BSF EXECUTIVE MEETING REPORT:
9 JULY 2020

The BSF Executive held its latest meeting by video conference on the evening of Thursday 9 July. Below is a journalistic account of the key discussions and decisions.

Attendance

Present: Jenny Fromer (President), Laura Burkhardt (Treasurer), Liz Graham (Competitions Officer), Chris Moon (Technical Officer), Mike Jennings (General Officer), Bob Fromer (Administrator).

Apologies: Alexis Markham-Hill (National Teams Officer), Mike Lott (Coaching Officer).

Guest: Tim Stride (BaseballSoftballUK)

Softball in 2020

The announcement by the government on 3 July that recreational cricket matches involving up to 30 people could be played starting on 15 July has opened the door for other outdoor sports to resume playing games. Any sport seeking a return to play must submit protocols to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) detailing how this can be done safely, and these protocols need to be approved by the DCMS before games can be staged.

BaseballSoftballUK has prepared a Return to Play guidance document on behalf of the BSF and this document is being submitted to the DCMS on Monday 13 July. An announcement will be made on the BSF website and social media as soon as approval is received, and the guidance document will be published, along with a date on which single games of softball with a maximum of 30 people involved can begin.

Most games in 2020 are likely to be scratch or pick-up games, whether staged under the auspices of BSF leagues or independently. Most leagues have already cancelled their seasons, and at its meeting on 9 July, the BSF Executive cancelled plans for the only two events it was still hoping to hold this year: two one-day invitational co-ed slowpitch tournaments on 5-6 September and the Softball World Series Tournament on 19-20 September, both planned for Farnham Park.

The Return to Play guidance for softball is based on three elements:

- Basic health and safety measures designed to minimise the possibility of transmission.
- The appointment of league and/or team Covid-19 Officers to ensure that the health and safety guidance is followed.
• Registration of all participants in organised softball games so that track-and-trace can be applied in the event of a participant later testing positive for the virus. League Heads or Covid-19 Officers will need to ensure this data is kept.

All of this was discussed at a well-attended video conference held on Monday 6 July involving members of the BSF Executive, representatives from BASU and BaseballSoftballUK and a large number of League Heads or League Committee members. A report on that meeting can be found on the BSF website here: https://www.britishsoftball.org/news/view/bsf-and-league-heads-explore-return-to-play.

The BSF will now keep in touch with League Heads and independent teams to ensure that Covid-19 Officers are appointed and that Return to Play protocols are agreed and followed with regard to any softball games that are played through BSF-affiliated leagues or independent teams.

2021 Calendar

In the hope that 2021 can be a normal year of softball competition, BSF Competitions Officer Liz Graham has announced dates for National Championships in 2021. They are:

June 26-27    BSF Single-Sex Slowpitch National Championships    Birmingham
August 7-8    BSF Co-ed Slowpitch League National Championships    Farnham Park
September 4-5 BSF Co-ed Slowpitch NSL National Championships    Farnham Park

Tournament organisers who want to reserve dates on the 2021 Softball Calendar for their events should contact Liz Graham (liz@softball.org.uk) and BSF Administrator Bob Fromer (bob.fromer@britishsoftball.org).

BSF website update

During the Covid-19 lockdown, BaseballSoftballUK Head of Operations Tim Stride has continued to work on a re-design and update of the BSF website, a project that began over 18 months ago. The aim is to bring the new version into operation by the end of the summer.

The new version of the BSF website will be mobile-responsive (which the current site is not) and will feature:

• Cleaner and more modern design.
• Better-looking landing pages for website sections.
• Retention of Spawtz league management functionality.
• A continued focus on news.
**Finances**

BSF Treasurer Laura Burkhardt reported that there has not been much in the way of financial transactions over the past month, and the BSF still has around £40,000 in the bank.

No requests have been received as yet from national teams to repay losses made on cancelled tournaments because in many cases those losses, or at least the amounts involved, are not yet certain.

Jenny Fromer told the meeting, “It looks like we will come out of this year in better shape than we thought, which bodes well in terms of what we will need to request from members in future to restore our reserves.”

The Executive has decided to bring forward the development of a budget for 2020-21 to September, to better inform the discussion about next year’s fees.

**Slowpitch World Cup**

Mike Jennings reported to the meeting that costing proposals for a WBSC Slowpitch World Cup (in effect a World Slowpitch Championship with national teams) have now gone to various members of WBSC’s Competitions Committee and will hopefully be discussed and agreed soon.

The proposals are an attempt to scale down some of the requirements normally attached to WBSC World Cups so that the competition will be affordable both for hosts and participating teams.

The hope is that the competition, the first genuine World Championship for national co-ed slowpitch teams, can take place in the autumn of 2021, probably in Florida.

**Next meeting**

The next BSF Executive video conference meeting will be on Thursday 13 August.

Anyone with matters to bring to the meeting should contact BSF Administrator Bob Fromer. (bob.fromer@britishsoftball.org).