

Head Coach Baker selected for elite coaching programme

Author: [Russell Moore](#)

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Greg Baker (right) with Aaron McKibbin

The GB Para Table Tennis Team's head coach Greg Baker, a graduate of UK Sport's Elite Coaching Apprenticeship Programme, has been chosen to be part of the second intake of UK Sport's World Class Coaching Elite Programme.

The 27 year old from Tamworth, who represented England from the ages of 12–20 and is now based with the GB Team at the EIS in Sheffield, is one of nine of the UK's top high performance coaches selected for the programme. The coaches have been chosen due to their proven ability to deliver success at the highest level within the British high performance system, and will benefit from a ground-breaking three-year development programme, with an investment of approximately £20,000 per coach, per year.

Baker, who joined the GB Para Table Tennis Team in 2006, said: "I really want to move towards managing other coaches and support staff, as well as athletes. This represents the next level for me and I think this programme can really help me with that. Programmes like this massively help the success of British sport. ECAP helped me personally and I think really helped our sport to achieve the results we did in London. I think programmes like this really can be the difference between winning and losing medals."

Simon Timson, Director of Performance at UK Sport, said: "Supporting and challenging our best coaches to become world leading is one of the core pillars to achieving our goal of enabling more athletes to win more medals in Rio 2016 and beyond. The Elite Programme provides tailored opportunities for our best coaches to develop personally and technically so they can contribute even more to the development of a stronger, more sustainable high performance system.

"In addition to becoming better coaches themselves, our expectation is they will also learn to mentor and develop aspiring world class coaches within their sport, develop more effective talent pathways and efficiently integrate sports science and medicine support, so ultimately more athletes realise their full potential on the Olympic and Paralympic stage."

Gorazd Vecko, the GB Para Table Tennis Team's Performance Director, said: "I am delighted that Greg has been chosen by UK Sport to join the World Class Coaching Elite Programme and it will undoubtedly be of great benefit not only to him but also to the GB Para Table Tennis Programme. Greg is passionate about coaching and his

hard work and professionalism have been a major factor in the results achieved by the GB team in the last two years.”

The nine high performance coaches selected are: Greg Baker (Disability Table Tennis), Andy Banks (British Diving), Ben Bright (British Triathlon), Andy Flower (England Cricket), Stephen Jennings (GB Taekwondo), Pasan Kularatne (Disability Target Shooting), Jack Maitland (British Triathlon), Hugh Styles (GB Sailing), Stuart Wilkinson (Wheelchair Tennis).

Francesca Bullock

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