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## Press Release

Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018

### 3000 KIDS JOIN BRITISH TENNIS STARS AS GLASGOW GETS READY FOR MORE DAVIS CUP ACTION

The Great Britain Davis Cup team today welcomed over 3,000 Scottish school children to the Emirates Arena in Glasgow, for a once in a lifetime opportunity to watch a practice session and get on court with team captain Leon Smith and a number of the players including Jamie Murray and Cameron Norrie ahead of GB's World Group play-off tie against Uzbekistan this weekend.

Children from over 60 schools around Glasgow and North and South Lanarkshire were invited to meet the Great Britain team and watch a practice session in the lead up to their historic first ever Davis Cup meeting with Uzbekistan. A lucky few were also picked from the crowd to have a go at some activities from the Lawn Tennis Associations (LTA's) Tennis for Kids programme on the match court, which is its flagship kid's initiative, aimed at children aged four-11 years old.

Since Tennis for Kids launched in 2016, following Great Britain's historic Davis Cup win in 2015, the LTA's biggest grassroots programme has inspired over 61,000 children to pick up a racket for the first time, with over 25,000 children getting involved this year alone.

The Great Britain Davis Cup team, formed of six-time Grand Slam doubles champion Jamie Murray, Cameron Norrie, Jay Clarke, Dan Evans and Dom Inglot along with Leon Smith were cheered into the arena by the thousands of children and took part in a fun Davis Cup Q&A and launched prizes into the crowd before starting their on-court session.

**Matthew Smith (10) from Logans Primary School** said: "Today has been so much fun and I've loved watching professional tennis players live. Jamie Murray is my favourite player and I can't wait to come back at the weekend to watch him play."

The Great Britain Davis Cup team got a taste of the programme, which is aimed at children who have never played tennis before and runs all year round. It has a focus on fun, getting kids active and teaching them basic tennis skills. Delivered by trained and accredited LTA coaches, Tennis for Kids also gives parents the chance to join in with their children to encourage families to get on court together.

**Leon Smith, Great Britain Davis Cup Captain** said: "Being back in Glasgow and having the chance to meet thousands of our young fans at this special kids day is a huge motivation for our team and something we were really looking forward to. As a team, we are passionate about getting children into tennis and it's such a big part of all our lives. By making the sport more

accessible, we hope even more children will get involved, sign up to a Tennis for Kids course and cheer the team on this weekend.”

All of the children who came to watch the Great Britain Davis Cup team practice session are being offered a free pair of tickets to one day of the tie at the weekend, to sample the unique atmosphere of a Davis Cup tie and to see the British tennis stars live in action. Further tickets are also being given away to groups including local Universities, coaches and children currently enrolled in training programmes, as a way to open tennis up to more fans and enable them to enjoy professional tennis.

**Oliver Scadgell, Participation Director at the LTA** said: “Making tennis more relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable for more kids is a key focus for the LTA and Tennis for Kids is one of the most successful and innovative children’s programmes the LTA has delivered in trying to achieve this ambition. Giving young children a positive first experience of tennis is so important and why days like today, where children from all across Scotland get to meet their Davis Cup heroes, will hopefully engage them in tennis for life. As more Tennis for Kids courses become available throughout the autumn, we encourage more children and their parents to take the opportunity to sign up, pick up a racket, meet new friends and have fun playing tennis.”

A win for Great Britain would see them keep their place in the World Group for the sixth year in a row and guarantee seeding in February’s first round draw of the famous competition. A win for Uzbekistan, led by World No. 76 Denis Istomin would see them claim a place in the elite World Group for the first time in their history.

**Blane Dodds, CEO of Tennis Scotland** said: “It is great to welcome back the Davis Cup to Scotland as it acts as a fantastic platform to introduce kids to tennis, and to see so many young people inspired by today’s event. We have seen over 1,500 kids sign up to Tennis for Kids across Scotland this year alone and today’s event gives us the chance to motivate more young people into tennis in Scotland. The popularity of the sport right now is a credit to the hard work of coaches and facilities across Scotland, the work of organisations like Glasgow Life and the fantastic Scottish role models we have in our current players and coaches.”

The Davis Cup by BNP Paribas World Group Play-Off between Great Britain and Uzbekistan takes place this weekend at The Emirates Arena in Glasgow. Single and three day tickets are available now from £37 at [lta.org.uk/DavisCup](http://lta.org.uk/DavisCup)

Tennis for Kids is run all year round across the country. The course includes six sessions, their own kit including a racket, balls and personalised t-shirt all delivered directly to them for £25. To find your nearest Tennis for Kids venue and to sign up, visit [www.tennis-for-kids.co.uk](http://www.tennis-for-kids.co.uk)

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#### **ABOUT THE LTA**

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the National Governing Body for tennis in Great Britain, responsible for developing and promoting the sport, with a mission to get more people playing tennis more often. It does this under the consumer brand of British Tennis, by working with a broad range of partners and over 25,000 volunteers, to grow the game in communities, clubs and schools. The LTA represents the interests of over 590,000 British Tennis Members, men and women, girls and boys across the country, playing on more than 23,000 courts. The LTA runs and supports a network of 11,500 approved tournaments for players of all ages, the corner-stones of which are the premier grass court events leading up to Wimbledon: the Nature Valley Open at Nottingham, the Nature Valley Classic at Birmingham, the Fever-Tree Championships at The Queen’s Club and the Nature Valley International at Eastbourne. The LTA works with many delivery partners to grow the sport across the country. One of these is its charitable entity, the Tennis Foundation, to

provide a tennis provision for more than 20,000 schools, disadvantaged youth as well as promoting tennis as an inclusive sport for anyone with a disability. For further information about the LTA and British Tennis, and to review the British Tennis strategy for 2015 – 2019 visit [www.lta.org.uk](http://www.lta.org.uk) or follow us on Twitter @BritishTennis