



LEICESTER RIDERS BASKETBALL CLUB



AUGUST NEWSLETTER

RIDERS ROSTER SO FAR

It's been a busy offseason! Both new and familiar names have signed to play in Riders red for the upcoming season, and there are a few more to come! Here you can refamiliarise yourself with our roster so far...

Kimbal Mackenzie - Guard

Kimbal is back for his third season with the Riders. During that time has proved himself one of the BBL's best in the backcourt, earning a spot on the Molten BBL British Team of the Year.

Samuel Idowu - Forward

Samuel is a force in the Riders' frontcourt. The 6'8" forward brings strength and physicality to the paint on both ends of the court.

Braelen Bridges - Forward

Braelen is a first-year pro, following four years in the NCAA Division One. He played his first two college seasons at the University of Illinois at Chicago, before transferring to his hometown University of Georgia for his junior and senior years.

Victor Ndoukou - Forward

Ndoukou first joined the Riders in 2019 and is one of GB basketball's exciting young talents. Ndoukou represented GB Under-20s this summer in the FIBA European Youth Championships.

Mo Walker - Forward

Canadian-born, British big-man Mo Walker returns for his fourth season with the Riders. Mo graduated from the University of Minnesota, leading the team in rebounds and blocks as the second-leading scorer in his senior year. Mo was a key fixture in the Riders' 2022 treble-winning side.





RIDERS ROSTER CONTINUED

TJ Lall - Forward

TJ Lall is a first-year Rider, who has played in the Canadian CEBL for much of his career. He was selected by the Ottawa BlackJacks as the first overall pick during the 2020 CEBL Draft, and played in Canada for four seasons.

Miryne Thomas- Forward

Miryne Thomas signed in the summer for the 2023/24 season. The 6'8" forward is in his rookie year after averaging 10.5 points and 5.5 rebounds for Kent State in the NCAA Division One last season.

Caleb Asberry- Guard

Caleb Asberry signed straight out of college to the Riders' 2023/24 roster. The 6'3 Guard spent his final year of eligibility with Oklahoma State in the NCAA Division One. He averaged 9.7 points per game in the Big 12 for the Cowboys, following three seasons with Texas State.

Jaren Holmes - Guard

Holmes arrived in Leicester as a rookie, having spent his final season of college eligibility at Iowa State. He led the Cyclones in scoring with 13.3 points per game and was one of two players to start all 33 games.

Blake Bowman - Forward

Blake joined the Riders for his first venture into BBL basketball last season, establishing himself as one of the UK's hottest prospects. His high-flying dunks and infectious energy quickly made him a fan-favourite.

Conner Washington - Guard

The Riders veteran holds 10 years of experience in the East Midlands and has 14 pieces of silverware to his name. Conner has been featured on the British Basketball League all-British team on four occasions and the all-defensive team three times. He is a dangerous perimeter threat, averaging over 40% from three in three separate seasons.





FIXTURES ANNOUNCED

The British Basketball League Regular Season 2023/24 schedule has been announced.

We will host the Cheshire Phoenix on opening night on September 15. Before trips to the Bristol Flyers and the London Lions to conclude an exciting September of fixtures.

Around Christmas, we head to Manchester to take on the Giants on December 23, before returning home to host the Bristol Flyers on the 28th, and the Sheffield Sharks on the 30th.

The 2024 British Basketball League Men's Trophy will take place throughout January, as we host the Bristol Flyers and Manchester Giants, and travel to the London Lions and Newcastle Eagles in our group.

The Trophy semi-finals and finals will be played on the weekend commencing January 27 at the Utilita Arena Birmingham.

The All-Star game will take place on March 17, at a venue to be confirmed.

The British Basketball League has recently undergone a rebrand ahead of the 2023/24 season. Setting out the clear message as being '*Unbeatable*', the British Basketball League set an exciting precedent for the league's 36th year.



A full fixture list can be found on the Riders' website and is subject to minor changes.



TICKET INFORMATION - USA SELECT & CHESHIRE PHOENIX

Tickets are available for the matchups against USA Select and Cheshire Phoenix.

Ahead of what promises to be another thrilling season of British Basketball League action, we face the USA Select in a first home outing for our new signings. It proves to be a great opportunity to see our revitalised roster in action before the start of the season. We have unreserved seating and mezzanine hospitality available for the match on Friday 8th September at 7:45pm.



In our first match of the 2023/24 British Basketball League season we face Cheshire Phoenix at Morningside Arena.

This season promises to be an exciting one as we look to go one step further this year.

