

ETTA Regional Coach Programme

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Regional Coaches – The last 4 years...

Hopefully those of you that are reading this will be aware that the ETTA has employed 10 full-time Regional Coaches during the current whole sport plan (2009-13). During that time significant developments and improvements have taken place as a result of the Regional Coaches working in partnership with ETTA members around the country.

Regional Audit

Regional surveys were undertaken by the regional coaches when their jobs were realigned in 2009 from the original 'club and coach' concept. These surveys highlighted the coaching activity that was taking place throughout the respective regions. It also gave the regional coaches a better idea of who the key active people in the region are and how the clubs were operating.



Club Engagement

The next step for the coaches was to make their way around the clubs that wanted assistance from them and carry out an audit of the talent. Following this audit, an assessment day was organised to identify potential players for regional and development squads. Each regional coach was responsible for putting in place the optimal plans for these regional and development squads. In order to up skill coaches in the region, suitable

candidates were identified to work with the squads alongside the regional coach.

As the regions differ greatly the structures are therefore adapted for each region. Some of the regional coaches do more club visits than others depending on the strengths of the clubs in their region. The regional coaches have set up weekly development centres for the more advanced players in the region and they have identified 8-10 players who they work with at least two times per week at a variety of venues.

I think the role of the regional coach is an important one in the South West as it pulls everyone together. It gives coaches the opportunity to learn new skills, gives more players the opportunity to play and train with others of their own standard and it gives smaller clubs the opportunity to get in contact with larger ones to further their development. The regional coach is the focal point of all that is good. Okehampton Head Coach – Mike High

Regional Training

Monthly regional training days are set in the ETTA calendar which takes place in all the regions. This is an opportunity for the more advanced players in the region to get together for a training day once a month. Coaches from around the region are invited to these sessions so that they can hear the latest coaching theory and see the latest coaching practice. On some occasions, there are joint regional sessions so that the players have the opportunity to train and compete with different players.

In terms of player development, the regional coach has been instrumental in setting up and supporting weekly development and high performance sessions. These sessions have ensured weekly attendance of 20 – 25 committed players wanting to take their game to the next level. The results in a short time have been quite remarkable. The regional coach has an excellent relationship with both players and parents and he is held in high regard. With his regular attendance at these sessions, he continues to provide excellent further training to the league coaching team. This constant input and modelling of sessions has definitely improved the quality of coaching delivered. James Lewis, New Milton Table Tennis Club

Each year the region holds an assessment day so that everyone in the region has an opportunity for players to show their skills and is an ideal day for talent ID. Pools of talent scouts have been identified in each region to ensure the players are being seen in competitions as well as training and they are always looking for new talent.

Coach Education



Regional Coaches have also been instrumental in the development and delivery of the UKCC endorsed qualifications from Level 1 to 3. They have setup courses, established new venues, mentored learners through the qualifications and been responsible for recruitment and development of many of the new or existing coaches across the regions.

Coach CPD

The regional coaches are also responsible for organising at least 2 coach education days per year. This gives the coaches from around the region an opportunity to attend a day where topics such as advanced techniques, multi-ball, speed and agility are covered to ensure they are passing this information onto players in their respective clubs. This also gives the regional coach an indication as to which coaches are keen to learn and develop. On some occasions, regions get together and organise joint coach education days.

Summary

As a result of the team of regional coaches that are in place across the country, there has been outstanding development in the following areas:

- As a result of having one regional coach in each region, there are more clubs being visited on a regular basis than ever before.
- Regional coach education days are being conducted across the country to up skill existing coaches.
- As a result of the hard work of the regional coaches, the number of coaches qualifying for various UKCC levels is at an all time high.
- Identified coaches within each region to work alongside them at the appropriate time so as to up skill and mentor these people.
- Worked closely with the appropriate ETTA members to ensure that the regional and development squads are operating successfully in all the regions. This is part of the work conducted by the regional coaches to ensure that all the performance pathways are in place for a developing young player.
- Ensuring that inter regional activity is taking place in both the player performance and coach education areas.
- Arranging for the regional squads to travel overseas to gain international experience.
- Developed a talent ID system in each region which includes a team of talent scouts who attend regional activities.
- Established a close working relationship with the English Schools Table Tennis Association including attending the UK School Games and the regional schools events.
- Support the national squads in both training and competition around the world. This support is invaluable to the ETTA Performance staff.
- Work very closely alongside the development team to ensure a coordinated approach in each region. They also work closely with the ETTA Communications team and are very active with the various social media opportunities.
- The regional squad championships has grown into a very prestigious event where each regional coach is responsible for ensuring a regional team enters this annual event. The event is a great talent ID opportunity and for the regional coaches to work alongside their team of coaches.



Thanks to the excellent work of the regional coaches, the foundations are now in place for creating a successful coaching structure. A lot of work still needs to be done however, if we continue to progress over the next four years as we have done in the previous four, then the English Table Tennis Association will have a system that will produce more players and better players to make England a real force in the international arena.

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