

WEBSITE SUMMARY – ‘Back to Basics’

The ‘Back to Basics’ strategy will be presented at the forums in North Wales (1st September) and South Wales (9th September). The purpose of the meetings will be to outline the ‘Back to Basics’ proposal recently written by the National Coach and ratified by the Board of Squash Wales. Sport Wales have also endorsed this plan.

The plan offers the juniors in Squash Wales a new direction in developing their squash talents. Ultimately it has been devised to unearth a future Top 20 player in the professional game. The plan has key/core programmes, which the National Coach views as integral to developing fundamentals required not only to play junior elite squash, but also future professional squash.

The forum will discuss each of these key programmes and the mechanisms around such programmes. The following programmes are part of the discussion:

Junior National Squads

- Mixed National Squads (boys & girls) with Under 13/15 age groups combined and Under 17/19 ages combined.
- Maximum 16 players per squad (places will be limited).
- Invites will be sent 3 weeks before each squad. This permits the transference in and out the squad structure of players who perform well or poorly in the programmes offered and the Squash Wales tournaments.
- The squads will be residential squads with the North Wales players expected to stay Friday and Saturday nights and the South Wales players on Saturday night. Coaches will also stay. Exceptions to this are any players 11 years and under that may prefer to stay at home in South Wales or not attend from North Wales.
- All National squads will be led by the National Coach and supported by 2 or 3 of the following coaches – Greg Tippings/Andrew Evans/Nic Birt. These coaches, together with the National Coach make up the Coaches Panel responsible for the selection of the squad players.
- The National Coach will write a report for each player after each National Squad to offer assistance in the areas that require improvement.

Fitness Testing/Training Programmes

- Inside the National Squads, a fitness-testing programme will be run by Elite Fitness in Cardiff and will have a development edge to the younger squad and a more personalised view for the older squad.

- More details will be finalised nearer the squad dates, but players will be expected to make a lifestyle change to this programme and commit to the sessions and frequency outlined.
- This area has been lacking in the Squash Wales junior structure and its re-emergence is a much needed and integral aspect of the physical nature of squash.

Regional Training Nights

- Weekly sessions in each region will result in the best players working in a training environment. The consistent interaction between players and coach should see an improvement in standard.
- The South region will run both younger and older sessions, while the North will run one session for all applicable players.
- The National Coach and regional elite coach will select the players for attendance.
- Contributions will be sought to attend. Attendance is voluntary, but non-attendance without good reason will be seen as an opportunity missed to develop and improve in key fundamental areas.
- The key fundamentals of training will be addressed with ghosting/solo practice/routines /warm up, warm down, and fitness drills being targeted. Any integral technical and tactical themes developed in squads and individual coaching will be monitored and evaluated.

Individual Coaching Programme

- Block sessions of 'themed' based work will be awarded to players over the course of the season.
- Selection of the players will be by the Coaches Panel, and will firstly, be looking for players who have the ability and desire to be professional players and secondly the committed, and talented player who would benefit from work on 'one specific' area.
- Any continuation of allocated coaching sessions will only be considered if the National Coach and selected coach agree the changes are working and progress is being made.
- A contribution will be required for each session and the National Coach will select the appropriate coach to deliver the sessions.

Elite Player Support Package

- This extensive support package is available to any Squash Wales junior who clearly displays an outstanding talent and commitment to their junior squash.
- Such talent must be displayed in results and performances outside Wales and this player should be looking to aspire to become a senior professional player.
- Fitness/coaching/tournament support is areas that will be part of the programme.
- Tesni Evans is the only current recipient of this extensive support package.
- The National Coach will be the sole selector of this award. The duration will last 12 months.

European Tournament Support Programme-

- Players will be selected, funding permitted, for subsidy to certain European events.
- Only players who provide future reward to Squash Wales along with a total 'buy in' to our programmes will be considered.
- The programme will run at a reduced level compared to previous years. If the funding does not extend to player support for a European event, a designated Squash Wales coach may be sent allowing the players to have support on hand if they fund themselves.
- The Coach Panel will again determine selection of players.

NOTE – The above information is a high level overview and is not exhaustive of the plan content, so please come to the meeting with any questions regarding the above programmes. As the plan is new in its conception and its delivery starts with the first National squad on 16th September, some structures and ideas may change if it is felt it improves the effectiveness of any programme. The National squads will commence in September, while the training nights and individual coaching sessions will start in mid October.