



Nationals viewing figures on the up

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BBC website audience figures for Finals Day for the Mark Bates Ltd National Championships were up substantially on last year – and we are continuing to work to bring more live coverage of table tennis to viewers.

In total, just under 33,000 people watched the BBC stream during Finals Day, with an average of 18 minutes spent watching. These figures do not include those watching on BBC iPlayer, which hosted catch-up viewing for a month after the competition.

This compares with around 21,000 for Finals Day in 2019, when the average time spent watching was 16 minutes.

The National Championships are just one aspect of our work with the BBC, which has also seen the Corporation cover the ITTF Team World Cup in London in 2018.

In the early part of 2018, the Team World Cup, Commonwealth Games and PG Mutual Nationals were watched by a combined 400,000 viewers.

Before BBC Sport started streaming table tennis, previous National Championships were shown live on ITV4 in 2016 and the SPORTbible Facebook page in 2017.

The home European Championships Qualifying match against Greece in late 2016 was also streamed live on the SPORTbible Facebook page, reaching 2.2 million viewers.

Working with our production partners 1080 Media, we also provided three hour-long highlights programmes to Sky Sports Mix in 2017, encompassing the Nationals and England European Championships qualifying matches.

We continue to liaise extensively with the ITTF and BBC to try to provide live coverage of other events including the European Championships, World Championships and ITTF World Tour matches, although some rights and branding issues around certain events do need to be resolved.

In addition to working with the BBC, Table Tennis England and a number of other sport National Governing

Bodies have worked with UK Sport, the British Olympic Association and British Paralympic Association to develop the GB Sport online streaming platform.

The platform will provide Olympic and Paralympic sports content focused on British and Northern Irish athletes and teams.

Among the table tennis events which will feature – subject to changes in the calendar brought about by the coronavirus pandemic – are the Mark Bates Ltd National Championships, from 2021 onwards, as well as a number of ITTF events, including:

- Men's World Cup 2020
- Women's World Cup 2020
- World Tour Bulgarian Open
- World Tour Sweden Open
- World Tour Platinum Australia Open
- World Tour Grand Finals

We will continue to work with ITTF and ETTU to secure further events for the platform in 2021 onwards, including para and European events.

*** Our members, by paying their membership fees, subsidise our marketing and communications department, helping us to put table tennis in the spotlight to raise its profile and visibility and get more people playing. Your fees enable us to liaise with both local and national media to gain coverage of everything from grass roots through to elite level, and to provide live footage of events to outlets like the BBC to ensure you can watch world class table tennis wherever you are in the country.**

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