



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH SOFTBALL FEDERATION

This is the official Notification and Information Pack for the 2024 British Softball Federation Annual General Meeting, which will be held remotely as a videoconference meeting.

Venue:

The 2024 BSF AGM will be a remote meeting using Google Hangout. The formal AGM (see Agenda below) will be the sole business of the meeting, and there will be no workshops or other additional sessions.

A League Heads Forum remote meeting will be held before the AGM, on Thursday 15 February 2024.

AGM Date:

Saturday 24 February 2024
2.00-4.00 pm

Meeting Link:

See Joining Instructions below.

Responses to AGM Pack Content:

If there are any matters in this AGM Pack that you wish to raise at the AGM, please communicate this no later than Monday 20 February to BSF Administrator Bob Fromer: bob.fromer@britishsoftball.org.

AGM JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

To join the 2024 BSF AGM, please use the following link:

<https://meet.google.com/cra-nenz-ith>

Alternatively, you can dial: (GB) +44 20 3937 3298 -- PIN: 115 288 650#.

Note: You can test out this link in advance of the meeting. Ideally, the link should be pasted into a Chrome browser, which should work particularly well for anyone with a gmail email account.

Meeting instructions

Due to the technical challenges of holding this meeting remotely, we ask that during the meeting you remain muted unless and until you wish to speak.

Questions can be raised either by using the 'Raise Hand' function or by posting questions in the Chat function, which will be monitored throughout the meeting.

In order to manage voting, we will use a Google Form that can be accessed by all through the chat function. By completing this form your vote will remain anonymous to all except the President and the person tabulating the votes.

Patience please!

Please bear with us if we experience technical difficulties or if it is hard to address all questions and comments during the meeting. Despite the experience we have all had of remote meetings over the past few years, holding a meeting of this size can be tricky, and we will do our best to manage it as efficiently and painlessly as possible.

Any questions that are not responded to at the meeting will be addressed afterwards.

We will be recording the meeting and will be happy to provide a copy on request.

AGM ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

The following attendance requirements will apply for the 2024 AGM. Attendance is required by representatives from:

- All NSL1, NSL2, and NSL3 teams.
- All slowpitch softball leagues that wish to send teams to National Championships at any level.
- All 2023 league divisional winners that wish to take up the place they have earned in the 2024 Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals at the appropriate grade.
- All teams that won their grade (Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze) at the 2023 Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals if they wish to be guaranteed a place in the 2024 League Nationals as defending champions.

Please note that, in general, a league representative cannot also represent a team at the AGM. However, a League Head who is a registered playing member of a team from their league that has won a place in the 2024 BSF Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals **can** represent both the league and that team – although such a person will only have one vote, not two.

If you want to represent both your league and your team at the AGM, please let BSF Membership Officer [Liz Graham](#) know beforehand.

IMPORTANT: When you attend the remote AGM, please ensure that your name and the name of the team or league you are representing is on the screen so we can collate attendance.

BSF AGM 2024: AGENDA

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REPORT FROM THE 2023 BSF AGM

The British Softball Federation held its 2023 AGM as a remote meeting on the afternoon of Saturday 25 February, and the attendance, which peaked at 79, and the 63 voting members present, may both have been the highest in BSF history.

All nine members of the BSF Executive attended the meeting, along with five BaseballSoftballUK staff members, two BSUK Board members (including Board Chair Phil Veasey) and British Baseball Federation (BBF) President Tom Thornhill.

The meeting, which may also have been the shortest-ever BSF AGM, lasted for just an hour and a quarter, with very few questions or comments from the floor as BSF President Ieuan Gale and other members of the BSF Executive ran through the agenda.

An indicative poll taken at the end of the meeting about whether members want to continue with remote AGMs as opposed to the in-person meetings that were held before the pandemic resulted in 54 votes for remote meetings, one vote to go back to in-person meetings and eight votes from people who had no preference. So remote AGMs look set to continue.

Many of the agenda items at the meeting referred to reports published in the BSF AGM Pack, including reports from President Ieuan Gale, Competitions Officer Liz Graham, Coaching Officer Michael Lott and Technical Officer Pete Saunders, plus an extensive National Teams report. There were no comments or questions on any of these reports, all of which can be read in the AGM Pack [here](#).

There were also no questions or comments on the BSF Accounts for 2021-22 or the proposed BSF Budget for 2022-23, presented by BSF Treasurer Laura Burkhardt.

One question came from the floor in relation to the proposed 2023 BSF Team Affiliation Fees, which will rise by around five per cent across the various membership categories.

The question was why Scottish league teams affiliate at the lesser Associate Member rate rather than the full rate paid by league teams in England and Wales. The answer is two-fold: (1) geography means that Scottish teams and players have less opportunity to take part in tournaments and other softball events in England – and if they do attend, travel costs are high; and (2) funding given to BaseballSoftballUK by Sport England for development work cannot be spent on initiatives in Scotland (or Wales). However, Welsh teams and players do not face the same geographical and travel cost issues as their Scottish counterparts.

The longest sessions at the meeting were the presentation of BSF Annual Awards to eight deserving recipients, and a session presented by BSUK CEO John Boyd on the Agency's purpose, development work and future initiatives.

There was also a moment taken during the meeting to remember three prominent members of the softball community who have passed away since the last AGM in February 2022: John Lehmann, Chris Moon and Emily Tomkins (née Clifford).

Voting

There were a number of matters at the AGM that required voting by those present and eligible to do so:

- The Minutes of the 2022 BSF AGM were approved with 60 votes for and 3 abstentions.
- The 2021-22 Accounts and the 2022-23 Budget were approved with 61 votes for and 2 abstentions.
- The 2023 BSF team affiliation fees were approved with 60 votes for and three abstentions. The new Affiliation Fees for 2023 can be found on the BSF website [here](#).

Further votes were held on the election of Officers and on a number of proposals for changes to the BSF Articles of Association, and these will be discussed in more detail below.

Agenda topics

Opening remarks. BSF President Ieuan Gale opened the meeting by saying that the 2022 season had been a great year for everyone to get fully back on the field after the pandemic and that the 2023 season should be even better.

World Class Performance Programme. With regard to the National Teams report, Gary Anderson from BSUK, who is Head of Performance for GB Female Fastpitch programmes, noted that the World Class Performance Programme that is now being built up around the GB Senior Women's Team and the age group teams below it had received a huge vote of confidence earlier in February with a further increase in funding from UK Sport to help the Women's Team compete in the WBSC World Cup Qualifying Stage Tournament this summer in Dublin.

Gary noted that the GB Women's Team that won the silver medal at last summer's European Women's Championship was the youngest team at the tournament in terms of average age, which is ideal for building the team towards qualification for the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028.

Points from the BSF League Heads Forum. The BSF's annual League Heads Forum meeting had been held remotely on the evening of Thursday 16 February, and two points arising from the meeting were brought to the AGM:

- The BSF has followed the lead of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) in extending regulations for protective equipment that needs to be worn by all under-18 players taking part in youth or adult fastpitch or slowpitch play. The main changes are that players in both formats need to wear helmets with face grills when batting or baserunning, and that players in both formats at the positions of pitcher, first base and third base need to wear face masks and gum shields. The revised regulations for under-18 players can be found on the BSF website [here](#).
- At the recent WBSC Europe Congress, Britain made a successful bid to host the 2026 European Co-ed Slowpitch Championship, which should be a qualifier for the 2027 WBSC Co-ed Slowpitch World Cup. This is an important tournament for us to host, and a great chance to bring official European slowpitch competition to Farnham Park, the biggest and best slowpitch facility in Europe. But the challenge will be, over the next three years, to find the funding and volunteers necessary, and support will be needed from the full softball community.

