



Peake and Barella are first GB Coach Apprentices

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Lois Peake and Graeme Barella are the first coaches to be selected to the GB Coach Apprenticeship Programme. They were selected from 10 applicants and will start on the 15-month programme next month.

Both coaches are working within the England Hopes Programme, while Barella has also assisted at a number of Aspire and Junior camps in the last 12-18 months.

Lois Peake, 24, is a senior England international who has a strong academic background, with a first-class degree in sport and exercise science and a distinction in her Masters on management psychology.

She said: "I'm delighted to be given this opportunity and looking forward to developing my own knowledge as well as helping young players. It's very exciting.

"With my background, I think I can bring a holistic approach to the role and an athlete-centred approach to work with individuals to help them achieve their best.

"I hope my experience playing for England will help me have as big an impact as possible developing young players."

Graeme Barella, 28, is a top-40 player in the senior rankings and has qualified for the Mark Bates Ltd Senior Nationals in both 2020 and this year. He is a Level 3 Head Coach.

He said: "I'm really pleased to be selected and hoping it's an opportunity for me to develop as a coach as well as supporting the young England and GB players.

"I've played table tennis for more than 20 years and coached for coming up to 10 years, so I've got quite a bit of experience behind me and as I'm still on the scene as a player, hopefully that will be relatable to the players."

Matt Stanforth, Head of England Performance, said: "It's brilliant news that Graeme and Lois have both been accepted onto the GB Coach Apprenticeship programme. Both have shown a passion for coaching the open-mindedness to learn and grow, volunteering their own time to support the national training programmes.

"This opens a fantastic opportunity for them both to learn and grow further which will not only benefit them as individuals, but also the GB and England training programmes."

GB Performance Director Simon Mills added: "We're delighted to launch this initiative and to welcome the Lois and Graeme to the programme.

"We want to support each Home Nation performance programme to have a greater pool of experienced and expert coaches to use and this is a key start to this. I am very much looking forward to working with our two apprentices in the coming 15 months."

What is the programme?

The GB Coach Apprenticeship Programme aims to create a greater number of coaches who can work in the talent pathway across the Home Nations and GB. This will provide future coaches who have the experience and expertise to work in the GB and Home Nations programmes.

There will be a maximum of four places in each intake, with a new intake starting every 12 months up to a maximum of three intakes.

Those who apply must be coaching in their Home Nation Squad programmes and must continue to do so while they are on the apprenticeship. They will also commit to attend monthly GB training camps, fortnightly coaching meetings and two major international competitions.

Each coach on the programme will receive a £4,000 apprenticeship cost spread over the duration of the course, including a £1,000 passing bonus after a final assessment.

The second round of applications will open in May 2022 for a September 2022 start.

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