

LEXUS  
BIRMINGHAM  
— OPEN —

ATP CHALLENGER WTA 125





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# WELCOME



On behalf of the LTA I'm delighted to welcome you to the Lexus Birmingham Open. Building on last year's event, we are pleased to once again be staging a week of both men's and women's tennis here at the Edgbaston Priory Club. This year will see new catering options, a big screen and more activities around the site for the whole family. We hope you enjoy the changes and enjoy the world class tennis at the first grass court event of the year.

I would also like to thank the Edgbaston Priory Club for hosting the event, as well as Lexus and all our commercial partners for their support. Finally, a big thank you to the players, officials, tournament staff, and volunteers who make the event possible.

I hope you enjoy your visit.

**SCOTT LLOYD**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE | LTA



It is with huge excitement that I welcome you to the Lexus Birmingham Open, an event which forms part of the LTA Grass Court Season and our second summer as title partner of the Lexus Open events at Birmingham, Ilkley, Nottingham, Eastbourne, and Roehampton.

Following a fantastic debut season, which saw over 96,000 fans attend the Lexus title events last summer, we are proud to return to these iconic venues and build on the incredible support shown for British tennis.

As lead partner to the LTA, we continue to celebrate all aspects of the game; from emerging to established players, from those picking up a racket for the first time, to those lifting a trophy.

We wish all players and fans a spectacular summer filled with thrilling matches and unforgettable moments.

**CHRIS HAYES**  
DIRECTOR | LEXUS UK

# WTA UNLOCKED SIGN IN & GET SERVED



LIVE TOURNAMENT STREAMS  
EXCLUSIVE CONTENT DELIVERED TO YOUR INBOX



# WTA WELCOME

## DEAR TENNIS FANS,

On behalf of the WTA Tour Driven by Mercedes-Benz, it is our great pleasure to welcome you to the Lexus Birmingham Open.

As the global leader in women's sport, the WTA is home to an incredible array of players, athletes and icons, many of whom you will see stepping onto the stage here in Birmingham as the WTA continues to Rally The World.

Each match represents countless hours of training and preparation, and your support from the stands brings the energy that inspires every player to showcase their very best.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all the partners, sponsors, staff and volunteers who continually raise the bar in our collective mission of championing women's sport. The dedicated WTA and tournament team at the Lexus Birmingham Open take great pride in delivering an unforgettable experience for players and fans alike.

2025 proved to be a record-breaking year for the Tour, with over 4 million fans attending WTA events across the season in addition to WTA players earning an unprecedented \$249 million in prize money. 2026 is proving to be even bigger and better with world-class performances on and off the court, especially with our new Premier Partner Mercedes-Benz by our side.

Thank you, our loyal fans, for being with us and supporting our Tour, your presence makes every tournament truly special and we wish you a memorable experience filled with inspiring performances, incredible energy and unforgettable memories.

Welcome to the 2026 WTA Tour.

All the best,

**THE WTA FAMILY**



ATP

# FOLLOW THE TOUR

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LEXUS



# WELCOME

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Edgbaston Priory Club.

We are proud to host you as we once again showcase outstanding tennis in a setting that combines tradition, ambition and excellence. Whether you are joining us as a member, partner, player or visitor, we are delighted to have you here to experience the very best of our Club.

Our enduring relationship with the LTA is central to our success and future growth. Working closely with the LTA enables us to uphold the highest standards across performance, competition and governance, while contributing meaningfully to the development of British tennis. This partnership is built on shared values, integrity, excellence, and a long-term commitment to nurturing talent.

That commitment is reflected in our delivery of the Regional Player

Development Centre (RPDC) programme. As an LTA-supported pathway, the RPDC provides talented young athletes with a structured and progressive performance environment. By integrating technical expertise, physical conditioning and psychological resilience, we ensure players are developed holistically and prepared for the demands of elite competition. It is through programmes such as this that we continue to strengthen the foundations of the sport.

We are particularly honoured to host the Lexus Birmingham Open, a tournament of significant prestige within the international calendar. As the first grass court event of the season, it marks the beginning of an important chapter in the tennis year. To open the British grass court season here at Edgbaston Priory Club is both a privilege and a responsibility, one that reflects the confidence placed in us by the LTA and the global tennis community.

This event celebrates not only world-class competition, but also our Club's historic role in the development of lawn tennis. It reinforces our position as a leader in the sport and highlights the strength of our partnerships, our facilities and our people.

Thank you for being part of this special occasion. We hope you enjoy exceptional tennis, outstanding hospitality and the unique atmosphere that makes Edgbaston Priory Club such a distinctive venue at the very start of the grass court season.

We look forward to building on our proud heritage as we continue to shape the future of British tennis, together.

**CLAIRE DANIEL-LEPORE**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER |  
EDGBASTON PRIORY CLUB

# LEXUS BIRMINGHAM — OPEN —

PLEASE USE THE LTA COURTSIDE APP FOR THE LATEST SCORES, RESULTS, DRAWS, ORDER OF PLAY AND PLAYER ENTRY LISTS



## LEXUS BIRMINGHAM OPEN PROGRAMME TEAM

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All LTA programmes for the grass court season have been produced on carbon neutral paper.

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Throughout June, we'll be celebrating LGBTQ+ communities in tennis as part of Pride Month, including once again holding 'Friday Pride Day' at our events and telling stories from these communities, showing that tennis is a sport where everyone is welcome.

# PLAYER PROFILES

# WOMEN



## JANICE TJEN

AGE: 24  
COUNTRY: INDONESIA

Tjen is enjoying the best year of her career and has taken strides forward in the WTA rankings after some impressive performances on the WTA Tour.

She reached the last 16 in Dubai in February and beat 2021 US Open finalist Leylah Fernandez during that run after beating the same opponent at the Australian Open in January.

The best moment of her career so far came as she won her first senior title in Chennai last October, becoming the first Indonesian woman in 23 years to win a WTA singles title.



## ALEXANDRA EALA

AGE: 21  
COUNTRY: PHILIPPINES

One of the most popular players on the WTA Tour made her breakthrough at the highest level of the game when she reached the semi-finals at the 2025 Miami Open, beating multiple Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek during that run.

It was a breakthrough tournament that ensured Eala quickly became a big star in her homeland.

She confirmed her prowess on grass courts last year by reaching the final of the LTA's Lexus Eastbourne Open, where she lost against Maya Joint in a compelling final.



## TATJANA MARIA

AGE: 38  
COUNTRY: GERMANY

A grass court specialist who confirmed she can still compete with the very best in the women's game when she won the biggest title of her career at the LTA's HSBC Championship at The Queen's Club last June.

Maria beat four of the top eight seeds to win that title, with her win against Amanda Anisimova in the final completing a dream week in London.

Her game is made for grass courts, with her run to the semi-finals at Wimbledon in 2022 highlighting her qualities, while she won the first of her WTA Tour titles on this surface in Mallorca in 2018.



## ANTONIA RUZIC

AGE: 23  
COUNTRY: CROATIA

Ruzic broke into the top 100 of the WTA Rankings for the first time after the 2025 French Open and she reached her first quarter-final at WTA 500 level in the Monterrey Open.

She was also a quarter-finalist at the WTA 1000 tournament in Dubai earlier this year, where she beat Britain's Emma Raducanu in the first round and then pushed Elena Rybakina before the Kazakhstani player was forced to retire.

Ruzic went on to win two matches at the prestigious Indian Wells tournament and is eyeing up a place in the upper echelons of the WTA rankings.



## TALIA GIBSON

AGE: 24  
COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA

Gibson has been enjoying her best year on the WTA Tour, with a win on the ITF World Tennis Tour in Brisbane in February backed up by impressive runs at the Indian Wells Open and Miami Open.

She came through qualifying at Indian Wells and beat top ten players Clara Tauson and Jasmine Paolini en route to the quarter-finals of the WTA 1000 tournament.

She then beat Naomi Osaka and Iva Jovic in a run to the last-16 in Miami, with those wins boosting her WTA ranking to a new career high.



## CATY MCNALLY

AGE: 24  
COUNTRY: USA

McNally enjoyed a fine junior career that included appearances in the Wimbledon doubles final (2016, 2017 and 2018) and the French Open singles final in 2018, where she won the doubles title with partner Iga Swiatek.

She enjoyed a couple of outstanding wins at this year's Madrid Open, beating top ten player Victoria Mboko and Katerina Siniakova before losing to eventual champion Marta Kostyuk.

McNally won the Hall of Fame championship in Newport last July, beating Tatjana Maria in the final.

# PLAYER PROFILES

# WOMEN



## SHUAI ZHANG

AGE: 37  
COUNTRY: CHINA

A three-time Grand Slam winner in doubles, Zhang won the Australian Open in 2019 and again in January this year, while she also lifted the US Open doubles title in 2021.

She has won three WTA Tour singles titles, with two coming in front of her home fans in China at the Guangzhou Open in 2013 and 2017. In 2001, Zhang highlighted her prowess on grass courts by reaching the final of the LTA's Lexus Nottingham Open, where she lost against Britain's Johanna Konta.



## BEATRIZ HADDAD MAIA

AGE: 30  
COUNTRY: BRAZIL

Haddad Maia reached a career high of No.10 in the WTA Rankings in June 2023 and has an impressive record on grass courts.

A winner at the LTA's Lexus Nottingham Open in 2022, she backed that up by winning in Birmingham the same summer.

She has also been a winner on the WTA Tour in the WTA Elite Trophy in China in October 2023 and then lifted the WTA 500 Korea Open, beating Daria Kasatkina in the final.



## ALYCIA PARKS

AGE: 25  
COUNTRY: USA

Parks reached a career-high ranking of No.40 in August 2023, with her first WTA Tour title coming in that year as she beat Caroline Garcia in the final in Lyon.

She has grass court title success on her record from a WTA World Tennis Tour title in June 2024 with a win at the Veneto Open and has also lifted four additional titles at that level.

Parks was the top seed at the Lexus Birmingham Open last year and was beaten by Britain's Mimi Xu in the opening round.



## KIMBERLY BIRRELL

AGE: 28  
COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA

Birrell's year started in impressive fashion as she made it through to the quarter-finals of the Adelaide International, beating former Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrusova during that run in front of her home fans.

She has appeared in two WTA Finals, losing against Suzan Lamens from the Netherlands in the Japan Women's Open in October 2024 and against Janice Tjen in the 2025 Chennai Open in India.



## AJLA TOMLJANOVIC

AGE: 33  
COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA

Tomljanovic has always been at home on grass courts, reaching the quarter-finals at Wimbledon in 2021 and 2022.

She also made her fifth WTA final here in Birmingham two years ago, missing out on the title to Julia Putintseva.

Tomljanovic has struggled with injury problems in recent years and that has impacted her ambitions after reaching a career high ranking of No.32 in April 2023.



## HARRIET DART

AGE: 29  
COUNTRY: GREAT BRITAIN

Dart has enjoyed some of her finest performances on grass courts, including runs to the final at the Nottingham Open in 2023 and 2024.

Her best performances at Wimbledon came in 2019 and 2024 as she reached the third round, with a thrilling win against fellow Briton Katie Boulter.

She was a Grand Slam doubles finalist at Wimbledon 2021, losing in the final alongside fellow Brit Joe Salisbury in a final against their compatriot Neal Skupski and Desirae Krawczyk.

# PLAYER PROFILES

# MEN



## KAMIL MAJCHRZAK

AGE: 30  
COUNTRY: POLAND

Majchrzak has played some of his best tennis on grass courts, with his impressive run to the last 16 at Wimbledon last year securing his best run at a Grand Slam tournament.

He is a Manchester United supporter and was a big fan of Novak Djokovic in his youth.



## MATTIA BELLUCCI

AGE: 24  
COUNTRY: ITALY

Bellucci is part of the impressive collection of Italian players making their mark in the top 100 of the men's game, with world No.1 Jannik Sinner leading their charge.

He is at home on a grass court and his appearance in the third round at Wimbledon last year included an impressive win against No.23 seed Jiri Lehecka.



## JAMES DUCKWORTH

AGE: 34  
COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA

Duckworth broke into the top 50 of the ATP rankings at the start of 2022 after a solid run of results that included an appearance in the third round at Wimbledon the previous year.

His career has been impacted by injury issues and he has undergone a series of surgeries that have hampered his progress.



## PATRICK KYPSON

AGE: 26  
COUNTRY: USA

Kypson broke into the top 100 of the ATP rankings for the first time in his career earlier this year and after some impressive performances on the ATP Challenger Tour.