Financial matters. In presenting the BSF Accounts for 2021-22 to the meeting, BSF Treasurer Laura Burkhardt noted that the BSF had budgeted for a £17,000 loss in that year but had only lost around £4,000 – mainly because more domestic teams returned after the pandemic than had been expected and because less money than planned had been spent on development and national teams. In 2022-23, where a £9,000 loss is being planned, the intention is to provide more money for BSF Development Grants, and a £6,000 grant is being provided to the GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team over the

next two financial years to help them attend the first-ever WBSC Co-ed Slowpitch World Cup for national teams, scheduled to take place in November 2023.

Election of Officers

The BSF Executive, which went into the AGM with vacancies in two key positions – National Teams Officer and Marketing and Communications Officer – will be even more short-handed following the AGM, with President Ieuan Gale stepping down after one two-year term and General Officer Mike Jennings stepping down after decades of distinguished service to the BSF.

However, there will be one addition to the Executive, with Nicola-Jane Dyson having been elected to a General Officer role.

All members of the Executive standing unopposed to continue in the second year of their current term were re-elected unanimously with the exception of one Officer, where there was one vote for NOTA “None of the Above”.

As there was no candidate standing for President and Ieuan Gale is stepping down, the Executive is constitutionally required to select an existing member of the Executive to take on the President’s role on an interim basis until a new President can be co-opted or elected at a subsequent AGM or EGM, and General Officer Lesley Morisetti has been chosen to take on the role.

Accordingly, the BSF Executive for 2023, barring the addition of further Officers by co-option, will be:

General Officer and Interim President: Lesley Morisetti

Treasurer: Laura Burkhardt

Competitions and Membership Officer: Liz Graham

Technical Officer: Pete Saunders

Coaching Officer: Michael Lott

General Officer (Safeguarding): Stella Ackrell

General Officer: Nicola-Jane Dyson

Bob Fromer will continue in his paid staff role as **BSF Administrator**.

The positions of National Teams Officer, Marketing and Communications Officer, and one General Officer position remain unfilled and the Executive will be looking to co-opt qualified people into those roles.

Changes to BSF Articles of Association

The BSF’s current Articles of Association, based on a UK Sport template, are well over a decade old and are in need of some updating and revision.

Accordingly, the Executive brought a number of proposed changes to be considered and voted on at the AGM, and all were passed by a large majority of those voting with between 53 and 57 votes for each proposal and between 6 and 10 abstentions (there were no votes against). The changes are:

- One clause in Article 3, which defines the Objects of the Federation, was changed to reflect the fact that Softball now includes the disciplines of Baseball5, eSports and Para-sports (specifically Wheelchair Softball and Blind Baseball) in addition to the previously recognised formats of Slowpitch, Fastpitch, Indoor, Beach, and Corporate. The new formats are now official WBSC

disciplines and so need to be included within the remit of the BSF – and the BBF.

- A new clause added to Article 3 asserts that the BSF and the BBF will collaborate to organise, promote and develop the new formats of Baseball5, e-Sports and Para-sports, including the entry of club and national teams into international competitions.
- A further new clause added to Article 3 asserts that the BSF and the BBF will collaborate on Olympic and Paralympic matters, with BSUK representing both Federations at the British National Olympic Committee and the British Paralympic Association.
- A new clause 13.3 states if the office of BSF President is vacant because the post has not been filled at an AGM, the Executive will choose one of its members to take on the role and responsibilities of the President on an interim basis. A previous clause had suggested that the only role of an Interim President would be to chair meetings, but this has now been widened to say that an Interim President will take on other roles and responsibilities associated with the position.
- A change to Article 18.1 specifies that a minimum of three and a maximum of five members of the BSF Executive shall be Directors of the company (BSF Ltd) and that the Directors will have sole responsibility for matters arising from incorporation.
- A change to Article 18.2 specifies that the Executive will consist of up to five Directors and up to six other elected Officers, including no more than three General Officers, plus an Athlete Representative. The effect of the change is to limit the number of Executive members to 11 and the number of General Officers to three, whereas formerly the limit was six. The overall effect is designed to keep the Executive to a manageable size.
- A new clause 19.2 specifies that All Directors and other Officers can vote on non-corporate matters that come before the Executive, with the President holding a casting vote. At present, the Athlete Representative would not have a vote, but a motion to change that is likely to be brought to the 2024 AGM.
- Clause 22.2, which is about benefits, gratuities and pensions to be paid to former Directors, has been deleted as not relevant to the way the BSF operates.
- Clause 26.1 has been changed to specify that candidates for the BSF Executive cannot be self-nominated, but must be nominated in a prescribed form by another member.
- A new clause 26.3 specifies that if there are no nominations for vacant positions on the Executive by the specified deadline prior to an AGM or EGM, nominations can be made from the floor for all positions except that of President. The Executive feels that the position of President is too important to depend on such an unplanned and random procedure.
- Article 42, which has some rather obscure provisions for how resolutions can be proposed and amended at a general meeting, has been deleted as not relevant to the way the BSF operates.

BSF Annual Awards

The BSF presents Annual Awards at each AGM, most of them related to the previous season, in categories where candidates are nominated.

The awards presented at this AGM are listed below, and full details of why they were given can be found in a separate article on the BSF website.

- The **Glover Cup** for outstanding long-term service to softball by a coach, administrator or organiser, was awarded to **Mark Saunders**.
- The **League Glover Cup** for outstanding development achievement by an affiliated league was awarded to the **Oxford Softball Association**.
- The **President's Club Award** for outstanding performance or development by an affiliated club or team was awarded to **The Stags** from the Great Britain Fastpitch League.
- The **Umpire of the Year Award** went to **Stephen Coyle**.
- The **Tournament of the Year Award** was won by the **Solent Lastball Tournament**.
- The **Young Fastpitch Player of the Year Award** was given to **Tia Warsop** from the Great Britain Senior Women's Team.
- The **Young Slowpitch Player of the Year Award** was given to **Rebekah Kay** from the Bristol Tigers and GB Slowpitch Team.
- The **Betsy Holden Award** for outstanding achievement by a young person in developing or promoting the sport was given to **Kai Owens** from the GB Under-23 Men's Fastpitch Team.

BSUK session

The BSUK section at the end of the meeting was delivered by BaseballSoftballUK CEO John Boyd, who began by congratulating all the award recipients.

"Over the years," John said, "I've heard the comment from the BSF AGM floor that softball needs to become younger. But this is happening and there are many examples we can point to, as shown by the contribution of so many young award winners and contributors."

John also paid tribute to Glover Cup winner Mark Saunders and the very successful programme he has developed over a number of years at Archway School in Stroud. "It's such a live and important reminder," John noted, "of how much teenagers enjoy playing and the impact that slowpitch can play on the growth of the sports."

Purpose

John then set out a definition: "BaseballSoftballUK is the development and Olympic performance agency for the Baseball and Softball Federations."

"The value at the centre of our organisation," John said, "is that baseball, fastpitch and slowpitch are three equally important disciplines at the heart of what we have to offer as the sport of baseball/softball, positioned alongside our counterparts in volleyball, netball, cricket, lacrosse, rugby, and many other sports."

