



LEICESTER RIDERS BASKETBALL CLUB



RIDERS ROUND-UP

RIDERS SIGN SESAN RUSSELL

Leicester Riders are thrilled to announce the signing of Sesan Russell for the remainder of the 2023/24 season.

The 6'1" British guard comes off the back of a four-year collegiate career for Florida Tech University in the NCAA Division II. He averaged 18.8 points, 6.9 assists and 5.3 rebounds as a senior, leading the nation in his assists total.

Russell has been a member of the Riders family since 2015, joining Charnwood College at the age of 16. He went on to play for the Loughborough Riders until 2018 and represented Great Britain for the under-18s and under-20s.

He helped Charnwood to an EABL North Division title, earning EABL North Player of the Year and EABL First Team selection in 2018, and lifted the NBL Division 1 title with Loughborough Riders.

Head Coach Rob Paternostro commented: "Sesan is a guy that we know well. He came through our academy and saw some time on our bench during that time, so he understands the club and what it takes to be a Rider.

"He brings a combination of scoring and passing, and he was excellent at Florida Tech. I know the coaches there were really impressed by him. He's someone that can step in and make a real impact out there."

Russell added: "It's a pleasure to be back with the Riders. Thank you to Coach Rob and Russell for the opportunity, and I'm looking forward to getting out there with the team."

The Riders are back in action on Friday, taking on the London Lions at home.

Sesan is proudly sponsored by DFDS.

NEXT UP...

See Sesan and the Riders live in British Basketball League action as they take on the London Lions at the Morningside Arena on Friday 1 December!

The Riders begin December basketball by welcoming the London Lions to the Morningside Arena in Round 12 of the British Basketball League Championship. It will be the second meeting between the two sides, the first a high-scoring 102-95 victory for the league leaders.

You will not want to miss this one, get your tickets from riders.basketball.





UPCOMING FIXTURES

We have a packed winter schedule at Leicester Riders, and we need your help as the sixth man in the stands!

In December, we look to climb the British Basketball League Championship table in the following fixtures:

Friday, 1st December vs London Lions

Friday, 15th December vs Caledonia Gladiators

Thursday, 28th December vs Bristol Flyers

Saturday, 30th December vs Sheffield Sharks

To kick start 2024, the Riders will fight for silverware in the all-new British Basketball League Trophy in the following games:

Saturday, 6th January vs Bristol Flyers

Wednesday, 10th January vs Manchester Giants

Come down to the Arena to get behind your Riders, Visit riders.basketball for tickets!



SEASON TICKET OFFER!

Leicester Riders are offering 35% off season tickets for the remainder of the 2023/24 British basketball League season! With discounts increasing as the season progresses!

Enjoy the following benefits, in addition to allocated seated at all Leicester Riders home games:

- Signed team photo
 - Membership points: can be used to purchase Riders tickets and designated non-Riders events
 - Exclusive merchandise items
 - Exclusive Riders seating for selected non-Riders events
 - 15% off the best rate at the Leicester Hilton Hotel
 - 15% off spectacles at Edmonds and Slatter
 - 10% off at Wok 68
 - 40% off at Peter Pizzeria
 - 10% off at Trophies Plus Medals
 - Opportunity to upgrade your Season Ticket to a discounted 1967 Hospitality Ticket at £60 per event.
- Many more benefits to come!



HEAD COACH ROB PATERNOSTRO SPEAKS TO BBC RADIO LEICESTER ON DEPARTURES

Following the departure of three Riders players as part of a Riders roster restructure, Head Coach Rob Paternostro spoke to BBC Radio Leicester to explain the organisation's decision-making process.

"We had to try and find a way to be pulling in the same direction," said Paternostro.

"We want a group that is committed to winning together. It was an organisational decision to turn a page and head in a different direction.

"This was something that we have spoken about for a number of weeks. In my 16 seasons at the club, we've always had a team that is committed to winning and playing the right way. When we don't see that, we want to correct that as quickly as possible.

"The players had been here since August, and we did everything we could to create the best environment possible for those guys. We have a track record of players around the world that will tell you this is a great place to play basketball.

"There's a lot of factors that go into that, and we want to continue to ensure we have a great basketball club on and off the court. But sometimes you have to make tough decisions, and those decisions weren't made hastily.

"We were having discussions for a while, and each one of the players knew that. There are certain criteria we have to play for the Riders, and that isn't just about winning. I love to win, but there's more to it than that. We want to play the right way, and we want our whole team to pull in the same direction."

