



SSS Competitions Committee Meeting (87)
3rd November 2022
1000-1300

MINUTES

Attendees:

- Eamonn Laird (Chair, Dundee Staff) - EL
- Chris Purdie (SSS Head of Competitions) - CP
- Jess Barrows (SSS Event Coordinator) – JB
- Polly Pearce (Fixture Administrator Representative, Edinburgh Staff) - PP
- Sophie Charlton (Staff Representative, Stirling Staff) - SC
- Murray Bushell (Sabbatical Officer Representative, Stirling Sabb) - MB
- Joel Adebajo (Sabbatical Officer Representative, RGU Sabb) - JA
- Gregor MacIolm (Sports Chair Representative, Cross Country Chair) - GM
- Johnathan Macleod (Staff Representative, UWS Staff) - JM
- Eilidh Paterson (SSS Inclusion and Culture Coordinator) – EP

Apologies:

- Ian Lowe (SSS Head of Development) - swapped with Eilidh

1. Welcome and Apologies

2. Standing Updates

a. SSS Development Committee

- National Forum to place on 1st November with 47 attendees and brilliant input from SAMH
- Festive Gathering agenda will include LEAPS, Concussion Research, Golf It!, This is your Life with Jim & potential sportscotland (Atta), Zander Murray, Don't be That Guy & others. A reminder that [sign-ups are live](#) and all institutions are welcome
- Kabbadi Training Weekend is taking place over 19th-20th November
- Boccia Event next week – 5 teams so far (deadline Friday 4th November)
- Match Officials – Training and Recruitment is a large project Ian Lowe (SSS Head of Development) is working on
- SSS will be delivering at the Young Leaders Conference on 12th November
- Head of Development Forum has been resurrected by sportscotland – Ian will sit on this
- Equality Data – SBGs are working to improve their data collection which will benefit wider SSS work. Ian can share SSS data if it's desired
- Orienteering – New Sport Application has been received and will be considered

SSS are working to evaluate the current [New Sport Policy](#) to establish a second 'tier' of sport application which allows for newer/smaller sports to benefit. Boccia and Kabbadi have been taken on by the Development team to help develop them to, one day, become an 'official' SSS sport as we consider the current sports to be. Orienteering is a more established sport therefore it will likely come to the Competitions Committee to approve it.

b. SSS Fixtures Forum

- BUCS and SSS events have kick started

- Weather yesterday caused most issues
- Transport issues due to strikes
- Match Officials – same sports coming together – National Forum had a good conversation led by Jo about the plan to get more Officials coming in so could perhaps tie-in nicely

c. SSS Chairs

- Development Day at Strathclyde last month – got to know each other and learned key points to take forward
- No other feedback has come in since
- Will be seeking dates for a December catch-up over Zoom soon

d. Sabbatical Forum

- Timings of fixtures being released has caused issues – Squash Centralised Fixtures in particular has been a struggle
- Captains Meetings buy-in (and information absorption) needs to improve across the board
- Netball Champs – Date of BUCS fixtures should be factored in to the planning next year as there needed to be a few matches rearranged this year
- Cycling Hill Climb went well (MB attended)
- Table Tennis – Stirling's club want opportunity for Semester 2 activity, if possible. JB mentioned the Training Camp taking place in November and that the Championships will be held in February

3. SSS Competitions Overview

a. SSS Staffing

- Welcome to Sean Berthelsen (SB), the new full-time SSS Competitions Assistant
- Ongoing discussion between BUCS and SSS regarding fixture administration in Scottish region
- Competitions Assistant role will remain full-time and permanent #

b. BUCS

i. Fixtures

- SSS have been monitoring the completion of fixtures in Scotland and so far the majority of fixtures have happened
- Golf Tier 3 and Women's Tennis Tier 3 are concerning at the moment (**CP to chase up the teams to ensure fixtures take place**)
- CP to update document to include the number of fixtures in each League, to provide context for the Committee**

ii. BUCS Comps Group

Plan to meet in next couple of weeks and have only met once this year so far

- Team Line Fines are going to be brought in this season so Committee are asked to ensure as many teams as possible fill theirs in. This partially due to BUCS Staff needing the relevant data to monitor player movement. BUCS fines will be tallied and each institution needs to reach a certain overall percentage in order to avoid fines as of this season. **CP will ask BUCS for clarity on percentage of team lines which need to be done in order to avoid fines – and how institutions can check without going through manually**
SSS to create a social media post which can be shared across all channels to ensure each Chair and Captain is aware of, and can encourage, completion of team lines

