



# 2016 AGM & OGM MINUTES

## 2016 Annual General Meeting of the England Touch Association

**Venue:** Meeting room 1, British Cycling, National Cycling Centre, Stuart Street, Manchester, M11 4DQ

**Date:** 09:00 Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2016

### ***Order of Business:***

#### **1 Opening address and welcome**

Gregg Cropper (GC), England Touch President, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Start at 09:00.

#### **2 Apologies**

Apologies received from:

##### **2.1 Committee and post holders:**

Shelley Grace (Referee Director)

Doug Benzie (Finance Director)

Matt Thomas (Schools Liaison)

Cathryn Ogle (Apparel Coordinator)

Kate Hyde (DBS Systems)

##### **2.2 Members:**

Club - Blackadders

Club - Bristol Fijians

Club - Canterbury

Club - Galaxy London

Club - Green and Gold

Club - Hot Custard

Club - London Scorpions

Club - Mawsley

Club - Northamptonshire Helix

Club - Nottingham

Club - Oakmeadians

Club - Percy Park

Club - Peterborough

Club - Rugby Barbearians

Club - Saracens Veterans

Club - South London

Club - Tumeke

Club - Warwick

Club - Wixams

League - Bath Touch

League - Bedford

League - Bristol Touch League

League - Chippenham

League - Medway

League - Midlands Ladies Touch League

League - Norwich

League - Percy Park

University of Oxford

University of Sheffield

University of Southampton

University of Bath

University of Exeter

##### **2.3 No show:**

Club - Chester Cheetahs

Club - Crewe and Nantwich

Club - Orrel St James

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## 3 Registration and accreditation of nominated delegates

Discussions around whether proxy voting are to be allowed (if it is not specifically outlined as to what/who the proxies have been given for), as this contradicts the constitution, but has been custom and practice in the previous AGMs. A majority vote was held to decide the outcome:

Take proxy votes as they are, whereby the person nominated as the proxy can vote as they wish	13
Only count proxy votes where it has been specifically outlined what/who the vote is for	7
Abstaining	2

*Note: A large piece of work to update the constitution and articles is currently underway, which will hopefully alleviate these issues going forward.*

The majority voted for the proxies to be taken as they stand, whereby the person nominated as the proxy can vote as they wish on behalf of that member.

Attendees and voting rights conferred (not all get a vote – those in red are without votes):

### 3.1 Committee and post holders:

NAME	REPRESENTING	VOTES
Gregg Cropper (GC)	President	1
Mike Roa (MR)	Vice President <i>proxy</i> : Finance Director, Galaxy, Hot Custard, London Scorpions, Tumeke.	6
Carly Heselwood (CH)	Governance Director	1
Ben Powell (BP)	Technical Director <i>proxy</i> : Bath University, Blackadders, Bedford League, Canterbury, COYS, Exeter University, Mawsley, Medway League, Midlands Ladies League, Northampton Helix, Norwich League, Oakmedians, Oxford University, Percy Park, Percy Park League, Peterborough, Referee Director, Rugby Barbarians, Saracens Veterans, Sheffield University, Wixams.	22
Tim Osborne (TO)	High Performance Director	1
Kevin Hill (KH)	Tournaments Director <i>proxy</i> : Chippenham League, Manchester Chargers, Altrincham, Southampton University, Warwick.	6
Ken Pollard (KP)	Development Director <i>proxy</i> : Nottingham Club.	2
Cari Thorpe (CT)	Head of Medical Services	1
Rich King (RK)	Membership, Affiliation & Insurance Manager	1
Julia Kang (JK)	Marketing & PR Manager / <b>Disclosure Manager</b>	1
Gary Lambert (GL)	<b>Liaison Officer</b>	0
Lois Lau (LL)	<b>Secretary</b> <i>proxy</i> : South London Touch Rugby Club.	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>43</b>

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## 3.2 Members and other attendees:

NAME	REPRESENTING	VOTES
Adele Langlois	Lincoln	1
Chris Simon	Nottingham Perfect Motion League <i>proxy: Bath League, Bristol League.</i>	3
Chris Wall	CSSC Club, CSSC League – Battersea, CSSC League – Tooting Bec.	3
Will Ten Broeke	Thames Valley Vikings	1
Jeff Bimson	Wigan Warriors <i>proxy: Green &amp; Gold.</i>	2
Joelene Hughes	Oxford	1
Jon Lovell	Cambridge Hornets, Cambridge League.	2
Mike Abromowitz	In2Touch Clapham Common, In2Touch Putney/Wandsworth, In2Touch Regents Park, In2Touch Richmond, In2Touch Wandsworth Common, In2Touch St Albans, In2Touch Surrey Quays, In2Touch - Burnage.	8
Piula Tu’lono	Halton	1
Ryan Miemczyk	Bareback Riders	1
Sammie Phillips	In2Touch Maidenhead <i>proxy: In2Touch Oxford, In2Touch Reading.</i>	3
Ian Syder	Potential new Referee Director	0
Tom Conway	RFU	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>26</b>

Total available votes above from all sources = 43 + 26 = 69 votes. However Gregg Cropper’s Committee vote will not count due to conflict of interest and therefore total applicable votes = 68 votes.