His biggest win was recorded as he beat top 10 player Alex de Minaur in the Mexico Open last February, 6-1, 6-7(4), 7-6(4) giving him a moment to savour in Acapulco.



## ELIOT SPIZZIRRI

AGE: 24  
COUNTRY: USA

His win against rising Brazilian star Joao Fonseca at the Australian Open in January helped him to reach the third round at a Grand Slam for the first time and that helped him to achieve a new career-high ranking a few weeks later.

Spizzirri played college tennis at the University of Texas, becoming ITA National Player of the Year in both 2023 and 2024.



## RINKY HIJIKATA

AGE: 25  
COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA

A former top ten-ranked junior player who broke into top 100 of the senior rankings after reaching the 2023 US Open fourth round as a wild card.

Hijikata highlighted his quality on grass courts with a run to the quarter-finals at the LTA's HSBC Championship at The Queen's Club in 2024, beating No.8 seed Ugo Humbert in his first match of that tournament.

# PLAYER PROFILES

# MEN



## ALEKSANDAR VUKIC

AGE: 30  
COUNTRY: AUSTRALIA

Vukic cracked the top 50 of the ATP rankings for the first time in August 2023, with some impressive displays on the Challenger Tour.

He recorded his best performance at a Grand Slam when he reached the third round at the Australian Open last year and he was only halted by an inspired performance from Britain's Jack Draper, who edged him out in a fifth set tie-break.



## JACOB FEARNLEY

AGE: 24  
COUNTRY: GREAT BRITAIN

Fearnley broke into the top 50 of the ATP rankings for the first time last June, as he completed a rise that started with a memorable win at the Lexus Nottingham Open the year before.

Fearnley came through the US college system and enjoyed a fine start to his career in the professional ranks, reaching the third round at the Australian Open and French Open last year.



## MACKENZIE MCDONALD

AGE: 31  
COUNTRY: USA

After making a breakthrough run to the US Open quarter-finals in 2020, McDonald rose to a career-high ranking of No.37 in October 2023.

He has some impressive wins on his record, including a success against Juan Martin del Potro 2019, while he also beat Rafael Nadal at the 2023 Australian Open. He also beat top 10 players Taylor Fritz, Andrey Rublev and Holger Rune in that same year.



## OTTO VIRTANEN

AGE: 24  
COUNTRY: FINLAND

The defending Lexus Birmingham Open champion will be eager to replicate his memorable displays here last year as he sets foot back on grass courts.

He was a highly promising junior who made it into the top 10 of the rankings at that level and has gone on to be a prolific winner at ATP Challenger Tour level, winning seven titles in addition to his victory at Edgbaston Priory Club last year.



## JACK PINNINGTON JONES

AGE: 23  
COUNTRY: GREAT BRITAIN

Pinnington Jones achieved a career-high ranking earlier this year.

His quality on grass was highlighted when he reached the final of the Lexus Nottingham Open in 2024, where he was beaten by fellow Brit Jacob Fearnley.

His form on grass continued last year as he reached the final of the Lexus Ilkley Open, narrowly losing in a three-set thriller.



## COLEMAN WONG

AGE: 21  
COUNTRY: HONG KONG

Wong enjoyed a breakthrough tournament at last year's US Open, as he made it through to the third round at a Grand Slam tournament for the first time.

That run created history as he became the first player from Hong Kong to reach the main draw of a Grand Slam since Paulette Moreno at the 1988 Australian Open.

He collected his first ATP Challenger title in Jiujiang, China.

# CHANGING FACES OF GRASS COURT TENNIS

THE TRANSITION FROM CLAY TO GRASS COURTS WAS ONCE THE MOST CHALLENGING IN TENNIS, BUT THE GREAT CHAMPIONS OF THE MODERN ERA ARE GLIDING FROM ONE SURFACE TO THE NEXT WITH IMPRESSIVE EASE.

Carlos Alcaraz's success on the Roland-Garros clay and also at The Queen's Club and Wimbledon in recent years is an example of a player who has mastered both surfaces, while 'Queen of Clay' Iga Swiatek confirmed she can also make her mark on grass courts by winning her first title at the All England Club last summer.

Changing conditions on clay and grass have contributed to a levelling of the playing field, with players who specialise on one surface no longer having a big edge when they move from the red dirt of Paris and onto the lush green lawns of England.

For many years, there were just two weeks between the conclusion of the French Open and the start of Wimbledon, yet that has been extended to three weeks and it has allowed the acclimatisation between the two surfaces to be more manageable.

In addition, the grass surfaces that are providing a stage for the best players in tennis during this English summer respond in a very different manner than the courts that were the norm prior to 2001, when a decision was made to sew all courts with 100 per cent perennial ryegrass.

The move was made to improve durability and strengthen the courts to better withstand the increasing wear of the modern game and it had a big impact on how grass court tennis has been played in the quarter of a century since.

The matches we are seeing on grass courts now are very different to the explosive version of the sport that was a winning formula a couple of decades ago, with the days when big serves had a big advantage over their rivals fading along with the serve and

- Roger Federer
- Serena Williams
- John McEnroe
- Chris Evert

volley tactics that were once the norm on the surface.

Grass court greats Billie Jean King, John McEnroe, Martina Navratilova and Bjorn Borg dominated in the days when net play was more important than power.

Then the sport went through a period in the late 1980s and 1990s that saw big servers reduce the number of extended rallies, with Boris Becker, Steffi Graf, Goran Ivanisevic and Pete Sampras thriving in this era.

That was before Roger Federer and Serena Williams set new high bars of excellence on grass courts in this century, with their blend of power and brilliance

creating a new blueprint of how to win on grass.

Statistical analysis of the shift in tactics on grass court tennis highlights the magnitude of the change in approach,



with 60 per cent of all male and female players using serve and volley tactics in the 1997 Championships at Wimbledon. By 2000, that figure had dropped dramatically to just 28 per cent and by 2008, that figure had slipped below 10 per cent.

A glance at Federer's early matches at Wimbledon will confirm that the player who would go on to win a record eight singles titles at the All England Club used serve-volley tactics, with his first final against Australia's Mark Philippoussis in 2003 seeing both players coming to the net behind many of their serves.

Federer came to the net 50 per cent of the time behind his first serve in his first successful run to the Wimbledon title and by 2006, the Swiss maestro was using the tactic on just five per cent of his service points in a year when he beat a youthful Rafael Nadal in the final.

By then, the sport had evolved to a point that a player of Nadal's calibre could move from the clay courts of Paris and onto the grass at Wimbledon and modify his game to ensure he was competitive on both surfaces.

Nadal's first Wimbledon title in 2008 saw him join Australian great Rod Laver and Borg as the only two players to win the 'Channel Slam' by clinching the French Open title and Wimbledon titles in the

## HIGHEST WIN PERCENTAGES ON GRASS:

- Margaret Court 92.63%
- Pete Sampras 90%
- Novak Djokovic 88.7%
- Martina Navratilova 88.54%
- Roger Federer 88.24%
- Bjorn Borg 87.5%
- Chris Evert 87.39%
- Serena Williams 86.99%

same year, with that list now also including Federer (2009), Novak Djokovic (2021) and Alcaraz (2024).

In the women's game, Margaret Court (1970), Evonne Goolagong (1971), Billie Jean King (1972), Chris Evert (1974), Navratilova (1982 and 1984), Graf (1988, 1993, 1995 and 1996) and Serena Williams (2002 and 2015) have won the Roland-Garros and Wimbledon title in the same year, with recent history suggesting the adaptation from clay to grass has been more challenging for female players.

Swiatek's Wimbledon win last July was somewhat unexpected, as a player who has excelled on clay courts she struggled to find her feet on grass until she pieced together a run that concluded with a crushing 6-0, 6-0 win against America's Amanda Anisimova in last year's final on the Centre Court at the All England Club.

Improvements in racket technology and the advancements in footwear played a big part in the evolution of the brand of tennis we are used to seeing now, with longer rallies replacing the quick-fire tennis of yesterday on grass courts.

It makes for a more entertaining spectacle for the fans attending this summer's tournaments, with the champions of this era needing to add so many facets to their game to win the biggest prizes.



## THE GREAT HEALTH ADVANTAGE: WHY TENNIS IS IN A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN

As you take your seat today, it is easy to view tennis as a spectator sport. However, beyond the powerful serves and impressive drop shots you see before you, lies a profound truth: tennis is perhaps the most significant investment you can make in your own health.

In fact, tennis is often cited as the healthiest sport in the world, with scientific evidence supporting this claim. It offers a unique combination of physical conditioning and mental health benefits that few other activities can match. Some of the most startling evidence comes from the Copenhagen City Heart Study, which suggests that whilst various sports increase life expectancy tennis players live an average of 9.7 years longer than sedentary individuals— topping other sports by quite a margin, including cycling (3.7 years) and swimming (3.4 years)\*.

The physical benefits of the game are rooted in its interval-based nature. Tennis requires short bursts of energy followed by brief periods of recovery which is widely regarded as the most effective way to improve cardiovascular health. But beyond your heart health it is also a full body workout that improves balance, coordination, and bone density.

The mental health benefits are equally compelling. It requires tactical thinking,

split-second decision-making, and constant problem-solving that keeps the brain sharp. Beyond the game, tennis builds meaningful connections, particularly for people who feel lonely or isolated. Whether playing doubles with friends or family, or joining a local club to meet new people, the smiles on the court say it all.

Perhaps tennis' main advantage, is its adaptability, a lifelong sport that evolves with you, from the LTA's colour coded youth system, to walking tennis for those seeking a slower pace. It is also widely regarded as one of the most inclusive sports. The LTA is committed to ensuring the game remains accessible to all, staging a year round disability tennis competitions calendar to give disabled



Government guidelines recommend that adults aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity each week and muscle strengthening activities at least twice a week.



people, and those with long term health conditions, a chance to compete.

The LTA's Chief Medical Officer, Dr Guy Evans agrees: "Tennis is an "all in one" sport that uniquely combines all three core areas of the government's physical activity guidelines in a single engaging activity. It provides a rigorous cardiovascular workout while doubling as a full-body strength session that also improves balance and coordination. Beyond the physical, it is a powerful tool for stress management and mood improvement." So, as you watch the pros play today, let their game inspire you to pick up a racket. Your future body and mind will thank you for it.

\*Copenhagen study in published 2018 tracked over 8,500 people for 25 years



**5.8M**  
adults played tennis annually

**4M+**  
children playing tennis, a record high

**1.4M**  
children playing in schools via FAGE LTA Youth and FAGE LTA Youth Schools programmes

**3**  
Billie Jean King Cup Finals in the past four years for GB

**30,000**  
teachers trained and over half of all schools in Britain signed up to FAGE LTA Youth Schools



**2.2M**  
people playing tennis in parks following the Parks investment project

**1,000**  
venues delivering LTA SERVES - a record high

**35,000+**  
young people taking part regularly

**2025**  
TENNIS IN BRITAIN  
IN NUMBERS

**24,000+**  
participants playing disability tennis at a record number of venues delivering LTA Open Court

**13**  
British men in ATP top 200 over the course of the year

**5**  
British men in the ATP doubles Top 10 rankings at year end – first time in 32 years for any nation

**23**  
British players in the main singles draw at The Championships, Wimbledon, for first time since 1984

# RISING STAR EALA

WHEN ALEX EALA STEPPED ONTO THE GRASS COURTS AT THE LTA'S LEXUS BIRMINGHAM OPEN LAST JUNE, SHE ENTERED UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY.

Growing up in the Philippines, Eala had little experience on grass, and a first-round exit at Edgbaston Priory Club suggested she would need time to adapt.

Just weeks later, uncertainty had turned into opportunity. A dazzling run to the final of the Lexus Eastbourne Open highlighted her rapid progress on grass as she came close to winning her first WTA Tour title.

In a dramatic final, Australia's Maya Joint saved four match points before edging victory, leaving Eala with a painful near miss but also proof she can thrive on grass courts.

"I'm always excited to go back on grass. It's a very unique experience," said Eala. "We do not have many grass courts in

the Philippines. I probably only played on grass when I was hitting the ball around in a backyard!

"I've been liking the grass so far. It is a little hard to get used to at the start, especially because the season is so short and you come from clay.

"I think grass suits my game and I feel more comfortable on it now."

She may still be waiting for her first title and a place in the WTA top 20, but Eala has already made a huge impact on the women's game over the last 18 months.

