

# **Birmingham to host world's oldest squash tournament for first time in 22 years**

The oldest and one of the most prestigious squash tournaments in the global game will return to Birmingham next year for the first time in 22 years.

The British Open will be held in April on the stage [at the city's Rep theatre](#) along with early rounds at Edgbaston Priory Club and will welcome the sport's best men's and women's players from across the world.

The tournament, whose origins date back to the 1920s, has been held in Hull since 2013 but has previously come to Birmingham on five occasions, the last of which was in 2001 at the then National Indoor Arena.

Known within the sport as the Wimbledon of squash, the British Open is the most coveted of titles among professional players alongside the annual World Championship tournament. Next year's event will have a record prize fund of around £300,000, to be split equally between the men's and women's competitions.

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In addition, the junior equivalent is taking place from January 4 to 8 at University of Birmingham, Edgbaston Priory Club, Solihull Arden Club and West Warwickshire Sports

Complex.

The decision to choose Birmingham as host of the 2023 British Open will be seen as another feather in the city's cap following the successful staging of the Commonwealth Games earlier this year whose squash competition was held at University of Birmingham.

It will also provide another huge boost to the city's tourism economy with thousands of players, coaches and fans expected to visit for the eight-day event which starts on April 9.

This latest deal follows the news last month that the [2026 European Athletics Championships will be held in Birmingham](#) – the first time a UK city has hosted the event in its entire history.



Squash pros Lee Beachill (left) and David Palmer battle it out at the 2001 British Open at the NIA in Birmingham – the last

time the prestigious tournament was held in the city  
Alex Gough is chief executive of global governing body the Professional Squash Association and said he wanted to carry on the legacy left by the city's hosting of the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

He said: "We're excited to move the British Open to Birmingham, a city which has a rich history within the sport. We started this conversation earlier this year with the West Midlands Growth Company so we are delighted to be announcing this.

"Not only has Birmingham hosted the British Open on five previous occasions, the city also successfully hosted the Commonwealth Games last summer, with thousands of fans flocking to watch the squash.

"We want to continue this legacy with the latest instalment of the iconic British Open and look forward to working with Birmingham City Council, Edgbaston Priory Club and members of the Birmingham major sporting event leadership group over the coming months to ensure we put on a show to remember."

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The Rep's executive director Rachael Thomas added "We're thrilled to be part of bringing the British Open to the city and hosting matches on our main stage in a spectacular all-glass showcourt. We look forward to welcoming thousands of spectators and sharing our iconic theatre with them.

"Hosting this significant sporting event in partnership with our events company Unique Venues Birmingham and Birmingham City Council generates income that's invested back into all the work that The Rep does as a registered charity. We're delighted to be playing our part in such a high-profile event for the city."

Mark Williams, chief executive of national governing body England Squash, said: "Following the success of the Commonwealth Games, we're delighted the British Open will be coming back to Birmingham.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to further raise the profile of squash and build on the work we have been doing to help people from communities across the city play squash since the Commonwealth Games. We hope the British Open will inspire people of all ages and from all communities to try squash."

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