Meeting was deemed quorate as > 10 members present in person who are eligible to vote.

## 4 Receive and consider the minutes of the previous AGM

Minor amendments to acknowledge:

- Nancy Lyndhurst has stepped down from the PR/Marketing Director role prior to the AGM and therefore her vote should not count. Note: This was an oversight and had no bearing on any voted decisions.
- It was raised that Paul Farrington has voting rights for Maidenhead, Oxford and Reading (these are separate from the 9 In2Touch votes) – therefore they did not exceed the 20% quota and should all have been counted as valid votes. This will be investigated for clarity going forward. Note: This had no bearing on any voted decisions.

Otherwise, the minutes from the 2014 AGM were accepted by all present.

<http://www.EnglandTouch.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/2014-AGM-OGM-Minutes-v1.0.pdf>

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## 5 Directors Reports: Verbal summary

Written reports have been published as part of the 2014/15 Annual Report, which can be found here: [https://www.dropbox.com/s/cx180w7u3wkldxs/England Touch Annual Report 2014 15 Complete.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/cx180w7u3wkldxs/England_Touch_Annual_Report_2014_15_Complete.pdf?dl=0)

The following board members gave verbal summaries of their areas of responsibility:

- Gregg Cropper, President

GC gave a brief overview of 2015. Highlights included achieving 3<sup>rd</sup> in the world rankings at the Touch World Cup in Australia in 2015, the success of NTS/CTS series, the growth of Nationals, and the inaugural Junior Touch Championships at Nottingham.

GC also mentioned the executive planning meeting at the committee away day in November, where there are lots of exciting new ideas and projects in the pipeline for the coming year(s). The task descriptions for all committee posts have now been re-vamped to reflect changes/growth of those roles and better identify suitable candidates in the future. A skill gap analysis is also almost complete. The new membership scheme introduced last year has generally been well received showing a 233% increase with over 850 individuals now registered. In 2015 we had over 100 volunteers play their part and 11 new clubs affiliated to England Touch. GC finished with thanking all those who'd been a big part of the association in 2015 and touched on the 8 pillars on which England Touch will follow moving forward.

- Mike Roa, Vice President

Nothing to add.

- Ben Powell, Technical Director

BP outlined the numerous coaching and development courses delivered throughout England (included a few abroad) in 2015. With an increase in number of qualified coaches, course presenters and development officers, there are plans for even more courses to be delivered over 2016.

Nationals once again were huge success, with the addition of the Masters division and a developing mixed division being successfully rolled out. The title was fiercely contested in each division, and competition for individual selection into national squads was more difficult than ever. Planning has already begun for 2016 Nationals, being bigger and better than ever. It will be a 3-day event, with U15 junior division and W27 division being added.

- Shelley Grace, Referee Director

GC gave a summary in SG's absence. It has been a good year for referees, with 8 England referees being selected to represent at the TWC2015. There is also increasing interests from overseas referees to attend our NTS and Nationals due to the higher standard of competitive games.

A number of referee courses were delivered in 2015. With an increase in number of referee course presenters and a referee manager dedicated to coordinating courses, the plan is to deliver even more courses and ensure that those having attended the theory part can then be assessed on-field.

SG is stepping down from the Referee Director role after 4 years. A proposal has been submitted on how to split the role into 3 distinct areas for the workload to be shared out. GC wanted to thank SG for all her hard work and dedication in her time as NDR.

- Carly Heselwood, Governance Director

CH updated the group on the progress with the safeguarding policy, welfare policy, the voluntary code of good governance. Safeguarding has been a priority this year, especially with the growth in juniors playing touch.

## 6 Financial Report

MR gave a brief summary of ETA finances in the absence of DB. Figures are outlined in the annual report. DB is working to align the annual reporting of cash flow with the touch season.

