

# **BSF EXECUTIVE MEETING REPORT: 12 AUGUST 2021**

The British Softball Federation Executive held its most recent monthly videoconference meeting on the evening of Thursday 12 August. Below is a report on the main discussions and decisions.

## **Return to Play update**

BSUK Head of Commercial Joelle Watkins, who represented the development agency at the meeting, told the Executive that the Covid-19 Guidance Update that was created by BSUK and published on the BSF and BSUK websites on 9 August was likely to be the last for a while, as the government and Sport England have effectively washed their hands of further regulation of sport in England following “Freedom Day” (some requirements remain in Scotland and Wales).

The Guidance contains recommendations from BSUK and the BSF for supporting NHS contact tracing and maintaining basic hygiene precautions during softball play, but these are no longer mandatory.

## **Financial matters**

BSF Treasurer Laura Burkhardt reported that no major changes to income or expenditure had arisen with regard to the 2020-21 budget that was finalised recently in light of registration and income data for the current season.

However, a few items that will affect the budget remained to be finalised:

- A decision on adding a search function to the new BSF website (see below).
- The exact amount to be refunded by the ESF for entry fees paid for European competitions that our national and club teams were unable to attend for Covid-related reasons.
- How many umpires we will need to fund for ESF competitions this summer.
- Decisions about the purchase and use of softballs for BSF-run competitions (the NSL, National Championships and the Softball World Series).

## **BSF website**

Following completion of basic work on the new BSF website that went live in February, two additional projects were proposed, to be carried out by Tim Stride, former BSUK Head of Operations, who created the website:

- 1) An archive for historical news stories on the old website, dating back to 2011. Although the original idea was to retain the old website as an archive, this material has now all been transferred to the new website, and the project has been completed.
- 2) Create a search function and filter system for the new website. This project was approved by the BSF Executive at the August meeting, and work will begin shortly.

## Registration

No additional teams or leagues have registered since the BSF Executive last met in July.

## BSF Tournaments

**League National Championships.** Competitions Officer Liz Graham told the Executive that the weather had made the League National Championships at Farnham Park on 7-8 August “a tough weekend for everyone” – but in the event, all games were played, players seemed to enjoy themselves and the multi-media coverage created by BSUK was well-received.

**Softball World Series.** World Series organiser Bob Fromer told the meeting that all six teams coming from overseas had been forced to withdraw from the tournament because of Covid travel restrictions and quarantine rules, but the nine UK-based teams that had signed up are still committed to play.

Various possibilities for adding additional UK-based teams to the tournament are being explored, with the aim of having a 12-team tournament, and participants will be finalised during the week beginning 16 August.

## International issues

**Slowpitch Working Group.** Mike Jennings reported that there have been no further meetings of the WBSC Slowpitch Working Group and no progress on a Slowpitch World Cup, currently scheduled for 2023. The WBSC has recently been preoccupied, understandably, with the Tokyo Olympics.

**WBSC tournament portal.** With large amounts of information now needing to be input to a WBSC portal by GB national and club teams playing in Softball Europe and/or WBSC competitions, it was agreed that more than one person should have access to the portal and be able to upload information.

## BSF Development Grant

The Executive has agreed to award a £250 BSF Development Grant to a new softball club forming in the South Lake District town of Kendal, a region that has previously had no organised softball activity. The hope is that the club can grow to the point where a small league could be formed, and they are planning to eventually have a youth section. The grant will go towards player recruitment, grounds fees and equipment.

## **BSF Face-to-Face meeting**

For many years, the BSF Executive has held monthly meetings by phone (and more recently by videoconference) but has also had an annual in-person weekend meeting, usually in the autumn, where issues can be discussed in more depth.

Last year's face-to-face meeting was cancelled due to Covid, but the Executive is hoping to hold an in-person meeting this year in October or early November, probably in Manchester, and is currently canvassing dates.

## **Next meeting**

The next BSF Executive videoconference meeting will be held on Thursday 9 September.

Anyone from the softball community with matters to raise at the meeting should contact BSF Administrator Bob Fromer [[bob.fromer@britishsoftball.org](mailto:bob.fromer@britishsoftball.org)].