

THE AMERICAN DREAM

England international Peter Barker tells Simon Redfern that American squash camps are a good model for UK organisers to follow

Peter Barker, the England international who will feature in two squash camps in this country later this month and in August, is hoping that UK camps will soon become as popular as those in the USA.

The world no.7 from Essex has been coaching children aged between 10 and 16 at Squash and Beyond's camp in Williamson, Massachusetts, for a while now, and has witnessed what enjoyment they get from it.

"I got involved in summer camps through the Squash and Beyond director, Zafi Levy," Barker said. "He invited me to be a part of his camp maybe six to seven years ago and I have done it every summer since."

"He allows me to have a good balance between coaching, warm-weather training and an escapism from the [PSA] Tour. The squash is a small part of it. We do kayaking, alpine racing and other fun activities."

"I'm pleased to say camps in England are getting

more popular, both for kids and adults. There is a culture in America where the kids go to four to six weeks of camps a summer, ranging from lacrosse, hockey, basketball to squash. That culture isn't present in the UK, but with some of the top squash players in the world based here, I hope people see the value of squash camps closer to home. In the UK I mainly do adult camps, which is a nice mix."

Barker will be attending Off the Wall's junior courses in May and August in Colchester, along with fellow world top 10 player Daryl Selby, and London Squash Camp's one-day course for adults in Wimbledon on May 31.

Meanwhile, Ben Ford, who coaches Barker, has scheduled five three-day courses in July and August for three groups – county players aged between 11 and 16, national top 20 juniors aged 13 to 18 and PSA adults – at Bexley in Kent.

He will be aided by Gary Nisbet and other as-yet

unnamed coaches, although Ford added: "These coaches will be current and past world top 10 players."

Nisbet's expertise in the area of fitness is also being called upon by Squashskills founder Jethro Binns for his adult camp in Guildford, Surrey, on June 7 and 8.

England high performance coach Lee Drew and Jesse Engelbrecht, the former world no.55 from South Africa, will also attend the camp which will focus on the short game, with particular attention paid to the technical aspects of the shot.

"Jesse is a fantastic coach and had a successful playing career," said Binns. "Those of you who joined us in Guildford in 2013 will know that Jesse is full of enthusiasm and a joy to be around. We're delighted to have him back on board for this one!"

World no.18 Sarah-Jane Perry, one of England's top young female players, will be the star attraction at Steve Townsend's Total Squash Camp at Kenilworth Squash Club in Warwickshire from July 20 to 25.

"It's a packed week with a holistic approach to your game encompassing technique, tactics, conditioning, and match analysis," said Townsend. "Oh and don't forget the famed trip to Alton Towers as active recovery! This is now a

Peter Barker, who is heading up squash camps in the UK and USA this summer



well-attended and established annual camp, with coaches of the highest level."

Also in the Midlands, recently-retired PSA Tour player Chris Ryder is running two three-day courses for youngsters aged between 10 and 15 of at least county standard at Solihull Arden SC.

The former world no.33, who will be assisted by ex-world no.19 Rob Owen, will concentrate on deceptions, boasts and patterns of play in the course from May 27 to 29, and technique, tactics, movement and matchplay from August 26 to 28.

FORD IN THE DRIVING SEAT



Ben Ford, who will be running a string of squash camps this summer in Bexley in Kent for a variety of levels of player, has an impressive pedigree as a coach.

The former world no.82 currently coaches world no.7 Peter Barker, as well as several leading juniors, including European under-19 champion Richie Fallows and English under-

17 champion Georgina Kennedy.

"I've now been coaching for 15 years and I've coached numerous national junior champions and top-ranked English juniors," said the 38-year-old Londoner.

Ford's main partner on his courses at the end of July and through August is Gary Nisbet, who will be looking after fitness.

"He is a Level 3 squash coach and has worked with numerous players, including Charles Sharpes (PSA top 65) and Richie Fallows, on speed and agility sessions. He also plays on the PSA Tour," Ford added.

Ford has now retired from the PSA Tour, but still plays on the BSPA circuit and last year reached the quarter-finals of the Boston Open and Solent Classic, as well as finishing runner-up to Tim Vail in the British Over-35 National Championship.

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