Her run to the semi-finals of the 2025 Miami Open, including a standout win over Iga Swiatek, announced her arrival on the world stage, while passionate Filipino support has made her a fan favourite wherever she plays.

Sky Sports Tennis host Gigi Salmon believes Eala is already one of the sport's biggest attractions.

"In terms of her appeal and the crowds that follow her, Eala might already be one of the biggest stars in the women's game," said Salmon.

"In Dubai, it was like a Taylor Swift concert when Eala was on court. People were screaming, but she seems to be flourishing with it."

Eala's humble nature is part of her appeal, with the Rafael Nadal Academy player embracing the support from her fans.

"The support I have had has been amazing," she said. "It means the world to me to have people pushing me forward and having my back when things get tough.

"So many things have changed in the last year and my perspective on what I can achieve has changed, but my day-to-day life is the same. I have the same work ethic and attention to detail."

Her profile may have grown, but Eala says her values remain unchanged, with family central to her success.

"My family played such a big role in my career," she added. "They built the structure and the path I walked on. Family is such a crucial part of who I am.

"To share these special moments on the biggest tennis courts with them is crazy because they've been there from the start."

Eala may still be at the beginning of her tennis journey, but she is already inspiring young girls in the Philippines to dream of following in her footsteps.



EALAH!



OFFICIAL YOGHURT PARTNER OF THE LTA

# HEROES OF BIRMINGHAM

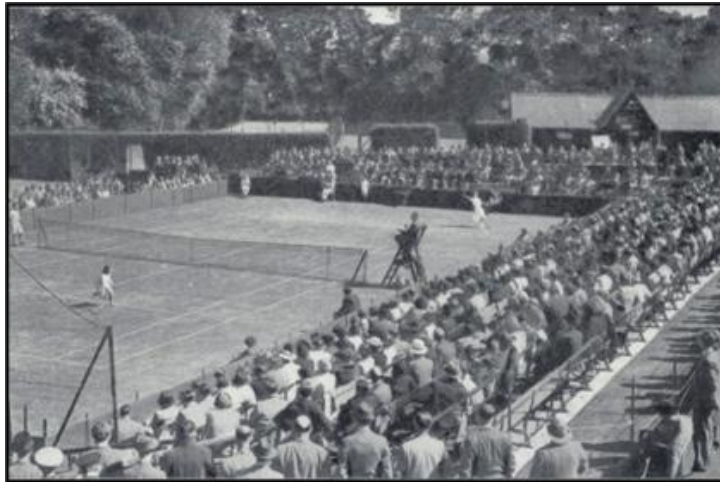
A NEW ERA DAWNED AT THE LEXUS BIRMINGHAM OPEN LAST JUNE, AS THE EDGBASTON PRIORY CLUB PROVIDED A FITTING STAGE FOR THE START OF THE BRITISH GRASS COURT SEASON.

Belgium's Greet Minnen and Finland's Otto Virtanen were crowned as champions in an event that became the first male and female combined event in professional tennis history in Birmingham, with the champions joining a long list of famous names who have raised their arms aloft in victory at this Club.

The revamped tournament continued the strong traditions of top level tennis being played on these courts in Birmingham, which has traditions dating back to 1875.

The iconic Maud Watson trophy that will be presented to the winner of the women's tournament this week is named after one of Birmingham's greatest sporting heroines, with the Solihull-born player etching herself into tennis folklore when she won the first Ladies Singles title at Wimbledon in 1884.

From 1902 to 1957, the Priory Lawn Tennis Club's Whitsun tournament rose from being a county players' testing ground to an event that attracted Wimbledon champions such as Helen Jacobs, Dorothy Round,



Dorothy Round beating American Open Champion and World No 1 Anita Lizana at the Priory in 1937

Louise Brough, Margaret du Pont, Jaroslav Drobny, Alex Olmedo and Sven Davidson.

The club bounced back from the ashes after a fire destroyed the Priory Clubhouse in 1963 and six years later King's Heath-born Ann Jones joined Watson on the list of Wimbledon champions.

Jones would go on to play a key role in bringing a major women's tournament to Edgbaston Priory Club in 1982.

The great Billie Jean King won the first two editions of a tournament named

the Birmingham Classic, with her fellow American Pam Shriver enjoying great success at this Club as she won the subsequent four championships.

Shriver's regular doubles partner, Martina Navratilova, is a prominent name on the list of winners here in Birmingham, while Maria Sharapova is another stand-out name on the list of former champions after she won at Edgbaston Priory Club in 2004 and 2005.

Grand Slam champions dominate the list of winners in recent years, with Angelique Kerber,

Madison Keys, Petra Kvitova, Ashleigh Barty and Jelena Ostapenko among the champions have won here over the last 11 years.

While last year's event was officially the first staging of a brand new WTA 125 event, it continued the proud tradition of tennis at this club, with Minnen's victory in the women's tournament sealed with a win against rising Czech star Linda Fruhvirtova in the final.

The women's tournament was also memorable for some stand-out performances from British players, with Jodie Burrage and Heather Watson delighting the home fans with wins in their opening matches, while Welsh teenager Mimi Xu enjoyed a breakthrough week in her professional career.

Wild card Xu was handed a daunting task in her opening match against top seed Alycia Parks and she showed impressive maturity to overcome a vastly more experienced American opponent to seal the biggest win of her career.

Xu backed up that win with another triumph against Poland's Katarzyna Kawa in the second round, as she highlighted her exciting potential in front of the British fans.

Virtanen lifted the trophy in the first edition of the ATP Challenger event at



the Birmingham Open with a victory against American Colton Smith in an entertaining final.

Now the Edgbaston Priory Club is playing host to the start of another thrilling summer of tennis

on British grass courts, with this opening week of action backed up by the HSBC Championships at The Queen's Club and the Lexus Ilkley Open next week.

It will be the turn of the men to contest for the historic title at The Queen's Club the following week, with the tennis fans of the Midlands gathering for another edition of the Lexus Nottingham Open in the same week.

Towards the end of June the Lexus Eastbourne Open and Lexus British Open Roehampton are staged, before the grass court season concludes in the grand manner at the All England Club, Wimbledon, heading into the first two weeks of July.

Opposite page  
Greet Minnen,  
Otto Virtanen and  
Mimi Xu

# GREG AND TIM — A RIVALRY REVISITED

FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, THE BRITISH TENNIS LANDSCAPE WAS DOMINATED BY TWO CHALLENGERS WHO TOOK US ALL ON A ROLLER-COASTER LACED WITH GLORY, DESPAIR, NEAR MISSES AND EPIC TRIUMPHS.

Now, when Greg Rusedski and Tim Henman look back on their careers carrying the British flag with pride around the tennis world and leading the hopes of the Davis Cup team, they do so with a sense of pride in the story they wrote together.

The similarities between the duo are stark, as they reached a career-high No.4 in the ATP Rankings, they share a September 6th birthday and both married British women named Lucy.

At the peak of their powers, there was also an intense rivalry that added spice to this story and when the duo appeared on the Off Court with Greg Rusedski podcast, they offered up a wonderful trip down memory lane that was a delight for British tennis fans.

Looking back on their Davis Cup adventures and their battle for the British No.1 ranking, Henman admitted he did not initially view Canadian-born Rusedski as a direct rival when

he declared his intentions to represent Great Britain in 1995.

“When Greg arrived, I didn’t really see him as a competitor. He wasn’t really on my radar,” reflected Henman. “My ranking was a lot lower at the time and I had a lot to do to get into the conversation, but then things began to change.

“Once I get to around 50 in the rankings and Greg is around there or maybe a bit higher, then things start to change, but I always felt that I had a perspective of where I wanted to be.

“Yes, of course I wanted to be British No.1, but you’d much rather be British No.2 and number 10 in the world than British No.1 and No.95 in the world.

“I think that’s where Greg and I changed the landscape. All of a sudden, there was a belief that British players could compete for big titles.”



The rivalry between Rusedski and Henman moved through the gears in 1997, as the duo were on course to meet in a Wimbledon semi-final after both made it through to the last eight at the All England Club.

That clash never materialised as Henman was beaten by Germany’s Michael Stich and Rusedski came up short in four sets against Frenchman Cedric Pioline, who would go on to lose against Pete Sampras in the final.

“It would have been a semi-final and a chance to play each other at Wimbledon, which we never managed to do,” pondered Rusedski. “I wish we could have had that match-up and that year of 1997 is where the Rusedski vs Henman rivalry really took off.



“I got to the US Open final later that year and when I look back at the media attention we got from that point forward, it became really big.

“I would never read the press, but I’d have family members who would tell me what was being written and I didn’t want to know about it. It’s hard enough trying to win tennis matches and then dealing with the press and our rivalry was a big deal.”

Greg and Tim failed to win the Grand Slam title that could

have added gloss to their impressive careers, but Henman insisted titles are not the only barometer for success.

“The conversation around success is not just about winning and losing titles,” he stated. “It’s about maximising your potential and for Greg and I to reach No.4 in the world was as good as we’re meant to be.

“The trouble is, when you come from a Grand Slam country and you are deep in the second week at Wimbledon, it comes



down to whether you win it or lose... and Greg and I didn’t win it. Despite that, when I look back at my career, I’m thrilled with what I was able to achieve.”

Rusedski expressed his regret over the duo’s failure to make progress in the Davis Cup, but he suggested his former rival and friend should look back on his career with pride.

“I feel like Tim maximised everything he had,” he said. “If you get to No.4 in the world, you have had an amazing career.

“For me, my one big regret is the US Open final against Pat Rafter in 1997 because I was sick going into that match and you always wonder what might have been.”

Rusedski and Henman put British tennis back on the map and those who followed in the footsteps they created will always be grateful for the inspiration they provided.



# Haier



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DISCOVER MORE

## CELEBRATING THE LTA AWARDS



LTA Award winners at the National Tennis Centre in April

**THE LTA AWARDS, PRESENTED BY LEXUS, HONOUR THE PEOPLE AND PLACES THAT HELP TENNIS AND PADEL THRIVE ACROSS GREAT BRITAIN.**



Presented annually, the awards highlight the volunteers, coaches, players, officials, and venues whose passion and dedication grow the game at every level - from grassroots courts to the biggest stages. For many involved, tennis and padel are about far more than competition. They foster community, confidence and connection, and the LTA Awards recognise those who go above and beyond.

Whether it's a volunteer giving countless hours to keep sessions running, a coach opening doors for new players, or a venue improving access to its courts, each winner has made a lasting impact on their local community and the sport as a whole.

At their heart, the LTA Awards reflect the LTA's vision of 'tennis opened up' - ensuring tennis and padel are accessible, inclusive

and welcoming to all. This year's nominations showcased how that vision is being brought to life across Great Britain, from breaking down barriers to creating safe, supportive environments and expanding opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

Award categories span participation, inclusion, performance, education and community engagement, recognising the many ways people contribute to the game. The awards also spotlight unsung heroes, whose behind-the-scenes work has a meaningful impact on everyone who steps on court.

Now in their 11th year, this year's winners were celebrated in April at the National Tennis Centre. The ceremony was attended by sporting greats, guest presenters, and tennis and

padel fans, including comedian Jason Manford, adventurer Bear Grylls, broadcaster Sir Trevor McDonald and former British No.1 Laura Robson, alongside HRH The Duchess of Gloucester, the LTA's Honorary President.

Among the winners was the University of Birmingham, recognised for an exceptional year of innovation, community impact, and commitment to growing tennis and padel.

Above all, the LTA Awards are about saying thank you - to those helping open up tennis and padel for generations to come.

Know a tennis or padel hero? Nominations for the LTA Awards 2027 are now open until the end of November. Scan the QR code to submit a nomination.



# DOUBLES DOMINATION

BECOMING THE BEST IN THE WORLD IS A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT IN ANY SPORT AND FIVE BRITISH TENNIS PLAYERS HAVE REACHED THAT MILESTONE OVER THE LAST DECADE.

Leading the way was three-time Grand Slam singles champion Andy Murray, who is also a record five-time winner of the HSBC Championships at The Queen's Club, but it was another Murray who hit the top of the tennis rankings a few months before him.

While Andy finished 2016 as the best player in men's tennis after he won his second Wimbledon title and clinched the year-end No.1 ranking by beating Novak Djokovic at the ATP Finals in London, another Murray broke the glass ceiling at the top of the world rankings earlier in that same year.

His elder brother Jamie's ascent to the top of the doubles rankings was confirmed in late March of that year, after he contested three successive Grand Slam finals and became the first British man to clinch the No.1 ranking in doubles.