## 7 Election for Executive Committee

MR led the proceedings to elect a new England Touch CEO:

- CEO (formerly President) - Standing: Gregg Cropper (GC)  
- Standing: Mike Abromowitz (MA)

Both members standing were given 5 minutes to state their cases as to why they would like the role. They were then invited to leave the room where a paper voting system was conducted.

For Gregg Cropper: 47 votes

For Mike Abromowitz: 21 votes

GC was declared the new CEO for England Touch for 2016. He continued chairing the rest of the meeting.

The following positions only have one candidate standing for election each. They were therefore declared elected unopposed at the AGM:

- Governance Director - Carly Heselwood (CH)
- Technical Director - Ben Powell (BP)
- High Performance Director - Tim Osborne (TO)
- Tournaments Director - Kevin Hill (KH)

The Finance Director role is recruited by the Board based on appropriate skill sets. DB has applied to stay on in the role and has been re-appointed:

- Finance Director - Doug Benzie (DB)

## 8 Appointment of General Committee

The Medical Services Manager role is similar to that of the Finance Director. The newly appointed executive committee made the following appointment:

- Medical Services Director - Cari Thorpe (CT)

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The following candidates were declared elected unopposed at the AGM:

- Referee Managers (shared role) - Stephen Dubreuil, Ian Syder & Nicolas Van de Rijt
- Marketing & PR Director - Julia Kang (JK)
- Membership, Affiliation & Insurance Director - Rich King (RK)
- Development Director - Ken Pollard (KP)

Stephen Dubreuil (SD) will be the regions liaison, Ian Syder (IS) will lead on NTS/CTS events and Nationals, whilst Nicolas Van de Rijt (NVR) will be the referee courses coordinator.

Sub-committee members:

- Schools Liaison - Matt Thomas (MT)
- Secretary - Lois Lau (LL)
- Safeguarding Officer - Ben Powell (BP) & Cari Thorpe (CT)
- Disclosure Manager - Julia Kang (JK)
- Apparel Coordinator - Cathryn Ogle (CO)

## 9 To consider any proposed changes to the Association structure

CH gave an overview of several legal structures, outlining their main pros and cons. In the UK there is no single recognised legal structure required for NGBs of sport. England Touch is currently registered through Companies House as Private Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG).

It was agreed that a small Task and Finish Group would look further into this and develop a proposal to recommend to the Board.

**ACTION:** Volunteers with the right skillset for the Task and Finish Group are to contact CH.

## 10 Update on ETA structure map

GC presented the new structure for England Touch, which is summarised in the following diagram. The minor changes to the Executive Committee board were:

