



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH SOFTBALL FEDERATION

This is the official Notification and Information Pack for the
2019 British Softball Federation Annual General Meeting.

Venue:

Metropolitan Police Bushey Sports Club
Aldenham Road
Bushey
Herts WD23 2TR
<http://www.busheysportsclub.co.uk/>

Date:

Saturday 23 February 2019
10.45 am-4.30 pm

Map Reference:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Bushey+WD23+2TR,+UK/@51.657599,-0.363928,13z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x48761539d739e99b:0xe3d48351eedf2e58!8m2!3d51.658637!4d-0.3665886?hl=en>

Schedule:

10.45-11.00	Registration
11.00-1.00	Softball League Heads Forum Meeting
1.00-1.45	LUNCH and Registration
1.45-2.45	Concussion Webinar
2.45-3.00	Tea and coffee break
3.00-4.30	AGM + Annual Awards

Parking:

There is plenty of free parking in front of the venue.

Directions by Public Transport:

The nearest train station is Watford Junction.

Directions by Car:

The venue is two miles (seven minutes) from Watford Junction Station by taxi and is one mile from J5 on the M1.

Food and Drink Options:

The canteen at the Police Sports Club will be open from noon on the day of the AGM, serving a varied menu including burgers, jacket potatoes, paninis, omelettes, fish and chips etc, with prices ranging from £3.50 to £7.50. If you want lunch before the afternoon programme starts (see schedule above), best to come early.

Tea and coffee will be provided between the concussion webinar and the AGM.

AGM ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at the BSF AGM is linked to participation in National Championships. Attendance is now required by:

- All NSL 1 and NSL 2 teams.
- All slowpitch softball leagues that wish to send teams to Nationals at any level.
- All 2018 league divisional winners that wish to take up the place they have earned in the Co-ed Slowpitch Nationals in 2019 at the appropriate grade.
- All teams that won their grade (Gold, Silver, Bronze) at the 2018 Co-ed Slowpitch Nationals if they wish to be guaranteed a place in the 2019 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 genuine registered playing member of a team from that league that has won a place in the 2019 BSF Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals can represent both the league and that team. But such a person will only have one vote, not two.

If you are representing both your league and team at the AGM, as in the paragraph above, please let the BSF know beforehand (email Competitions Director Liz Graham on: liz@softball.org.uk).

BSF AGM 2019: AGENDA

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REPORT FROM THE 2018 BSF AGM

A well-organised 2018 BSF AGM, held on Saturday 24 February at the Hough End Centre in Manchester, was enlivened by a ceremony in which the BSF gave out its annual awards for the 2017 season and nine new members were inducted into the BSF Hall of Fame.

A total of 60 people attended the AGM, representing leagues and teams from around the country.

Those in attendance also heard a presentation on BaseballSoftballUK's development work by CEO John Boyd, based around the question: "What does BSUK do for the mainstream softballer?"

Below is a journalistic account of the meeting.

Matters Arising from the 2017 BSF AGM

There were no Matters Arising from the report on the 2017 BSF AGM.

However, BSF President Jenny Fromer brought the meeting up to date on the question of the proposed merger between the BSF, the BBF and BSUK, which had been discussed at the 2017 AGM. At that time, the proposal had been put on hold because of uncertainty around BaseballSoftballUK's imminent funding award from Sport England but also because of opposition from the BBF, despite the previous agreement of the BBF Board to the merger.

Jenny reported that nothing has changed in the interim: the BSF remains in favour of the proposal, but the BBF has moved even further away from the idea. Meanwhile, BSUK is reconstituting its own Board, with a new Chair not yet in place. However, with or without the BBF, the merger proposal will be revisited in due course.

President's Statement

In her President's Statement, Jenny Fromer picked out some of the highlights of the year that she had referenced in her AGM Pack report:

- All seven GB National teams competing in European or World Championships.
- Seven BASU umpires officiating at European Softball Federation (ESF) or World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) tournaments.
- The GB Women's team taking the bronze medal at the European Championship and qualifying for this year's crucial World Championship in Japan.
- A full and successful season for both NSL1 and NSL2.
- The opening of a brand-new field and the Home Plate clubhouse at Farnham Park.

Jenny paid tribute to the many people who work on behalf of British softball to make all this and much more happen: team captains, league organisers, national team staff, coaches, umpires, the BSF Executive and BaseballSoftballUK staff. Most of these people are volunteers, which make the many achievements in British softball even more remarkable.

