**Goalball UK – Club & Competition Committee Minutes**

Tuesday 13th February 2020, 10:30am at The Factory, Birmingham

**Present:** Dina Murdie (DM) Chair, Dani Dillon (DD) Dyfrig Lewis Smith (DLS) - (by phone; items 1-4 only), Alex Bunney (AB), Tom Dobson (TD), Sammie Korosi (SK)

**Apologies:** Paul Holloway (PH), Sarah Leiter (SL)

**1. Introductions**

• DM opened the meeting at 10:30 and welcomed the new members to the committee.

**2. National League Feedback & 2020/21 Structure**

(A) FEEDBACK FROM CLUBS

• Committee discussed the feedback from national league survey in detail.

\* A wide range of opinions were noted, and it will not be possible to accommodate all concerns, for example the travel commitments some clubs have to make to attend tournaments.

\* AB and TD noted that the feedback themes reflected conversations they had with clubs during the season.

\* One of the themes was problems with venues, e.g. lack of hot showers, poor changing facilities, etc. TDs will report such issues, whether spotted by them or brought to their attention, and GUK will raise these with the venues to push for improvement.

\* The joining of Novice and Intermediate tournaments at same day/venue was criticised, and AB noted that this was causing clubs with multiple teams to struggle with coaching and players were losing court time. Although splitting the tournaments will create additional resource issues, in season 2020-2021 the two levels will be split into separate days.

\* Whilst the end of season tournament was a good social event, court time was limited. TD also noted that participation levels was reducing. The end of season tournament in its current format will not place in 2020-21 season. Options for different social opportunities would be looked at in the discussion of the new league structure.

\* The feedback showed lack of support for creating new player levels. The CC also noted that the division between Novice and Intermediate had some unintended consequences, for example a team of 3 x Level 2 players could not play at a Novice competition because they exceeded the 5point limit. AB highlighted there was also concern about a duty of care towards lower level players facing significantly stronger ones at Intermediate. AB and TD will look at proposals including the points system so that Novice goes up to 6 points across a team, with Intermediate starting at 7, for introduction in season 2020-2021.

\* CC will also develop guidance to help clubs and GUK have an agreed understanding of what the levels indicate.

\* Second teams gaining additional points for the overall championship were criticised. CC noted that the purpose of second teams was to encourage participation, not as a way of generating additional points. A decision to be made on second team points when 2020-2021 structure is confirmed.

(B) OTHER ISSUES:

* The number of officials & activators.

CC congratulated the 3 new British IBSA qualified referees and wished the 10 volunteers signed up for Goalball UK referee course 17th February in Hereford luck. Introduction to Officiating course planned 21st April at in London.

TD to look into getting name badges for referees and activators to help integrate new people into tournaments.

* First Aid

CC agreed there is a need for this at tournaments however staff need to be V.I. trained and confident working with people who have a visual impairment. Cost also needs to be considered. AB to speak to a university clinic regarding using sports physios at tournaments.

SK also suggested club coaches and volunteers should also be First Aid trained.

(C) LEAGUE STRUCTURE

The CC discussed drafts for different league structures. It was noted that the budget for next season will be the same.

The strengths and weaknesses of each proposal was discussed, as well as the feasibility of transitioning to a league structure and sourcing venues for expanded competitions.

CC asked AB and TD to work up a plan for introducing a new structure for the season 2021-2022 with the following main principles:

\* Novice to retain a regional structure with individual competitions to encourage participation.

\* Intermediate and Elites to have a league structure with promotion / relegation between divisions and a schedule that would require teams to commit to a certain number of fixtures that counted towards league positions.

\* To encourage participation by developing clubs, Intermediate and Elite tournaments to include slots for “friendly” games to allow new clubs to be exposed to competition level opposition.

\* Each level of play would retain a national cup competition.

Based on the timeline the committee may consider restructuring some elements for 2020-21 with full structural change in 2021-22.

**3. Transgender Policy**

**\*** DLS briefed the committee on the wider context within which GUK needed to develop a policy for the appropriate support of trans-gender athletes, volunteers and other participants. As well as the social and legal contexts, there is also the approaches taken by international and national sports bodies.

• Work is currently ongoing at UK Sport and Sport England regarding development of guidance to help the creation of national governing body policies.

• Further discussions will happen at many levels, including the Board, and any updates will be discussed at upcoming meetings.

**4. Update from the CC Disciplinary Panel**

• All complaints received and raised at the last meeting have been dealt with accordingly by the relevant disciplinary panels.

\* The CC noted that some of the matters raised broader issues of behaviour at tournaments, and that TDs will monitor; AB will report further to CC

\* AB, with support from CC members, had taken steps to address the coming to light of errors of inputting game results at tournaments. Corrections have been made and affected clubs contacted. League records have been amended appropriately.

**5. Player Level Reassessment**

• TD presented to the committee a list of the current registered players

\*The Committee reviewed each player individually and made changes: 11 were moved up a level. Some changes are to be immediate, for player safety reasons.

• Confirmation of changes will be communicated to clubs and individual’s w/c 17.02.2020

\*The hope to put player levels online cannot currently be fulfilled because of the need to have effective data security in place. Clubs wishing to access the information should contact the office and copies can be made available.

**6. Competition Update**

• TD reported that since the last CC meeting there had been:

• Novice – 15 teams at 3 tournaments

• Intermediate – 19 teams at 3 tournaments

• Elite – 9 teams at 1 tournament

• Application of Rules

TD reported 3 incidents where Goalball UK have applied the rules regarding player levels and registration. Committee agreed this was a good consistent approach.

• February Elite

AB mentioned players behaviour has notably improved since the meeting at the last Elite tournament. A tournament briefing reminding players, coaches and officials of their responsibilities will be rolled out at all levels in the coming months.

• This Girl Can

TD confirmed GUK plans to hold two This Girl Can player days, 2nd May in York and Birmingham followed by a tournament later in 2020, date to be confirmed

**7. AOB**

• None

**8 Date of next meeting**

Currently scheduled for 30 April 2020, but as this date was fixed before new members could input, this date will be reviewed to ensure maximum attendance.

DM closed the meeting at 14:40 and thanked everyone for their attendance and ongoing support.