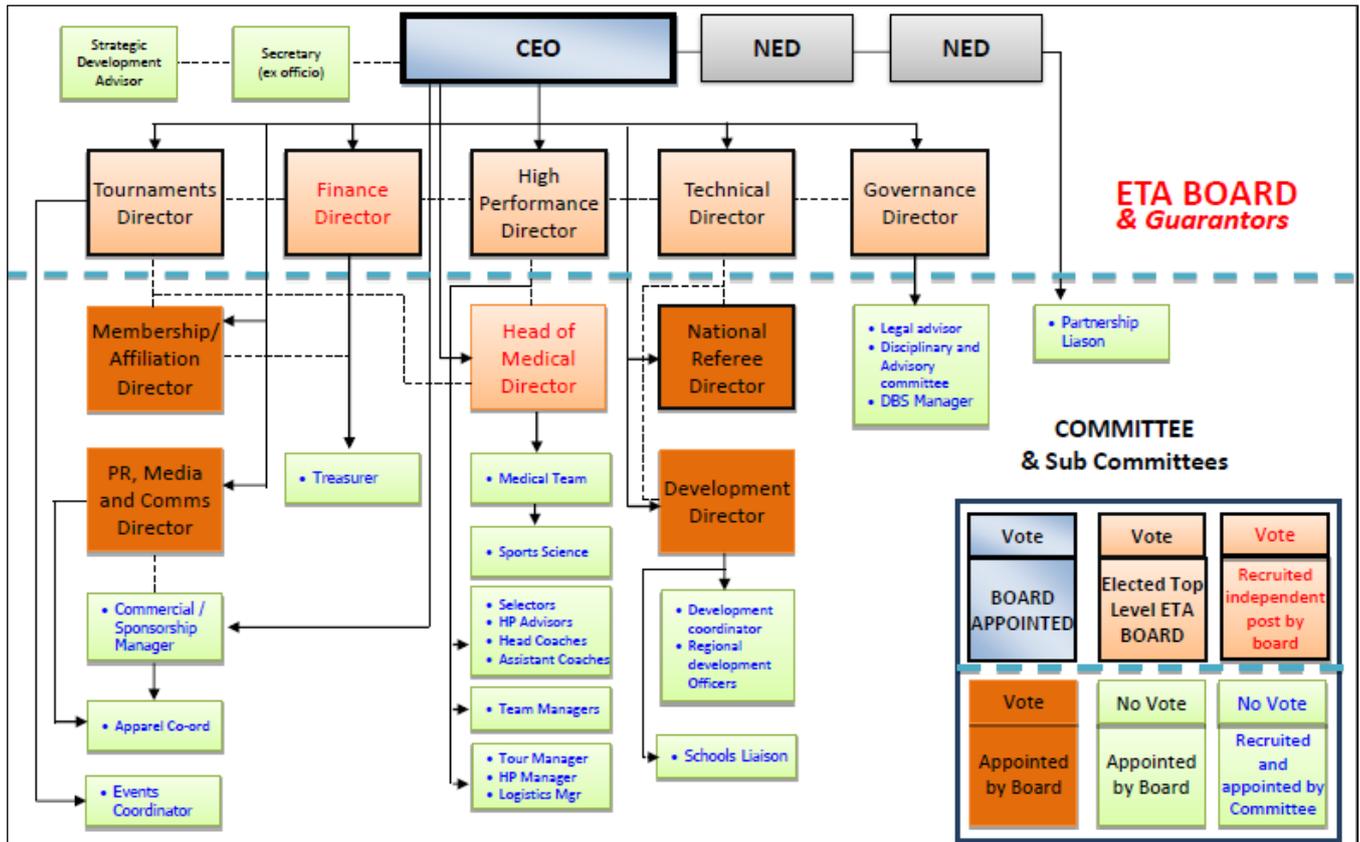
- The President is now the CEO, name change based on good practice guidance from Sport and Recreation Alliance.
- The Vice President role is no longer required to manage the roles of Referee, Governance and Technical Directors, who were all capable of carrying out their roles without oversight.
- Events Director and High Performance Director are now both on the Executive Board, based on the activities England Touch is most known for and amount of work these roles require.
- The National Referee Director role has been removed from the Board as it is now a shared role between 3 people.
- Non-Executive Director roles have been advertised and will be recruited support the Board. (post meeting note: 3 applications have been submitted)

It is recommended that all 6 Directors on the Board are now listed as guarantors with Companies House for England Touch. Based on the increasing role of memberships, it was also suggested that the Membership, Affiliation and Insurance Manager be included into the Board as a Director.

*Post meeting note: This role is an admin role, Finance is covered on the Exec.*

**ACTION:** LL to organise EGM midyear once governance is ready to launch the new constitution.

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## 11 To consider any proposed changes to relevant policy documents

CH recommended a proxy form to be used for future AGMs. A draft document was circulated with the agenda. A couple of members had tested it out for this AGM, and the form seemed appropriate. Deadline for proxy votes must be no later than 48 hours before the start of the AGM.

**ACTION:** Comments on proxy form to CH.

## 12 Closure of meeting

Meeting closed at 11:30.

## OGM

### *Order of Business:*

#### 1 Introduction by the CEO

GC welcomed everyone to the meeting. Start at 11:45.

#### 2 Apologies

As per AGM.

#### 3 Registration and accreditation of nominated delegates

As per AGM, with the exception of Chris Wall (CSSC Club and League x2), Gary Lambert (Liaison Officer), Mike Roa (Galaxy, Tumeke, Hot Custard, London Scorpions), and Adele Langlois (Lincoln).

Mike Abromowitz and Carly Heselwood also left the meeting before its completion.

#### 4 Minutes of previous meeting / matters arising

The minutes from 2014 OGM were accepted by all present.

<http://www.EnglandTouch.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/2014-AGM-OGM-Minutes-v1.0.pdf>

#### 5 Reports and updates

All non-executive committee members gave a verbal summary of their activities over 2015. Many of these can be found in the Annual Report:

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/cx180w7u3wklDxs/England\\_Touch\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2014\\_15\\_Complete.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/cx180w7u3wklDxs/England_Touch_Annual_Report_2014_15_Complete.pdf?dl=0)

- Julia Kang, PR / Marketing

Nothing to report due to only recently taking post.

- Tim Osborne, High Performance

TO updated on the achievements of the HP team and elite athletes, covering the success at the TWC2015 and the JTC2015. Peter Bell, previous Australian Head Coach, will be in the UK in April to upskill coaches and players alike. The HP team is continuing to work with Sports Science and Data Analytics team to better understand the demands of the sport. TO is working on a 4-year strategic plan to lead England into the next TWC in Malaysia in 2019.