Since then, the Murray's club of No.1's has been growing, with Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski climbing to the top of the doubles rankings in 2022. Then Lloyd Glasspool joined the ranks as he claimed the top spot last August after an impressive run of results with his British partner Julian Cash.



A glance at the doubles rankings today highlights the impressive strength in depth of British men in the top 10, with Skupski suggesting the support British players receive is vital to this impressive success story.

"Doubles is the version of the game that a lot of the fans watching us play can associate with. They play it at their clubs and with their friends and the success the British players have had in recent years is down to a number of factors," said Skupski, who started 2026 in impressive fashion by winning the Australian Open title with his new partner, America's Christian Harrison.

"The LTA are one of the only governing bodies that offer so much support to the doubles players and there is no doubt that helps us.

"Louis Cayer is part of our team and he is the best doubles coach in the world and the LTA help us with strength and conditioning, physiotherapists, psychologists, and we get all the reports on the other

- 1 Jamie Murray of Great Britain and Martina Hingis of Switzerland
- 2 Murray brothers in doubles action
- 3 Louis Cayer with Neal Skupski and Henry Patten
- 4 Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool at The Queen's Club
- 5 Neal Skupski (R) and his partner USA's Christian Harrison won the 2026 Australian Open doubles title
- 6 Michael Venus of New Zealand (R) and Neal Skupski of Great Britain

doubles guys so we can prepare for our matches.

"They put a lot of effort into us and it shows that it has paid off. You look Jamie Murray and Joe Salisbury getting to No.1 in the world, me getting there and the success of Henry Patten, Lloyd Glasspool and Julian Cash and we are all getting good results.

"The British system is working so well in doubles and when you look at the rankings, you can see how well we are all doing."

Skupski is not alone in saluting the influence of coach Cayer on the British doubles scene, as his tactical analysis of the doubles game has given a host of players an edge on their rivals.

Cayer has helped several British players clinch Grand Slam titles in recent years, with Jamie Murray among those inspired by the knowledge he gleaned from the experienced tactician.

"I worked with Louis for the first time when I was going

to team up with Colin Fleming for the first time at Wimbledon," said Murray.

"For me and Colin, it was a complete education. It was like a degree in doubles that no one else really had. It was super tiring because we were on court with him for three hours and his attention to detail is amazing.

"There's no doubt he has had a massive impact on the doubles guys in Britain and the results we have had in Grand Slams show what a great job he has done."

The crowds watching doubles tennis over the course of the grass court season in Britain are generally among the biggest of the tennis year, with Skupski relishing the chance to play in front of his home fans.

"It's always fun to play in front of the British crowds," he added. "We are on the road so much over the course of the year and it is nice to be at home and playing with crowds cheering us on. The Queen's Club tournament is always a fantastic week and then, of course, Wimbledon is a very special place to play tennis."

We've had numerous British winners of the doubles events at Nottingham, The Queen's Club and Eastbourne in recent years and our galaxy of champions will be looking to add to their trophy collections this summer.



# LOVE WHAT YOU DO. BECOME A COACH.



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A NEW CAREER  
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COACH OF THE COMMUNITY:

## THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF CORINA

Meet Corina, an LTA Accredited+ Level 4 Senior Performance coach, one of Middlesex's most inspirational tennis figures and a finalist at this year's LTA Awards. At Conway LTC, she is the heartbeat of an inclusive, high-performing and community-centred tennis culture. With her welcoming energy, creativity and leadership, Corina's influence extends far beyond the club, shaping participation and pathways across the local tennis landscape.

At Conway, Corina leads one of the county's most diverse and inclusive coaching programmes. Her sessions welcome toddlers, seniors, beginners and performance players, all designed to be engaging, challenging and fun:

**Coffee & Play** blends tennis with social connection.

**LTA Cardio Tennis** keeps joy at the centre of the game while working up a sweat.

**Neurodiverse outreach sessions** with local SEN schools are also among the week's most meaningful highlights.

Her commitment to community

impact is equally impressive. Corina has led women-only groups and supported the integration of refugees through the club's programmes.

Under Corina's leadership, Conway now fields 17 adult teams and several new junior squads, remarkable for a five-court community club. She has also launched a Performance Pathway to help talented local juniors progress to county and regional levels.

Her influence as a mentor is equally powerful. Corina has supported several coaches through their LTA Level 2 and 3 qualifications while continuing

her own development as an LTA Level 4 Coach, member of the Female Performance Coach Engagement Programme, Assistant Captain of the Middlesex Women's County Team and contributor to the County Performance Advisory Board.

Corina is the driving force behind Conway LTC's success. Her work within the community embodies the LTA's mission of "tennis opened up", and she is an exceptional inspiration for those considering a career in the tennis workforce.

**"Tennis has given me the chance to help others find their passion"**

Corina explains why she loves coaching: "They say tennis is a sport for life, one that opens doors and offers opportunities beyond competitive play, and I have been fortunate to experience and witness this throughout a decade of coaching. Tennis has given me the chance to help others find their passion, their 'safe space' and build confidence. I'm happy I can play a small part in everyone's journey."



Scan the QR code to find out how you can get involved with coaching.



## MARIA'S INSPIRING STORY

TATJANA MARIA SERVED UP ONE OF THE GREAT TENNIS STORIES AT THE QUEEN'S CLUB LAST SUMMER, AS SHE BECAME THE FIRST WOMAN TO BE CROWNED CHAMPION SINCE OLGA MOROZOVA IN 1973.

The 38-year-old German beat four of the world's top 15 players on her way to becoming the oldest player to win a WTA 500 tournament, with this mother of two young children winning the most prestigious title of her career in unexpected fashion.

The images of Maria sharing her success with husband, Charles, and their two daughters, who watched her triumph at The Queen's Club, were beamed around the sporting world and she admits their presence added some additional joy to her triumph.

"It's such a special moment for all of us, a family together," said Maria. "We won the trophy together, because we stick together and we are doing everything together."

"We are travelling all the time together. They have been in all the tournaments with us from the beginning. It's super special to have them around, and to live these moments with them, it's something amazing."

"The whole week was a dream come true to win the title. When we arrived my little girl said 'wow that's a nice trophy, so big' and I said, 'OK let's go for it I will try to win it'. In the end I won it, so it was incredible."

Maria's triumph at the first edition of the new WTA 500 tournament in London last summer was an inspiration to many sporting mothers.

Wins against 2021 US Open finalist Leylah Fernandez, Czech star Karolina Muchova, former Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina and then reigning Australian Open champion Madison Keys preceded her impressive win against Anisimova in the final.

Maria's brand of tennis sparked plenty of discussion, as she managed to disrupt the big hitters with a game laced with variety, as she suggested her Queen's Club win confirmed that the more traditional brand of the game could still produce results.

"In the past, people were always saying, you are too old and maybe now is the time to stop," she said.

"I'm a good example that even in my age, you still can win big trophies. That's why we kept going, because there was always this belief that I can win big tournaments and that I can do great things on the court. So I'm really, really proud of this."

The low bouncing grass courts in England are receptive to Maria's brand of tennis, as she proved back in 2022 with an



appearance in the Wimbledon semi-finals that included wins against Maria Sakkari and Jelena Ostapenko before she was beaten by Ons Jabeur.

That All England Club run looked set to be the highlight of her career, but her Queen's Club win topped that and she will be keen to add to her grass court success this summer.

"Grass is perfect for my game and especially my slice," she added. "If I can serve well, I can play a lot of slice and I can go to the net. This is why grass is such a perfect fit for me."

"It would be good if we could have more grass tournaments because there is no one else playing like me now and this is why the other players are not used to the slice I can play."

At a time when power defines the women's game, Maria's success at The Queen's Club underlined the enduring value of tactical variety.

2:31

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# BELONGING IN TENNIS

THE LTA IS HERE TO TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES THROUGH TENNIS AND PADEL – MAKING BOTH SPORTS WELCOMING, ENJOYABLE AND INSPIRING TO EVERYONE.

In 2025 the LTA launched their updated **Belonging in Tennis** plan to continue the drive for the sport to be as inclusive as possible, sitting alongside existing plans and initiatives to drive participation and engagement with women, underserved communities and disabled people.

Through the She Rallies ambition the LTA continue to champion women and girls - driving change for equal prize money, breaking down barriers for young girls to try the sport for

the first time, training more women to take up roles in the workforce and elevating the visibility of women's tennis.

During last year's HSBC Championships the LTA held an event, celebrating the historic return of professional women's tennis to The Queen's Club in over 50 years. The event brought together some of the most influential leaders from across sport, Jo Downing, LTA Programme Strategy Manager, said: "It was inspiring to see so many people working

together to achieve genuine gender equality in sports. I'm confident that together, we can go even further in turning that vision into reality and driving meaningful, lasting change."

The LTA's sector-leading LTA SERVES programme which helps people who might not previously have had the opportunity to experience tennis, continues to help significant numbers of young people to pick up a racquet, with over 35,000 young people taking part regularly last year.



Nearly 100 children from communities across London came together for a high-energy tennis festival last August to mark the official launch of Rally Together London, a groundbreaking three-year collaboration between the LTA and Mayor Sadiq Khan aiming to open tennis up to more young Londoners and break down barriers in the sport.

At the event, rising tennis star Ella McDonald said: "I love that tennis is accessible and welcoming to everyone – regardless of age, gender, background or ability. Whether you're picking up a racquet for the first time or playing competitively, there's a place for you in this sport."

LTA Open Court, is a national programme that actively promotes and delivers opportunities for disabled people and those with long term health conditions to get involved in tennis helped nearly 25,000 participants to play regularly last year.

Lewis Mitchell, Community Connector for Inclusive Sport, said: "Our Open Court programme has been a huge success and we have managed



At an event marking the end of the project, Sir Andy Murray said: "Tennis has given me so much and it all started on a local court, just hitting balls with family and friends. It's great that so many more people around the country are now getting to play tennis in local parks, thanks to the LTA's Park Tennis Project."

The LTA continue to work in partnership with Pride in Tennis and other organisations and this year will be developing a plan to help engage with LGBTQ+ communities further. Alongside this, the LTA will again be holding the popular Friday Pride Days across the Grass Court Season.

to build a very inclusive community where we can provide activities for people that might miss out otherwise."

Thanks to the Park Tennis Project, dilapidated courts across Britain have been brought back to life and into long term sustainable use for local communities, with over half of these in areas of highest social deprivation.

Speaking about last year's Pride Days, James Swanson, Chair of the Pride in Tennis Network, said, "Friday Pride Days have helped to foster safe, celebratory spaces for LGBTQ+ tennis communities at the LTA's major events, as well as promoting the vital work of LGBTQ+ allies at venues across the country, since they began in 2022."

# 3000+

# COURTS

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## OUR COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

At Edgbaston Priory Club, excellence is not simply an aspiration, it is a standard that lies in every aspect of the Club's culture. From elite coaching environments to first-class facilities, the Club has long been committed to creating a place where potential is recognised and nurtured. At the core of this commitment is the support of the RPDC (Regional Player Development Centre) programme, which plays a vital role in strengthening player development and long-term success in tennis.

Through the RPDC programme, Edgbaston Priory Club provides young players with a structured, high-performance environment that bridges ambition with opportunity. The programme aligns seamlessly with the Club's values, combining technical development, physical preparation and mental resilience to ensure players are supported



holistically. This partnership reinforces the Club's belief that excellence is built through consistency and care.

The RPDC programme also enables access to expert guidance and best-in-class practices ensuring players benefit from informed coaching and clear progression routes. By integrating these principles into daily training and competition, Edgbaston Priory Club continues to raise standards while maintaining an inclusive and supportive environment. Each player is encouraged to

challenge themselves, learn from experience and develop a strong sense of professionalism both on and off the court.

The relationship between Edgbaston Priory Club and the RPDC programme reflects a shared vision: to cultivate talent responsibly, sustainably and ambitiously. Together, we are shaping an environment where excellence is not only pursued but consistently achieved, laying strong foundations for future success and reinforcing the Club's reputation as a leader in player development.



# IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH TENNIS



LTA Tennis Foundation is a grant and loan giving charity, with a mission to improve lives through tennis. The funding we provide is primarily 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 underserved communities.

Our ambition is for every child, young person, and adult to access the unique and life-changing benefits that tennis offers. To achieve this, we partner with experts in their areas of work and delivery who are embedded within communities, ensuring maximum impact.

IN 2025, LTA TENNIS FOUNDATION'S GRANT MAKING FRAMEWORK GENERATED

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OF SOCIAL VALUE ACROSS BRITAIN, POSITIVELY IMPACTING **34,424** PEOPLE.

