

behind the glass



University of
Nottingham Sport

ISSUE 01 / February 2018

Time to end the season on a high

Exclusive interview
with Commonwealth Games
Team England Squash star
Declan James

Premier Squash League

University of Nottingham
vs Warwick & Kenilworth
27 February 2018
David Ross Sports Village

PSL
PREMIER SQUASH LEAGUE



Welcome

Welcome to David Ross Sports Village for tonight's Premier Squash League action between University of Nottingham and Warwick

The University is delighted to be working in partnership with Nottingham Squash Rackets club and Toyota Nottingham to host tonight's Premier Squash League match. The University has a rich and proud heritage in squash with players such as Gawain Briars, Emma Beddoes and Peter Marshall graduating from the University.

The investment in David Ross Sports Village has reinforced our intent with squash following the creation of one

of only a handful of permanent all glass courts in the UK.

The University helps to provide a significant opportunity for young people to secure a world class education, alongside one of the most comprehensive higher education performance squash programmes in the country, and we hope this venture with the PSL will further embed our status as one of the leading Universities for squash in the UK.



Dan Tilley
Director of Sport
University of Nottingham

We are delighted to welcome our friends at Warwick this evening, in what is their inaugural season in the Premier Squash League. It is great to see the league being expanded and developed.

Finally, I would like to thank Toyota Materials Handling for their continued sponsorship of our Premier Squash League team. I hope you all enjoy the action with us this evening.

Standings

Premier Squash League 2017/18

DIVISION A	P	W	L	TF	TA	GF	GA	Pts
University of Nottingham	6	6	0	21	9	69	45	99
Warwick/Kenilworth	5	3	2	13	12	50	46	65
University of Birmingham Lions	6	2	4	13	17	53	60	63
Pontefract/Woodfield	5	2	3	14	11	52	45	62
UWE /Elite Squash Bristol	6	2	4	9	21	46	74	51


DIVISION B	P	W	L	TF	TA	GF	GA	Pts
Tradition @ RAC	6	5	1	18	12	67	54	92
Coolhurst	6	3	3	17	13	62	51	77
Bexley	5	3	2	15	10	55	34	70
Luxfords St George's Hill	5	2	3	13	12	50	48	60
Chichester	6	1	5	7	23	37	73	42

University of Nottingham extended their unbeaten run in the Premier Squash League to 13 matches, with a comprehensive 5-0 away victory against Elite Squash Bristol. Bristol's only points of the game coming as Brian Byrne and Josh Masters stretched Nottingham's top two of Adam Murrills and Declan James to five games. Victory tonight will secure top spot in the PSL resulting in a playoff tie against the second placed finisher in a wide open Division B.


In Round 7, tonight's visitors Warwick & Kenilworth hosted Birmingham Lions in a tie that went to a deciding match thanks to an impressive comeback win from Birmingham's Jaymie Haycocks over Nafiizwan Adnan. The home side had a 'secret weapon' though, with world #3 Ali Farag making his debut and the Egyptian duly clinched the match with a three-nil win.


Tonight's fixtures

DIVISION A

 **Pontefract/Woodfield vs Bristol**
27th February, 7pm

DIVISION B

 **Luxfords St George's Hill vs Coolhurst**
27th February, 7pm

 **Tradition @ RAC vs Bexley**
27th February, 7pm



UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
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 **NEXT UP - ROUND 9**
University of Birmingham Lions vs University of Nottingham
13th March, 7pm

Interview

with Declan James

It has been a meteoric rise for Declan James, in a year that has seen him selected for the Team England squad who will shortly head out to the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth games.

Born in Nottingham, 24 year old squash star Declan James has quickly become a crowd favourite for University of Nottingham. James overcame his first round loss to Chris Simpson by beating him over 5 sets in the return leg at the Parks. The valuable point secured a fifth straight victory for University of Nottingham, all but securing top spot in the PSL back in January.

His career has grown from strength-to-strength since he burst onto the PSA World Tour in 2013 as an unseeded player to triumph at the Nottingham Open to win the first tour title of his career. Just 20-years-old at the time, the former European Junior Champion announced himself on the big stage and has never looked back going on to win successive PSA Tour Titles and developing into one of the most established players on the circuit.

