a Panel that will be chaired by the Performance Director (or their nominee).

An appeal can only be made on one or both of the following grounds:

- a. There has been a failure by the selection panel to follow this selection policy (i.e. there has been a procedural defect); or
- b. The decision has been reached on the basis of an error of fact.

The Appeals Panel can decide either:

1. To set aside the selection panel's decision as it was based on an error of fact or procedurally flawed and remit the matter of the player's contractual status to the selection panel; or
2. To uphold the selection panel's decision.

Should a decision be set aside and be re-considered by the selection panel which has an effect on a selection decision taken in relation to another player, that decision in relation to the other player may also be re-considered and changed if necessary.