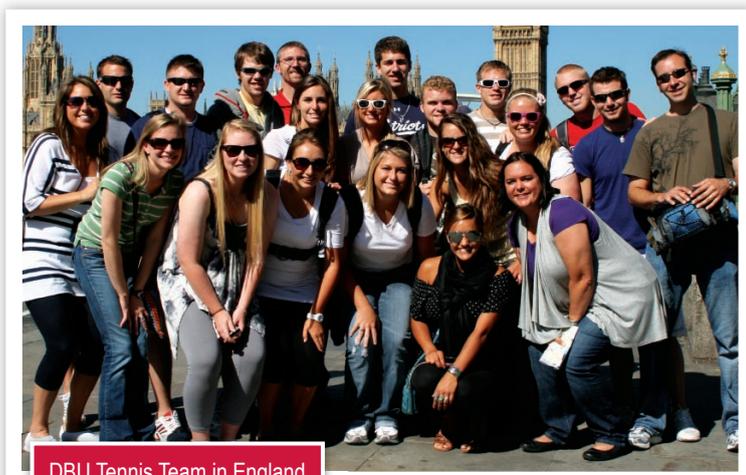


# DBU TENNIS AND GOLF TEAMS *Serve in England*

Written by Ryan Erwin

**THE** Dallas Baptist University Men and Women's Tennis Teams traveled to the Tees Valley area of Northern England on May 17, 2010, for a nine-day mission trip, followed by the Patriot Golf Team who traveled to the United Kingdom on July 26, 2010, for an eight-day mission trip to Northeast England and parts of Scotland.

During their time in England, the Patriot Tennis players were divided into three separate groups—each group assigned to a different church. The DBU student-athletes had the privilege of staying in the homes of church members and experiencing the British culture in their respective households.



Each day the student-athletes spent time working with local churches—serving in their established ministries and teaching tennis lessons and Christianity in public schools. They spent time building relationships with youth groups at each church—taking part in a community-wide, all-night youth outreach and seeking to support and encourage churches and leaders in the community. Tennis clinics allowed the teams many opportunities to share their athletic knowledge and skills and, most importantly, their testimonies of God's grace and love.

"We had the chance to go into the public schools and present the story of the Good Samaritan. We would sing songs about being kind to your neighbor and loving God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. With this simple story we were able to discuss God's love and tell them that He cares for each of them," Head Tennis Coach Jennifer Curran said. "In our attempt to be a blessing to them, they blessed all of us so much. No one came home the same person."

We were all challenged to set a goal of being **intentional** in the way we live our lives and to seek out those who **need the hope of Christ**.

**Christy Gandy**  
Director of Global Missions

"Several students had very real conversations with youth and adults about what it means to be saved, who Jesus is, and how they can have a relationship with Him," Director of Global Missions Christy Gandy said. "Some were burdened for the lost, convicted of their selfishness, and moved to someday return to the people of England. We were all challenged to set a goal of being intentional in the way we live our lives and to seek out those who need the hope of Christ."

The Vineyard Church, which one of the groups worked with throughout the week, met for church on the beach of the North Sea for spiritual rejuvenation and baptisms. The DBU student-athletes were blessed to participate in this special service.

The Patriot Golf Team and four DBU staff members traveled to Northeast England and parts of Scotland. The cities they visited included Middlesbrough, Stockton, Billingham, and Ayr. They were able to serve the local population by assisting Youth for Christ and local pastors.

Time was largely spent ministering to children at city parks—providing them with a safe place for sports and conversation.





DBU Tennis player Lexi Yeado, DBU Head Tennis Coach Jennifer Curran, DBU Tennis player Hannah Innes, and DBU Tennis player Richard Abel lead primary school age children in music at their morning assembly.



Lexi Yeado

The DBU student-athletes taught fundamentals and sportsmanship of soccer, baseball, and golf. By connecting with the children through sports, the DBU team was able to create many successful conversations which included their faith, Christian beliefs, and personal relationships with Christ. Many of the children who attended the local park events came from broken homes and rough areas. When these kids saw that DBU college students came halfway around the world just to meet and spend time with them, it lit up their faces and brightened their spirits.



"I believe we planted seeds through our conversations with the children. While running the batting cage at the sports outreach, I realized how much I take for granted because I grew up going to church. I went into this mission opportunity thinking I was going to change the community, but the community changed me," shared DBU Golfer Kristen Tucker.

The Patriot Golf Team also provided volunteer service to the Stockton Town Pastors at a local festival. The DBU student-athletes were able to minister to the festival attendees through conversations focused on God's love.

"Being able to talk about God with people who, in some cases, had never heard the Gospel is the best opportunity I have ever been given. Spending 10 or 15 minutes talking with a person on the street could change their life and potentially lead them to salvation. That makes everything worth it," said DBU Golfer Justin Wileman.

"This experience has been one of the most memorable of my life," said DBU Golfer Christa Williams. "It rejuvenated my spirit

**The Patriot Athletic Global Sports Mission Initiative was created to allow DBU student-athletes the opportunity to experience other cultures by living and serving abroad as "Champions for Christ."**

and allowed me to see the Lord in mission work, the church, and His beautiful creation on the golf course. No amount of words could express how big the Lord is and how blessed we are by Him."

The Patriot Athletic Global Sports Mission Initiative was created to allow DBU student-athletes the opportunity to experience other cultures by living and serving abroad as "Champions for Christ," which is exactly what the tennis players, golf players, and coaches did. The young student-athletes served and shared their faith in Christ as they used their God-given talents to minister and spread the Word among the people of England.



DBU Head Golf Coach Kenny Trapp shows a local child how to swing a baseball bat in a park in Stockton, England.