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More than 55 players confirmed for The Hundred as men's retention window slams shut

- *Overseas stars including Aaron Finch, Amelia Kerr, Andre Russell, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Dane Van Niekerk, Kane Williamson and Glenn Maxwell sign up*
- *Sam Billings, Freya Davies, Alex Hartley and Mark Wood among England players confirmed*
- *Men's retained players confirmed ahead of the men's draft picks being announced on 23 February*
- *Women's squads to be finalised over the coming months*

The final retained men's players for The Hundred have been named today with a series of England and overseas stars among the 57 male and female players signing up for the action-packed 100-ball competition which launches this summer.

The men's retention window – where teams could re-sign players who had been due to play for them in 2020 - has now closed, with Australian one-day captain Aaron Finch and all-rounder Glenn Maxwell, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson, the West Indies' Andre Russell and England fast bowler Mark Wood among the big names unveiled today.

The teams are also continuing to build their women's squads with ICC Women's World Cup winner Alex Hartley, England star Freya Davies, and New Zealand's Amelia Kerr among a number of new signings. The women's teams can continue to sign players until June.

All eight men's sides will pick the remainder of their squads in the upcoming Men's Draft where 35 spaces will be up for grabs. Manchester Originals will be the busiest side with ten slots to fill while Welsh Fire have seven. The picks, along with further women's signings, will be announced throughout the day on 23 February.

The Hundred features world-class domestic and international players in men's and women's competitions, with family-friendly entertainment off the pitch. It will take place this summer and feature eight city-based teams based in Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, Southampton and two in London. It will be screened live by the BBC and Sky.

Birmingham Phoenix have moved to strengthen their men's squad with the retention of overseas stars Shaheen Afridi and New Zealand's Kane Williamson. Hard hitting Liam Livingstone and keeper-batsman Chris Cooke round off the retentions in the men's squad. Exciting seamer Issy Wong is one of three women's retentions with local Warwickshire players Thea Brookes and Gwen Davies also joining.

Kane Williamson said: "I'm really pleased to be staying at Birmingham Phoenix. It's always been great to play against Moeen [Ali] and Chris [Woakes] and it'll be exciting to line up alongside them. You want to test yourself against the best and that's what The Hundred is all about."

Four England players will be lining up for London Spirit with Mason Crane, Freya Davies, Joe Denly and Mark Wood all staying at Lord's. Aussie allrounder Glenn Maxwell and Somerset spinner Roelof Van Der Merwe are the final two men's retentions. London Spirit have also kept three further domestic players with all-rounder Charlie Dean, spinner Hannah Jones and seamer Sophie Munro staying with the team.

Freya Davies said: "Lord's is a brilliant place to play cricket and it'll be really special to call it home with London Spirit this summer. The Hundred is a fantastic opportunity, representing another important step in growing the sport for women and girls."

Three overseas stars will stay at Northern Superchargers with Australian white ball captain Aaron Finch and compatriot Chris Lynn lining up alongside Afghanistan spinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman. The women's side continues to develop with England bowlers Beth Langston and Linsey Smith joining Lauren Winfield-Hill's squad. Middlesex keeper John Simpson rounds off the list of retentions for the Emerald Headingley-based side.

Aaron Finch said: "I loved my time as a player at Yorkshire and I'm really looking forward to getting back up there and hopefully putting on a show. We have a batting line-up that can do some damage and with some smart additions at the draft we should have a very strong squad."

Southern Brave welcome three big-name overseas players including New Zealand legspinning allrounder Amelia Kerr, who signs as a replacement for Suzie Bates, who has had to withdraw from the competition with a shoulder injury. Kerr will line up alongside Western Storm spinner Fi Morris. West Indies' Andre Russell and Australia's Marcus Stoinis join an exciting men's squad alongside England seamer Craig Overton and Worcestershire's Ross Whiteley.