Tip off is at 7:45pm on Friday 15th September, limited early bird tickets are now available. For hospitality enquiries contact Reception on 0116 326 9700 or contact tracey@leicesterarena.co.uk



LEICESTER RIDERS ESTABLISHED 1967

LEICESTER RIDERS LAUNCH REBRAND

Leicester Riders are excited to present their rebrand ahead of the 2023/24 season, ushering in a new era of Riders basketball.

The Riders are proud to have innovatively evolved throughout their 56-year history as Britain's oldest professional basketball club. This rebrand allows the club to continue modernising, 10 years on from the launch of its previous logo.

This marks a fresh start for the club, with a revitalised roster of young talent ready to take the reins and add to the Riders' rich history.

The updated brand incorporates every facet of the club, from its community work with the Leicester Riders Foundation, its player pathways and development through Charnwood College and Loughborough University, to the first teams in the BBL and WBBL.

The club would like to thank its partners at 5or6 for their support during the rebrand.

Leicester Riders managing director Russell Levenston commented: "It's been 10 years since the previous logo was created, as we thought it was the fitting moment for us to re-evaluate the Riders brand.

"Looking at how branding has changed over the past decade, we thought it was the right time to refresh ours.

"Thank you for all the work 5or6 has put into supporting the club, both with the rebranding and their continued support through the years. We have worked closely with the team there since they designed the last logo in 2013.

"What is especially pleasing is the new brand's versatility, and how it can incorporate everything we are about, from our pathways and community work through to the pros.

"These are exciting times for the club, and we look forward to seeing how the brand grows over the coming years. We hope everyone loves it as much as we do!"



The Riders' iconic '*hotshot*' has undergone a makeover and remains the forefront of the club's rebrand



RIDERS WOMEN ROSTER SO FAR

We're counting down the days for the new WBBL season, and it's been a busy offseason so far! Both new and familiar names have signed to play in Riders red, and there are a few more to come!

Here you can refamiliarise yourself with our roster.

Katie Januszewska - Retained

"KJ" is a Charnwood product, joining the Academy in 2020. In 2021/2022, the versatile wing averaged 19.3 points and 11.7 rebounds in the WEABL. Last season, Januszewska joined St. Francis Brooklyn in NCAA Division One, before her return to the East Midlands.

Jessica Eadsforth-Yates - Retained

Jessica Eadsforth-Yates is a Manchester-born guard who signed a two-year deal last summer, joining from the Newcastle Eagles. The Charnwood graduate averaged 7.7 points per game in the WBBL Championship for the Riders last year, putting up a season-high 25 points against the Oaklands Wolves.

Erin Powell - Retained

Erin Powell will suit up for the Riders while completing her third year at Charnwood College. Powell averaged 28.5 points and 18.8 rebounds in the EABL last season and 6.8 points per game in the WBL Division One for the Loughborough Riders. She also has international experience, having played for Great Britain Under-18s.

Shahd Abboud - Signed from Maccabi Ramat Gan

Abboud is an Israeli international, who joined from Maccabi Ramat Gan in the Israeli Premier Division. She represented her country in the 2021 European Championships and has regularly played for Israeli senior team since 2018.

McKenzie Johnston- Retained

American guard McKenzie Johnston helped the Riders to all three domestic finals last season. She averaged 8.3 points, 6.4 assists and 6.1 rebounds per game in the WBBL Championship.

Sam Ashby- Signed from the University of the Pacific

Sam Ashby is a 5'9" Australian, joining the club following her college career at the University of the Pacific. She scored 10.9 per game in her senior year with the Tigers, earning an All-West Coast Conference Honourable Mention selection.

Taylor O'Brien- Signed from Florida State

The American guard signs from Florida State, having averaged 6.7 points for the Seminoles last season. She spent four years prior at Bucknell University, leading the team in scoring for two straight seasons and earning a place on the All-Patriot League First team for 2021 and 2022. The Pennsylvania native averaged 16.7 points and 6.5 rebounds in her final season with the Bison.



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RIDERS WOMEN FIXTURES ANNOUNCED

Leicester Riders' fixtures for the 2023/24 season have been announced.

We host the Manchester Giants, in Loughborough on opening night on 21 October.

One for the diaries is when we play host to local rivals, Nottingham Wildcats on 25th November.

The WBBL Betty Codona Trophy will take place throughout January, with the draw taking place at a later date.

The new WBBL All-Star game will take place on 17 March, at a venue to be confirmed.