But volunteers can't necessarily be counted on for long-term contribution, so it's good that there is a professional organisation in BaseballSoftballUK to provide ongoing support. Meanwhile, more volunteers are necessary – and will be welcomed! Just contact the BSF through: info@britishsoftball.org.

The British Baseball Federation, Jenny told the meeting is moving further away from the idea of working with BSUK and taking advantage of what the organisation can provide, but this is the opposite of the direction in which the BSF should travel.

The BSF underspent against its planned budget in 2017 for the third or fourth year in a row, Jenny said. But in 2018, the Executive is determined that the surplus accumulated will be reinvested in the sport, primarily in development (including development grants), safety (including safeguarding and training), enhancing National Championships, further support for a growing number of national teams, webstreaming of BSF events and restructuring or replacing the BSF website to make it more useful for members.

Jenny said: "2018 should be a very good year for British softball!"

National Championships

Lesley Morisetti, who is a BSF General Officer with responsibility for National Championships, told the meeting that everything is in place for 2018, and that it's looking like the League National Championships in August will be the largest for many years.

Meanwhile, the NSL Nationals in September will include a round-robin "NSL 3" tournament for additional teams interested in NSL 2 places.

A full league season for both NSL 1 and NSL 2, with home-and-away fixtures for the 12 teams in each division, was run for the first time in 2017 and was very well received. Lesley highlighted the growth in the popularity of the NSL concept over the past few years: in 2013 there were 91 registered NSL players and in 2017 there were just under 500. The level of competition has improved as well, and should get even better in future.

Going forward, and for at least the next two seasons, there will be promotion and relegation of one up and one down between NSL 1 and NSL 2, but two teams will drop out of NSL 2 after the league season and will be replaced by the top two teams from the "NSL 3" tournament played during the NSL Nationals.

Softball World Series

Mike Jennings told the meeting that changes are being made to the organisation of the annual Softball World Series Tournament, which will celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2018, to ensure that all players have a genuine connection to the country or region of the world their team represents.

With GB-based teams – the home country teams representing England, Scotland and Wales and the ex-pat teams representing the US, Canada, the Anzacs, Africa, Latin America and Japan – the BSF has put the names and email addresses of team captains on the website (<http://www.britishsoftball.org/news/view/world-series-teams-looking-for-new-players>) so that new players from or connected to those countries or regions can trial for places. Each of these teams will also be required to add two new players to their roster for next year.

With teams coming from overseas, preference will be given to genuine national teams, and both Belgium and Holland will be sending national slowpitch teams to the World Series this September. This reflects the BSF's desire to use the tournament to foster the growth of slowpitch in Europe and increase the number of teams entering ESF slowpitch competitions.

National Teams and the GBMC

National Teams Officer Jana McCaskill told the meeting that the seven GB National Teams that had competed abroad in 2017 were being joined by two more teams in 2018 – a GB Men's Slowpitch Team that will compete in the ESF's first-ever Men's Slowpitch Championship in June in the Czech Republic, and a new GB Under-22 Women's Fastpitch Team that will compete for the first time in July in the already-established ESF Under-22 Women's Championship.

The reason for forming a GB Under-22 team is to give players additional competition experience and help bridge the gap between junior and senior levels of play.

Locally, in 2018, the BSF and the GB Management Committee will be hosting an international women's fastpitch tournament, the London Cup, on 7-8 July at Farnham Park, with Senior or Under-19 National Teams from Great Britain, France, Ireland and the Czech Republic competing. It will, Jana said, be the highest-level fastpitch tournament held in this country for over a decade, and well worth attending as a spectator.

Meanwhile, the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) is making major changes to World Championships that will also have an impact in Europe – and may provide a chance for the current Slowpitch World Cup to move towards a genuine world championship-type tournament, contested by national teams consisting of passport holders. For more details on these WBSC changes and their effects, see:

<http://www.britishsoftball.org/news/view/changesplanned-by-wbsc-to-softball-world-championships>.

Jana asked those at the meeting how many people knew what the GB Management Committee is and what it does. Not many hands were raised, so Jana, who chairs the GBMC by virtue of her position as the BSF National Teams Officer, explained that the role of the GBMC – currently consisting of herself, Simon Mortimer, Johanna Malisani, Ian Tomlin, Kellie Whitaker and Bob Fromer -- is to oversee and support all GB National Team programmes. Specifically, the GBMC is responsible for:

- National team policy and governance.
- The appointment of Head Coaches and Team Managers.
- Safeguarding for all national team programmes.
- Provision of equipment, uniforms and branding for national teams.
- Financial management, fundraising and merchandising.
- UK-based national team events and competitions.
- This year, the GBMC has also taken on responsibility on a temporary basis for organising the Great Britain Fastpitch League.