c. SSS Leagues and Football Team Lines

- Aquatics, Handball and Shinty are going well so far, but have far more flexibility in completion dates than BUCS Leagues
- Football Team Lines – SSS are aware that the process we follow for Team Line admin for the Football fixtures is still contentious but we are as flexible as possible, offering the chance for teams to chase up and re-send missing team lines. Fine costs haven't been increased in 14 years and there aren't plans to increase these fines this year

- All institutions are encouraged to take a photo of the completed Team Line to the SSS HQ as it still rests with the Referee to submit the forms and some team lines are lost along the way

EP left the meeting at this point

d. Finance

- CP has uploaded a document on to Basecamp to outline the current position of SSS Competitions, with a caveat that some expenditure is yet to come in for certain sports which have had income taken
- Cheer – had a cancelled event so will be in the red unless the Champs can take place
- Fencing – made a significant loss last year but is on track to be in a better place this year
- Many events still to take place so some sports do not yet have any activity noted
- Income goes to two decimal places due to the Stripe processing fees we pay to take payments online

4. Events

a. Completion rate

JB provided an updated on the competition programme as it stands so far:

- Hosted: 22 events (excluding Centralised Fixture dates which Chris will discuss later)
- Cancelled: 4 (Cycling Enduro, Cheer Masterclass, Trampoline LM2 and Fencing Shield)
- Pending: 4 (Polo, Sailing Women's TR, Rowing Indoors and Bball Trophy venue)
- Upcoming (this semester): 14

Overall doing well and the big win was hosting the Netball Championships, which was a targeted event in the Comps Ops Plan this year.

b. Participation numbers

SB will be taking over the accumulation of Participation Numbers this year to create a report, however overall numbers are doing well at this early stage of the year. JB provided a few key highlights to share with the group, based on analysis of previous years' data:

- Athletics Opening Match saw the largest participation rate in the event over the last 5 years, breaking 200 competitors for the first time
- Golf's Stirling International and Autumn Trophy also had the highest rates of participation in the last 5 years, with the Fife Tournament on track to break a similar record were it not for running out of daylight hours
- Netball were able to host the Netball Championships for the first time in 5 years and had 10 teams entered, just 2 teams under capacity
- Rifle Grand Prix has had the largest number of Novice entries in the last 6 years, indicating growth within the clubs and overall student community
- Shinty re-branded the 'Freshers Tournament' as the 'Shinty Festival' this year (after a 5-year hiatus) and kick-started the season with a successful event which had 13 teams entered
- Volleyball have managed to host a regional 4v4 tournament across all 4 regions this year, reaching capacity in the West region and receiving entries from 3 different colleges overall

c. Event feedback

JB presented a presentation which included updates on the feedback responses which had been received on the SSS Event Feedback Survey so far:

- Pre-Event Information – 4.28
- Friendliness of Event Team – 4.81
- Competition Environment – 4.44
- Non-Competition Environment – 4.08
- Officials – 4.47
- Medal Ceremony – 4.53
- Atmosphere – 4.64
- Overall Experience – 4.75

Overall, SSS are hitting above the goal of 4 out of 5 across all areas which is positive. Notable points for the Committee were that we are still on relatively low numbers for the feedback survey so all members are asked to encourage their clubs to complete the survey to best support this work.

d. Trophies and Medals

- i) Updated Trophy Policy has come in to place and has made a difference as we are now in possession of a few trophies which would have been held by clubs in the past. Mixed feedback has come in and the Committee will be asked to review the policy towards the end of the year to go in to the 23-24 season
- ii) Medals – SSS are using up the last of the stock from remaining years (which are mostly boxed) before purchasing more ribboned medals to have a more consistent medal appearance used in future

5. Centralised Fixtures

CP prepared a paper to present to the Committee to update them on where we stand on Centralised Fixtures. Key updates were as follows:

