



Promising England youngsters get funding aid

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Nine promising young English talents have been given a helping hand by the Backing the Best programme.

Naphong Boonyaprapa, Rhys Davies, Megan Gidney, Amirul Hussain, Mollie Patterson, Thomas Rayner, Josh Weatherby, Sam Wilson and Jasmin Wong have all received an award of £5,000.

The grant will help them meet essential costs such as travel, accommodation, kit, nutrition and medical expenses.

The athletes' programmes will all be agreed by Table Tennis England's national coaching staff.

Para table tennis athlete Alex Bland is also a recipient of an award and he was among dozens of athletes who attended workshops at Nottingham Racecourse in April, offering media training, nutrition advice, performance lifestyle guidance and support for parents.

The youngsters from all over the country were joined by Winter Olympian Elise Christie, who sung the praises of the programme.

"It was a really great day in Nottingham. It's amazing to be a part of something that gives young adults the chance to shine," said the triple short track speed skating world champion.

"I think that's what is important about SportsAid – they don't just give money, they help you develop skills."

Backing The Best is helping talented young athletes facing the greatest financial pressure to pursue their sporting ambitions. The programme, managed by SportsAid for Sport England, is supported by National Lottery funding. Visit www.sportengland.org/our-work/talent/backing-the-best/ to find out more.

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