Many of these functions are carried out by subcommittees that include one or more members of the GBMC and other volunteers, and Jana told the AGM that more volunteers are needed, particularly to help with fundraising and merchandising activities. Anyone interested in finding out more or getting involved can contact gbmc@britishsoftball.org.

Jana also addressed the question of what the BSF pays for on behalf of its national teams, since this budget line will amount to around 31% of planned BSF spending in 2018. The BSF pays for:

- Affiliation fees to the ESF and the WBSC.
- Entry fees to ESF and WBSC tournaments for all national teams (and 50% of the entry fees for British club teams competing in European Cups).
- Bursaries to help GB-based players who will struggle financially to accept their selection.
- Help for teams consisting of GB players to attend development tournaments in Europe.
- Half the travel costs for the umpires we are required to send to European tournaments by virtue of the number of British teams that enter them.
- Some of the costs involved in staging the London Cup.
- Some of the costs of hiring training venues for national teams in the UK.
- A limited amount of equipment, including medical equipment.
- Part of the costs of training – including safeguarding and first aid training – for national team staff.

The BSF also ringfences £10 from every full affiliation fee it receives from member teams and makes direct cash grants from the amount raised to national teams: £1000 every year to the GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team and £500 per year to all fastpitch national teams in years in which they attend official ESF or WBSC competitions.

Despite the fact that this amounts to a reasonable proportion of the BSF's budget, it is dwarfed by the amount of money that players and/or parents contribute towards the cost of GB Teams representing their country in official tournaments abroad.

Olympic chances and funding

Bob Fromer told the meeting that with softball and baseball restored to the Summer Olympic Games in 2020 in Tokyo, the GB Women's Fastpitch Team programme is currently focused on the possibility of qualification as the one country that will represent Europe in the six-team Olympic competition. This will be decided at a Europe/Africa Olympic Qualifying Tournament to be held in 2019, though details of the competition have not yet been announced.

The GB Women's Team, currently ranked third in Europe, and with a number of outstanding players, has at least an outside chance of achieving Olympic qualification – and if we could do so, the exposure and attention we would receive in the British media before and during the Olympics would bring major benefits to all formats of the sport, mainly in attracting new players.

But the major disadvantage we face compared to our main competitors for that Olympic place – the Netherlands, Italy and the Czech Republic – is that they have substantial public funding to help them prepare for the Olympic Qualifier, and we have none. The policy of UK Sport, the agency that funds the elite level of Olympic and Paralympic sport in Britain, is only to give funding to teams and athletes that are proven or probable Olympic medal-winners. This has meant giving more and more money to fewer and fewer sports, and of the 33 sports that will compete in the 2020 Summer Olympics, UK Sport will probably only be funding 17 or 18 of them.

This policy has been a success in pushing Britain up the Olympic medals table (fourth in Beijing, third in London, second in Rio), but at a cost of leaving an increasing number of sports completely out in the cold. For many of the unfunded Olympic and Paralympic sports, this means the destruction of their elite programmes and the elimination of any chance that they could ever achieve Olympic podium status or even qualification.

There have been an increasing number of calls over the past year or two – in the media, in Parliament and in the sports community – for UK Sport to look again at its funding model, and last summer, 12 unfunded Olympic and Paralympic sports, including baseball/softball, formed a movement called #Every Sport Matters, arguing that UK Sport should give every Olympic and Paralympic Sport at least a baseline level of funding to keep their elite programmes going. The group has now met twice with UK Sport Chair Dame Katherine Grainger and Chief Executive Liz Nicholl, and signs are that UK Sport will hold a widespread consultation about changing its funding model – but not in time to help unfunded sports for the Tokyo Olympics. And who know if baseball/softball will be in the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024?

However, despite the disadvantages brought about by having no public funding, and the fact that the GB Women cannot afford to train and compete together in the run-up to the Olympic Qualifier to anything like the extent that our main rivals can, the current talent in our programme gives us a genuine chance to qualify – and the GB Women's performance in the World Championship in Japan this summer should give an indication of what we may be able to achieve in 2019.