FULL FIXTURE LIST

Date	Time	Competition	H/A	Opponent
21st Oct	18:00	Championship	H	Manchester Giants
28th Oct	17:45	Championship	A	Oaklands Wolves
4th Nov	18:00	Championship	H	Newcastle Eagles
18th Nov	15:15	Championship	A	Cardiff Met Archers
25th Nov	18:00	Championship	H	Nottingham Wildcats
3rd Dec	12:00	Championship	A	London Lions
9th Dec	16:00	Championship	A	Essex Rebels
13/14th Jan	TBC	Trophy QF	TBC	TBC
20/21st Jan	TBC	Trophy SF	TBC	TBC
28th Jan	TBC	Trophy Final		TBC
10th Feb	16:00	Championship	H	Cardiff Met Archers
17th Feb	19:30	Championship	A	Newcastle Eagles
25th Feb	14:00	Championship	A	Manchester Giants
2nd Mar	18:00	Championship	H	Oaklands Wolves
9th Mar	18:00	Championship	H	London Lions
17th Mar	TBC	All-Star Game		
31st Mar	17:00	Championship	A	Nottingham Wildcats
6th Apr	18:00	Championship	H	Essex Rebels
13th Apr	13:00	Championship	A	Durham Palatinates
21st Apr	17:00	Championship	A	Caledonia Gladiators
27 Apr	18:00	Championship	H	Sheffield Hatters
TBC		Championship	H	Caledonia Gladiators
TBC		Championship	H	Durham Palatinates
TBC		Championship	A	Sheffield Hatters





LEICESTER RIDERS FOUNDATION 'ALL GIRLS' OPPORTUNITIES

Over the last year, the Leicester Riders Foundation has continued their efforts to create opportunities for young girls and women to get involved in the game of basketball.

This summer, the foundation organised two sessions of All Girls Summer Hoops at the Broughton Astley Leisure Centre. These sessions provided a space for girls aged 8-16, whether they were seasoned players or stepping onto the court for the first time. It was heartwarming to see both familiar faces and newcomers joining in the spirit of the game.

What's particularly noteworthy is the foundation's commitment to reaching out to girls who hadn't previously engaged in basketball. The Riders ensure that the sport becomes accessible to a wider audience, which aligns perfectly with their ethos of inclusivity. Additionally, the choice to hold these sessions at the Broughton Astley Leisure Centre not only introduced a new venue but also extended the foundation's outreach to another area within the Leicestershire region.

The Leicester Riders Foundation have quietly demonstrated the positive impact that sports can have on personal growth and community development. Through basketball, they've managed to instill not only skills but also confidence and camaraderie in young girls around Leicester and Leicestershire.

"I've enjoyed learning how to play basketball over the last 2 weeks. I haven't played basketball much before so to be coached properly has been a great experience."

– Orla, All Girls Summer Hoops Participant.

"It's been great to deliver our All Girls Summer Hoops sessions at Broughton Astley Leisure Centre. It's been fantastic to welcome around 60 girls over the past 2 weeks and to engage in a new area within Leicestershire"

– Neve Considine, Leicester Riders Foundation Community Coach.

We plan on having many more All Girls events and sessions over the coming season, keep an eye on our website and social media channels (@ridersbf) for more information.





LRF & MENPHYS CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THEIR PARTNERSHIP

In 2020, our Foundation were incredibly fortunate to secure funding for 3 years from Children in Need that has enabled us to develop our partnership with Menphys. We currently deliver weekly inclusive sessions at the Menphys hub in Wigston for those children with special educational needs. These sessions are taught by our community coaches in an environment that allows the children to express themselves freely.

Following the success of these sessions over the last couple of years, this has resulted in Menphys being integrated into 5 of our Community Camps, whereby the Foundation hosts basketball camps throughout school holiday periods, delivering key coaching and mentoring sessions.

At our Foundation Awards Night in May, we were incredibly pleased to present Menphys with our Community Organisation of the Year award. By including basketball into their programmes, embracing our partnership and using basketball as part of their delivery model, Menphys has positively contributed to the local community and helped to proactively increase opportunities for young people with special educational needs.

In June 2023, we are expanding our work with Menphys to promote more inclusive sessions across Leicestershire, giving more children the opportunity to get active and participate in basketball sessions. Throughout the summer, Menphys Together will reach children in areas across Leicestershire, including Melton Mowbray, Wigston and Hinckley and offer sessions at our Morningside Arena. We aim to get more children involved in sessions that teach them the fundamental basketball skills, encourage teamwork and most importantly to discover the benefits of basketball and to have fun whilst learning. Partnering with Menphys has given us the opportunity to work towards our goal of increasing the possibilities for young people with disabilities in our communities.