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The LTA Tennis Foundation grant will enable us to train young people who are not in education, employment or training, giving them meaningful pathways into coaching, leadership and future employment. The impact will be felt not just on the court, but in improved confidence, wellbeing and long-term life chances.

**MALACHI FARQUHARSON**

Director, The Learn Active Coaching Group  
LTA Tennis Foundation grant funded partner

GRANT FUNDED PARTNERS EVIDENCED:

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**94%**  
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Scan the QR code to join LTA Tennis Foundation's community and keep up to date with the life-changing work.

# CELEBRATING 50-YEARS OF WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

FROM A RADICAL IDEA TO A GLOBAL SPORT

Wheelchair tennis was created in 1976, by American Brad Parks, as he rehabilitated following a lifechanging skiing accident. Alongside Jeff Minnenbraker, he adapted the sport, showing that with the allowance of two bounces, tennis could be both accessible and fiercely competitive.

What began on public courts in California quickly gathered momentum. The first wheelchair tennis tournament was held in May 1977 in Los Angeles and by the mid-1980s, international tournaments were being staged, the World Team Cup had been launched, and the International Tennis Federation (ITF) had formally recognised wheelchair tennis. Today, wheelchair tennis is fully embedded across the four Grand Slams and the Paralympic Games, with men's, women's and quad events – the sports class designed for players with a



permanent impairment in at least one lower and one upper extremity (e.g. hands or arms) and may include level of trunk function – now contested on the world's biggest stages.

## BRITISH SUCCESS ON THE WORLD STAGE

British wheelchair tennis players have played a central role in shaping the sport's competitive and cultural history. In the men's wheelchair game, **Jayant Mistry** was one of Britain's leading figures during the 1990s and early 2000s, competing at four Paralympic Games and achieving landmark success on the Grand Slam stage. Alongside him, **Peter Norfolk** as one of the sport's most dominant forces of the late 1990s and early 2000s, helped to raise the profile of quad wheelchair tennis through sustained success at Grand Slams and Paralympic Games, becoming flagbearer at the London 2012 Paralympics.

In recent years, wheelchair tennis has been carried forward by a new generation, most notably **Alfie Hewett** and **Gordon Reid**, who together and individually, have delivered Grand Slam

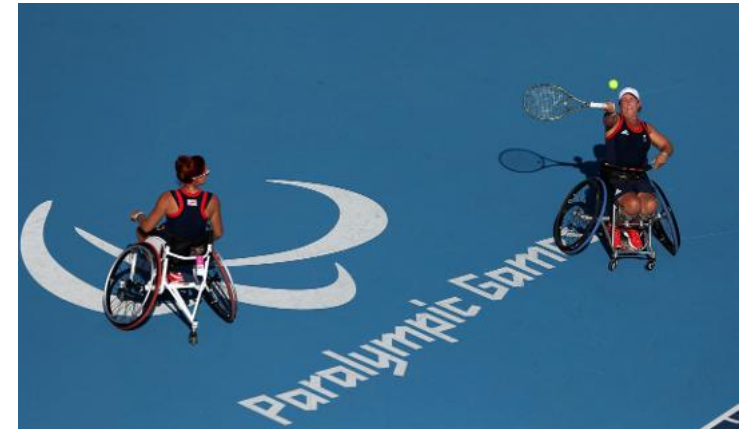
California, Brad Parks, at the sport's 1986 US Open, the forerunner to inclusion in the Grand Slam in 2005. (Photo by Todd Friedman/Popperfoto via Getty Images)

Jayant Mistry celebrates winning the first wheelchair doubles title at The Championships in 2005 – the first British man to triumph at Wimbledon since 1936. (Photo by Phil Cole/Getty Images)



titles, Paralympic medals and world number one rankings, cementing Britain's position as a leading force in wheelchair tennis. In quad wheelchair tennis, **Andy Lapthorne** has won 17 Grand Slam titles in singles and doubles alongside four paralympic medals.

British female players have remained a consistent presence on the international stage. **Lucy Shuker's** career stands out as one of the most enduring in the sport's history, spanning five Paralympic Games, becoming flagbearer at the Paris 2024 Paralympics. **Jordanne Whiley** played a key role alongside Lucy Shuker, securing two bronze



and a silver Paralympic medal in women's doubles. A history maker in her own right, Jordanne was the first British woman to win a singles Paralympic medal and the first Brit player of any tennis format to complete the calendar Grand Slam in doubles.

Great Britain's Peter Norfolk OBE celebrates winning the first of his two successive Paralympic quad singles gold medals in Athens in 2004. (Photo by Phil Cole/Getty Images)

Record-breaking partnership Alfie Hewett and Gordon Reid celebrate becoming the first men's wheelchair doubles pairing to complete the career Golden Slam at Paris 2024. (Photo by Daniel Kopatsch/Getty Images)



Doubles bronze medalists Lucy Shuker and Jordanne Whiley made history at London 2012, becoming the first British female tennis players to win a Paralympic medal. (Photo by Julian Finney/Getty Images)

## CELEBRATING FIVE DECADES OF WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

To mark the 50 year milestone, the LTA is spotlighting wheelchair tennis across its grasscourt season:

**Get In and Go** wheelchair tennis taster sessions, powered by Lexus, will allow event spectators to try wheelchair tennis using specialist sports wheelchairs, provided by Alfie Hewett.

Induction of British individuals and organisations to the ITF's **Wheelchair Tennis Hall of Champions** will recognise those who have shaped the sport on and off court.

A new **digital exhibition**, curated by the LTA in partnership with Getty Images, will celebrate 50 years with 50 images of wheelchair tennis.



Scan the QR code to view the full LTA and Getty Images exhibition online.

## MOMENT IN TIME

Jodie Burrage posing for photos with young fans at the 2025 Lexus Birmingham Open



# RALLY FOR TOMORROW

TO DELIVER THE LTA'S VISION OF TENNIS OPENED UP AND ENSURE THAT TENNIS AND THE PLACES IT IS PLAYED ARE ACCESSIBLE AND THRIVING FOR GENERATIONS TO COME, IT'S VITAL THAT EVERYONE RALLIES TOGETHER TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PLACES WE PLAY.

The LTA is working hard to secure a sustainable future for tennis in Britain, both in terms of its own operations and major events, but also by supporting the wider tennis community to take action.

## THE GRASS COURT SEASON

The LTA Grass Court Season attracts thousands of fans every year, and it is vital that the events put as many measures as possible in place to reduce any potential harmful environmental impact.

The LTA has introduced a number of steps to make their events more environmentally friendly. The LTA uses Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel to power temporary generators on-site, resulting in 90 per cent less emissions than standard fuels.

New this year, the onsite stringers will be working with Hubba, collecting used racket strings, which will then be recycled and transformed into high performance, sustainable sportswear.



THE LTA HAS REMOVED OVER 480,000 SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BOTTLES ACROSS EVENTS SINCE THE START OF THE PARTNERSHIP WITH BRITA.



OVER 50 PER CENT OF ALL TOURNAMENT FLEET VEHICLES ARE FULLY ELECTRIC, THANKS TO A PARTNERSHIP WITH LEXUS

## PLAY YOUR PART

Whilst everyone in British tennis must pull together to play their part, as a fan and spectator there are some things you can do which can make a big difference:

- Use your own reusable bottle to fill up at one of BRITA's refill stations
- Choose a low carbon option from one of the menus onsite
- Use the right bin for your waste
- Use public transport to travel to and from events
- Return your reusable cup if you've had a drink



ACROSS THE GRASS COURT SEASON THE LTA DONATES MORE THAN THREE TONNES OF LEFTOVER FOOD TO LOCAL CHARITIES.

## LTA PLEDGEBALL LEAGUE

The LTA Pledgeball League, encourages venues, coaches and players to commit pledges to make their day-to-day lives more sustainable, everyone who makes a pledge will be entered into the draw to win a pair of tickets to the HSBC Championships at The Queen's Club in 2027!

This is just one way in which the LTA is supporting tennis in Britain to take action to protect the environment and the places we play, with a range of guidance and resources for LTA registered venues.



Scan the QR code to make a nature-friendly pledge and enter into the draw!



# SUSTAINABILITY SPOTLIGHT

As the inaugural winner of the Protect Where We Play Award, The West Worthing Club in Sussex has emerged as a shining example of how sports clubs can lead the way in environmental responsibility. A proud notforprofit Community Amateur Sports Club, it has placed sustainability at the heart of its mission, demonstrating that caring for the environment and providing excellent sporting facilities can go hand in hand.

The club has invested heavily in reducing its carbon footprint. LED floodlights now illuminate its courts while consuming

far less electricity, and the clubhouse roof is lined with 90 solar panels that have already generated over 100 MWh of clean energy. This is supported by the club's decision to source all its electricity from 100 per cent renewable suppliers. Smart scheduling and sensor controlled lighting ensure energy is only used when needed, with automated timers linked directly to the court booking system to prevent unnecessary energy usage.

West Worthing's sustainability efforts run throughout the site. Recycling has been part of the club's culture for years,

from repurposing tennis and padel balls to sourcing recycled furniture and ensuring glass, plastics, paper and cardboard are recycled responsibly. Single-use plastics are being phased out, with players encouraged to refill bottles at water stations and the café removing plastic straws, cutlery, cups and containers.

A strong commitment to the local community shapes every decision. The club prioritises local suppliers, from UK manufactured padel courts to locally roasted coffee beans. Its grounds are alive with biodiversity: hedges and trees are carefully maintained, and beehives

in the wooded areas produce award winning honey sold on site!

The club also promotes cycling and car sharing, supports National Bike Week, and has provided new cycle racks. The grounds team use rechargeable equipment where possible, minimise chemical treatments, compost all green waste, and ensure that they maintain their grass courts in environmentally friendly ways.

West Worthing Club have shown what's possible when passion meets purpose, with their leadership showing how grassroots sport can play a powerful role in protecting the places we play.



Julian Cash of Great Britain and Lloyd Glasspool of Great Britain pose for a photo with the Gentlemen's Doubles Trophies at Wimbledon

## A FATHER'S STORY

GRAND SLAM GLORY SEEMS AS DISTANT A DREAM WHEN YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER TAKES THEIR FIRST STEPS ONTO A TENNIS COURT, BUT A SELECT FEW BEAT THE ODDS TO REACH THE TOP.

**B**irmingham local Dan Evans and Redditch-born Lloyd Glasspool have done that and more over the last decade and for their family and friends watching from the sidelines, those moments of glory are all the more special.

Neil Glasspool's pride was overflowing when he watched his son represent Warwickshire in his teenage years, but he never imagined he would see the day when Lloyd would be standing on the Centre Court at Wimbledon as a champion.

Glasspool and partner Julian Cash became the first all-British team to win the Wimbledon doubles title in 89 years last July, with proud Dad Neil pinching himself as he lapped up the moment.

"I was at Wimbledon for the quarter-final, the semi-final and then the final and it was just an amazing experience," said Neil, as his son achieved his Wimbledon dream nine years after making his debut in the tournament playing with Dan Evans back in 2016.



"When he first played for the county at under-14s, I remember thinking that if he never achieved anything else in tennis, he'd already done so well.

"Then he played with Dan Evans in the doubles and they got knocked out in the first round, but how fantastic was it to say he had gone all the way and played at Wimbledon.

"Now I can't quite believe he has won the doubles title at Wimbledon and also made it to world No.1 in the rankings. I can't really get my head around it.

"It's been so exciting to see him achieving so much at the top of the game in recent years.

"There have been so many years of hard work that have gone into this success and it's only been in the last few years that he has been reaping the rewards at the top."

Lloyd's success has been a joyous chapter in a life that has been enriched by tennis for Neil, but it has not diluted his passion to give his all to his role at the Edgbaston Archery & Lawn

Tennis Society in Birmingham, which is recognised as the oldest tennis club in the world.

His contribution to tennis was acknowledged as Dan Evans proudly presented him with the Lifetime Achievement Award at this year's Warwickshire Tennis Awards, Neil then went on to be shortlisted for this award at the LTA Awards national ceremony at the National Tennis Centre.

"I've been a member of the Edgbaston Archery & Lawn Tennis Society for 40 years," adds Neil, who is House and Grounds Secretary at the club.

"We were founded in 1860 and our courts are lined up in the same way as they were back

in the early days, which makes us the oldest club in the world.