- Cari Thorpe, Medical

CT gave an overview of player injuries sustained throughout the season covering TWC2015, JTC2015, NTS/CTS, and Nationals, and the ongoing studies that will be undertaken in 2016 to better understand the sport in order to reduce risk of injury to touch players.

- Rich King, Membership

RK gave a brief summary of all the work involved in progressing memberships in 2015, thanking GC for its creation and driving it forward. In addition to club and league memberships, there are now individual memberships available for players, referees, coaches, and medical staff.

- Ken Pollard, Development

KP gave an update on the development work that has been progressed in 2015.

- Kevin Hill, Events

KH summarised the main England Touch events last year, NTS/CTS/DTS and Nationals, all of which have been successful. The plan for 2016 is to bring these events in-house, so they are hosted by the ETA

rather than nominated clubs. This is to ensure consistency throughout all the events and to generate income for England Touch. KH spoke about his experiences at TWC2015 and all the learnings he was able to gain.

Discussions around how communications to the wider touch community could be improved so everyone is consulted prior to any changes being made, and kept updated with changes and reasons behind those changes. A subgroup is recommended to assist KH with this wider consultation and communications. All changes should then be summarised and sent out in the newsletter or put on the England Touch website.

**ACTION:** Volunteers for player representative to be part of the subgroup to contact KH.

- Gary Lambert, Partnership Liaison

GL updated the group on the partnerships with RFU and O2 centres, giving some insights into successes, challenges, and issues encountered in 2015, and outlined plans for going forward in 2016.

**ACTION:** Tom Conway to speak to Ed Curran regarding insurance coverage under the RFU umbrella.

- Matt Thomas, Schools Development

GC gave an update in the absence of MT. Progress being made with getting more juniors involved in touch, especially with the new categories being added to JTC2016 and also having a new grant from Wembley Trust. TC noted that the RFU is looking to roll out a touch programme to all secondary schools from 2017.

## 6 General business:

The following items were submitted for discussion:

### GOVERNANCE

- **In2Touch – Mike Abromowitz**

*Complaint proceedings instituted and panel investigations held in 2015.*

An investigation was carried out, and due process was followed. A panel was formed and made recommendations to the ETA Board. There were some lessons to be learnt and some procedures have been reviewed and others created in light of this.

- **Mike Abromowitz (In2Touch)**

*Suitability of candidates to hold office executive office or leadership positions.*

CH detailed the current process. Board members are all elected at the AGM each year. This excludes the roles of the Finance Director and Head of Medical Services, who are both appointed due to the qualifications required for those roles.

All post-holders in the ETA are required to fill in a Conflict of Interest (CoI) form each year upon election/appointment, and if there has been a change to their circumstances, and these are reviewed. Every role has a task description detailing what is required from that role, and these were updated this year to reflect the progression in each of the roles.

There are plans to potentially have a nominations committee in the future. It has also been proposed the skills matrix is carried out for committee members to identify any gaps and CPD training to be provided to Board members.

- **Orrell St James – Mike Horrocks (no show)**

*Possibility of the ETA defining the minimum age for a player to compete alongside Adult players to come in line with other Rugby NGBs such as the RFL and RFU in order to help clubs with their Safeguarding of Children in sport?*

This is a question that is being asked more often particularly as we develop pathways for U18s to play Touch. Although many national governing bodies recommend players under 13 years of age play in a separate group, ultimately the decision is to be made by your organisation's committee.

Discussions were had whether to have an ETA policy on this, or whether clubs should adopt their own common sense approach based on individual cases. The key principles to be considered are to ensure:

- The young person has reached a level of maturity and skill which enable them to participate in a mixed age group safely
- Over 18 participants set a positive example to the younger members of the team
- The presence of more than one coach/volunteer available for the duration of the activity
- All individuals are aware of and comply with the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures and their own safeguarding role and responsibilities.

In the interests of good practice, safeguarding and welfare the ETA requests parental consent for all children/young people. For more specific advice from the ETA:

<http://englandtouch.org.uk/wp/index.php/why-eta/policies-procedures/>

There were also discussions around the need for more guidance for the sport surrounding pregnancy, minimum age for refereeing senior games, and liability/insurance issues.