An important aspect of BSUK's work is to represent baseball/softball to the sports' key stakeholders, which include Sport England, UK Sport, the British Olympic Association, Major League Baseball, the Youth Sport Trust, the Child Protection in Sport Unit, the Major of London's Office, and city councils and county-based sports partnerships across the country.

Highlights

John then turned to some of the highlights of 2022-23, which he described as a big year of change for the organisation.

“We introduced a new Olympic performance department last year,” John said, “which Gary Anderson heads up. This time last year, our Sport England funding was confirmed for five years, including a great percentage of funding that we can allocate to our Olympic talent pathways in England. And our partnerships have diversified too, adding substantive relationships with UK Sport, Major League Baseball, the Mayor of London’s Office and the London Stadium.”

With regard to development, highlights of the past year included university softball and baseball being included as official BUCS sports, further work with softball clubs and leagues through the Development Charter, the introduction of a new Health Check for clubs, support for facilities and location relationships, and the provision of money to enhance facilities from BSUK’s Facilities Fund, which comes from BSUK’s own resources, not from Sport England.

Although BSUK has no formal responsibilities over slowpitch or men’s fastpitch national teams, John said, the World Class Performance Programme being built around the Women’s Fastpitch programme will create “a halo of benefits” for other national team programmes as well.

At Farnham Park, BSUK built Field 5 last year and provided a fully-skinned infield on the softball diamond on Field 2. Now, a purpose-built field at Conniburrow in Milton Keynes is now back on line for use, particularly by the Milton Keynes slowpitch league and by fastpitch.

Unfortunately, John said, the proposed development of a dedicated facility along the lines of Farnham Park at Hough End in Manchester has failed to materialise due to objections from local residents, so BSUK will re-set its facilities strategies and will continue to consult with the softball community about needs.

BSUK also continues to coordinate Regents Park on behalf of London Leagues.

Priorities

Safeguarding, welfare and governance are going to become a major priority for all sports, John told the meeting, in light of the Whyte Review into the abuse of athletes in British Gymnastics, which has created new expectations for the organisation of sport.

Safeguarding, culture, coaching, officiating, and diversity are all areas where the government will expect National Governing Bodies to be proactive to ensure that the experience sports provide is as high-quality, safe and inclusive as is possible. This is an area where the responsibilities of BSUK and the BSF overlap significantly and discussions with the BSF Executive on these areas are ongoing.

Events

With regard to events, John noted that BSUK is now supporting the running of NSL weekends and some National Championships on behalf of the BSF, and this year will organise the Softball World Series.

“I want to thank the British Softball community for this,” John said. “By keeping the revenues in the sport, we have been able to invest in Farnham Park, and the two new slowpitch infields are an example.”

BSUK is now also running several Slowpitch Cup competitions, including the Fully Loaded Cup and the May and June Cups, and last year introduced a new All-Star Women’s Fastpitch Series which will continue in 2023.

Expectations

John said: “You’ve heard today that there are more and more areas that require close working between baseball and softball to meet expectations from government and from the International Federation, and this is putting more and more pressure on the two voluntary boards. BSUK is under no illusion about the scale of the ask on voluntary Boards and we are ready and willing to offer our staff and resource to help

wherever it is required. This may well include approaches those attending this AGM, as key decision makers in the sport, to contribute.”

Looking ahead

Finally, looking ahead to 2023, John said that BSUK will:

- Publish key actions for the development of fastpitch and slowpitch softball.
- Start planning, with the BSF, for the 2026 European Slowpitch Championships.
- Work with the BSF – and BBF – on the creation of a Diversity Inclusion Action Plan and People Plan as required by the government.
- Continue to support clubs and leagues through the Development Charter and Health Check.
- Bring back Academy Slowpitch, along with a specific development programme for captains and coaches.
- Continue to develop the MLB London Legacy Programme. Within it, there will be a generic youth format introduced across 250 schools nationwide, a local pop-up community provision programme in East London and a volunteering programme.

Finale

At the close of the meeting BSUK Board Chair Phil Veasey, thanked the BSF Executive for its work and offered particular thanks to Ieuan Gale for his efforts and commitment during his two years as BSF President.

Ieuan closed the meeting by noting that BBF President Tom Thornhill was in attendance and wished the GB Men’s Baseball Team the best of luck when they play in the World Baseball Classic in Arizona early in March.

“This is the end of my time as BSF President,” Ieuan said. “The last two years have been a rollercoaster, but we have achieved a lot, and I’m sure this will continue. I want to offer my thanks to everyone at this AGM for your enthusiasm and dedication that makes the sport what it is.”

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lesley Morisetti

Well, this was a surprise: me, Interim President of the British Softball Federation -- who knew I needed to do a report for the AGM? Well, here it is....

Starting at the end, we, the BSF Executive, have welcomed many new members to our ranks, especially in the last two months, and we are looking forward to a very productive 2024 season. We also formed the Athlete Commission last year, made up of representatives from each discipline and from various levels of softball, and they have been very engaged with the softball community. I think they will have a big influence going forward, bringing softball members' issues to the fore.

It's been a big learning curve for me, getting to grips with all the behind-the-scenes work that the Federation Board needs to do to keep afloat with current domestic, European and international relationships.

So to what was an extraordinary year in 2023. I'm not sure I can do everyone and everything justice in a brief overview: it takes a lot of individuals a lot of time, effort, and money to produce the results we have achieved and the growth we've made in participation. The future is looking good for softball and for moving forward to bigger and better results.

Some of our achievements last year are detailed in reports below, but for a full account of all those achievements, the BSF website News section (<https://www.britishsoftball.org/news>) is the place to go, and we are looking for a keen, able person with an interest in covering our sporting endeavours in 2024 to follow in Bob Fromer's footsteps. Please let us know if you – or someone you know – is interested in doing journalism for the BSF website.

Our domestic softball is played at many levels, over many events, and at many venues across our nation. Some of the notable winners in our community in 2023 included:

- The **National Softball League**, with three divisions, continued to provide slowpitch teams with very competitive games. In 2024, the total number of teams over the three divisions will increase to 40, playing over three weekends in May, June, and July, with Nationals to follow. **2023 NSL League Winners – NSL 1: Legends, NSL2: The Mob, NSL 3: Bracknell.**
- The **Great Britain Fastpitch League** had the weather to contend with in 2023, with the first weekend cancelled completely, so let's hope 2024 will bring sunshine and competitive games. Laura Hirai is now on the BSF Executive as our Fastpitch Development Officer, and there will be a number of new initiatives for the GBFL in 2024, including fastpitch umpire training and a new junior training and competition section in the Men's Division. **2023 GBFL Winners -- The Mix (Women's Division) and the Stags (Men's Division). These two teams, along with the Barbarians and Meteors, are eligible for European Men's Super Cup play in 2024.**
- The **Single-Sex Slowpitch Nationals** were held in Manchester in 2023, with 20 teams, with trophies won in Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze Divisions. This year the event will be played at Farnham Park, but in future we would like to continue to take this event to hosts around the country. **2023 Single-Sex Nationals Winners – Platinum: Guzzlers, Gold: Royals, Silver: Chaos, Bronze: Cardiff.**

- The **Slowpitch League Nationals** were held at Farnham Park over the weekend of 12-13 August, with 20 entries from 10 leagues across the country, up slightly on 2022. There were Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals available.
2023 League Nationals Winners – Platinum: Mi6, Gold: Blue Sox, Silver: Sheriffs, Bronze: Wet Socks.
- The **NSL Nationals** were held at Farnham Park at the beginning of September, and only The Mob from NSL2 was able to translate league success into a Nationals gold medal. In 2024, NSL Nationals winners will receive a cash prize: their entry fee will be refunded.
2023 NSL Nationals Winners: NSL1: H20, NSL2: The Mob, NSL3: Storm.

