PRESS RELEASE No. 13/185

8 October 2013

[**New Zealand coach appointed to begin new era for Loughborough Lightning**](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/service/publicity/news-releases/2013/185_Margaret-Foster.html)

Loughborough University, the best University for Sport in the UK, has today announced the appointment of Margaret Foster as the new head coach of the Loughborough Lightning netball franchise.

Margaret, better known as ‘Marg’, is a household figure back home in New Zealand, as a successful businesswoman, media personality and author, alongside being an inspirational coach and mentor.

She has won a number of accolades including in 2009 being awarded the New Zealand ‘Order of Merit’ for her contribution to sport and netball in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list.

After a playing career which culminated in representing the New Zealand ‘Silver Ferns’ netball team, Marg has been involved in coaching for over 20 years in settings that include schools, clubs, franchises, national and international squads.

After retiring from playing, Marg remained part of the national set up as a selector for the Silver Ferns in 2002, and as the head coach of the New Zealand ‘A’ and Netball Academy squads from 2002-2003.

Marg also took on the role of sports analyst for New Zealand during their 2003 Netball World Cup victory and silver medal success at the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games.

More recently Marg has been contracted as head coach at Christchurch Netball Centre, who finished third in the New Zealand national netball championships last week.

Marg has also been the assistant coach for Waikato Bay of Plenty Magic and Southern Steel, franchises that play in the ANZ Netball Championships.

Internationally she was the coach and mentor for the Cook Islands squad who finished second in the South Pacific Series in 2011, and has also worked with players in St Lucia.

Speaking of her appointment Marg Foster said:

"We are really looking forward to sharing our experiences with the Loughborough team. The university has an amazing name throughout the world, especially in sport, and we are excited to be able to be immersed into this environment.

“We want to be one step ahead, by using innovation, and finding different ways to bring the best out in our athletes who are passionate about succeeding, both on and off the court."

Marg will arrive in Loughborough, situated in the heart of England, in November 2013 and will be joined by fellow Kiwi Shelley Norris, who has recently been contracted as the assistant coach at Christchurch Netball Centre.

The coaching team for the 2013-14 season also includes new netball coordinator Tara St Clair, and BUCS first team coach Kaylea McQuade.

They will join an institution that was recently awarded the title of [University of the Year for Sport](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/service/publicity/news-releases/2013/181_Sport-Uni.html) by The Times Good University Guide 2014, and has a proud record of sporting excellence and achievement.

Peter Keen, Director of Sport at Loughborough University, said:

“We are very much looking forward to welcoming Marg to Loughborough.  Her philosophy of developing and empowering players to achieve their potential fits very well with our own, and this is a big step forward for our netball programme.  We are all looking forward to learning and developing our squad with Marg, and to the forthcoming competitive season!”

Loughborough Lightning is one of the eight teams that play in the Netball Super League, the premier tournament for the sport in the country. The new season will begin in February 2014.

Fixture dates will be released shortly and published on the Loughborough Lightning [website](http://loughboroughsport.com/loughborough-lightning/).

Trials for the 2014 Lightning squad will be taking place through October and November. Further details can be found on our website or by contacting Jo Emmett, Lightning Franchise Director on j.emmett@lboro.ac.uk.

−ENDS−

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#### Notes for editors:

Loughborough is one of the country’s leading universities, with an international reputation for research that matters, excellence in teaching, strong links with industry, and unrivalled achievement in sport and its underpinning academic disciplines.

It was awarded the coveted Sunday Times University of the Year 2008-09 title, and is consistently ranked in the top twenty of UK universities in national newspaper league tables. It has been voted England's Best Student Experience for six years running in the Times Higher Education league, and in recognition of its contribution to the sector, the University has been awarded six Queen's Anniversary Prizes.

It is a member of the 1994 Group of 11 leading research-intensive universities. The Group was established in 1994 to promote excellence in university research and teaching. Each member undertakes diverse and high-quality research, while ensuring excellent levels of teaching and student experience.