- **Peterborough – Max Raymond (not attending)**

*Age of Participation: With the recent topic of mixed age sport asking for feedback, I have attached the link to a 'best practice' document that I have written for our club as part of the safeguarding policy.*

[http://files.pitchero.com/clubs/40537/appendix2-ageguidelines\\_156222.pdf](http://files.pitchero.com/clubs/40537/appendix2-ageguidelines_156222.pdf)

Clubs/Leagues are encouraged to use this safeguarding policy from Peterborough should they wish, and adapt to their own needs.

## **EVENTS**

- **Lincoln – Sam Roylance (not attending)**

*Full-size touch pitches (FIT standards) at DTS level.*

Each DTS is assessed on a case by case basis. Ideally all games would be on clearly marked out full-size pitches with sub boxes on both sides and defined dead ball lines, but this is not always possible depending on the host venues and it is not a requirement at DTS level.

- **Chester Cheetahs – Liam Lawton (no show)**

*We would like to see more regional North West events for DTS.*

ETA has announced several national DTS rounds. All clubs are encouraged to bid to host more regional events and have since been sent information on this:

<http://englandtouch.org.uk/wp/index.php/2016/02/regional-hosting-steeden-dts-2016/>

- **Chester Cheetahs – Liam Lawton (no show)**

*Hosting competitions at Chester RUFC and North West promotion of ladies touch.*

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Regions are encouraged to take ownerships to organise any additional events. ETA can assist with 'blueprint' of how run events. There will also be the women's touch cups this year that clubs can enter.

**ACTION:** KH to create blueprint.

- **Peterborough – Max Raymond**

*Regional Development Tournaments: As a club we struggle to have enough female players to enter the DTS so we are arranging a series of tournaments with local clubs in a similar situation where over 40s and under 15s can count towards the 3 female players and would like to get approval/ support from the ETA for these, as a kind of level down from DTS. Whilst we are continuing to try to attract more female players and enter DTS events, the demographic of our club means that we're always going to have lots of 'old guys' who can't make the DTS squad, so the need for the type of tournament described above is always going to be there.*

This can be on decided locally on a case-by-case basis. DTS however will be staying as a mixed 3:3 event as per FIT rules.

- **London Scorpions – Daniel Rowling**

*NTS Game Format: The current game format for the NTS tournaments needs to be improved. Elite tournaments always consist of 40 minute games and this needs to also be adopted by the ETA.*

*Beginning in 2016, each NTS team should play less games, but their outcome should be more significant. Game lengths should be increased to 30 minutes (preferably 40 minutes), with no half time and turn around after each touchdown. To accommodate the increased game length, a knockout system needs to be applied, if necessary split the NTS into two tiers, which could possibly change each tournament based on the results of the prior.*

*It's very important that elite players practise playing in the elite format. The current system has been useful and has added a lot of value in progressing the sport to its current position, but the focus now must be on quality of game play rather than quantity.*

Email has gone out to all clubs for comments/feedback, but very low response rate so far. The current format for NTS/CTS is generally well received. Players seem to prefer playing the shorter games rather than 40 minute games, to allow them to play against more teams each round. Nationals will have 40 minute games.

Games will however be changed to 25 minutes touchdown turnaround. Quarter finals will be removed instead to allow for the slightly longer game time, and also to ensure pool games are more competitively contested.

Some feedbacks received were not in favour of the two-tier split in NTS. This does not allow teams in the bottom half of NTS to experience playing against tougher competition, and be exposed to that higher level of competition to improve.

*Post meeting note: Discussions have been taking places by clubs representatives in an open forum. KH will collate and feedback to the board with recommendations for implementation in 2016.*

- **London Scorpions – Daniel Rowling**

*NTS Player eligibility: The NTS is England Touch's flagship competition, and as such should be competed for by England Touch clubs. All clubs should be domiciled in England, and restrictions should be applied on the amount of ineligible (for England) players each club can field.*

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*The definition of ineligible is a grey area, and this should be clearly defined. Care needs to be taken to not deter high quality players from competing, as they can add immense value, but they should be integrated into teams/clubs which are contributing players to elite ETA teams. For example, there could be a limit of how many players that are currently representing a country other than England can play for one team/club.*

*The player eligibility section from the NSW Touch Football General Conditions document could be used as a guide in deciding the specifics of what to adopt:*

<http://www.nswtouch.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/General-Conditions-of-Entry-19.5.15.pdf>

All clubs in NTS/CTS 2016 will be English-based. The 3 Welsh clubs have been informed and thanked for their participation in the event thus far, especially Gower Dragons who stepped up very last minute last year.