- Paper was released last year to ascertain demand for the indoor sports involved to remain in a Centralised model
- The paper was released to Captains but it was recognised that Fixture Admins may have been the ideal group to contact around this
- Since the paper's release, the number of teams entered in to 3 of the 4 sports increased, which increased demand on facility time, space and cost
- Futsal has had further complications as their wish is to play the fixtures on full-sized courts increases the cost so we need to manage player and Development Group expectations vs the cost to the player
- Fencing has moved facilities this year which has led to a decrease costs and, despite volunteer availability issues, the first two days of fixtures have gone well
- Squash, causes few issues to SSS due to the courts being reasonably priced and there being few overheads (e.g. no officials)
- Table Tennis's growth has been managed by allowing certain teams to play matches outside of the Centralised model and by borrowing tables from Table Tennis Scotland. The cost of moving the tables around Scotland hopes to be mitigated by a Special Projects Fund application in partnership with Oriam to purchase tables for the benefit of the Table Tennis programme

CP summarised to say that SSS will tweak a few elements in the organising process, there needs to be a further consultation with Futsal to ensure the expectations are managed and that there needs to be a costing exercise undertaken to ascertain what the institutions are happy to pay for a centralised model in comparison to weekly fixtures.

SC mentioned that the consistency in court size is a concern for the membership as each institution has differently sized courts. There is also a concern around the increased cost impacting the clubs, even when the SFA funding sourced by former SSS employee, Neil Rankin, is applied to the programme JM is aware of the struggle to get court and officials due to a Scotland-wide Futsal gap therefore the membership would be concerned if matches were moved to a more weekly model.

EL raised that any combined model that could be sought, could involve the institutions which have adequate Futsal courts hosting the fixtures under their MoU

JA left the meeting at this point

6. National Squads

- a) CP thanked EL and JM for their support in bringing forward the National Squad conversation from the application process to the review and confirmation process. CP shared a paper to update the group with key updates:
 - 10 sports completed the application process: Aquatics, Basketball, Cheer, Cricket, Curling, Futsal, Netball, Sailing, Shinty and Volleyball. Cross Country was missing but accepted as a late applicant – an invitational option from the SGB so very little issue
 - The Sub-Group created a Tiered system to help allocate staffing support to the National Squads
 - Tier 1 = Will receive most support from SSS staff and will be considered 'top tier'

- Tier 2 = Level of SSS staff support will be determined on what resource may be available each year
- Tier 3 = Sports will be offered opportunity for developmental support, but no National Squad activity will take place this year
- The sports which have been accepted are:
 - Tier 1 = Basketball and Volleyball
 - Tier 2 = Cricket, Sailing, Netball and Cross Country
 - Tier 3 = Shinty, Futsal, Cheer, Curling and Aquatics

EL happy with the progress this project is making and is aware that the work being put in to the SSS National Squad programme to host a domestic element is essential while the Home Nations and broader element is under discussion.

b) Sub-Group formation update – 3 applications for the group and don't want to lose out on the enthusiasm so keen to channel in to two groups: Home Nations organising and SSS National Squad development. The volunteers on the call mentioned:

- SC - Home Nations group
- MB – SSS National Squad group
- JA – TBC (had to leave the meeting before this conversation took place) **CP to ask JA which National squad-related sub-group he wants to be part of**

7. Operational Plan 22/23

CP shared the Ops Plan in its current state with a RAG rating (red = to be done, amber = underway and green = done).

Key updates included:

- Centralised Fixtures are underway and being analysed, as discussed earlier in the meeting
- Sustainability in our events is improving, with support from the Chairs
- Events are making good progress and one of the key events we highlighted as a priority to bring back has happened (Netball Championships)
- SB will be supporting the work around Medal Tracker and Participation Numbers now he is in place
- National Squads are coming together, as discussed earlier in the meeting

8. Next Meeting and Topics

- a. 10th February between 1000-1300

9. AOB

None

10. Actions

- CP to chase up the teams to ensure fixtures take place)
- CP to update document to include the number of fixtures in each League, to provide context for the Committee
- CP will ask BUCS for clarity on percentage of team lines which need to be done in order to avoid fines – and how institutions can check without going through manually
- SSS to create a social media post which can be shared across all channels to ensure each Chair and Captain is aware of, and can encourage, completion of team lines
- CP to ask JA which National squad-related sub-group he wants to be part of