

18th March 2025

Dear Parents and Players,

Player Development Pathway and Restructure (Phase 1)

The HKCTA Council believes that a reevaluation of the National Training Squad (NTS) programme is needed if we are serious about benchmarking Hong Kong tennis against the best tennis nations in the future. We are undertaking a mid term review and we want to provide a viewpoint regarding the current thinking of the HKCTA Council.

NTS Programme

At a high level, we believe that not enough resources have been allocated to developing a sound methodology and system for building a development pathway. We believe there are two main areas requiring attention as a matter of priority, being (1) the need to prioritise resources and attention to improve the system to develop a youth programme at the base and reinforcing the foundation of the sport; and (2) cultivating a strong tennis team culture and a robust competition structure that promotes healthy competition.

To align the above operating principles, the HKCTA Council resolved in 2025 to separate the performance and development departments into two committees to ensure we have sufficient resources allocated to both areas. The Player Development Committee, in its previous form, will be divided into the Elite Committee, and a newly-formed Development Committee, which is chaired by Derek Ling.

The Elite Committee will be chaired by Michael Cheng, and the Tournament Committee (under the previous format) will merge into the Elite Committee to ensure we have a coherent strategy that aligns the technical pathway with the competition environment.

Consequently, we also announce a few key managerial appointments effective immediately:

1. **Shane Dunn**, as Leader in Coaching Administration, will oversee all NTS programme administration and coordination at both the Elite and Development levels. The administration team supporting the coaches will report to Shane. He is also the programme manager in charge of our new tennis sites in Go Park and Kai Tak Sports Park (KTSP). Leaders in the coaching department will also have a dotted reporting line to Shane from an administration and co-ordination perspective pending the arrival of the Director of Player Development.

2. **Ahmed El Menshawy**, as Leader of NTS Regional, will be joined by his deputy, **Alvin Yip**, as Deputy Leader of the same. Together, they will oversee the NTS Regional programmes, in ensuring a comprehensive and consistent approach to player development pathway. The NTS Regional leaders are also responsible for building effective connectivity in the overall NTS programme, between NTS Future, NTS Regional and NTS Elite.

3. **Mark Eade** and **Allen Xu**, as co-Leaders of Development Department overseeing HKCTA's development programmes from grassroots to NTS Futures. Both Mark and Allen are also centre leaders of two of the largest Elite Development centres in Shek Kip Mei and Wong Ngai Chung Gap

respectively, where they will play a pivotal role in nurturing talent and fostering a strong foundation for future players.

4. **Romain Deffet** and **Dennis de Mingo**, as co-Leaders of HKCTA's overall physical training programme with a mandate to making our NTS players to be the fittest group among their peers in Asia over the medium to long term. Gaining a comparative advantage in physical fitness is the first step towards elevating Hong Kong tennis to the next level.

5. **Leo Liu**, as Leader in Greater China Strategic Development, will oversee all strategic liaison with the China Tennis Association (CTA) and all provincial tennis agencies. He will be responsible for promoting cross fertilisation, organising cross training blocks, developing a coherent tournament calendar that aligns China and Hong Kong. Leo also serves as the main liaison point person with Hong Kong-based players training in China. Leo is the Tournament Director of CTA 1000 in Hong Kong and is also the Team Coach for the upcoming University Games and National Games.

Elite Performance: Scholarship Programme (NTS Elite and HKSI)

The tennis world is changing both internationally and regionally, and this is having a knock-on impact on the tennis ecosystem in Hong Kong. We started the year knowing that the elite programme has fallen short of the criteria set under Elite Vote Support Selection (EVSS) for the evaluation period from 2021 to 2024, and this will inevitably result in changes to government support policy. As a consequence we should expect the elite training infrastructure be restructured from April.

We should expect the grant system going forward to be more geared towards achieving honors for Hong Kong and be more result driven and merit based; and also be less dependent on government subsidy.

As a matter of principle HKCTA is committed to delivering a first in class full time elite athlete programme; and on a parallel basis we are also prepared to be operate on a more decentralised basis and the role of the NSA can be more in the role of facilitation and support to our top athletes.

The changes to the elite performance training structure is under a separate consideration and requires more deliberation with multiple external agencies. More information will be provided in due course under a separate memo including the appointment of Director of Player Development and the overall leadership construct.

We will be organizing a parents' meeting to go over all the upcoming changes in March. If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to contact Shane Dunn at (852) 2794 1791 or at shane.dunn@tennishk.org.

Kind regards,



Michael Cheng
President
Hong Kong, China
Tennis Association



Oscar Chow
Hon. Secretary
Hong Kong, China
Tennis Association



Derek Ling
Chairman of Development
Committee
Hong Kong, China
Tennis Association