

Notts come back for more as young Norfolk star Ben signs on again

Cricket

Gresham's Senior School pupil, Ben Wilcox, has been selected to join Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club's Supported Talented Age Group (STAG) player programme for the second year running.

All-rounder Ben, 14, who is part of the Norfolk Cricket Board's Emerging Players Programme (EPP), led by former first-class cricketer and Gresham's cricket coach Chris Brown, has already featured in Norfolk's U14 and U15 teams.

Ben, who was knocked for six when he received his contract, said: "I was really surprised and I am so excited!"

He began playing cricket when

he was seven and looks to Yorkshire and England's Jonny Bairstow for on-pitch inspiration.

Brown, who has coached Ben through Norfolk's EPP, has provided an unrivalled link and pathway for talented players in Norfolk through to

Northamptonshire, Essex and Nottinghamshire where he currently works on their Academy programme.

"Ben had developed through our age groups and EPP and with the strong link now established at

Nottinghamshire CCC,"

said Brown. "He is amongst four Norfolk EPP players connected with their Academy and STAG programmes."

With Brown being director of cricket at Gresham's, it gives the Nottinghamshire STAG programme more contact and access to Ben during school time

for him to work on his skills during the winter months. Nottinghamshire director of cricket, Mick Newell is coming to work on the programme with Brown at the end of November. Ben will follow a programme of cricket skills and conditioning-based training set up by Brown and the STAG Academy director, Matt Wood.

Steve Adams, Gresham's sports development director said: "This is a fabulous accolade for Ben and he is certainly deserving of this Academy contract. Ben is a very talented player and at only 13 represented the School first XI last season which is a fabulous achievement at this age. Ben is a passionate sportsman and I wish him every success with this venture and knowing he is under Chris' guidance at school will mean he is looked after properly in terms of his cricket and academic development."