On the international scene, several GB National Fastpitch Teams competed in European Championships in 2023: the Women's Under-18 and Under-13 Teams, and the Men's Senior, Under-18 and Under-16 Teams. See the National Teams Report below to see where they placed.

We also had six club teams competing in European Cups in 2023, with a considerable amount of success:

- The **European Women's Cup** was held in Zagreb, Croatia in August last year, and the 2022 GBFL Women's Division champions The Mix won the tournament, defeating the host team Princ Zagreb in the final, which meant that The Mix have been promoted to the Women's Premier Cup for 2024, the first British club team to play at that level. Congratulations again to The Mix!
2023 European Women's Cup Winner -- The Mix.
- The **European Slowpitch Super Cup** was hosted early in August in Sofia, Bulgaria by the Akademiks Club, and two British teams competed -- H20 and the Travelling Dodgers. H20 went undefeated to take the gold medal while Travelling Dodgers lost in the bronze medal game and finished fourth
2023 European Super Cup Winner -- H20.
- The **European Men's Fastpitch Super Cup** was held across three cities in The Netherlands at the end of August, with the Stags and the Meteors from the GBFL Men's Division taking part. More details are below in the National Teams report.

In early July, the GB Senior Women's National Fastpitch Team competed in a two-game exhibition series at Farnham Park against the American professional team Oklahoma City Spark, as a warm-up for their WBSC World Cup Group Stage tournament in Ireland. At that tournament, the GB Women opened with well-deserved 2-0 wins over World #9 Australia and World #3 Chinese Taipei. Then the weather took over, with rain delays, schedule disruption, and early starts, none of which made play easy. For more, see the National Teams Report below. Later in the year, the news that the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles will include men's baseball and women's fastpitch softball has been a great boost to our international programme.

Towards the end of 2023 and early in 2024, a number of vacancies have appeared on the BSF website for Head Coaches and Team Managers for several of our national teams, most of which are run entirely by volunteers. If you have the time, the energy, and the passion, please get involved.

Finally, during 2023, the BSF has been forging new relationships with the British Baseball Federation, and Bristol Softball Association President Neil Butterfield and BBF Coaching Commissioner Mike Hayward have been working with BSUK on a Coach Education Review. I hope that 2024 will see further collaboration on projects that can benefit both sports.

I've been around for a few years, and am hoping for a few more, but just wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your involvement in softball -- as part of a team or as a League Head or Committee member, an Umpire, a coach -- in fact, anyone who turns up on a Tuesday evening in the rain.

COMPETITIONS OFFICER'S REPORT AND NSL OVERVIEW

Liz Graham, Matt Tebb, and Nicola-Jane Dyson

BSF Single-Sex Slowpitch Nationals (Organiser – Nicola-Jane Dyson)

<https://www.britishsoftball.org/news/article/no-balls-and-pyros-take-top-trophies-at-the-2022-bsf-single-sex-nationals>

Held in Manchester in 2023 with 20 teams.

Following our policy of trying to run this in different areas, the event will return to Farnham Park in 2024 (the last time the event was played there was 2016). The East Midlands did come forward to host, but dates and availability of their ground could not be matched. We will explore whether they can host the tournament in 2025.

Women's Winners

- **Gold Winner:** Chaos (Manchester)
- **Silver Winner:** Cardiff Women

Men's Winners

- **Gold Winner:** Guzzlers (US Base)
- **Silver Winner:** Royals (East Midlands)

2024 event: 15-16 June at Farnham Park

Co-Ed Slowpitch League Nationals (Organiser – Matt Tebb)

<https://www.britishsoftball.org/news/article/Four-Champions-Crowned-at-Co-Ed-League-Nationals>

A total of 20 teams took part from all around the UK – most of whom had qualified by virtue of placings within their leagues in 2022 -- and the tournament eventually divided into Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze divisions when it came to the fight for trophies.

Winners will be invited to the **2024 event at Farnham Park**. All teams must attend the AGM and sign in for their team to claim a place.

- **Platinum Winner:** MI6 (London)
- **Gold Winner:** Blue Sox (Windsor)
- **Silver Winner:** Sheriffs (East Midlands)
- **Bronze Winner :** Wet Sox (Cardiff)

2024 event: 10-11 August at Farnham Park

NSL1 / NSL2 / NSL3 Nationals

<https://www.britishsoftball.org/news/article/h20-mob-and-storm-capture-nsl-nationals-titles>

The top 8 NSL1 and NSL2 teams once again contested these Nationals and the new NSL3 Nationals was populated by those who were able to field a team given the late announcement that the tournament would be held. Places were offered in order of final league placement.

- **NSL1 Winner:** H2O
- **NSL2 Winner:** The Mob
- **NSL3 Winner:** Storm

2024 event: 31 August-1 September at Farnham Park

NSL Overview

- NSL1 League winner – Legends
- NSL2 League winner – Mob
- NSL3 League winners Bracknell

- Mob and Blitz Bombers promoted to NSL1
- KK's and Tempest demoted to NSL2
- Bracknell and Blitz Meerkats promoted to NSL2
- MK and Ninos demoted to NSL3

Plans for 2024

NSL3 will have its final expansion in 2024, with four new teams entering. NSL3 will split into two equal divisions of eight teams. Each team will play teams in their own division twice (home and away) and all the teams in the other division once. The top four teams from each division will qualify for NSL3 Nationals, the top team from each division will be promoted to NSL2 for 2025, and the two bottom teams from each division will be demoted out.

This will increase turnover and reduce waiting time for other teams hoping to play in the NSL. Demoted teams can join the waiting list at the bottom.

All NSL teams must send a representative to the AGM and complete the form with name and team you are representing. You cannot represent more than one team.

League Winners 2023	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4
Bristol	Jets	Scorgs	Buccs Whizz	
Cardiff	Valley Wet Socks	Base Invaders		
East Midlands	Pyros	Brewers		
Edinburgh	Souls	Bolts		
Glasgow	CSC Chaos			
LSL Majors	Secret Agents MI6	The Mob	Joint: Softboiled, GOT	
LSL Minors	Raiders Blue	Joint: Diamond Dogs, Golden Sombreros	Joint: Fly Ballers, Battitude	
London Advertising Softball League	MPC (Moving Picture Company)	ILM (Industrial Light & Magic)	Mindshare	
Leeds	Bobcats	Yorkshire Dales		
Liverpool	Southport Seagulls			
Manchester	Thunder	Manchester Dodgers	Stingers	Barflies
Milton Keynes	The Tribe			
Oxford	Rebels	Knights		

Publishers	Piranhas			
Solent	Itchen Knicks	Southsea Sharks		
Windsor	FP Falcons	Scorchers Red		
League Nationals	Platinum	MI6 (London)		
	Gold	Blue Socks (Windsor)		
	Silver	Sheriffs (East Midlands)		
	Bronze	Wet Sox (Cardiff)		

FASTPITCH DEVELOPMENT OFFICER REPORT

Laura Hirai

In October 2023, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced that softball has been welcomed back as an official event for the 2028 Games in Los Angeles, following its absence from the 2024 Olympic lineup. As a result, a Delegation of Authority has been made by the BSF to BSUK to manage all of the Great Britain female fastpitch national teams. The implication of this is that female fastpitch development in the UK has become even more of a priority.

