



## **NESTA Committee Meeting**

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018, 7pm, Mill of Mundurno, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen

### **Agenda**

- *Prior minutes*
- *STA development workshop*
- *STA funding request*
- *Winter/regional training update*
- *Regionals funding*
- *Website/2019 advertising*
- *2019 look ahead*
- *Payment for nationals (just past)*
- *Regional training - will NESTA contribute to costs?*
- *Looking to next season - tournaments? Anything over winter (ASV?)*
- *Leagues?*
- *AOB*

### **Attendees**

Iain Mackenzie, Monica Wallace, Alasdair Gossip, Matthew Sharkey, Christina Farr, Leon Chan

### **Prior minutes**

Apologies for AGM Minutes not produced yet – due to family bereavement.

### **STA development workshop**

STA development day was held at Dundee David Lloyd.

12 coaches attended including Monica Wallace and Iain Craik, and there is now a coaching group setup.

There is a need for 2 or 3 coaches to be on the STA board and a coaching coordinator is required for the STA. Coaching Courses will be organised.

Regarding Comms - it was noted that parents of the youth team(s) are keen to help, Rachel just needs to ask. EFT is to distribute the information.

Youth development – Amy Martin is looking at developing an information pack. End goals to be defined.

AG has copy of old youth training material known as “Priority 6” training - we will target national players with this (in southern hemisphere the target for this level of training is 10 year olds). AG will contact Amy regarding this.

Noted that there is no one based in Aberdeen in a youth development role now. Amy and Jen are now based in Edinburgh and Glasgow respectively. Is anything to be done before the start of the

2019 season? Minimum age group – Primary 6 upto S1 /2. Determine if the touch community have any links to; Mackie Academy, Ellon Academy, Deeside, Portlethen, BoD etc.

During the STA Meeting that was attended, STS events and competitions were also discussed.

Possibly looking at developing a 3-way STS for Edinburgh/Glasgow/Stirling. The 4<sup>th</sup> STS may be dropped, i.e. Aberdeen (or Dundee as it was last year).

Glasgow were planning to run another beginners' touch tournament, Edinburgh also planned to run something developmental, Stirling will have the Wallace Cup tournament.

Question was raised as to when we would find out if Aberdeen was to hold a 4<sup>th</sup> STS or possibly a single sex tournament. Currently unknown.

MW to enquire so that we can produce a calendar for NESTA purposes.

MW has national squad training dates available already, which will also be included in a NESTA calendar of events.

It was felt there were not enough tournaments for lower levels of beginners and intermediates.

More beginner and intermediate tournaments would make Touch more accessible to people.

A query was raised regarding the STS “tiered” survey and the thoughts behind this. Currently awaiting release of results from the STA.

Deadlines and Actions information is required from the STA development day. MW to chase this up so we can keep the momentum going.

### **STA funding request**

Issue raised that STA had been in contact with NESTA regarding borrowing money to pay for World Cup entry fees.

Lynne Gordon was approached by Kirsty Wheeler (who is on the National Squad Committee).

The request was made to borrow money from Regions ahead of the selections, to pay for up-front costs.

It was believed that payment was required by 1<sup>st</sup> December of around £4300 in total. This would cover entry for 6 teams, but it was felt that there probably would not be enough people for 6 teams.

It was noted that we should know the squads and members soon as training due to start in 2 – 3 weeks' time.

STA have requested personal money from MW, KW, Michael Bottom. is no finance-responsible person for the National Squad yet. Players currently need to pay up by certain dates.

Question was raised - If NESTA agreed to lend money, when would this money be returned?

It was suggested that if money was lent to STA then there should be a clause to have the money returned by end of February, for example. (Put conditions on loan, maybe requiring instalments by certain dates, etc.).

Fees were to be collected at the time when the squads were announced (it was also commented that the selection process has seemed highly inefficient & time-consuming). Discussion whether to offer 25% of the full amount but expect an agreed for terms of repayment. Also to discuss as part of repayment, whether the STA can actually help to promote touch in the North East and even help with development such as having an STS tournament back in Aberdeen, or a Tournament organised and run by the STA or even training camps.

It was agreed that NESTA should support STA with a loan, but this should also be with caution. 25% is the initial offer but there is the capacity to offer more. (Monica/Iain).

### **Regionals funding & Payment for nationals (just past)**

Question raised – are there minutes from a previous meeting deciding what would be covered (this was last year's committee remit)?

As the STA have billed us late, I suspect there will be no chance of getting money from players - IF that was the agreed plan. However, bill still needs to be paid, and it might be a good time to plan for next year.

Nationals Tournament 2018 – Fees. 2 teams were entered at a cost of £140 per team but this entry fee was never paid and players were not told about it or asked to contribute. NESTA will cover the outstanding amount.

Agreed that NESTA can cover the upfront cost with players to make a contribution.

