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Wimbledon to pay for Ukrainian players' accommodation at grass court events

Вімблдон сплатить розміщення українських гравців на трав'яних турнірах

Британське видання The Guardian повідомляє, що російським і білоруським тенісистам буде дозволено брати участь у Вімблдонському турнірі та інших британських турнірах на трав'яному покритті в 2023 р. В світлі цього рішення Всеанглійський клуб заявив, що покриє витрати українських гравців і 1 члена їхньої команди на весь трав'яний сезон. Також клуб також зробить пожертву українським організаціям, пообіцявши по 1 фунту стерлінгів за кожного власника квитка на чемпіонат, що становитиме понад 500 тис. фунтів стерлінгів. В рамках протидії російській пропаганді на Вімблдонському турнірі заборонені всі символи РФ і Білорусі, турнір не буде транслюватися в Росії, а росЗМІ не отримають акредитації на турнір.

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/apr/25/wimbledon-to-pay-for-ukrainian-players-accommodation-at-grass-court-events>

The All England Club has made a number of significant financial gestures towards Ukraine's crisis response funds and Ukrainian tennis players competing in their tournaments, asserting their support for the country in light of their decision to permit Russian and Belarusian players to return as competitors at Wimbledon this year.

The AELTC and the LTA have announced that they will cover the accommodation costs of two rooms for all main draw and qualifying players who compete at any British grass court event for the entirety of the grass court season.

While some playing facilities are often only reserved for British players and competitors ranked in the top 10, Ukrainian players will additionally be allowed to prepare on courts at the All England Club and Surbiton from their exits at the French Open until the eve of Wimbledon qualifying.

The financial commitment will probably amount to five figures a player, with about 15 Ukrainian players in position to compete in the qualifying and main-draw events of Wimbledon alone. The AELTC will further donate to Ukraine crisis response organisations, pledging £1 for each ticket holder at the championships, which the AELTC estimates will amount to a donation of more than £500,000.

Last month, the AELTC announced Russian and Belarusian players will be allowed to compete at Wimbledon under the provision that they sign a declaration of neutrality. The declaration has three conditions: players must confirm that they will compete as neutrals, they will not make any statements of support for the Russian or Belarusian regimes, and they will not be in receipt of funds from either states or businesses closely related to the states.

Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine, the world No 36

Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine, currently world No 36, will be among the players from her country to get financial help from the AELTC this summer if she plays in UK grass court events.

Photograph: Luke Walker/Getty Images for ITF

"I found this probably the most difficult decision during my chairmanship," said Ian Hewitt, the AELTC chairman. The AELTC confirmed it has held discussions with Ukrainian players.

"Without discussing the details of those conversations, I think it'd be fair to say that they understood the situation," said Sally Bolton, chief executive of the AELTC. "They've been

competing on the tour with Russian and Belarusian athletes for a year – they understood the situation we found ourselves in. They understood our decision. They were thankful for us taking the time to have that conversation with them.”

Although the AELTC declined to reveal specific numbers, Bolton noted that “a number of players” from Russia and Belarus have signed or are in the process of signing off on the declaration. Wimbledon has updated its entry terms and conditions to prohibit Russian or Belarusian flags on the grounds and any support for Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The championships will not be shown in either country, with Russian and Belarusian media “not welcome” at the tournament this year.

Meanwhile, Wimbledon will be taking steps to celebrate Roger Federer’s achievements in light of the eight-time champion’s retirement from tennis last year. “He is a very great champion,” Hewitt said.

“We have a very close association. I am delighted to say that Roger will be making a visit here as a member. He is very welcome any time. And yes, we will be celebrating his achievements in an appropriate Wimbledon way in due course.”