Within my role as Fastpitch Development Officer, I have been tasked to make sure that ideas are put forward to BSUK around fastpitch development, and that projects from BSUK are maintained and held accountable for achieving agreed objectives. Three areas have been the focus of discussion since my time in this role: GBFL development, fastpitch umpiring, and grassroots growth.

GBFL

The GBFL has long been the sole fastpitch competition structure in the UK. With this in mind, the BSF is working with BSUK to improve its competition levels for all its players and introduce more development elements into its structure. One obstacle that needs to be overcome with this in mind is the consistent availability of dates and pitches for the GBFL on the Farnham Park calendar.

One idea to increase the number of players involved, and make sure that the level of play is suited to all, is to split the league into two levels. The GBFL Men's Division successfully implemented this last season and is planning to continue with a similar structure. There has been continued dialogue around this concept within the GBFL Women's Division.

The benefits of a two-tier system (with some cross-over play) are that players can play at a level best suited to them and also maintain a competitive feel, regardless of level. As well, there is more opportunity overall to play fastpitch softball.

It is certainly worth trying out this structure. If it works, this will open doors for more grassroots players to enter the only fastpitch league in the UK at a suitable level, and eventually progress to the higher levels.

Fastpitch Umpiring

With more games comes the need for more umpires. The feedback from last season's GBFL was that better umpiring was needed to improve the quality of the play. Plans to incorporate umpiring sessions on GBFL weekends and build a pathway for getting more umpires qualified to officiate in Europe are in the works for 2024.

We need to send an umpire to a European competition each year for every national or club team that enters a European Championship or Cup, with fines incurred if this is not achieved. This is a further reason to encourage the support of umpire development.

As of January 2024, we have seven members of the softball community who are keen to progress their umpiring skills by helping out at GBFL and potentially going for the WBSCE qualification. We are working closely with BSUK and BASU to have them ready for the GBFL season.

Grassroots developments and the Secondary School Fastpitch Programme

In BSUK's Annual Review 2022-2023, they highlighted that there were 671 participants in fastpitch softball last year. That is nowhere near the 8,277 members of baseball and the 10,816 members of slowpitch softball. We could list all the reasons why this might be, and fastpitch has always been a minority discipline in the UK -- but it is still clear that the fastpitch scene in the UK has dwindled over recent years. The number of new players has largely ceased to grow and the pathway to help them play more often and at higher levels is not available.

To support the growth of the sport at the grassroots level, BSUK has created the National Secondary School Girls Fastpitch Programme as part of the MLB London Series Legacy programme. This project targets girls at Key Stage Three to keep them in sport, and in particular softball, as statistically this is the age where many girls stop participating in sport.

In July 2023, BSUK hosted the National Secondary School Girls Fastpitch Festival at Farnham Park with a few schools attending, marking the start of this initiative. The goal is to start the delivery of the programme across a wide range of schools in four key areas (East London, West Sussex, Milton Keynes, and South Buckinghamshire/Slough) in the summer term of 2024.

Within the BSF, we have created a Working Group to support as well as to challenge this programme, to make sure that it will be delivered and sustained, and that the number of fastpitch softball players grows as a result.

At the end of the day, we will be unable to see the growth and development of the format without there being more opportunities to play fastpitch softball. That means having more regular fastpitch competitions throughout the season, as well as having more players at different levels to compete against one another. The journey will be slow and long, but the seeds have been sown.

NATIONAL TEAM REPORTS: 2023

WORLD CLASS PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Gary Anderson

BSUK Performance Director and Olympic Team Leader

The GB Senior Women's Fastpitch Team is making great strides towards the goal of qualifying for and winning a medal at the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Click on the link below for a report from BSUK Performance Director and Olympic Team Leader Gary Anderson:

https://www.britishsoftball.org/uploads/documents/Performance_Report.pdf

NATIONAL AND CLUB TEAM PERFORMANCE IN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION IN 2023

Bob Fromer

GB Softball National Teams and British club teams turned in some noteworthy performances in international softball competition in 2023.

GB Women's Fastpitch

Following two exciting games at Farnham Park on 6 and 7 July against the American professional team Oklahoma City Spark, played in front of enthusiastic crowds, the **GB Senior Women's Fastpitch Team** travelled to Balbriggan, north of Dublin, for the first of three WBSC World Cup Group Stage tournaments to be played in Europe, featuring top softball nations from around the world.

Each group was a six-team tournament that would qualify two teams for the WBSC Women's World Cup Final in 2024. GB were up against the USA, Chinese Taipei, Australia, Ireland, and Botswana.

Behind pitcher Georgina Corrick, GB started with memorable 2-0 wins over World #9 Australia and World #3 Chinese Taipei – GB's first-ever win against Australia and the first-ever win against a country ranked as high as Chinese Taipei. Next up was Ireland, and Georgina pitched a five-inning perfect game, striking out nine, as GB won 7-0.

But then the weather got even colder and wetter, washing out GB's remaining group games against the USA and Botswana, as the tournament moved straight to playoffs.

GB and the USA began their 1 v 2 Page Playoff game on Saturday 15 July at 8.00 am, hoping to beat the weather, but only finished it at 4.45 pm, after a long rain delay, when the US scored five runs in the bottom of the fifth inning to seal a 7-0 win. Georgina Corrick didn't pitch, as GB coaches held her back for the game against Australia or Chinese Taipei that would decide the second qualifying place for the World Cup finals. In the event, Australia beat Chinese Taipei, the GB v Australia game started at 8.30 pm in miserable conditions, and after four innings, GB held a 1-0 lead. But one bad inning was the difference in a 4-1 Australian win.

Though GB missed out on a place in the World Cup Finals, the team played incredibly well throughout the week, particularly on defense, with several standout defensive gems. Georgina Corrick threw 23 consecutive scoreless innings and 25 out of 26 scoreless innings in the tournament.

This was a very young GB Women's Team, representing a performance programme designed to build towards the Los Angeles Olympics Games in 2028. The performances in Dublin showed that the programme is on the right trajectory.

At the end of July, the **GB Under-18 Women's Fastpitch Team** travelled to Prague to compete in the 20-team European Under-18 Women's Championship. Wins against Germany, Hungary, Spain, France, and Ukraine put GB into the final six-team round-robin, but losses to the Netherlands, Ireland, and Italy meant that the team finished in fifth place.

Overall, GB had an amazingly good .381 team batting average, with a .432 on-base percentage and a .597 slugging percentage. The offense had 22 doubles and 11 triples in 10 games, and eight players had batting averages over .300, with a ninth player at .292. Shortstop Jessica Chan, who played with the GB Women in Ireland, was at or near the top of the leaderboard in several offensive categories.

GB Men's Fastpitch

The GB Men's Fastpitch programme sent three teams – the Seniors, Under-18s and Under-16s – to European Championships in 2023, and achieved a notable milestone, with the biggest move up the table of any country in the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) men's fastpitch world rankings published at the end of 2023.

GB climbed seven places from 32nd to 25th, four more than any other country managed to achieve.