There is no restriction to the player base for the NTS/CTS currently; as it is a club competition and therefore clubs should be able to recruit however they wish. However KH is looking at exemptions for Finals possibly to avoid clubs bringing in top players specifically for that 1 round.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

- **Reading Bluecoat School – Nicholas Matenga**

*Is there a possibility that the fees associated with joining the governing body for a school are able to be made cheaper/discount?*

This has been addressed via the 'university membership' option which should roll out for schools and FE/HE too. The website will be made clearer to cover all education facilities.

*Post meeting note: Membership pages now updated for clarity.*

- **Oakmedians – Jason Cunningham / Allan Reed**

*Can a beach touch event I am planning be affiliated to the ETA?*

*Does it have to be 6 a side?*

*Can we vary other rules to suit the beach?*

This is best to be ran via the club which has now been set up and affiliated. FIT rules of beach touch have been sent.

- **Perfect Motion, Nottingham League – Chris Simon**

*Proposed league membership fees for season 2016, including the current situation with Bristol/Bath please.*

The league membership fees for 2016 season will be unaltered from 2015, i.e. £20 per team in 'busiest league', per venue. ETA will be looking to make the process more robust with clearer invoicing dates and deadlines, and reviewing and updating its membership policy for leagues, ensuring members are aware of their responsibilities and minimum standards required.

The Bristol league is currently running and its affiliation re-instated. ETA did not take any decisions around this issue lightly, and in the interest of participants in the Bristol area were willing to lift the ban/unaffiliated status of the Bristol league in the short-term.

The Bath league has no issues.

## DEVELOPMENT / SCHOOLS

- **Reading Bluecoat School – Nicholas Matenga**

*As a school/teacher it is vital that the dates for any competition are published as soon as possible to allow our parents/students to plan at least 6 months in advance. You also have to take into account examination periods, especially external summer examinations. Dates for this year were great. Can I please encourage this to continue and develop even further?*

Noted.

- **Bristol University – James Brown**

*University Touch - how to support existing clubs and expand to new universities.*

Discussions were had on what the universities require. There is now a written proposal on how the universities and ETA can work together to support each other and grow the UTS series.

- **Peterborough – Max Raymond**

*Schools Tournaments: We're in discussion with our local academy school to launch a satellite club, starting around late February, so if anyone within ETA is looking at future schools tournaments please get in touch.*

Several other similar queries have been received too.

**ACTION:** MT to set up a working group with interested representatives to look into this, including contacting the local RFU Rugby Development Officers for support.

## LIAISON and DEVELOPMENT

- **Nottingham – Richard Chapman**

*The lack of affiliation with a national body has prevented us from applying for certain sports grants / awards - I'd like to know what the Exec sees as the future relationship between England Touch, O2 Touch and the RFU and what the plan is to get there.*

The committee are very keen to become recognised as a National Governing Body by Sport England, which will allow us and our member clubs to apply for further funding. We also realise that while Sport England are funding the RFU and the RFL to develop Touch as part of their Whole Sport Plans, this will be very difficult.

With a new round of funding for sports being reviewed from 2017 and an increased emphasis on female participation - an area Touch can offer a great deal - we are hopeful that we may be able to address this area.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- **London Scorpions – Daniel Rowling**

*ETA Revenue: As an urgent matter of priority the ETA needs to begin generating its own revenue. Whilst membership schemes have been introduced to address, they are narrow in their catchment and further tax those players already contributing the most. They are a short term band aid at best and certainly not a long term solution.*

*An approach that needs to be taken to begin generating more substantial revenue for the ETA is the establishment of ETA owned and operated modules. This model has been implemented with much success in Australia and New Zealand (amongst other countries), and England is very far behind in this*

*crucial area. Within England a number of private enterprises have already capitalised on this opportunity, and have successfully demonstrated that this approach can be applied here too.*

*The ETA needs to develop a business plan to address this and begin executing against this immediately; the 2016 season is fast approaching. The priority must be on establishing ETA owned and operated modules, which would logically begin in areas which do not have significant private enterprises competing in the same space. Any area outside of London and perhaps Nottingham/Cambridge is ripe for this opportunity. ETA committee members, and others associated with the development of elite touch in England need to abandon private ventures and begin focusing on building on behalf of the ETA.*

Additional revenue streams have been on ETA's agenda for a while, and huge strides forward are being made. ETA has sought advice from TFA and TNZ. Each area of the ETA now has its own budget and plans for the future.

NTS/CTS/DTS events are being brought 'in house', and the Nationals will stay in house too, whereby the profit comes directly to the ETA. The new men's and women's tournaments (MWTC) are also being hosted in house. Both coaching and refereeing courses are up on numbers from previous years and ETA is now generating a profit from running these.