Last year, James narrowly missed out to Mohamed Elshorbagy, the world number 1 and defending champion, in the Tournament of Champions' giving the world a glimpse of what is to come with an emphatic high energy performance.

We caught up with Declan to find out more about his fantastic season and look ahead to what his bright future has to offer >>

What kind of challenge will Warwick bring this evening? They have a world class squad so if they bring their team at it's full strength it will require season best performances from every member of our squad. It's a challenge we relish.

Your ranking is now up to #26 in the world, which part of your game has developed the most? I wouldn't say one thing in particular. It is just the culmination and onwards progress of years of hard work, working away at lots of little things. It's funny as a season can turn on one or two good results sometimes. I've gained some momentum and I'm looking to carry that forward.

What are your goals for 2018? Pushing into the top 20 is a nice goal. Mainly, I concern myself with enjoying my squash, improving as a player and a person. As ever, I want to push the top guys and give them something to think about. 2017 ended really positively so I believe 2018 will be even better.



"We have a great opportunity to press forward and close out the season in style."

That's now thirteen matches unbeaten in the league, how hard is it to maintain that dominance? A lot of those matches have been 3-2 which indicates we have shown a lot of heart even when having to come from behind. But when you get on a run like that you start to believe you can win any match in any circumstance which is a great thing to carry forward.

We're close to the post season. Who would you like to face in the playoffs? I'm not too worried about who we face in the playoffs, if we make them! When it gets to that stage you have to put out your best side against whoever you are playing just to have a chance. We are defending champions and so we know what it takes to come through a playoffs, something that I know we can achieve again.

With James rising up the rankings early this year, there is no doubt that the possibilities are endless in 2018. He will line up in the all glass court tonight looking to extend his fantastic run and deliver another crucial point for the high flying University of Nottingham.

Tonight's one to watch
Declan James
v Iker Pajares
All Glass Court, DRSV

"They have a world class squad so if they bring their team at it's full strength it will require season best performances".

THE VISITORS WARWICK

Travelling from the West Midlands, Warwick look set to bring a strong side to David Ross Sports Village and the squad has been blessed with a number of internationals in their PSL team this season.

Birmingham-born Sarah-Jane Perry made her Tour breakthrough in 2011 as she defeated Tania Bailey in the final of the Manor Open to capture her first Tour title.

She collected a further three titles a year later and finished 2012 in the world's top 30, having leapt up over 35 places in the World Rankings since the start of the 2017. England's Perry also finished runner-up at the British Open, and helped England triumph in the women's final at the European Team Championships as she beat France's No.3 Camille Serme for just the second time in her career.

Similar to Nick Matthew and Declan James, Sarah-Jane Perry is set to join the squad heading out to Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games where she will make her Team England debut at Oxenford Studios.

A talent who has also featured this season for the West Midlands side is professional squash player Iker Pajares Bernabeu who is ranked No.64 in the World. The Spanish national joined the PSA World Tour in 2013 and has seen his World Rankings go from strength-to-strength to break into the world's top 100 for the first time in 2016. In 2016, Pajares reached his first final at the Seapiax Open Lorient where he finished runner-up to Carlos Cornes

Ribadas before opening his PSA World Tour title account later in the year at the City of Prague Open.

Pajares beat Jan Koukal 11-8, 11-9, 8-11, 11-6 to lift his maiden PSA World Tour title. Further titles soon followed for Pajares when he beat Edmon Lopez in the Otters International JSW ISC final and then at the Malaysian Squash Tour VII to clinch victory over Chi Him Wong.

More titles soon followed in 2017 this time clinching victory at the Seapiax Lorient Open and Jersey Squash Classic when he beat Martin Svec and Jaymie Haycocks respectively.

Warwick & Kenilworth currently lie in 2nd place of Division A in the Premier Squash League and will be hoping to secure a spot in the playoffs as the regular season reaches a conclusion.

Tonight's one to watch
Declan James
v Iker Pajares
All Glass Court, DRSV





Meet the Players

The University of Nottingham squad features some of the world's top squash players including World No #6 Nick Matthew and University of Nottingham student's Coline Aumard and Hana Ramadan, both amongst the world's top 50.

