

Talent Development Centres announced

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English table tennis will see a major boost in talent development with the launch of four development centres designed to highlight, develop and nurture new table tennis talent across England.

Funded by Sport England, these four talent development centres will operate as a partnership between the ETTA, local clubs and supported by partner organisations. The ETTA will employ a leading table tennis coach, tasked with the implementation of this ambitious talent development programme.

The implementation of this programme stems from an English Table Tennis Association review of the sports talent pathway in a search for future stars to challenge the likes of Liam Pitchford and Paul Drinkhall, and succeed on the world stage. This review has highlighted the need for a more robust system at the base of the pathway with high quality coaching and access to the right environment to develop talented players.

The programme aims to develop a squad of up to 20 players at each location, all aged under 14 years, increasing the quantity and quality of training available on a weekly basis to enable the young players to compete at the highest level internationally in the future. Each centre will be focussed around a central 'hub' club with a series of linked satellite clubs or sessions, providing a conveyor belt of talent and increasing competition within the programme. Strengthening the lower levels of the England Talent Pathway, this initiative will provide the sport with a stable foundation for the future.

The Head Coach and Talent Development Manager at the English Table Tennis Association Nick Jarvis said: "The sport has recognised that development centres are the way forward, Sport England has given us the opportunity to bring this to life. Full time, part time and volunteers working on a daily basis with a squad of players puts us in a position to have a continuous supply of players capable of beating the best. Talent ID will help to develop feeder squads increasing the pool of talent within the area. The future looks very bright."

These talent development centres will be situated across the major regions of England and are as follows; in the North venues will be based in Ormesby, Middlesbrough and at Sycamore in Nottingham with the third centre based in the South at BATTs in Harlow. There will also be a centre at Plymouth in the South West.

English Table Tennis Association CEO, Sara Sutcliffe said: "This a very exciting new programme and one which will develop the base of the English table tennis performance programme going forward"

"We believe that this is the most exciting initiative for many years and are delighted to partner the Association in investing in it. We have a strong ambition to produce another crop of England players and this will be a really important part of it." Alan Ransome – Ormesby TDC Club

"BATTs are proud and excited to be involved at the outset with the ETTA initiative for talent development centres.

This provides a blueprint and an opportunity to nurture young talent that can one day flourish on the international stage. We relish the challenge.” Neil Brierley – BATTs TDC

“We are privileged to have been chosen as one of the Talent Development Centres and are looking forward to developing a successful project, helping to produce future International stars for England.” Jason Ramage – Nottingham TDC

“We cannot understate what an amazing opportunity this will be for children playing table tennis in our area. The faith and investment that the ETTA has entrusted us with will be a massive boost to our sport and we hope we can deliver a successful performance, development and participation programme, the like of which has never been attempted in the Plymouth area” Kevin Buddell – Plymouth TDC

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