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Players signed in Vitality Wildcard Draft as Birmingham Phoenix confirm squads

Birmingham Phoenix has used the local talent at their disposal to finalise their squads ahead of the third edition of The Hundred, which gets underway on Tuesday 1 August.

With their Vitality Wildcard selections, Phoenix men chose Birmingham Bears fast bowler Henry Brookes and all-rounder Jacob Bethell, whilst the final round of signings in the women's competition include Central Sparks batter Davina Perrin, wicket-keeper Abbey Freeborn and all-rounder Charis Pavely.

All five will be recognisable names for Edgbaston regulars with Pavely, who was part of England's U19 World Cup finalist squad in January, the only player not to have experienced the competition already.

Solihull-born Brookes, who is just 23 years old, returns to the Phoenix having taken six wickets in six matches last year. Originally picked by Oval Invincibles in the Vitality Wildcard, Phoenix used their right to match for the right-arm seamer, who's added 12 wickets during this year's Blast campaign.

Brookes' Bears teammate Bethell heads to Phoenix after featuring for Welsh Fire in 2022. The 19-year-old left-hand batting all-rounder was part of the England Under-19 team that reached the World Cup final in 2022, hitting 88 from 42 balls in the quarter-final against South Africa.

Perrin also returns having been the youngest player involved in The Hundred last summer at just 15 years old. Now a year older, the right-hand top-order batter from Wolverhampton will be looking to build on her regular involvement with Sparks this year.

Freeborn, meanwhile, heads to Edgbaston with a wealth of experience in the competition. A wicket-keeper with a knack for scoring quick runs, the 26-year-old makes the short journey from Trent Rockets to Birmingham.

Redditch-born Pavely rounds out the list on the back of making her debut with Central Sparks this year. Just 18 years old, the left-arm all-rounder has impressed domestically with bat and ball.

Henry Brookes said: "I'm really happy to have been signed in the Vitality Wildcard Draft. Having already experienced the competition I was desperate to return, so the opportunity to play for the Phoenix again at my home ground is fantastic.

"It's great to have a draft that rewards form in the Vitality Blast and links up the competitions and I'm hoping to take some of my form into The Hundred. I know the coaching staff and a lot of the players already, so seeing the final squad I'm incredibly excited for the summer ahead."

Abbey Freeborn added: "I can't wait to get started and play in front of a packed-out Edgbaston crowd once again. The support Birmingham Phoenix

get is fantastic and I'm looking forward to being on the home team after being part of the Trent Rockets in previous years.

New signings announced today:

Birmingham Phoenix: Davina Perrin, Abbey Freeborn, Charis Pavely, Jacob Bethell, Henry Brookes

London Spirit: Richa Ghosh*, Lauren Filer, Chloe Hill, Alice Monaghan, Daniel Bell-Drummond, Matt Critchley, Matthew Wade*, Daryl Mitchell*

Manchester Originals: Ami Campbell, Amara Carr, Mahika Gaur, Laura Jackson, Max Holden, Fred Klaassen, Usama Mir*

Northern Superchargers: Georgie Boyce, Lucy Higham, Grace Ballinger, Grace Hall, Leah Dobson*, Ollie Robinson, Saif Zaib, Matthew Short*

Oval Invincibles: Sophia Smale, Beth Langston, Cordelia Griffith, Claudie Cooper, Lizzie Scott*, Tawanda Muyeye, Zak Chappell, Tom Lawes*, Adam Zampa*

Southern Brave: Kalea Moore, Seren Smale, Ellie Anderson, Mary Taylor, Jafer Chohan, Matt Fisher

Trent Rockets: Jo Gardner, Fran Wilson, Nat Wraith, Cassidy McCarthy*, John Turner, Tom Moores

Welsh Fire: Emily Windsor, Ella McCaughan, Georgia Davis, Kate Coppack, Luke Wells, Chris Cooke

**denotes replacement player*

Trent Rockets and Southern Brave will go head-to-head on Tuesday 1 August, the opening matchday of the third year of The Hundred. The double-header is the first of 34 matchdays that promise high-octane men's and women's sporting action, live music, and a host of family-friendly entertainment.

Birmingham Phoenix's campaign kicks off against the Northern Supercharges at Headingley on Thursday 3 August, whilst the first home fixture at Edgbaston takes place two days later against Trent Rockets on Saturday 5 August.ⓧⓧ

Over half a million people attended games during The Hundred's second year in 2022, including a record-breaking 271,000 watching live women's fixtures across the competition and more families buying tickets than in 2021.

Tickets this year remain great value in line with 2022 pricing, with prices set at £5 for juniors aged 6-15, free for children five and under, and adults starting from £12.

Over 14.1 million people tuned in to watch The Hundred action in 2022 and games will again be broadcast live on Sky Sports and BBC broadcast and digital channels throughout the competition.

To stay up to date with the latest news, buy tickets or sign up for priority access, visit thehundred.com or follow The Hundred, and the eight teams, on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About The Hundred:✖

The Hundred is an action-packed, unmissable cricket competition that fuses world-class cricket with blockbuster entertainment.

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

The Hundred features eight 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 teams features✖some of the✖best international and domestic cricketers from around the world, including England Men's & Women's World Cup winners.✖

Highlight statistics from The Hundred 2022:☒

- More than 500,000 people attended games across the course of the competition☒
- The Hundred continued to take cricket to new audiences with more women (28%), children (22%) and families (41%) attending than in the first year☒
- 2022 once again set a new global record for total attendance at a women's cricket competition, with 271,000 people attending☒☒
- All eight venues broke their previous best for domestic women's attendances
- Of the Sky and BBC TV coverage, 42% hadn't watched any other ECB cricket in 2022 prior to The Hundred, resulting in 5.9m new viewers
- Women (31%) and children (14%) made up a significant share of the TV audience

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