In terms of results, the **GB Senior Men's Team** finished eighth out of 12 teams. Highlights of the tournament were an 8-1 win over Sweden, and a very creditable 8-0 loss to the all-conquering Czech Republic on the first day of competition.

Convincing 20-9 and 9-2 wins over Croatia helped the **GB Under-18 Men** reach the bronze medal game in their tournament and only a 4-1 loss to a powerful Denmark team in that game kept GB from achieving a medal.

The **GB Under-16 Men** were playing in their first-ever European competition, and for some of the newer players on the team, who were only recruited to the sport at the beginning of the year, the Europeans were a baptism of fire. But the team performed creditably despite not winning a game, finishing fourth and earning admiration from all of their rivals and from tournament officials for their sportsmanship and spirit.

GB's climb in the Men's Fastpitch world rankings is a tribute to the progress that has been made since the decision was taken by the BSF, early in 2019, to build men's fastpitch national team programmes almost entirely around home-based players.

Since that time, many more young players have joined the programme, almost all of them play in the Great Britain Fastpitch League (GBFL), there is a greater retention of players in national teams, and our ability to compete in Europe is slowly growing.

Club Team European Results in 2023

It was a successful year for British club teams in European Cup competitions in 2023.

H20 and the **Travelling Dodgers** represented Great Britain at the 2023 European Co-ed Slowpitch Super Cup in Sofia, Bulgaria, and H20 went undefeated in winning the competition with an overall 11-0 record, while the Travelling Dodgers lost the bronze medal game and finished fourth with a record of 9-3.

The Mix, Great Britain Fastpitch League (GBFL) Women's Division winners in 2022, also went undefeated in the European Women's Cup competition in Zagreb, Croatia in late August and captured the gold medal with a thrilling victory over the host team Princ Zagreb in the final, coming from behind for a 2-1 win. This result means that The Mix have been promoted to compete in the European Premier Cup, the top European Women's Cup competition, in 2024, and they will be the first British club team to compete at that level.

The **Barbarians**, GBFL Women's Division runners-up in 2022, had their first taste of European competition in the seven-team European Women's Cup Winners B tournament in the Netherlands. Inexperience showed as the Barbarians won only once, but they will hope to have a second crack at the tournament in 2024.

The **Stags**, who won the GBFL Men's Division in 2022, and the **Meteors**, who finished second, both competed in the 20-team European Men's Super Cup in Haarlem, Amstelveen, and Nieuw-Vennep in the Netherlands. The Stags won two games during the tournament – including a close 3-2 win over Meteors! – while the Meteors won once, but both teams gained valuable experience that will stand them in good stead when they return to the competition in 2024.

European Championship and World Cup competitions in 2024

Six GB National Teams will compete in European Championship competitions in 2024, and one team – the GB Under-18 Women – has been awarded a wild card place in the WBSC Under-18 Women's World Cup Group Stage tournaments.

The only uncertainty around this is that some European events do not yet have hosts at the time this AGM Pack is being written, though this might have changed by the time the AGM takes place.

The **GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team**, under a new Head Coach for the first time since 2012, will compete in the European Co-ed Slowpitch Championship from 15-21 July in Pardubice, Czechia. The team will be aiming for yet another gold medal.

The **GB Men's Slowpitch Team** will hope to compete for the third time in the European Men's Slowpitch Championship after winning the first two editions of this tournament in 2018 and 2022. However, at the time this is being written, no host has yet come forward for this event.

The **GB Senior Women's Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Women's Championship to be played in Utrecht in the Netherlands from 1-6 September, an unusually late date for this event. The goal at this tournament, which has no qualification implications, will be to medal. Another European Women's Championship will be played in 2025, and this tournament will be a qualifier for the Group Stage of the next WBSC Women's World Cup.

The **GB Under-22 Women's Fastpitch Team**, containing many players from the Senior squad, will compete in the European Under-22 Women's Championship from 5-11 August in Kutno, Poland. The goal for this squad, set by the GB World Class Performance Programme, will also be to medal in order to gain as many world ranking points as possible.

As mentioned above, the **GB Under-18 Women's Fastpitch Team** has recently been awarded a wild card place in the WBSC Under-18 Women's World Cup Group Stage. As with the Senior Women's World Cup in 2023, there will be three Group Stage tournaments, with six teams each, and the GB Under-18 Women will compete in Group A from 23-27 July in Sao Paulo, Brasil. The top two teams from each group, along with two wild card teams, will advance to the WBSC Under-18 World Cup Final in 2025, to be held in Dallas, Texas.

The **GB Under-15 Women's Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Women's Under-15 Championship from 1-6 July in Prague, Czechia. For various reasons, including the pandemic, this will be the first time this team has competed officially in Europe since 2017, and the goal, set by the GB World Class Performance Programme, will be to finish in the top six to gain more world ranking points.

Finally, the **GB Under-13 Girls Fastpitch Team** will make their annual trip to the European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy (EMRYT) tournament in Collecchio, Italy from 14-17 August, where the team will play in the more competitive Sport Division.

Unusually, there are no European Championships in 2024 for Men's Fastpitch teams at any age level due to WBSC Europe making adjustments to its competition cycles. Men's Fastpitch Championships will resume in 2025 with Senior and Under-23 competitions in odd-numbered years and Under-16 and Under-18 competitions in even-numbered years.

European Cup competitions in 2024

At time this AGM Pack is being written, two women's fastpitch teams and two men's fastpitch teams from Britain will compete in European Cup competitions in 2024 – provided that hosts for all these tournaments can be identified. There is no European Co-ed Slowpitch Super Cup in 2024.

As mentioned above, because the Great Britain Fastpitch League (GBFL) Women's Division winner **The Mix** won the European Women's Cup in 2023, they have been promoted to compete in the top tier of European women's club competition in 2024, the European Women's Premier Cup, which will be played from 19-24 August in Buttrio, Italy. The Mix will be the first British club team to compete in the Premier Cup, a tribute to the progress the team has made under the leadership of Sian Wigington and Chelsie Robison.

The 2023 GBFL Women's Division runner-up **Barbarians** will compete in the European Cup Winners Cup B from 19-24 August provided a host can be found for the tournament.

The **Stags** and the **Meteors**, who finished first and second respectively in the GBFL Men's Division in 2023, will return to the European Men's Super Cup in 2024, to be played from 26-31 August in Prague, Czechia.