Amelia Kerr said: "I'm so excited to represent Southern Brave in The Hundred. Hopefully, I can complement what is already an incredibly talented team and it's great to see so many amazing international players going head-to-head. I'm looking forward to putting on a show and continuing to put the women's game on the map."

England and Kent's Sam Billings is part of an impressive list of retentions at Oval Invincibles. The overseas duo of South Africa women's team skipper

Dane Van Niekerk and Nepalese spinner Sandeep Lamichhane will also stay at the Kia Oval. The women's squad is further bolstered by Scotland international Sarah Bryce, talented young batter Alice Capsey and allrounder Jo Gardner, while Surrey pair Laurie Evans and Will Jacks have also been retained.

There will be a local flavour to the Manchester Originals squads with England and Lancashire spinners Alex Hartley and Matt Parkinson staying at Emirates Old Trafford. Fellow Lancashire Thunder squad members Georgie Boyce, Natalie Brown, Emma Lamb and Ellie Threlkeld will link up with Hartley in the women's squad. Experienced Derbyshire batter Wayne Madsen is the final men's player to be retained.

England allrounder Lewis Gregory will lead a Trent Rockets side that will be able to call upon the services of Australian duo Nathan Coulter-Nile and D'Arcy Short. Two Lightning players, Nancy Harman and Lucy Higham are joining Trent Rockets, while Ben Cox, Luke Wood and Luke Wright are also being retained.

England men's World Cup winner Liam Plunkett will line up alongside Afghanistan legspinner Qais Ahmad. They will be joined by the Gloucestershire pair of Ryan Higgins and David Payne at Welsh Fire. South East Stars allrounder Amy Gordon will also stay in Cardiff.

ENDS

Full list of players announced today:

Birmingham Phoenix: Shaheen Afridi, Thea Brookes, Chris Cooke, Gwen Davies, Liam Livingstone, Isabelle Wong, Kane Williamson

London Spirit: Charlie Dean, Mason Crane, Freya Davies, Joe Denly, Hannah Jones, Glenn Maxwell, Sophie Munro, Roelof Van Der Merwe, Mark Wood

Manchester Originals: Georgie Boyce, Natalie Brown, Ellie Threlkeld, Alex Hartley, Emma Lamb, Wayne Madsen, Matt Parkinson,

Northern Superchargers: Aaron Finch, Beth Langston, Brydon Carse, Chris Lynn, John Simpson, Linsey Smith, Mujeeb Ur Rahman

Oval Invincibles: Sam Billings, Sarah Bryce, Alice Capsey, Laurie Evans, Jo Gardner, Will Jacks, Sandeep Lamichhane, Dane Van Niekerk

Southern Brave: Amelia Kerr, Fi Morris, Craig Overton, Andre Russell, Marcus Stoinis, Ross Whiteley,

Trent Rockets: Nathan Coulter-Nile, Ben Cox, Lewis Gregory, Nancy Harman, Lucy Higham, D'Arcy Short, Luke Wood, Luke Wright

Welsh Fire: Qais Ahmad, Amy Gordon, Ryan Higgins, David Payne, Liam Plunkett

About The Hundred

The Hundred is a brand new sports competition launching this summer. It fuses blockbuster entertainment with world-class cricket, inviting everyone to fall in love with the game at its intense, electrifying and incredible best.

Combining a new short, fast format of cricket, with each game lasting less than three hours, and incredible entertainment beyond sport, The Hundred will make cricket more accessible to reach a broader audience. It's simple: 100 balls per team, most runs wins, so every ball counts.

The Hundred will feature eight brand new teams from seven cities, with men's and women's competitions taking place side by side: Welsh Fire (Cardiff), Southern Brave (Southampton), Northern Superchargers (Leeds), London Spirit, Trent Rockets (Nottingham), Oval Invincibles (London), Manchester Originals and Birmingham Phoenix. Each team will feature some of the best international and domestic cricketers from around the world, including England Men's & Women's World Cup winners.

Games will be broadcasted live on Sky Sports and BBC throughout the competition – so whether in ground or watching from home – you'll be right amongst all the action.

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