



DiSE athletes on a roll after completing studies

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Table Tennis England's first cohort of 13 athletes have successfully completed the Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DiSE) programme, earning 64 UCAS points through developing understanding and demonstrating practical application of various aspects that go into being an elite athlete.

Areas covered included performance profiling, setting goals, developing and evaluating technical, tactical, physical and psychological skills both in training and competition – as well as more off table topics such as nutrition, drugs in sport, publicity, lifestyle, sports injuries and career planning.

The programme has been disrupted during the pandemic but various outside experts have been used to deliver the modules as well as in-house experts from Table Tennis England. Support was also given by the performance department in terms of competition preparation, career planning and online fitness sessions, and the communications team to support with publicity and interview techniques.

Programme Lead Chris Turner said: "The players have had a very tough two years on the programme with huge changes into how their schooling has been delivered and a lack of table time.

"We have had to adapt our programme and it's unfortunate we couldn't offer the camps and competitions we wanted to. A camp and competition was planned in Spain but this unfortunately had to be cancelled.

"The players have done very well to keep their motivation for the course and to attend the online content we provided, which was an extension to the online learning they were doing for their further education studies, so huge congratulations to them.

"The players have been supported by many experts in different areas so a thank you to them and a thank you to the performance department who gave their time to talk to the players and provide online content.

"Thank you also to the clubs and home coaches who have also supported them through this tough time."

Gemma Kerr, one of the successful players, said: "I've really enjoyed the DiSE programme and the content covered has helped me choose my next steps in terms of a degree choice and the UCAS points awarded have supported my application."

Gemma will now be studying Sports Rehabilitation and Strength & Conditioning as the next stage in her education.

The 13 successful players are: Jak Kane, Alex Pringle, Ethan Scully, Jacob Evans, Jodie Morris, Ronan Elder, Lewis Pocock, Theo Bishop, Herbie Sage, Gemma Kerr, Max Stevens, Peter Smallcombe and Mollie Patterson.

There are a further 12 athletes who are coming to the end of their first year on the course and Table Tennis England will be recruiting 12 more athletes for this coming September.

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