Looking Ahead

"We're excited about this group going forward, and they are a group that's come together through this. We have a team that's excited to play, and we have had great practices this week. These guys were the reason we were in these games. They're model professionals, and they're ready to go.

"We know we're down bodies, but we're excited about going out and fighting in front of our fans. These are the times that their support is really needed. I love our fans, and we expect great support on Saturday night. This is a group of guys that really deserve that."

The Riders are back in action on Friday, taking on table-toppers London Lions at home.





MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS SPECIAL WITH LEICESTER RIDERS!

Looking for gift ideas for the festive season? We have an incredible collection of Riders merchandise for your loved ones!

Support the team in style with our bobble hats, Riders sliders and replica jerseys. We have everything you need for a perfect Riders gift!

Visit our online shop to browse the full collection: <https://leicester-riders-shop.myshopify.com/>



WATCH THE RIDERS IN STYLE

Hospitality packages are available for 2023's remaining fixtures.

Enjoy the game from a unique vantage point overlooking the court with panoramic views on our Private Mezzanines. At £39+VAT per person, the Mezzanine Hospitality includes a pre-game buffet, private cash bar and toilets and a complementary season guide and game day team sheet. Open to individual tickets or for private hire for 30+ guests, our mezzanines provide you and your guests with a unique game day experience.

Enjoy our highest-quality game night experience as part of the 1967 Club. Offering a two-course meal served before the game, pre-game presentation, complimentary drinks before half-time, opportunities to meet the players and more.

For £80+VAT per person, the 1967 Club is an unparalleled opportunity to enjoy the game in style.

Contact tracey@leicesterarena.co.uk for enquiries and bookings.

WHAT'S ON AT THE ARENA?

WST WORLD GRAND PRIX 2024

The World Grand Prix will be staged at the Morningside Arena for the first time in 2024, featuring the sport's top 32 players from the 2023/24 season one-year ranking list. The tournament will run from January 15 to 21 2024.

Mark Allen won the title in this year's edition in Cheltenham.

Tickets for all sessions are on sale now, with fans urged to book early to avoid disappointment.



JAVED ALI LIVE IN CONCERT

Morningside Arena Leicester are excited to welcome Javed Ali for his 2024 UK Tour, on February 24, 2024. This will be his only stop in the Midlands!

Witness incredible performances and soulful renditions of classics like 'Jashn-e-Bahara', and the chartbusters 'Srivalli', as Javed Ali enchants the stage with his captivating voice.

Join us for an evening brimming with his timeless hits, promising an unforgettable experience. Tickets start at £35. Don't miss your only chance to see Javed Ali live in the Midlands!



AN EVENING WITH THE LEICESTER LEGENDS

On March 15 2024, we will take a trip back in time to a golden age in Leicester City's history, where a Martin O'Neill-led side took City to two League Cups and a venture into Europe.

Join O'Neill, alongside Leicester City legends, to get the opportunity to get up close and personal with the legends, with photo opportunities and a chance to ask that burning question.



ARMAGEDDON 2024

We are delighted to exclusively reveal the line-up for Armageddon 2024! This year's edition was big, but 2024 promises to be even bigger!

Featuring some of the biggest names in the sport and with the introduction of the fan zone with music, bars, food and entertainment, Armageddon 2024 promises to be a great night of darting entertainment. Book now to avoid disappointment!





RIDERS HEAD OF COMMERCIAL TRACEY HALLAM RAISES £1625 FOR LEICESTER HOSPITAL'S CHARITY

Leicester Riders Head of Commercial Tracey Hallam raised £1625 for Leicester Hospital's Charity in their Boss Breakout Event!

The event, hosted in Leicester Highcross, saw Tracey, among other Leicester business leaders, use her business skills to raise money for the purchase of 12 fold-away hospital beds.

The aim of each of the participants was to raise £1000, leaning on their business connections to encourage donations. Tracey comfortably achieved this total and more, thanks to the generosity of the Riders family.

The beds will serve an essential purpose, allowing parents to stay overnight with their children during their hospital stays. This invaluable support aims to ease the burden on families when faced with the challenging circumstances of having a child in hospital.

Your contributions will make a meaningful difference in the lives of families who find themselves in the difficult situation of having a child in the hospital.

Thank you for your help in supporting this cause.



