

## SPORT

# “I’M IN MUM’S BAD BOOKS!”

Alfie Hewett has two Paralympic silver medals, two US Open singles titles, three US Open doubles titles, three Wimbledon doubles titles and the French Open men’s singles – and he’s still only 22!

**WHEELCHAIR** tennis star Alfie Hewett is one of the sport’s most successful athletes, with several Grand Slams and two Paralympic silver medals to his name. He talked to *First News* about his career highlights, future plans, and how he’s coping with the COVID-19 lockdown.

● **How have you been keeping active in the lockdown?**

I’m trying my best to keep active. It’s obviously difficult. Every athlete is managing in their own ways. I live out in the sticks in Norfolk so it’s a peaceful and quiet area to go out for a push, and to do sprints on the pathways.

To be back home and not have [the gym and court] on hand means I have to be creative and imaginative with what I do. But I’m in Mum’s bad books because I’ve turned the conservatory into a home gym!

● **As an athlete, what has been the most frustrating thing about the lockdown for you?**

I accept the situation and there’s a bigger picture out there, it’s completely out of our control, everyone’s in the same boat. You can still do lots of other things: I’ve been watching lots of matches and doing more analysis than I have before.

The physical side is restrictive and I haven’t picked up a racket since the second week of March now. It’s quite strange! I think the most difficult thing I’ve struggled with in this period is motivation. But it’s quite good for us as athletes to take the strain off our bodies.

● **Do you have any tips for our readers about how to stay fit during this unusual time?**

What I found was the turning point for me was structure: most people have structure in their day, whether it’s going to school or to work. To have that taken away was [tough]. So the night before, I make a schedule for my day. Then within that, weigh up what you can and can’t do, write yourself a programme. Just get it down on paper. There’s lots of help on the internet, like apps for physical activity.

● **How did you first get into tennis?**

When I was seven I was diagnosed with a hip condition called Perthes’ disease. That’s why I came to be in a wheelchair. Obviously to have my life change

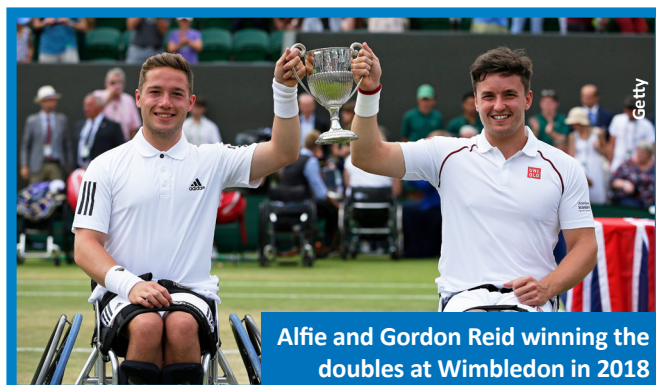
and be told I had to be in a wheelchair was a struggle. My mum and my family were big drivers behind getting me back involved with sport, so they took me to Stoke Mandeville

[a hospital] where anyone with a disability could try various para-sports. Then every Wednesday evening I was on the court with a group of other disabled people. It was to help my self-esteem, get social again, be happy and be active: all those benefits that sport can bring.

● **You’ve won so much, and starting at such a young age, but what has been the stand-out moment so far?**

Playing at the Rio 2016 Paralympics [above] was just unbelievable, a dream come true. To go and play as well as I did and get two medals was unexpected! To look up and see [my family] all there with the flag, it was something I’ll never forget.

As for the Grand Slams, it doesn’t get much better than Wimbledon. It’s such an amazing place to go. The support is incredible; every time, the support has blown my mind. I love that sort of atmosphere.



Alfie and Gordon Reid winning the doubles at Wimbledon in 2018

**GLOSSARY**

**Paralympics** – a parallel Olympic Games for athletes with disabilities, it is played every four years  
**analysis** – looking at something very carefully in order to better understand something about it  
**schedule** – a published list of events and the order they will happen in  
**Perthes’ disease** – a rare condition that affects a child’s hip joint  
**para-sports** – sports for people with disabilities

**Wimbledon** – one of the four Grand Slams, played every year in London. It is viewed as the most prestigious tennis tournament in the world  
**conservatory** – a room with a glass roof and walls, attached to a house at one side and used as a sun lounge or for growing plants



**SPORT NEWS**

1. Complete this fact file on the sport star featured in this interview.

<b>NAME</b>	
<b>AGE</b>	
<b>SPORT</b>	
<b>COMPETITIONS WON</b>	

2. Where in the news article do you find the precise information about the titles Alfie has won?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Lead paragraph	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caption on the photo	<input type="checkbox"/>	In the response to the second interview question
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3. Explain the medical condition that Alfie suffered from when he was seven years old.

4a. What did Alfie’s family do to get him involved in sport?

4b. What benefits does he say sport brings?

5. Alfie says: “It doesn’t get much better than Wimbledon.” What are the reasons for this being a highlight of his life so far?