"Being right next to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens makes it such a beautiful club to play at. We have clay courts, hard and astro on one side and then we have the grass courts.

"There is so much interest in tennis at the club and there is now also healthy competition with padel in Birmingham. I can't see any reason why those two sports can't work together, as we want to get as many people involved in racket sports as possible."

The star names take most of the headlines as they achieve success on court, but heroes like Neil are the heartbeat of tennis in clubs across the country.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM Edgbaston Park Hotel & Conference Centre

## Moments worth marking...

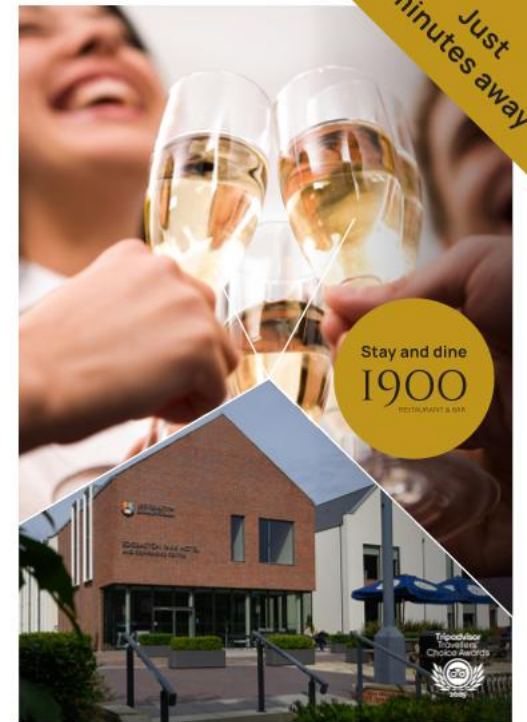
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## LEVELLING THE COURT

LTA TENNIS FOUNDATION – THE LTA’S OFFICIAL CHARITY – HAS LAUNCHED LEVELLING THE COURT, A NEW INITIATIVE TO HELP TALENTED YOUNG PLAYERS FROM LOW-INCOME BACKGROUNDS ACCESS THE OPPORTUNITIES THEY NEED TO PROGRESS IN TENNIS.

The programme is all about opening doors. It will fund projects that identify and support emerging talent in underserved communities, while also offering grants to young players already on the LTA pathway who need help with the costs of training, travel and competition.

Delivered by the LTA’s Performance Team and backed by an initial £100,000 investment, Levelling the Court aims to make a real, lasting difference. The first round of grants – worth up to £2,500 – will open in July for players aged 10–14 who meet the eligibility criteria, including those connected to Regional Player Development Centres or the Wheelchair 14U pathway.

Alongside individual support,

the programme will build on a pilot in Manchester – the Manchester Aces Development Squad, delivered with Manchester City Council. This work is already helping uncover talent in community spaces like parks, where ability often goes unseen. The ambition is to learn from this pilot and expand it across Great Britain, creating new pathways for players wherever they start.

LTA Performance Director Michael Bourne said: “This initiative was never about finding the next British No.1. It’s about creating more equal access to our sport and removing the financial barriers that hold talented players back. LTA Tennis Foundation’s mission is to improve lives through tennis, and this fund brings that to life in a really tangible way.”

Tim Lawler MBE, Chair of Trustees for LTA Tennis Foundation, added: “For too many young people, access to our sport is still shaped by socio-economic barriers. This funding stream is about changing that. By targeting support where it’s needed most, we’re removing barriers and opening up opportunities, ensuring that a young person’s future in tennis is defined by their passion and potential, not their financial circumstances.”

This work builds on the LTA Tennis Foundation’s broader mission to improve lives through tennis. In 2025 alone, its investment in grassroots and community tennis and padel through its Grant Making Framework generated over £21m in social value, positively impacting more than 34,000 people.

# BRITISH TENNIS GREATS

BRITISH TENNIS FANS RELISH THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHEER ON A HOMEGROWN HERO, AND THE CHAMPIONS THAT HAVE PREVAILED ON THE LUSH GREEN ENGLISH LAWNS HAVE SERVED UP SOME MOMENTS TO SAVOUR.

From Birmingham to Nottingham and The Queen's Club to Eastbourne, this is the month when tennis comes alive in this country and the roll call of Brits that have lifted titles at LTA tournaments makes for impressive reading.

Here, we look back at some of the great moments for British players on grass courts amid a summer when more big names will be striving to join the ranks of champions.

## WADE LEADS THE WAY

Women's tennis underwent a thrilling evolution in the early 1970s as American great Billie Jean King led the drive for equality in the sport.

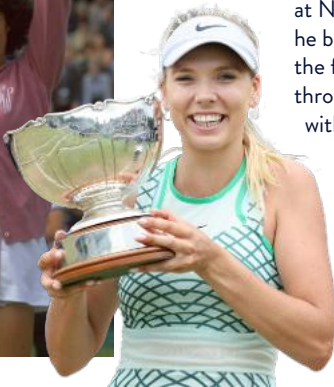
It was also a memorable decade for British tennis fans, as Virginia Wade took centre stage on grass courts that gave her some moments to savour.

After losing to Chris Evert in the inaugural final of the tournament at Eastbourne in 1974, Wade secured victory in the tournament a year later as she beat King in a thrilling final.

It was a prelude to Wade's memorable win at Wimbledon in 1977, when she beat Betty Stöve from the Netherlands in the final.

## NOTTINGHAM CHAMPIONS

Nottingham has been a stage for some memorable British triumphs, with Greg Rusedski, Elena Baltacha, Dan Evans, Katie Boulter and Andy Murray among those who have enjoyed that special feeling of securing a title on home soil.



Rusedski stormed to victory for the first time at Nottingham in 1997, as he beat Karol Kucera in the final after progressing through the tournament without dropping a set.

He then won the title for a second time in 2003, beating America's Mardy Fish in the final.

Evans is another two-time champion

in Nottingham after his wins in 2019 and 2022, with Murray adding his name to the roll of honour at the event a year later and Jacob Fearnley joining him on the Nottingham champions board in 2024.

British women have also thrived in Nottingham, with Elena Baltacha's wins in 2011 and 2013 backed up by more British success for Johanna Konta in 2021 and wins for Boulter in 2023 and 2024.

## ANDY MURRAY'S REMARKABLE RECORD

Andy Murray's five wins at The Queen's Club make him the most successful player in the long history of that great tournament, with his first coming with a victory against American James Blake in the 2009 final.

He beat France's Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the 2011 final before wins against Croatia's Marin Cilic in 2013, South Africa's Kevin Anderson two years later and Canada's Milos Raonic in 2016 gave him the last of his titles at the west London club. The Scot was also a doubles winner at The Queen's Club with Feliciano Lopez in 2019.

Murray's win at the 2023 Nottingham Open added to a record that also includes an Olympic Gold medal on grass courts at the All England Club in the London 2012 Games.

His two memorable wins at Wimbledon complete a remarkable record for Murray on grass courts.

## DOUBLES DELIGHT

British players have enjoyed impressive success on grass courts in doubles over the decades, with a lengthy list of players clinching titles in LTA events.

The all-British duo of Jo Durie and Anne Hobbs were doubles champions in Birmingham in 1982, with Mark Petchey and Danny Sapsford getting their name on the winners' list at Nottingham in 1996.

Jamie Murray was a doubles winner at Nottingham in 2007 with partner Eric Butorac, while Dominic Inglot (2016), Ken and Neil Skupski (2017), Joe Salisbury (2018), Jacob Fearnley and Johannes Monday (2023) and Marcus Willis (2024) are also on the winners' list in the men's doubles at Nottingham.



- 1 Greg Rusedski won in Nottingham in 2003
- 2 Elena Baltacha won the title in Nottingham in 2010
- 3 Virginia Wade with the Wimbledon trophy in 1977
- 4 Katie Boulter is a two-time winner in Nottingham
- 5 Andy Murray is a five-time singles champion at The Queen's Club
- 6 Murray with his coach Ivan Lendl
- 7 Murray won The Queen's Club doubles title with Feliciano Lopez in 2019

Jeremy Bates, Jamie Murray and his brother Andy are among the British winners of the doubles at the Queen's Club, with the last two editions of that tournament producing homegrown winners after Neal Skupski won the title with Michael Venus in 2024 and the British pair Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool lifted the trophy last year.

In Eastbourne, Colin Fleming and Ross Hutchins (2012), Dominic Inglot (2014), Luke Bambridge and Jonny O'Mara (2016), Neal Skupski (2024) and Cash and Glasspool (2025) have won the doubles title at Devonshire Park.



# OPENING UP ACCESS TO TENNIS IN SCHOOLS

FAGE LTA YOUTH SCHOOLS, THE LTA'S SCHOOL TENNIS PROGRAMME, RECENTLY CELEBRATED TRAINING 30,000 TEACHERS NATIONWIDE TO DELIVER TENNIS IN SCHOOLS, AND TO HELP CELEBRATE THE MILESTONE, THE PROGRAMME ENLISTED THE HELP OF BRITISH WOMEN'S STAR SONAY KARTAL.

The programme provides free teacher training for schools that sign up, as well as free teaching resources, to help give more children the opportunity to pick up a racket and play at school.

Data from teachers who have taken part in the training indicate that 99 per cent believe their teaching has improved as a result of FAGE LTA Youth Schools; 91 per cent of teachers have either already increased, or will increase, the amount of tennis they teach; and 89 per cent of teachers feel that playing tennis has improved their pupils' confidence.

To celebrate the milestone, British women's number two Sonay Kartal visited her primary school in Saltdean, Sussex, to take part in a tennis session with year five pupils run by their teacher Becky. After taking part in a classroom Q&A session, Sonay showed off her skills and gave pupils some tips as they got to grips with new rackets and balls – gifted to each pupil taking part thanks to the FAGE LTA Youth Starter Offer. This offer provides a racket, balls, access to free taster sessions and an LTA Advantage membership for just £4.99 and

can be found on the LTA website, just search 'How to get started'.

"When I was a kid, tennis was still a niche sport and there wasn't much tennis going on," said Sonay after taking part in the lesson. "The fact that Becky is one of 30,000 teachers that are now trained to deliver tennis is incredible. Becky's role is super important for this school, and hopefully other people will get inspired and are going to want to do the same; the more Beckys there are in schools, the



more it's going to entice kids into wanting to play tennis."

As well as providing free teacher training, which more than 33,000 teachers nationwide have now received, since FAGE LTA Youth Schools was launched in 2020 more than half of schools in Britain have registered with the programme. When schools' teachers complete their training, the school also receives a £250 voucher from the LTA Tennis Foundation to spend either on new equipment or on team teaching sessions with an LTA-accredited coach, which creates links between schools and community clubs to encourage play outside

the school environment. To date, over 10,000 schools have fully completed their training, with more than £2.5 million in LTA Tennis Foundation vouchers awarded.

Class teacher Becky Latter said, "Taking part has really benefited us with thinking about how we break down our lessons into what are the key skills we want the children to get out of those lessons, and what activities we take part in to really get the children involved in playing tennis. It's made me feel more confident in my teaching, and it's impacted the children in how they're learning these skills as well."

**"The fact that Becky is one of 30,000 teachers that are now trained to deliver tennis is incredible"**


Sonay Kartal

To find out more about the FAGE LTA Youth Schools programme, visit [www.lta.org.uk/schools](http://www.lta.org.uk/schools).



Scan the QR code to see how Sonay got on returning to her old school.


# SCAN TO TRY YOUR TENNIS TEKERS




**SMASH**  
THE COMPETITIVE ONE

FAVOURITE SHOT VOLLEY  
FAVOURITE PLAYER JACK DRAPER

Challenge yourself as much as you challenge others on the court. Smash loves to win.

SCAN TO MEET ME 

FIND OUT MORE  
LTA.ORG.UK/TENNISABLES




**Bounce**  
THE RESILIENT ONE

FAVOURITE SHOT FOREHAND  
FAVOURITE PLAYER SONAY KARTAL

Failures will happen. It's how you bounce back that counts! Bounce knows a thing or two about overcoming adversity.