The introduction of the new membership scheme in 2015 is generating a profit to be reinvested into the sport. ETA and the RFU currently have a partnership agreement and is both VIK and (affiliation) cash. 2015 also saw the first cash sponsorship for England Touch, a big leap forward from what's happened previously.

A new apparel section of the website is currently being built, which will allow us to generate profit from general online sales. ETA is also in discussions with numerous companies around different sponsorship opportunities and is advertising for the role of "Commercial Partnership Services and Sponsorship Manager" with a purpose of developing and delivering England Touch's commercial strategy to realise significant commercial sponsorship revenue to the benefit of the ETA, to in-turn help sustain and improve our European/World standings.

## 7 AOB

### England Touch Leagues

Discussions were had about touch leagues being launched and delivered by England Touch. The plan is to deliver leagues around the country that ensures anyone wanting to play the sport can do so in a safe, fun and enjoyable environment. It also provides consistency in customer experience in terms of competition administration, organisation, referees and ultimately, the game itself. The England Touch Leagues will also become another income stream to the ETA in the future.

Some concerns were undoubtedly raised by existing league operators. Assurances were given that these would initially only be rolled out to areas where there are currently no leagues being run.

## 8 Closure of meeting

Meeting closed at 14:00.

# 2016 AGM & OGM MINUTES

Items responded to and closed prior to the OGM:

## TECHNICAL

- **Oakmedians – Jason Cunningham / Allan Reed (NOT attending)**

*Southern Suns had a Masters team with players over 40s and over 45s who feel they are now unlikely to make masters teams at Nationals 2016 that have a new over 30 age limit. Why has it been dropped to 30? What can be done to include the over 40s and 45s who contribute so much down south to running touch.*

*I would like to see the ETA become involved in Bournemouth's First Beach Touch Festival to be held at the end of July. This is in conjunction with Beach Football/Volleyball, and potential Army/Navy attendance. In addition Jason and I are working hard towards hosting a major Touch Festival in Southampton, and bringing in secondary affiliated sports. Currently I am negotiating with Netball.*

*- Response sent to Jason on 30/1/16.*

- **Chester Cheetahs – Liam Lawton**

*How to integrate the youth into regional North West touch.*

*- Response sent to Liam on 30/1/16.*

## FINANCE

- **Perfect Motion, Nottingham League – Chris Simon**

*Presentation of annual accounts for year 2015.*

*- Response sent to Chris on 4/2/16.*

## LIAISON (including GOVERNANCE and EXEC)

- **Perfect Motion, Nottingham League – Chris Simon**

*Latest with regards the RFU/O2 Touch partnership and plans for the future.*

*- Response sent to Chris on 4/2/16.*

- **Oakmedians – Jason Cunningham / Allan Reed**

*How can one supply / tender services to supply ETA?*

*Perhaps one for the future. Association Football has a dedicated Beach Football Organization. Neither RFU or ETA have a similar Department to my knowledge. Jason and I would like your representatives to come and see what can be achieved on the beach on 30th July 2016. Perhaps a future formation of a similar Department to monitor events around our coast. Last year one of the England Touch Ladies teams trained on the beach at Bournemouth and hosted by us at Oakmeadians. Perhaps their opinion could be sought.*

*- Response sent to Jason and Allan on 4/2/16.*

## HIGH PERFORMANCE

- **Lincoln – Adele Langlois**

*Lincoln has 9 players in the England squads this year (significantly more than in previous years). Some of the England training clashes with DTS events. We are keen to put out our strongest teams at DTS as we*

*are aiming for promotion to CTS, but this is not possible if our most experienced players are unavailable due to their England commitments. We do recognise that the touch calendar is crowded and it is difficult to find free dates for things, but would ask that such clashes be avoided in future.*

*- Response sent to Adele on 29/1/16.*

- **Percy Park – Lesley McCallion**

*U15s - Northern Stars/England Touch: We have players who have the potential to make a North and possibly a National team. They/their parents are put off by the travel distances /commitment for training. We would welcome a 'play list/fundamentals' tick list so that we can coach these kids locally and prepare them for trials and reduce the need for regular team training. Like a satellite team for the U15s/U18s. Orla and I have just returned from a 10 hour round trip to Maidenhead - parents who are new to the game and don't understand the set up wouldn't be prepared to commit to that. The other option would be a future North East U15s/U18s but at the moment we don't have numbers.*

*- Response sent to Lesley on 29/1/16.*