The squad has had a fantastic 2017/18 season which has been rounded off with the selection of both Nick Matthew and Declan James in the Team England squad who will shortly be heading out to the Gold Coast for the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia.

Here's a quick overview of some of the players who make up the University of Nottingham Premier Squash League team.

HANA RAMADAN

Joining the PSA World Tour in 2011, Hana claimed her first World title in 2015 at the Brqthru Pharco Alexandria Open, breaking into the top 50 in the following year. Originally from Egypt, Hana now studies physiotherapy at the University of Nottingham and won the British Universities women's singles title in 2016 and 2017.

COLINE AUMARD

Coline is one of the best French players on the world PSA Tour, with a huge year in 2014 where she lifted three tour titles. Coline went on to break into the World top 30 in 2016 and continues to rise up the rankings. Coline is also a current student at the University of Nottingham, studying for an MA in Education.

CHRIS HANSON

Chris has swiftly climbed the world rankings since making his first PSA World Tour appearance back in 2010. Born in New York, Chris became the US National Champion at the end of the 2016-17 season as well as winning two bronze medals from the Pan American Championships so heads into the Premier Squash League season in top form.

RICHIE FALLOWS

Richie is another of England Squash's top young players and is a former National and European Champion. He competed in the PSA World Tour for the first time aged only 17 in 2012 and has been a consistent presence ever since. This year saw him break the World top 60 after victory at the PSA Tour event in Toulouse.

NICK MATTHEW OBE

Otherwise known as 'The Wolf', Nick Matthew OBE first drew the squash world's attention when, in 2006, when he became the first English player to win the British Open men's title since 1939. From then on his career rocketed, seeing him reach World No.1 in June 2010 and winning both the British Open and the World Open three times. The British No. 1 has enjoyed an illustrious career which was crowned by an honour from Her Majesty the Queen of England who awarded Matthew an OBE in her birthday honours list in 2015. Having secured the Premier Squash league title last year as captain, Nick will be looking to repeat the feat in 2018.

DECLAN JAMES

Declan, who is originally from Nottingham, has been rapidly climbing his way up the world rankings reaching the top 25 this season for the first time. After a promising start to the year at the Tournament of Champions, Declan drew attention World No.1 Mohamed Elshorbagy, who named him "certainly one of the best young English players coming through.

NICOLAS MÜLLER

Nicolas is firmly established as Switzerland's greatest player, being the only Swiss player ever to reach top 20 in the World rankings in 2012. He then reached a career-high of #17 in December 2014. In 2016, he reached the semi-final of the IG Open De Paris, where he narrowly lost out to Declan James over five games. He also reached the semi-final stage of the CCI International JSW ISC but was knocked out of the tournament by Mohamed Abouelghar over three games. Securing the Charlottesville Open Title in late September showed he's in strong form this season.

CHRIS BINNIE

Jamaican national Chris Binnie is the Jamaican and Caribbean top ranked player. With a career-high ranking of #72 from 2016, Chris won his 8th Caribbean championship title in August 2017 without dropping a game. Off the court, Chris is the Assistant Men's coach for the Trinity College Connecticut squash programme in the United States.

FEBRUARY PSA RANKINGS

#8	Nick Matthew
#24	Nicolas Mueller
#26	Declan James
#62	Richie Fallows
#82	Adam Murrills
#67	Chris Binnie
#76	Chris Hanson
#207	Adam Auckland
#210	Matt Broadberry
#229	Lewis Walters
#253	Owain Taylor
#33	Coline Aumard
#67	Hana Ramadan

HIGHLIGHTS FROM TODAY'S PSL GAMES AT DAVID ROSS SPORTS VILLAGE

You can catch all the action from tonight and our other matches via our Facebook page.

www.facebook.com/uonsport



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MY KIT - MY TEAM - BELONG

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Tonight's Teams

University of Nottingham Warwick & Kenilworth

Declan James	Iker Pajares
Adam Auckland	Mahesh Mangaonkar
Lewis Walters	Mark Fuller
Matt Broadberry	Nick Wall
Hana Ramadan	Grace Gear

David Ross Sports Village

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If you are interested in supporting our University of Nottingham Premier Squash League team then please call 0115 748 7000 or email christine.bailey@nottingham.ac.uk

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Email: sport@nottingham.ac.uk

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