BSF ACCOUNTS & BUDGET

BSF Accounts: year ended 30/9/23 + Budget 2024 proposed

Year-ended 30 Sept	2022		2023		2024	
	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Fees	45,138	53,085	56,099	57,112	59,356	
Nationals and WS	14,883	21,674	17,056	19,690	19,690	
TOTAL INCOME	60,021	74,759	73,155	76,802	79,046	-
Nationals and WS	15,513	22,461	16,947	19,659	20,130	
NTL Out	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	
Insurance	7,029	7,876	8,320	7,418	9,489	
BSUK Service fee	2,250	2,250	972	1,500	3,000	
Development	3,500	875	5,000	1,880	3,500	
GBR teams	22,935	20,748	19,831	14,722	24,850	
Marketing / Events	10,050	9,544	10,860	5,327	8,560	
Meetings / Travel	4,400	3,659	3,200	4,209	6,000	
Financial costs	8,250	8,209	10,100	9,997	8,780	
Contingency	-	-	4,000	4,355	4,000	
TOTAL COSTS	76,927	78,621	82,230	72,066	91,309	-
RESULT FOR YEAR	- 16,906	- 3,863	- 9,075	4,736	- 12,263	-

BALANCE SHEETS	<i>Forecast</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Forecast</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Forecast</i>	<i>Actual</i>
	2022		2023		2024	
Assets		59,525		59,105		
Liabilities		- 19,789		- 14,634		
Net Assets		39,736		44,471		-
Reserves b/f	43,598	43,598	39,736	39,736	44,471	
Profit / -Loss	- 16,906	- 3,863	- 9,075	4,736	- 12,263	-

BSF 2023 financial results overview

- **Income:** Additional teams and nationals event resulted in marginally higher income than expected.
- **Development:** There was an underspend in fastpitch and slowpitch coach development.
- **GB Teams:** There was an underspend in European training trip support and Slowpitch World Cup support when the tournament was cancelled, partially offset by one quarter's contribution towards BSUK's Performance Programme Coordinator.
- **Marketing / Events:** There was an underspend in event coverage and BSF promotional gifts for travelling teams.

BSF 2024 annual budget overview

- **Income:** The increase in fees is only to cover Personal Accident Insurance across all teams.
- **Insurance:** There is an increase in insurance costs due to Personal Accident insurance now being obtained for all teams.
- **BSUK service fee:** There could be an increase in BSUK service fees as additional comms support will be required.
- **GB teams:** There will be a full year's contribution towards BSUK's Performance Programme Coordinator, increased umpire travel costs, and ringfenced money for hosting the 2026 European Co-ed Slowpitch Championship.

BSF TEAM AFFILIATION FEES: 2024

The BSF did not raise team affiliation fees in 2021 as we began our recovery from the pandemic. We then brought in small increases in 2022 and 2023 because of the need to build back reserves after pandemic-induced losses and to cope with high inflation.

Basic BSF team fees will **not** rise again in 2024 and will remain the same as in 2023. Those fees are shown below.

However, because of the decision by the BSF Executive that all BSF-affiliated teams should have Personal Accident and Injury insurance as well as Civil and Public Liability insurance, team fees will increase this year by £20 to account for the Personal Accident and Injury insurance.

For teams that took out this insurance in previous years, total costs will not change. However, for those teams taking up this insurance for the first time, total costs will increase by £20 per team.

Fees for 2024 are shown below, with the cost for Personal Accident and Injury insurance, where appropriate, in brackets.

Full-Member League Teams: £220 (+£20)

Associate Member Teams: £115 (+£20)

Associate members include:

- Independent tournament teams with no league affiliation.
- Scottish league teams.
- Great Britain Fastpitch League teams.
- New league teams for the first two years of their existence.
- BASU as an organisation.

Junior Members: £85 (+£20)

- Under-18 teams (50% of rostered players must be under-18).
- University teams playing in BSF leagues.

Special Membership: £85

- A one-off team membership to allow entry to one specific competition.

GB National Teams: £40

- This fee is to provide Public Liability and Personal Accident and Injury insurance for GB National Teams when they train or play in the UK.

Single-Sex Teams created from non-BSF members: £10 per day

- This fee is to provide Public Liability insurance for single-sex slowpitch teams with members who are not affiliated to the BSF through co-ed slowpitch teams.

University Teams not in BSF Leagues: No fee

As has been the case since 2017, teams that enter the BSF Single-Sex Slowpitch National Championships or the Softball World Series will not be required to pay an additional affiliation fee for insurance purposes provided that all members of the team are rostered with co-ed slowpitch teams or fastpitch teams affiliated to the BSF. This will continue to be the case in 2024.

BSF AWARDS

ANNUAL AWARDS

The BSF Annual Awards, mostly based on the 2023 season, will be announced during the AGM.

Awards will be given in the following categories:

- The Glover Cup
- The League Glover Cup
- The President's Club Award
- The 2023 Tournament of the Year
- Youth Team of the Year
- Young Fastpitch Player of the Year
- The Betsy Holden Award
- BSF Lifetime Achievement Award

BSUK COACH & VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Softball and baseball coaching and volunteer awards for achievements in 2023 were not announced, as in the past, at the 2024 Coach Summit in January, but instead will be announced later in the year.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTIONS

The names of nine new entrants to the BSF Hall of Fame will be announced at the AGM.

They will include four Players, one Coach, one Team Manager, one Umpire, and one Organiser/Administrator.

ELECTION OF BSF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The BSF has co-opted a number of new members onto the Executive during 2023, and these co-opted Officers will be standing for election to a two-year term at the AGM.

A number of other existing Officers will be standing for election to new two-year terms, while two Officers, as shown below, will be serving the second year of a two-year term.

No nominations have been received from the community for any positions on the Executive.

All members of the BSF Executive elected at the 2023 AGM, except for President Lesley Morisetti and General Officer Nicola-Jane Dyson, are at the halfway point of a two-year term and are standing unopposed because no nominations were received for these positions. Officers co-opted during the year are also standing for two-year terms. Nominations can only be made during the AGM for vacant positions.

Role	Standing	Serving	Nominated
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DIRECTORS:

President		Lesley Morisetti	
Treasurer	Laura Burkhardt		
Competitions Officer	Liz Graham		
National Teams Officer	Alice Hunter (co-opted)		
Administrator	Jessica Hastings		

OFFICERS:

Technical Officer	Pete Saunders		
Safeguarding Officer	Stella Ackrell		
Fastpitch Development Officer	Laura Hirai (co-opted)		
Slowpitch Development Officer		Position vacant	
Communications Officer		Position vacant	

GENERAL OFFICERS (GO)

GO: 2026 Euros Organiser		Nicola-Jayne Dyson	
GO: Marketing	Jordan Cooper (co-opted)		
GO: Legal	Shiraz Mehra (co-opted)		

BSF STAFF: Following the retirement of Bob Fromer from the role of Administrator after this AGM, the BSF will not have any paid staff in 2024.

CONSTITUTIONAL MOTIONS TO THE 2024 BSF AGM

No constitutional motions are being presented at the 2024 AGM.

GENERAL MOTIONS OR PROPOSALS TO THE 2024 BSF AGM

PROPOSAL 1 (from the BSF Executive):

MOTION: That individual player registration on a platform designated by the BSF will be mandatory for all players on all affiliated teams for the 2024 season and in future.

RATIONALE: Safeguarding requirements from the government have tightened following the Whyte Review into the recent scandal in British Gymnastics, and all National Governing Bodies (NGBs) are required to maintain a record of their members. Individual player registration will be done under all relevant privacy and GDPR regulations, and when registering, players will be able to choose which questions they answer and what data they provide, although name, date of birth, and email address will be mandatory. The BSF would also welcome the ability that player registration will provide to communicate, on a limited basis, with individual members to provide important information when necessary. BSUK will not have the ability to use this data to communicate to BSF members.

SUPPORT: The BSF Executive supports this motion, and it is also supported by all League Heads that attended a special meeting on the subject on 10 January.



BASU REPORT

Pete Saunders
BSF Technical Officer

There were seven online BASU training courses in 2023, in Bristol, Cardiff, East Midlands, London (2), Manchester, and Windsor.

We had 83 trainees: 50 BASU-trained umpires (some requalifying), and 25+ local umpires.

In 2024, we're running eight BASU umpire training courses, in Bristol, Cardiff, Guernsey, East Midlands, London (2), Oxford + Swindon, and Manchester.