SCAN TO MEET ME 


FIND OUT MORE  
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**SPIN**  
THE SMOOTH ONE

FAVOURITE SHOT DROP SHOT  
FAVOURITE PLAYER EMMA RADUCANU

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SCAN TO MEET ME 


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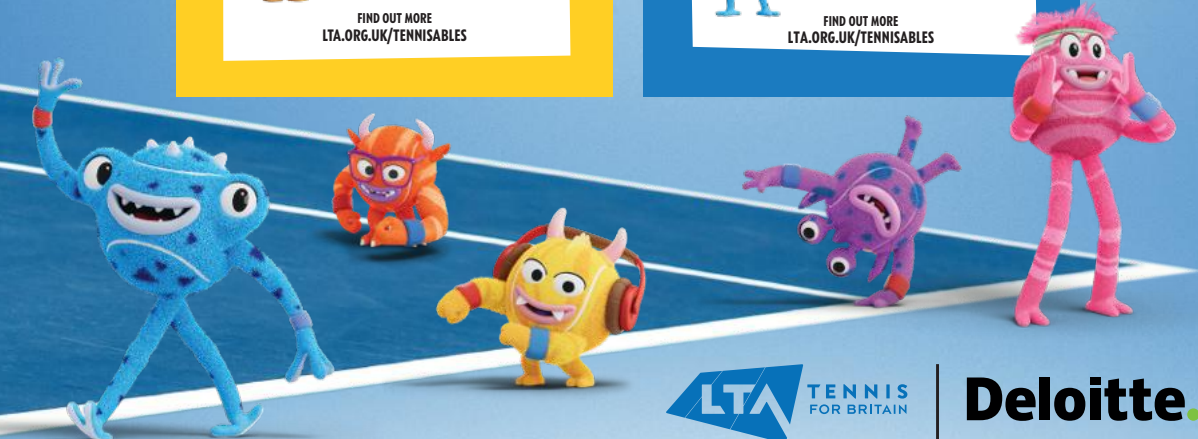
**ACE**  
THE SMART ONE

FAVOURITE SHOT SERVE  
FAVOURITE PLAYER KATIE BOULTER

Play smarter, not harder. Ace knows all the shots and when and how to play them.

SCAN TO MEET ME 

FIND OUT MORE  
LTA.ORG.UK/TENNISABLES



## BRITISH GIRL POWER

The Lexus Great Britain Billie Jean King Cup team are counting down to an appearance in the Finals of this year's tournament after securing their place in the finals with a fine away win against Australia in April.

Impressive victories for 17-year-old debutant Mika Stojisavljevic, Harriet Dart and Jodie Burrage on the John Cain Arena in Melbourne helped Anne Keothavong's side to book their place in the finals in Shenzhen in September.

"We're all just overjoyed," said Captain Anne Keothavong. "The tennis that was played was fantastic - I couldn't

ask for anything more of my team. I'm so proud of them.

"It's incredibly rewarding. I have to credit the players on my team for going out there and being able to execute the way they did, holding their nerve the way they did and performing the way they did.

"We've travelled to the other side of the world and it's a big ask of the players at this point in the year. On paper, the Aussies were favourites, but we went 2-0 up on the opening day and it was a great overall performance."

The Brits are through to the Finals for the fourth time in the last five

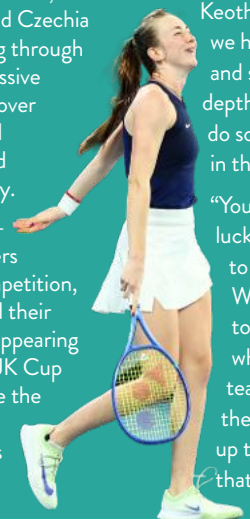
years and they will look to win the competition for the first time when they take on some strong teams in China.

Champions Italy secured their place with a 3-1 win over Japan in the Qualifiers, with Ukraine and Czechia progressing through with impressive away wins over Poland and Switzerland respectively.

Spain, five-time winners of the competition, maintained their record of appearing in every BJK Cup Finals since the new event format was introduced

in 2021 after seeing off Slovenia, while Kazakhstan beat 2023 champions Canada to join hosts China in the line-up.

"The ultimate goal is to win it," added Keothavong. "I know we have the players and strength and depth in the UK to do something special in this competition. "You need a bit of luck for everything to come together. When we head to the Finals, whoever is on my team, we aren't there to make up the numbers, that's for sure."



# THE WORLD CUP OF TENNIS

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DAVIS CUP TEAM

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## ELECTRONIC LINE CALLING

ALL EVENTS ACROSS THE LTA GRASS COURT SEASON NOW HAVE ELECTRONIC LINE CALLING LIVE (ELC LIVE) IN PLACE.

### What is Electronic Line Calling Live?

ELC Live covers all court lines for 'out' calls throughout matches and delivers comprehensive player and ball tracking, leading to an unprecedented level of data for player-performance analysis. Players can ask to see a virtual replay of a close call if they wish.

Service lets will be called by the Chair Umpire.

Foot faults will be called by the Review Official who sits within the ELC Live operating booth.

### How are Line Umpires roles changing?

2025 saw the Match Assistant role introduced. Match Assistants are there to support the Chair Umpire by measuring the net, overseeing ball changes, escorting players for toilet breaks or change of attire breaks.

The LTA Officials taking on the role as Match Assistant are trained line umpires and work as on-court officials at other events throughout the year. If the ELC

Live system fails, Match Assistants step in as the Line Umpires to call the lines so play can resume.

Line Umpires can still be seen calling the lines at the LTA Pro-Series events.

“Line Umpires are still vital and valued members of the LTA Official workforce”

**MATTHEW MORRISSEY**  
LTA | OFFICIATING  
OPERATIONS MANAGER

# OVER £85 MILLION INVESTED IN PLACES TO PLAY



The LTA, LTA Tennis Foundation and partners are helping transform courts, clubs, parks and community sports hubs across Britain.

OVER **£67M** INTO TENNIS | **£19M** INTO PADEL

## PARK TENNIS PROJECT

The Park Tennis Project, a nationwide investment by the UK Government and LTA Tennis Foundation, delivered by the LTA, saw Britain's biggest ever transformation of park tennis facilities.

During the summer of 2025, Sir Andy Murray led the celebrations to mark the completion of the project.

- Over **£45 million invested** by UK Government, LTA Tennis Foundation and local partners
- **More than 3,000 park** courts transformed across Britain
- **500,000 more people playing** in parks annually

## FACILITY LOAN SCHEME

The Facility Loan Scheme helps venues grow tennis and padel participation while supporting long-term sustainability for communities.

Since 2019 the Facility Loan Scheme has supported:

- **126** projects
- **48** covered tennis and padel courts
- **228** new floodlit tennis and padel courts

## COVERED COURTS

Many parts of Britain lack access to covered tennis and padel courts, so the LTA has developed a new approach to **Community Covered Tennis, Padel and Multi-Sport Hubs**, using permanent canopy structures that offer **light, shelter and year-round play**.

A first wave of pilot projects will begin in 2026/27, backed by £3 million from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, whilst the LTA continues discussions with the Government with a view to funding a nationwide rollout.

The LTA and LTA Tennis Foundation are committed to strengthening tennis and padel facilities across Britain. We are investing to improve venues, support long-term sustainability, and create more welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring places for people to play.



Learn more about  
this investment



# WHAT'S ON SITE?

VISIT THE LTA TENNIS FOUNDATION, THE LTA'S OFFICIAL CHARITY WITH A MISSION TO IMPROVE LIVES THROUGH TENNIS. GET INVOLVED, HAVE FUN, AND HELP IMPROVE LIVES THROUGH TENNIS.



## TENNIS BALL RE-SALE

Donate £5 and take home a tube of match-used balls from the tournament - a perfect memento.

## TENNIS BALL NAMING

Personalise a tennis ball with your name or message - a unique souvenir to take home.

## WHERE THE MONEY GOES

All funds raised for the LTA Tennis Foundation will support their mission to improve lives through tennis.



## GOLDEN SHOT

Support the LTA Tennis Foundation by taking part in the Golden Shot competition for your chance to win tickets to the final day of the Lexus Birmingham Open, plus the opportunity to take on a special challenge on Centre Court. Please note: Golden Shot is an in-person tennis challenge and can only be entered while you are on site.



## LIVE MUSIC

WEDNESDAY 3RD  
- SATURDAY 6TH  
JUNE FROM 3PM

DJ Fitchy brings her love of tennis and music to the Lexus Birmingham Open, serving up feelgood sets from house grooves to festival favourites. A keen player and familiar face at Edgbaston Priory Club, she's equally at home behind the decks, delivering crowdpleasing sounds from house nights to festival stages across Birmingham and beyond.

## JODI DANCERS

FRIDAY 5TH JUNE

Jodi Dancers are a Multi Award Winning Bhangra Group based in the West Midlands. They have featured in TV & Film and have danced on stage with a number of Punjabi artists. Jodi Dancers have performed across the UK and abroad, taking Bhangra to France and Norway. They showcase the vibrant and energetic dance form of Bhangra, bringing it to people of all communities.

## HAVE A GO ZONE!

Free to try, the Have A Go Zone invites all ages to jump in with swing ball, cornhole, spike ball, a reaction wall and photo booth fun.



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# DEAF TENNIS

**CATHERINE FLETCHER (NÉE GRAHAM) FIRST PICKED UP A RACKET WHEN SHE WAS 12 AND WITHIN A YEAR, SHE WAS REPRESENTING GREAT BRITAIN'S DEAF TENNIS TEAM.**

It was the start of a journey in the sport that would take her to the top of deaf tennis, with her gold medal at the 2009 Deaflympics a career highlight that cemented her legacy in the sport.

While her playing days may be over, Catherine's story in tennis has continued in a flourishing coaching career, which includes her role as the LTA's Great Britain National Deaf Tennis Coach.

Catherine is preparing to lead an experienced British team into next month's World Deaf Team Tennis Championships in Grenoble, France, as her story in tennis continues to add new chapters.

"Tennis has given me so many amazing opportunities," said Catherine. "This has been such a big part of my life and meeting so many people who are living a similar life to me and also enjoying tennis has been amazing.

"It's also such a great honour to represent your country, as the players who will compete for Great Britain in this year's World Deaf Team Tennis Championships will confirm."

Catherine's playing career brought success on the international stage and since making a full-time move into coaching, this LTA Level 4 coach has helped to shape tennis stories at Ramsbury and Great Bedwyn Tennis Clubs near Marlborough.

Yet her mission goes beyond developing players, as it's all about visibility for deaf tennis and what it can offer.

"We want to raise awareness of deaf tennis," she explains. "Wheelchair tennis is more visible, people understand it more easily. Deafness, on the other hand, is a hidden disability.

"That can make things more challenging on court, but tennis is such a powerful way for deaf players to connect, compete and build confidence."

That sense of connection is central to the LTA's growing Deaf Tennis Community Group - a nationwide network bringing together players, parents, coaches and officials in an open, supportive environment. It's a space to share ideas, experiences and opportunities, helping



to strengthen the sport from the ground up.

There is also a clear focus on the future, with the LTA continuing to invest in the development of female athletes within deaf tennis, offering grants to support players competing in ICSD Open events throughout the 2026 season.

For Catherine, it all comes back to the same simple belief: that tennis can open doors.

This sport did just that for her and now, she's determined to make sure it does the same for the next generation.

EVERY LOSS.



EVERY WIN.



EVERY POINT.



ATP IT ALL ADDS UP

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# JUNIOR NATIONALS

DORSET'S DANIELLA BRITTON ENJOYED A FORTNIGHT TO REMEMBER IN APRIL'S LTA LEXUS JUNIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, AS SHE WAS CROWNED CHAMPION IN BOTH THE 16U AND 18U COMPETITIONS.

Andy Murray, Heather Watson, Jack Draper and Dan Evans are among a long list of players who have won Junior National titles and gone on to become household names on the world tours, with Britton joining an impressive list of former champions on the tournament's Roll of Honour.

Britton's impressive 6-1, 6-3 win against Northamptonshire's Tegan Bush in the 18U final allowed her to complete a double after she beat Cheshire's Annabel Wong in the 16U final at the LTA's National Tennis Centre.

The triumph secured her the prestigious Junior Nationals title and also gave her a chance to take her place in the qualifying event for the women's singles at The Championships, Wimbledon later this month.

"The 16's title was unbelievable to win. That was a big goal for me coming into this year. To win the 18's as well, I'm very pleased," said Britton.

Looking ahead to her debut appearance in Wimbledon qualifying at the end of this month, Britton added: "I

honestly can't believe it. I'll be playing pros, the best of the best. I'm just really happy that I will get that experience and try and push my game on further."

The Girls' singles tournament at the Junior National Championships has been an impressive showcase for the quality of players emerging through the ranks in recent years, with former champions Mimi Xu and Mika Stojsavljevic currently striving to make the transition from the junior ranks and into the senior game.

