

ROAD TO JUNIOR SELECTION - 2024/2025

A huge thank you to all who completed our 'road to selection' survey and provided valuable feedback on the first season using the new selection system. Following a comprehensive review, 'Road to Selection' will continue to be used to select England teams for junior representative competition allowing players, parents and coaches to track progress towards selection throughout the season.

For many years, England Squash has been accused privately and publicly of bias and favouritism, it is therefore imperative that selection is as fair and transparent as possible. 'Road to Selection' allows complete clarity and acknowledges such concerns whilst recognising the pressures on time and resources in attempting to operate a subjective process that is fair for all players in all age groups.

Points achieved from selection events will continue to be collated and a 'Road to Selection' standings table released following each event. Each player qualifying for a top 8 position per age group, will be listed including players 'ageing out' before the selection deadline. We will employ larger differences in the allocated points, enabling us to clearly define the positions for the published top 8 players.'

Using the feedback received during the consultation phase we've published some frequently asked questions on the following pages to further support your understanding of the new process. Selection events for the 2024/2025 season are available to download via the following web link <https://www.englandsquash.com/roadtoselection>



FREQUENTLY ROAD TO JUNIOR SELECTION ASKED QUESTIONS

How does this differ to the current ranking system? Does using a separate system devalue junior rankings?

From a performance perspective we have always used results from the beginning of the season (September) through to the various selection deadlines we have in February, March and April. (Deadlines differ each year according to representation event dates).

Points and results accumulated in April/May/June, can't affect selections as deadlines have passed.

Using the traditional rankings, the difference in points available at Silver/Gold/Platinum levels make missing an event a greater challenge depending on the event missed (e.g if you're unable to play a platinum you miss the opportunity to earn larger points compared to playing all silver/gold events).

The road to selection system allows the opportunity to gain greater points in all selection events to specifically support selection. The current ranking system has a different purpose and timeframe. Road to Selection is not a ranking, it is a list of the top 8 players in each age group vying for England selection.



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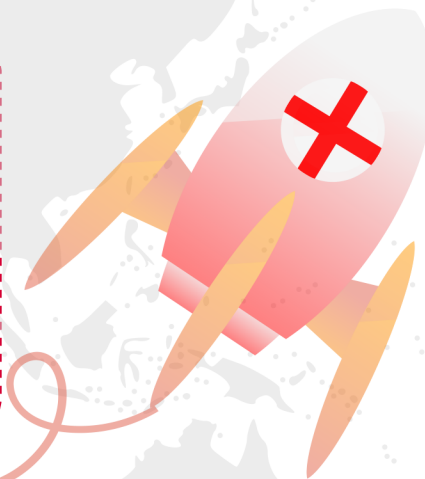


Can representation events be moved to a different time of year as some players will always miss out due to birthday cut-off?

The European and world tournament calendars are determined by the European and World Squash Federations respectively and competing nations have no input. Representation events are traditionally held towards the end of each season.

Why is the divisor different for different age groups?

The divisor will be the best 4 results from 7 selection events for U13 & U15s, 3 from 6 for U17s, 3 from 5 for U19 Europeans and 3 from 6 for World Junior Championships. Recent analysis discovered that our younger age groups often play a minimum of 4 events due to their developmental motivations, whilst our older age groups play a little less. Therefore, we positioned the divisor a little lower in the older age groups to support the ambitious U17 & U19 player aiming for both age groups, whilst recognising the U19 player entering PSA events for their development.



Is there any space for discretionary selections due to extenuating circumstances (injury, severe cost of living issues etc)?

The divisor is reduced to account for extenuating circumstances. It is the best 3/4 events from 6/7, therefore all players will have the opportunity to demonstrate their talents throughout the season. The points structure allows players to recoup sufficient points even if a couple of events are missed. If an eligible player is defending U19 European or World Junior Champion they will be considered for selection if legitimate reasons (i.e. injury) have prevented that player from playing in selection events to gain automatic selection.



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How does the U17/U19 split selection work?

It is becoming increasingly apparent that players have the ambition and talent to represent at the European U17s, European U19s and World Junior Championships. To support this, we have nominated different selection events for the U17 & U19 age groups. This provides the opportunity for players to play sufficient U17 events and 'play up' in specific U19 events to gain road to selection points in two age groups.

Will coaches also consider head-to-head results as well as the final Road to Selection standings?

No, this system is completely objective in terms of selecting players on road to selection points. It is fair to assume if you have a good head to head record against a player you would gain more points at selection events, and therefore earn a higher road to selection position. The coaching team will consider behaviour and commitment of all players. If either fall below the standard expected no player is guaranteed selection irrespective of their position in the Road to Selection system.



What happens when foreign players enter selection events? This reduces the opportunity for English players to gain selection points.

We think the fairest and simplest way is to use the points you finish with. Of course, some events may attract more foreign entries than others, but this adds to the excitement and unpredictable nature of competition. If you beat a foreign player who subsequently beats a rival of yours, you will gain the benefit of that situation in the points awarded to finishing positions.



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Will players who are ineligible due to age be included in the 'Road to Selection' standings?

All players playing in selection events will gain Road to Selection points and have the opportunity to feature on the Road to Selection standings (we will publish the top 8 players in each age group).

When a player ages out, they will be removed from the next release of the standings and eligible players will move up.

Will this only encourage players to play in selection events and not support the wider competitions calendar?

Unfortunately this is a familiar issue and a bi-product of identifying events as 'selection events'. The number of selection events is similar to previous years so we hope the competitions calendar isn't adversely impacted. It is important for players to continue to play in non-selection events throughout the season to support their development.



What happens to points when players transition to the next age group?

Road to Selection points are only valid towards the age group that you play in. For example if you play the British Junior Championships at under 15, you will gain under 15 Road to Selection points. If you play a selection silver at under 17, you will gain under 17 Road to Selection points. No points are eligible to be carried forward.



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How will seeding and draws be made as this will directly impact road to selection points??

The Competitions & Events department are responsible for draws and seedings in all sanctioned competitions. Performance has confidence in their processes and ability and believes the best players in the draw(s) will demonstrate their ability to progress at the end of each event. Information regarding draws and seedings is available via the following web link

<https://www.englandsquash.com/competitions/competition-rules-and-regulations>

Will selection events be evenly distributed around the country?

We have worked closely with the competitions and events team to ensure a fair spread of events (where possible) across the country.