The policy going forward as proposed by this committee is that NESTA will contribute 50% of the cost with players cover the other half. Assuming the entry fee will be unchanged in 2019, this will be £5 per player. (Iain McKenzie, Gemma Campbell)

### **Website/2019 advertising**

Agreed that NESTA need to try to do more to promote touch.

KM has access to website now and agreed that we need to promote and publicise.

Website – Cost £22 to get back up and running.

### **2019 look ahead / Leagues**

Recent survey from ATR regarding pitches at Woodside discussed.

Agreed that results were a fair assessment and that points were highlighted that had not been thought to be issues, e.g. different coloured paint for score zones, cutting grass, etc.

Suggested that further surveys are sent out after the end of each League.

Question was raised as to whether NESTA had looked at alternative pitches or people to run the leagues. Response was that the survey was just for feedback and to see what ATR will be able to do. Noted that Question 8 showed that 14% said no to attending again.

Discussed responsibility of promoting touch – ATR and/or NESTA?

It was agreed that it is not primarily ATR's job to do this and that NESTA should investigate other options.

However, there is a shortage of interested and available volunteers.

It was also noted that finding an alternative venue is an issue. Sport Aberdeen had previously been contacted regarding this but we had been unsuccessful in identifying an alternative location.

Suggestions made to promote touch / marketing touch included:

- Push rugby club(s) to help more
- Commitment required from ATR to improve pitches, where possible.

Question was raised regarding if "losing" the STS tournament in 2018 was related to ground conditions. Unsure what is happening with STS tournaments going forward.

It was also stated that although we can't change where/when Leagues are held, we are able to influence the number of players involved.

Things that put players off include high costs, pitches not as good as expected, bar not open, no food available.

Can NESTA also work on the social side?

Also suggested that we should consider extra 1-day tournaments based around Aberdeenshire. e.g. proposed beginners' tournament at Mackie Academy last year didn't happen.

It was noted that Rachel Howe was STA marketing contact and KM was NESTA marketing contact. These contacts should be utilised to improve awareness.

Actions from last year did not happen. Sharp drop in volunteers and support from STA (Kat to discuss with Rachel)

### **Regional training / Tournaments / Winter training update**

Question raised as to whether NESTA will contribute to costs of this.

Improving skills at Regional level, pushed down from National teams didn't really happen as expected.

Concerns were raised that U18's were all at Edinburgh.

It was suggested that NESTA should organise another beginners' tournament.

Indoor tournament to be organised. Need to decide on time, venue, target audience, coaches, national level support.

Also proposed that signs are purchased for advertising social touch when playing at Duthie Park. Robin suggested to contact regarding this as he works for Lofthus Signs.

Need to also look at beginner sessions such as the ones Audrey Philpott has run previously.

Suggested that we pitch it by encouraging social touch to start with.

That was agreed and also suggested that we need to push it and maybe contact ASV. Need to look at ASV availability, noting that weekends are usually very busy.

MS to talk to ASV regarding availability in February/March (he agreed to ask at board meeting in 2 weeks' time). ASV had previously been keen to get involvement in touch tournaments.

MW also has RGU contacts (outside) that could possibly be utilised too.

It was noted that Hillhead astroturf and Dyce 4G pitches are also optional locations.

Agreed to try to look at these locations for regional training and promote it and social touch better.

MS has to develop Level 1 or 2 referee courses so this will also help with that.

Winter Regional Training – Not to be aimed strictly at elite level. Open to all.

Post X-Mas 6 weeks indoor sessions to be booked (Steph and Gemma)

NESTA can cover the upfront cost with players to make a contribution.

Facility at Woodside a possibility for regional training later on in the year?

### **AOB – Active Schools**

Active Schools sessions were good. Around 12 attendees most weeks. – (Ali Gossip) to handover with (Jen Wright)

Took a while to work out how to instruct them.

Unrealistic expectations to get them playing in 6 weeks.

Need to target schools but need to make sure there is a resource available to teachers.

Suggested maybe trying to organise a schools tournament.

Need an end game.

Amy can / will produce something.

Info needs to be available before we push it out (Amy / Jenn to deal with).

Noted that Ian Gray started to do something, but not continued.

Question raised regarding what we already have access to – eg. Singapore or Touch Australia websites

Suggested that Becky may have information from learning touch at school in KL.

Need to be careful we don't lose this school year / in service days.

Edinburgh has 200+ kids that went to play touch over the summer.

Mackie / Portlethen / Ellon noted as locations that have rugby teams and/or kids that may be interested.

Need to contact clubs regarding teaching touch.

Robin coaches at Banchory / Deeside.

Suggest go back to clubs to ask if interested in doing touch.

MW to ask Andy/Robin/Neil. AG to assist.

Also suggested taking girls that play netball in P5/P6/P7/S1/S2

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