That path will also be followed by Boys' 18U Junior National's champion Mark Ceban from Surrey, who added the 18U Junior Nationals title to the 16U title he won in 2024 after an impressive 6-4, 6-1 win over Somerset's Joshua Craze.

"I'm excited to play in qualifying for Wimbledon," said Ceban. "I did well a couple of years ago at Wimbledon in the Juniors and I've had a lot of practice on grass, so I think that will give me a good advantage playing in qualifying."

The girls' doubles title in the 18U tournament was won by top seeds Suffolk's Megan



Dorset's Daniella Britton was crowned 16U and 18U champion

Mark Ceban was crowned 18U Junior Nationals champion

Knight and Middlesex's Hollie Smart, as they beat singles finalist Bush and her partner Teodora Prisadnikova in the final.

In the boys' doubles, the unseeded duo of Surrey's Liam Channon and Warwickshire's William Moxon beat No.3 seeds Archie Gray and Oliver Page in the final.



# PADEL IS UP AND COMING

**PADEL IS ONE OF THE FASTEST-GROWING SPORTS IN BRITAIN. OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS, PARTICIPATION HAS DOUBLED ANNUALLY, AND FIGURES FROM THE LTA SHOW THE GAME HAS NOW SURPASSED ONE MILLION PARTICIPANTS NATIONWIDE.**

This growth has been matched by rapid infrastructure development, with over 1800 courts now in use across the country, compared to just 68 in 2019 when the LTA took charge of the sport.

Padel is easy to pick up, highly social, and typically

played in doubles, with players close together on a relatively small court. Families can play together, and the enclosed glass walls keep the ball in play for longer rallies, helping beginners enjoy success quickly.

Padel also delivers significant health benefits. According

to LTA Lead Physical Preparation Coach Ian Aylward, the sport typically operates in the 70–85 per cent maximum heart-rate zone, making it highly effective for cardiovascular fitness. Frequent changes of direction support joint stability and proprioception, while the sport's tactical demands enhance reaction time, decision-making and pattern recognition. The doubles format further adds communication and social interaction, both of

which are linked to long-term engagement and psychological wellbeing. Padel's rapid growth has meant that it is now entering a more mature phase of its development. With players across Britain and an increasing number of established facilities, the sport now has to consider demands for high-quality qualified coaches, a strong competition framework, and all the requirements for a national sport, including a strong culture of safeguarding and inclusion.

The LTA is committed to working with the British padel community to support these requirements and help the sport continue to grow sustainably. The LTA also closely considers the relationship between padel and tennis, and how both can work to strengthen each other. Britain is not alone in having the same governing body for both tennis and padel, similar arrangement exists in France, Italy and the Netherlands amongst other European countries.

There is understandably a concern amongst some tennis players, that padel may cannibalise tennis participation, but there has been no evidence of this. During the period 2019-2026, whilst padel participation has grown by nearly a million players, tennis participation has actually risen amongst



adults by over 45 per cent. Whilst tennis participation amongst children is at a record high. There is a chance to develop a positive ecosystem with the popularity of tennis and padel both feeding off each other. The future looks bright for both sports, but the LTA is committed to ensuring they grow in a complimentary and sustainable way, to ensure everyone gets the chance to play tennis, padel or both, whatever their age or ability.

# COMING UP IN PADEL

The rest of the year promises to be just as exciting. Olympia in West London, is set to host the London Premier Padel P1, the first elite professional padel tournament to take place in Britain. Running from 4-9 August, the event will see the LTA, as the national governing body for padel, partner with Sela to deliver a milestone moment for the sport's growth and visibility in Britain.

British players will also be taking to the international stage, with Team GB competing across multiple age groups. The junior squad will travel to Portugal for the FIP Junior Euro Padel Cup in late June, while the seniors head to the FIP Senior World Padel Cup in September in Argentina. Britain's top open-category players, including leading athletes Aimee Gibson and Christian Medina Murphy, will look to build on their strong showing at last year's FIP Euro Padel Cup as they prepare to face the world's best at the FIP Open World Padel Cup.

Following the success of the inaugural LTA Padel National Championships,



Aimee Gibson and partner Catherine Rose were crowned champions at the inaugural LTA Padel National Championships

the tournament will return to Rocket Padel Bristol from 1-4 October. New for 2026, a standalone Junior National Championships will take place during the October half-term, further strengthening competitive opportunities for young players.

As the national governing body for both tennis and padel, we are seeing both sports growing together and complementing each other and the choice of opportunity they provide to help more people enjoy the benefits of being physically active.



Scan here to find out more about Padel in Britain



Pep Stonor (right) with Olympic gold medal hockey player Sophie Bray MBE (centre) and a young student

# EMPOWER PADEL

The rise of padel across Britain shows no sign of slowing down and Pep Stonor is on a mission to ensure women and girls are at the heart of the sport's growth.

With new padel courts opening at a rapid rate, Pep is leading the drive to ensure women and children experience the rewards of a sport that has not always seen women and girls at the forefront.

"I started playing during Covid and when I looked into playing in competitions, none of them had a women's event, so I made it my mission to change that," said Pep, who was recognised for her efforts in padel when she was presented with the President's Award at the LTA Awards in April.

"In September 2024, I set up Empower Padel and the aim was to get women to return to

sport or stay in sport through padel. This is a great team sport, a great social sport and the main thing is, it's easy to take up.

"Padel is offering enormous opportunities for women and girls and it is only going to get stronger from here.

"My passion is to urge all women and girls who have not tried this yet to get out on court and experience padel.

"We have a lot of women on our database who have come to padel without ever playing tennis and that shows this is a sport that is open to all."

While tennis takes time to master for newcomers to the sport, the smaller court dimensions ensure padel is the perfect sport for women who are looking to fit in some exercise into a busy schedule.

"Tennis is a difficult sport to crack and it takes time to learn the skills, but padel is a little easier," added Pep.

"There are so many barriers to entry for women in sport, but padel is a sport that you can play with three friends and enjoy some exercise and social time wrapped into one.

"I hope everyone reading this will be tempted to try padel if they have not done so already.

"It would also be great to see more females involved in padel coaching, as we know that can also be important when you are starting out in a new sport."

If you are looking for a new sport this summer, padel could be the one for you and inspirational leaders like Pep are opening doors for everyone to be part of the story.

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CREATE MAJOR  
MOMENTS ON AND  
OFF THE COURT





Yulia Putintseva of Kazakhstan with the Maud Watson trophy following victory against Ajla Tomljanovic in the 2024 final



Ashleigh Barty and Casey Dellacqua Doubles champion in 2017



Otto Virtanen 2025



Daniela Hantuchova 2013

# WALL OF CHAMPIONS BIRMINGHAM



Jelena Ostapenko celebrates with the trophy after winning against Czechia's Barbora Krejckikova in 2023



Nathalie Tauziat 2001



Ons Jabeur celebrates with the trophy after her victory against Daria Kasatkina in 2021



Australia's Ashleigh Barty poses for a photograph with the trophy after her straight sets victory over Germany's Julia Gorges in their 2019 women's singles final



Maria Sharapova 2004



Jelena Dokic 2002



Greet Minnen 2025

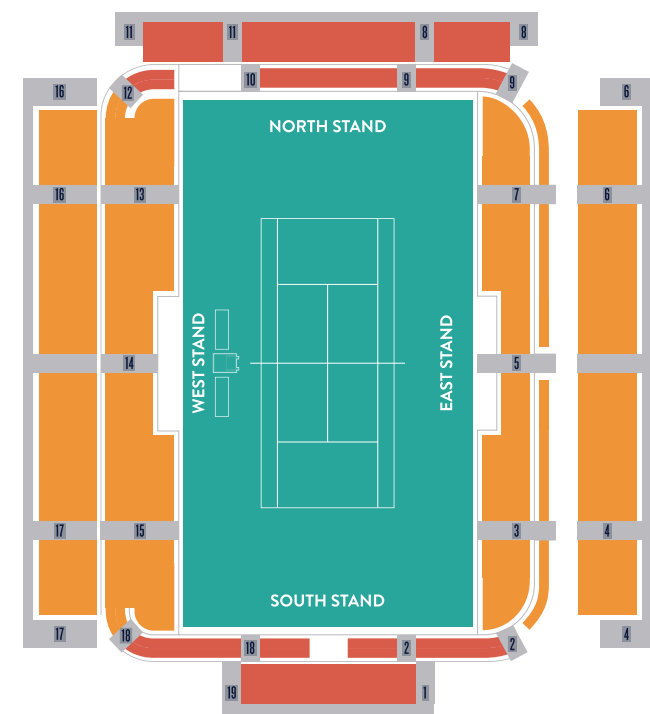


Petra Kvitova 2017



Beatriz Haddad Maia 2022

# FAN MOVEMENT



## MOMENT IN TIME

The Midlands Counties Championships ran from 1882 to 1977, and nearly 50 years later the trophy was recovered and given a new life as the men's trophy here at the Lexus Birmingham Open

LEXUS  
BIRMINGHAM  
- OPEN -

CHALLENGER TOUR  
WTA 125  
LTA TENNIS FOR BRITAIN

In 2025, the ATP and WTA introduced a new approach to Free Fan Movement across all tour events around the world. Along with all other events, the LTA's Grass Court Season needs to follow these tour rules – so here is what you need to know:

Free Fan Movement gives you the freedom to enjoy the tennis with greater access in and out of certain areas of the stands while matches are being played.

Depending on where you're sat, you will have either Restricted or Limited movement during matches to enter and leave the stadium.

At the Lexus Birmingham Open there are two zones – Red and Orange – which indicate when you can move from and to your seat.

Please refer to the seating map which highlights the relevant rules to each specific seating block.

In all cases please be respectful to the players and those seated around you.

If you're unsure of what area you are in, or what the rules are, you can also ask any of our event Stewards and Volunteers, who will be on hand to help you.

### RED (RESTRICTED MOVEMENT) :

You can move at every change of ends and set breaks.

### ORANGE (LIMITED MOVEMENT) :

You can move at the end of each game.

# SITE MAP

- 1 TICKET SUPPORT
- 2 BAG CHECK
- 3 STANDING VIEWING AREA
- 4 QUIET ROOM
- 5 HAVE A GO TENNIS COURT & GOLDEN SHOT
- 6 LEXUS SERVE CHALLENGE
- 7 DOG SPENDING AREA
- 8 FAN VILLAGE
- 9 UNRESERVED SEATING
- 10 CLUB 1875 SUITE
- 11 CLUB 1875 HOSPITALITY ENTRANCE

- FIRST AID
- TOILETS
- INFORMATION POINT  
TENNIS FOUNDATION
- TICKET SUPPORT
- BAR
- BRITA HYDRATION STATION
- FOOD AND DRINK
- SPECTATOR ROUTE
- BIG SCREEN
- YOU ARE HERE
- NO AUTHORISED ACCESS (PEDESTRIANS)
- NO AUTHORISED ACCESS (VEHICLES)



**LEXUS**  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
 — OPEN —

**ATP CHALLENGER WTA 125**

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THIS IS  
OUR STAGE.  
OUR STAGE IS  
THE **WTA**.



# WIN HOSPITALITY AT THE HSBC CHAMPIONSHIPS 2027



The LTA Tennis Foundation is transforming lives across Britain, helping millions build resilience, confidence and physical wellbeing through the power of tennis.

To celebrate the LTA's grass court season, we're giving you and a guest the chance to enjoy an unforgettable day of world-class tennis in style. Enter now for your opportunity to win exclusive hospitality at the Men's Finals Day of the HSBC Championships 2027.

## HOW TO ENTER

Scan the QR code to enter the prize draw and support the LTA Tennis Foundation to improve lives through tennis with a £10 donation.

Or enter for free by sending your name, address, email and phone number on a postcard to LTA TF Prize Draw, National Tennis Centre, Priory Lane, SW15 5JQ.



**ENTER THE  
PRIZE DRAW**

This prize draw is being promoted by the LTA Tennis Foundation (registered charity 1148421). All profits from the draw will support the LTA Tennis Foundation. You must be over 18 and a UK resident to enter. One person can enter a maximum of five times. The draw closes on the 1 July 2026 and any entries received after this date will not be included. The winner will be notified by phone on or before 6 July 2026. For full terms and conditions please visit [www.ltatennisfoundation.org.uk/get-involved/summer-giveaway/terms-and-conditions/](http://www.ltatennisfoundation.org.uk/get-involved/summer-giveaway/terms-and-conditions/)



LTA Tennis Foundation registered charity number: 1148421