LEICESTER RIDERS AND PETER PIZZERIA PARTNERSHIP!



Leicester Riders and Peter Pizzeria are working together to bring pizza to Riders fans!

With a Leicester Riders season ticket, you can receive 40% off at Peter Pizzeria. In addition to this, one lucky fan on Leicester Riders game day will be randomly selected for a free Peter Pizzeria pizza!

Coming to the game? You'll be in with a chance to win!

Visit riders.basketball view the full range of season ticket holder benefits and to secure your season ticket for the season's remaining fixtures.



RIDERS WOMEN BEAT WILDCATS IN OVERTIME

The Riders improved to 4-0 in the Women's British Basketball League Championship, taking an 83-75 overtime home win against the Nottingham Wildcats.

Taylor O'Brien led the team with her second straight 20-point performance, leading the game with 22 points, eight rebounds and six assists. She was backed by an 18-point double-double from Sam Ashby, who grabbed 10 rebounds in a red-hot overtime performance.

The so-far winless Wildcats put up a heroic fight against the table-topping Riders, pushing them all the way after a hot start. 22 from Jessica Wayne led the team, as the visitors shot 44% from three to come close to an upset win.

Starting off 6-0, Nottingham took an early surprise lead led by seven from 6'3" center Brooke Bjelko. The Riders shot 27% from the field in the first but trailed only by a possession after Elise Tweedie's free throw to end the quarter.

The visitors stretched their lead in the second, making it double-digits thanks to a layup inside from American Wayne. Leicester's two for 13 shooting from deep dug their first half hole, but Taylor O'Brien found form to end the second quarter to keep the hosts in touch.

O'Brien had four points and a steal in the final two minutes to bring her game tally to nine, and making the score 28-39 going into the locker rooms.

She continued her dominance in the third, scoring 11 in the quarter as the Riders attempted to chip into the deficit. Driving inside, her and-one play cut it to a four-point game with two minutes left.

Charnwood graduate Katie Januszevska got on the scoreboard to follow up her teammates, scoring five quick points and snatching the lead for the first time since the opening quarter. The Riders held the Wildcats to a scoreless final seven minutes of the third to lead by four with one to play.

Shahd Abboud, upon her return from injury, led the Riders out the gate in the fourth with two quick buckets. They stamped their authority in the final period of play, building a solid foundation to see the game out from. Abboud hit a three with four minutes gone to make it an eight-point Leicester lead.

Nottingham hit big shots throughout to keep it competitive, and cut it to a one-point game after a three from Wayne with 1:45 left to play. After a back-and-forth exchange, Mari Stewart drained another triple which tied it up with nine seconds remaining.

Ashby couldn't connect on the would-be game-winner, and the tie went to overtime.

She took over the overtime period with back-to-back threes to amend for the miss, building a two-possession lead for the Riders to defend. The GB international's second triple with 2:30 to go proved to be the final score before the fixture became a free-throw-shooting affair.

Jessica Eadsforth-Yates and Ashby hit their foul shots to end the game, winning it in overtime.

The Riders are back in action next week, hitting the road to take on last season's quadruple-winning London Lions on Sunday.





RIDERS DUO NAMED TO TEAM OF THE WEEK

Riders duo of Taylor O'Brien and Rayven Peeples were named to the Women's British Basketball League Team of the Week!

The Riders took a 110-64 road win against the Cardiff Met Archers last week, and the American pair showed out with a combined 45 points and 19 rebounds in the game. It was a dominant performance throughout, as Leicester took a big lead early and never looked back.

O'Brien led the way with 26 points, six rebounds and three assists, finishing with a game-high +/- of 35.

She was backed by Peeples, who continued her league-leading dominance on the glass with 19 points and 13 rebounds, shooting 81% from the field.

It's Peeples' second nod for Team of the Week, following her week one 18 point double-double performance against Manchester Giants.

The Riders are back in action on Sunday, hitting the road to take on last seasons quadruple-winning London Lions.





HIGHCROSS HOOPS

The Leicester Riders Foundation and Leicester Riders are going to be in the Highcross Shopping Centre in Leicester City Centre on Saturday 16th December.

“Highcross Hoops” will be located on the ground floor of the Highcross outside the old Debenhams store and will feature a series of activations hosted by the Leicester Riders Foundation.

The event is the perfect chance for us to interact with the community but also for fans to check out exclusive merchandise offers and purchase tickets.



