



Chairman's Message – March 2016

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Supporting our elite athletes

This time of year sees our elite athletes facing some of their biggest and best challenges of the season.

These players make considerable sacrifices throughout their careers to reach the peak of their ability – and it is our role as a sports National Governing Body to support them to the best of our ability.

We have sent a squad to Malaysia where our players will compete with the best in the world in the [World Team Championships](#). It is the first time since 1997 that our men have competed at the highest level.

Then it is back home for our own [National Championships](#). This year we have introduced a new format, which focuses on the competitive needs of our elite players and the desire to create a top domestic event where we can showcase table tennis to the widest audience.

National television is already interested in covering – and promoting – the sport and there will be [three hours of live coverage on ITV4](#) during the finals.

We want to create an event which benefits our elite players, as well as providing an opportunity to promote our sport. And this sits in a wider competition schedule where we will look to stage and introduce a range of events for players of all standards and in all locations.

We must also look to build for the future. We want our next generation of international players to look at this event and be inspired to have the ambition, drive and determination to perform there themselves.

It is wonderful to see the new talent already emerging through the [Talent Development Centres](#); to witness the high standard of play at our recent [Cadet and U12 National Cup](#); and to see the considerable improvements

coming through in the [England Youth Squad](#).

Table tennis is not a wealthy sport – and the funding which is available for our elite athletes is limited. However, we are aware of the sacrifices our performance athletes make to reach the pinnacle of their ability and we will find ways at home and abroad of supporting them in their endeavours.

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