6. He says in the interview that he lives in Norfolk “out in the sticks”. What do you think this phrase means?

7. Why is Alfie in his mum’s bad books?

8. Why is he **watching** tennis matches at the moment?

9a. Look at the headline for this interview. What technique does the journalist use to write this headline?

<input type="checkbox"/>	They use alliteration (where each word starts with the same sound).
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<input type="checkbox"/>	They use a pun (play on words).
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<input type="checkbox"/>	They use a quote from the interview.
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9b. How is an interview different to a news report?  
 Write down all the differences you can think of.

10. Do you agree with Alfie’s tips for how to cope with lockdown? Explain your thoughts or say what advice you would give.

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**TEACHER ANSWERS**

**AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS:** News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news ‘stories’ are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

**TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE:** The teacher answers are intended to provide a quick reference guide. Suggestions are given for the 'Expected response' or starting point that pupils could give. The 'Development' then gives more in-depth ideas that students can work towards as they develop their reading comprehension skills.

For a list of the reading skills used, please email [schools@firstnews.co.uk](mailto:schools@firstnews.co.uk).

1. Complete this fact file on the sport star featured in this interview.

READING SKILL – Find and explain information  
(NC 2a)

**Expected response**

<b>NAME</b>	Alfie Hewett
<b>AGE</b>	22
<b>SPORT</b>	Wheelchair tennis
<b>COMPETITIONS WON</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Paralympic silver medals</li> <li>• Two US Open singles titles</li> <li>• Three US Open doubles titles</li> <li>• Three Wimbledon doubles titles</li> <li>• French Open men’s singles</li> </ul>

2. Where in the news article do you find the precise information about the titles Alfie has won?

READING SKILL – Identify benefits of text organisation and terminology  
(NC 2f)

**Expected response**

Lead paragraph
  Caption on the photo
  In the response to the second interview question

3. Explain the medical condition that Alfie suffered from when he was seven years old.

READING SKILL – Summarise information from more than one paragraph  
(NC 2e)

**Expected response**

- He found out he had a condition called Perthes’ disease, which caused problems with his hip.

**Development**

- The problems caused by Perthes’ disease affected Alfie’s mobility and meant that he had to use a wheelchair.

4a. What did Alfie’s family do to get him involved in sport?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information  
(NC 2a)

**Expected response**

- They encouraged Alfie to become involved in sport even though he was in a wheelchair, and took him to a hospital called Stoke Mandeville where he could try out different kinds of para-sports.

**Development**

- His family provided him with every opportunity to try out sports for people in wheelchairs and find one that he enjoyed.

**4b.** What benefits does he say sport brings?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

**Expected response**

- Helped with his self-esteem.
- Helped him to mix and socialise with other children.
- Helped him be happy.
- Helped him be active again.

**5.** Alfie says: “It doesn’t get much better than Wimbledon.” What are the reasons for this being a highlight of his life so far?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

**Expected response**

- It was an amazing place to go. The support he had there blew his mind and he loved the atmosphere.

**Development**

- Alfie loved Wimbledon because there was such a huge amount of support from the crowd. The clapping and cheering created an amazing atmosphere on the court during the final. This really encouraged Alfie and made it an amazing occasion to be a competitor in.
- As the competition is in the UK, Alfie was playing in front of a huge home crowd who were all cheering for him. Imagine the noise from the crowd during the final, that must have been a unique and inspirational experience.

**6.** He says in the interview that he lives in Norfolk “out in the sticks”. What do you think this phrase means?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

**Expected response**

- He says “it’s a peaceful and quiet area” where he lives. This phrase means a quiet and non-busy place.

**Development**

- He lives in a rural area, so in the countryside, not a town or city.

**7.** Why is Alfie in his mum’s bad books?

READING SKILL – Find and explain information

(NC 2a)

**Expected response**

- He’s turned his mum’s conservatory into a home gym because he can't go to a gym.

**8.** Why is he **watching** tennis matches at the moment?

READING SKILL – Infer information and justify with evidence

(NC 2c & 8)

**Expected response**

- Alfie can’t play tennis at the moment because of COVID-19, lockdown and not being able to leave the house to play in tennis matches.

**Development**

- As he can’t play in tennis matches at the moment, he is watching tennis matches to see how other tennis players play, and to analyse matches to see if he can learn techniques from other players.

**9a.** Look at the headline for this interview. What technique does the journalist use to write this headline?

READING SKILL – Understanding journalistic writing techniques and the terms (words) used to describe them

Recognising effect of language choices

(NC 2f & 3)

They use alliteration (where each word starts with the same sound).

They use a pun (play on words).

They use a quote from the interview.

**9b.** How is an interview different to a news report?

Write down all the differences you can think of.

READING SKILL – Understanding journalistic writing techniques and the terms (words) used to describe them

**Expected response**

- The structure is questions followed by the answers.
- It is written in first person with the direct words from the person being interviewed used in the responses to the questions.
- The journalist talks directly to the interviewee to get the information for the story.

**10.** Do you agree with Alfie’s tips for how to cope with lockdown? Explain your thoughts or say what advice you would give.

READING SKILLS – Develop personal responses to news stories

*Pupils will have personal responses to this question.*