We plan to re-introduce the Advanced Umpiring Course in 2025 to help current umpires progress to a higher level.

Nationally, last season was pretty much back to pre-Covid numbers: 54 tournament days and over 3,000 games umpired.

In 2023, seven BASU umpires called at WBSC Europe tournaments – four fastpitch and three slowpitch umpires -- plus we had one newly-qualified WBSC Europe fastpitch umpire. Here is where British umpires officiated in Europe last year:

- European Men's Championship in Horsholm, Denmark from 24-29 July: Bridget Cameron.
- European Under-18 Women's Championship in Prague, Czechia from 30 Jul-5 August: Darrell Pitman and Jes Sandhu.
- European Co-ed Slowpitch Super Cup in Sofia, Bulgaria from 7-12 August: Christopher Lunn, Jason Smith, and Stephen Coyle.
- European Women's Cup in Zagreb, Croatia from 21-26 August: David Hurley.

We now have six fastpitch and three slowpitch WBSC Europe-qualified umpires, and we need more umpires to take WBSC Europe qualifying courses, especially in fastpitch, so we can fulfil our umpire commitments in Europe. We are required to send one umpire to a European competition each year for every national and club team that plays in Europe, and we sent 10 teams in 2023 and will send nine teams in 2024.

Although domestic umpire numbers are good, we can always use more tournament umpires from among those who have started umpiring in their local leagues. Leagues can always use more umpires too.

Recently we've seen rugby referees being threatened via social media and leaving the game, and football referees being physically attacked.

Thankfully, this sort of behaviour isn't seen in our game, which is great -- but let's make sure this sort of behaviour doesn't creep in.

Do umpires make mistakes? Sure, we're human! Do players ever make mistakes?

2024 SOFTBALL CALENDAR

(as of 8 February 2024)

Slowpitch = Black

Fastpitch = Red

Baseball = Green

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
Jan 6-7			
Jan 13-14	BSF Executive Face-to-Face Weekend Meeting	Manchester	Liz Graham
Jan 20 Jan 21			
Jan 27-28	BSUK Coach Summit	The 108 at Brent Cross	Colin Barrett
Jan 27	BASU AGM	Farnham Park	Jes Sandhu
Feb 3 Feb 4			
Feb 8-11	WBSC Europe Congress	Benalmadena, ESP	WBSC Europe
Feb 10-11			
Feb 15	Pre-Season League Heads Forum	Remote meeting	Bob Fromer
Feb 17-18			
Feb 24 Feb 25	2024 BSF AGM Chichester Co-ed Indoor Fastpitch Tournament	Remote meeting Chichester	Bob Fromer David Morris
Mar 2-3			

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
Mar 9-10			
Mar 16-17	BUCS National University Softball Championship	Farnham Park	Liz Knight
Mar 23-24			
Mar 30-31	EASTER WEEKEND		
Apr 6 Apr 7	Hit & Run 11 Preseason	Farnham Park	Alan Le Marquand
Apr 13 Apr 14	Windsor First Ball	Farnham Park	Tracey Evans
Apr 20-21 Apr 20 Apr 21	Great Britain Fastpitch League 1 Cardiff First Ball Bristol First Ball	Farnham Park Cardiff Bristol	David Morris Matt Andrews Neil Butterfield
Apr 27-28 Apr 27 Apr 28	Manchester First Ball GB Slowpitch Trials MK Softball Charity Cup GB Challenge Tournament	Manchester Farnham Park Milton Keynes Farnham Park	Nicola-Jane Dyson TBC MK Softball TBC
May 4-5 May 4	BSUK Coronation Fully-Loaded Cup Leeds First Ball	Farnham Park Leeds	Liz Knight Jo Galloway
May 11-12 May 11	Great Britain Fastpitch League 2 Chicks w/ Sticks & Let the Boys Play Tournaments London Softball League Firstball	Farnham Park Farnham Park London	David Morris Alan Le Marquand TBC
May 18-19	NSL Weekend 1	Farnham Park	Liz Graham
May 25-26	Sons of Pitches Tournament Liverpool Shield Tournament	Farnham Park Widnes	Sara Daughtrey Stephen Shearer

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
Jun 1-2	Diffodil Tournament Great Britain Fastpitch League 3	Cardiff Farnham Park	Dave McCarthy David Morris
Jun 8-9	MLB London Series	London Stadium	MLB/BSUK
Jun 15-16	BSF Single-Sex Slowpitch National Championships	Farnham Park	Nicola-Jane Dyson
Jun 22-23	NSL Weekend 2	Farnham Park	Liz Graham
Jun 29-30	Bristol Somerball	Keynsham	Neil Butterfield
Jul 1-6	European U-15 Women's Championship	Prague	Jodie Rushin
Jul 6-7	Great Britain Fastpitch League 4	Farnham Park	David Morris
Jul 13-14	Windsor Invitational Tournament	Farnham Park	Tracey Evans
Jul 15-21	European Co-ed Slowpitch Championship	Pardubice, CZ	TBC
Jul 20-21	Great Britain Fastpitch League 5 Labor Day Tournament	Farnham Park Leicester	David Morris TBC
Jul 20	Raiders Tournament	Farnham Park	TBC
Jul 27-28	NSL Weekend 3	Farnham Park	Liz Graham
Aug 3-4	Manchester Main Tournament BSUK August Cup Chicks w/ Sticks Tournament	Manchester Farnham Park Farnham Park	Nicola-Jane Dyson Liz Knight Alan Le Marquand
Aug 5-10	European U-22 Women's Fastpitch Championship	Kutno, Poland	Shelley Robinson
Aug 10-11	BSF Co-ed Slowpitch <u>League</u> National Championships	Farnham Park	Liz Graham
Aug 14-17	Massimo Romeo (U-13) Youth Trophy Tournament	Collecchio, Italy	Julie Spittle

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
Aug 17-18	Bristol Wreck Tournament	Keynsham	Neil Butterfield
Aug 17	London Softball League Lastball	London	TBC
Aug 19-24	European Women's Cup Tournaments	Various countries	WBSC Europe
Aug 24-25	Edinburgh Festiball	Edinburgh	Liz Graham
Aug 26-31	European Men's Super Cup	Prague, CZ	WBSC Europe
Aug 31-Sept 1	BSF Co-ed Slowpitch <u>NSL</u> National Championships	Farnham Park	Liz Graham
Sep 1-6	European Women's Fastpitch Chp	Utrecht, NL	Shelley Robinson
Sep 7-8	Softball World Series Tournament	Farnham Park	Liz Knight
Sep 7	Windsor Last Ball	Farnham Park	Alan Le Marquand
Sep 14-15	BBF National Championships	Farnham Park	BBF
Sep 21-22	Great Britain Fastpitch League 6	Farnham Park	David Morris
Sep 28-29			
Sep 28	The Codebreakers Cup	Milton Keynes	MK Softball
Oct 5-6			
Oct 12-13			
Oct 19-20			
Oct 26-27			
Nov 2-3			
Nov 9-10			
Nov 16-17			

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
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Nov 23-24

Nov 30-Dec 1

Dec 7-8

Dec 14-15

Dec 21-22

Dec 28-29

DATES NOT YET CONFIRMED FOR:

European Men's Slowpitch Championship

European Women's Cup Winners Cup B

Leeds Tournament

Hit & Run Tournament 11

Not Jingle Balls Tournament