LRF PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We are delighted to launch our new partnership opportunities brochure showcasing the wide array of opportunities for your organisation to make a positive impact on the community with the Leicester Riders Foundation.

“I am really excited that we have launched our partnership brochure and the potential new opportunities that may come off the back of it. At the Leicester Riders Foundation we are extremely passionate about creating new partnerships within our local community to be able to increase our delivery and provide additional opportunities for young people to access basketball within the community.” – Laura Shephard, Leicester Riders Foundation General Manager.

Visit our website to read our Partnership Opportunities brochure.

For more information on our partnership opportunities or to get involved email foundation@riders.basketball.



LRF DELIVER BLACK HISTORY MONTH ASSEMBLY

Earlier this week we headed over to Whitehall Primary School to deliver an assembly on Black History Month for both their KS1 & KS2 students. The aim of the assembly was to educate, inspire and create discussion on Black History and how it has influenced who we are today as a community.

The assembly was led by our Inclusion Activator Myalls Martin who spoke to the students about his story, key figures who influenced him growing up and how black history has shaped the person he is today.

"It was a liberating experience delivering the Black History Month assembly to Whitehall Primary. Black History is a subject that is close to my heart from a professional and personal stand point, so to be able to educate and inspire the students is something I am extremely proud of."

– Myalls Martin, Leicester Riders Foundation Inclusion Activator.

"I just wanted to take this opportunity on behalf of Whitehall Primary School to say a huge thank you to Myalls for taking the Black History Assembly this afternoon. Myalls's story, background, and messaging to the children was extremely powerful. Myalls was in his enthusiastic element and had a had an amazing impact on the students."

– Neal Ruparelia, PE Consultant at Whitehall Primary School.

The students were engaged throughout the assembly and were encouraged to get involved, discussing black role models who have had an impact on their personal journey and highlighting the challenges that they have overcome to get to where they are today.

Here at the Leicester Riders Foundation we believe that it is important to share the stories of those who have inspired and impacted our lives and use these stories to educate the younger generation.





LRF TO HOST PRIMARY SCHOOL TOURNAMENT

The Leicester Riders Foundation are delighted to be hosting a Primary Schools Tournament at the Morningside Arena on Wednesday 10th January prior to the Leicester Riders taking on the Manchester Giants later that evening.

"We are delighted to be able to provide the opportunity for both the schools we work with and new schools in the local area to be able to compete in the tournament and also experience a Riders Game day. This season our team have been working very hard out in schools across Leicestershire, we are looking forward to bringing everyone together to celebrate this hard work."

– Greg Ellis, Interim Head of Education & School Sport.

The Tournament will run throughout the afternoon with the final taking place on centre court during half time of the Riders game. This provides an excellent opportunity for the students to both experience a Riders game day and also put into practice what they have learnt whilst in the sessions we have delivered within their schools.

Schools can visit our website to book or contact greg@riders.basketball for more information.





SNOOKER AT THE MORNINGSIDE ARENA

Morningside Arena Leicester welcomed the World Snooker Tour last week for the MrQ UK Championship qualifiers.

The MrQ UK Championship is one of snooker's most prestigious events, with a long history dating back to 1977. The competition features 32 of the world's best players.

Hosting the MrQ UK Championship qualifiers was part of the Arena's long time relationship with the World Snooker Tour, with the Arena hosting several snooker events throughout the years. It was also the first time that fans were welcomed to spectate the qualifying stages of the championship.

The qualifying event featured 128 players, all trying to earn one of 16 spots in the final stages of the UK Championship in York and all culminated in two 'Judgement Days'.

Leicester native Joe O'Connor secured his spot in the UK Championship last week, with a 6-3 win over 2004 Champion, Stephen Maguire.

"He got me in all sorts of trouble at the end so I was relieved to get through," said O'Connor, who will be one of four Leicester-based players in York alongside Ben Woollaston, Mark Selby and Tom Ford.

"I feel I've been playing well the last few weeks and it's great to get through because York is such a good venue. It's nice for Leicester to have four players there and I'm pleased for Tom climbing into the top 16, he deserves to be there."

Live snooker action will take a two-month break from the Arena before action returns with the 2024 World Grand Prix!

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 2024. Mark Allen won the title in 2023, beating Judd Trump 10-9 in a dramatic final in Cheltenham. The 2024 edition promises to be more enthralling than ever.

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.

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. Get your tickets from www.leicesterarena.co.uk.