“The partnership Menphys has built with the Leicester Riders Foundation has gone from strength to strength. More young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities now have access to basketball, positively impacting their engagement with sport. Access to basketball is helping them to grow their confidence, Independence and build lifelong friendships, It is great to see our young people flourish. It is also fantastic to be working with a forward thinking, inclusive and engaged organisation that is working with us to make sport for all.”

– Emma Sharpe, Head of Services at Menphys.





Morningside Arena News

PDC Darts

The Morningside Arena Leicester is set to host the PDC Boyle Sports World Grand Prix.

The unique double-start event will see 32 of the world's top stars battling it out across seven days of action for TV silverware.

Michael Van Gerwen won the 2022 tournament, his 6th title, winning a thrilling final against Nathan Aspinall 5-3. It will be Leicester Arena's second consecutive year hosting the event.

The tournament will be broadcast live on Sky Sports in the UK, through the PDC's worldwide broadcast partners, including DAZN and Viaplay, and on PDCTV.

Tickets start at £28.08.

Wednesday night is student night, featuring tickets from £10, and £1 a pint.

We are also offering a premium package, featuring the following:

- 2 Course meal served prior to event start
- Complimentary bar (not including spirits)
- Event programme
- Drinks table service in the premium area
- Snack platter served during the evening

Tickets for the add-on are £80 per person.

2023 BoyleSports World Grand Prix Session Schedule

Monday October 2
8x First Round matches

Tuesday October 3
8x First Round matches

Thursday October 5
4x Second Round matches

Friday October 6
Quarter-Finals

Saturday October 7
Semi-Finals

Sunday October 8
Final





Net Zero Conference

Morningside Arena Leicester are happy to host the Net Zero ready in Leicester panel.

This physical panel includes discussions and presentations to highlight the opportunities and challenges of practice and businesses in Leicestershire, supporting clients to develop Net Zero plans and to hit their ESG reporting requirements.

It will cover why Net Zero is important for businesses in the region and how this can be delivered with the support. Members will be able to interact with a panel of local ESG experts, academics and businesses who are adopting their business activity as a result.

The sustainable development goals of the Leicester City Council and other local councils' transition to Net Zero by 2038 will be discussed. Hear from expert panellists to discover the opportunities and challenges to support clients and your own practice to develop Net Zero plans and ESG reporting requirements.





World Snooker Grand Prix 2024

The World Grand Prix will be staged at the Morningside Arena in Leicester for the first time in 2024, featuring the top 32 players from the 2023/24 season one-year ranking list.

Tickets are ON SALE NOW for the tournament, which will run from January 15th to 21st in 2024. Mark Allen won the title in 2023, beating Judd Trump 10-9 in a dramatic final in Cheltenham.

Tickets start at just £20, and fans are urged to book quickly to make sure of their seats to see a wide range of the sport's leading players.

The World Grand Prix has been ever-present on the calendar since 2015. The one-year list will run from the first ranking event of the 2023/24 season, and only the top 32 will make it to Leicester. It is the first event in the Players Series, followed by the Players Championship and Tour Championship.

The first two rounds are all best of seven frames, followed by best-of-nine quarter-finals, best-of-11 semi-finals, and then the final on Sunday January 21st will be best-of-19.

The superb Morningside Arena has hosted a variety of WST events in recent seasons. The event will be televised live by ITV, as well as a range of broadcasters worldwide.





Arena Marketing Executive Secures Role in NBA

Leicester Arena and Riders marketing executive Alex Medina has secured a role in the NBA's Global Media Distribution team!

Alex came to the Riders two seasons ago as a marketing student at the Business School at the University of Leicester, looking to gain experience working in the world of professional sport to further his career.

With the club's support, Alex's initial activities included working with the Morningside Arena, promoting the work of the coaches of the Leicester Riders Foundation and doing promotional work with the Riders. He then joined our team full-time earlier this year, which, in turn, allowed him to secure a job working for the biggest basketball brand in the world.

Alex is a shining success in the aspirations of our companies, providing career opportunities for local students and interns.

"I am massively thankful to this organisation which has offered me so many opportunities and support over the past two years and undoubtedly helped land my dream role," said Alex.

"I am especially thankful to Kevin Routledge and Laura Shephard for the amazing opportunity to be part of the team and work with some incredible people across all three businesses, including the Leicester Riders Foundation, who do incredible work across the Leicestershire community.

"It has been a pleasure working with everyone here, and I wish the organisation all the best as it continues to be the premier basketball club in the UK."

Ollie Cooper has joined the team as our new marketing executive for the Riders, helping the existing resources in the Foundation and helping drive forward the Morningside Arena, thereby continuing Alex's outstanding work.

We all wish Alex all the best in his future endeavours.