Accounts, budget and BSF affiliation fees

BSF Treasurer Laura Burkhardt led the presentation on the BSF accounts for 2017 and the proposed budget for 2018, and echoed the determination expressed by Jenny Fromer in her opening statement that the surplus created by BSF underspending over the past few years will be reinvested in the sport in 2018.

The BSF is planning for an income of around £90,000 in 2018 and spending of just over £113,000, and even if this is achieved, it will still leave the Federation with healthy reserves. However, Laura and BSF General Officer Mike Jennings, who also has responsibility for financial matters, stressed that the additional spending the BSF should be able to achieve in 2018 will not be able to be duplicated in future years.

Mike also announced that there was no intention to raise affiliation fees in 2018, but that the Executive was planning a small increase in 2019 to keep pace with inflation.

The accounts and budget were approved unanimously, and Jenny Fromer told the meeting that “this is the year to get some major pieces of work accomplished.” There were several questions from the floor, and one was around why the BSF has been underspending its budget for giving out development grants. It was explained that the BSF simply hadn’t received that many applications: very few grants were turned down, though some applications were referred back to be more fully developed.

The BSF gives development grants to leagues, clubs, teams and occasionally individuals – usually for a maximum of £250, but sometimes more – for a wide variety of development initiatives. For an application form, contact Liz Graham: liz.graham@britishsoftball.org.

Another question was why the BSF had underspent its marketing budget, designed to promote the sport and attract new players. Jenny Fromer explained that the post of Marketing and Communications Officer on the BSF Executive was and had been vacant, which had made it difficult to devote time and money to this area. Alan MacFarlane, Head of the London Advertising Softball League, said that there were people in his league who could help if given a brief.

With regard to the BSF’s intention to upgrade the BSF website, Jenny said that research would be needed to determine the best way to do this, but in the end, money would need to be spent.

A final question suggested that with a large proportion of the BSF budget going to support national teams, this meant that money from slowpitch players was going to support fastpitch, but this wasn’t having much effect in growing the community. National Teams Officer Jana McCaskill said that growing fastpitch was a long-term project, which was starting to happen with significant support from BSUK. There was more crossover between fastpitch and slowpitch than ever before, Jana said, in terms of players playing both formats, but the two sides of the sport needed to talk to each other more.

BASU Report

Chris Moon, BASU’s Training Officer and the BASU representative on the BSF Executive, told the meeting that there had been a number of new initiatives recently in the umpiring community, including the development of more fastpitch umpires and the increasing use of two-umpire systems in BSF Slowpitch National Championships and elsewhere.

BASU’s Advanced Slowpitch Umpire Course was being expanded to two days this year to add a section on two-umpire mechanics, Chris said, and all the places on the course were now taken. More information on BASU can be found in Chris’s report in the AGM Pack (<http://www.britishsoftball.org/uploads/documents/Files/BSF%20AGM%20Pack2018.pdf>) and in the report on the BSF website from the recent BASU AGM (<http://www.britishsoftball.org/news/view/basu-agm-reviews-successful-2017-and-looks-to-the-future>).

During subsequent discussion, the following points were made:

- At the NSL Nationals this year, umpires will manage the change between 11” and 12” balls rather than first base coaches, for reasons of safety and efficiency.
- Slowpitch umpire courses – either two-day BASU Qualification Courses or one-day courses for league umpires – need to be requested by leagues, and leagues have the responsibility for getting sufficient people to attend their course.
- WBSC rules on players wearing jewellery have changed to allow jewellery to be worn in some circumstances -- but BASU does not intend to change its “No Jewellery” policy.
- Jana McCaskill told the meeting that while no fastpitch umpire courses are being run this year, one-to-one training for potential fastpitch umpires could be delivered during Great Britain Fastpitch League days. Anyone interested should contact BASU Fastpitch Officer Bridget Cameron: bridgetcam@gmail.com.
- Bridget Cameron has been selected by the WBSC to represent BASU and Great Britain by umpiring at the Women’s World Championship in Japan this summer – a pinnacle tournament that will be just as exciting for Bridget as for the GB Women’s Fastpitch Team.

BSUK session

Following a lunch break and presentations to BSF award winners and Hall of Fame inductees, BaseballSoftballUK CEO John Boyd presented a session titled “What does BSUK do for the mainstream softballer?”

John suggested that there are eight areas in which BSUK is providing benefits to the sport, including:

- **Development work to grow slowpitch softball.** This includes a burgeoning university softball programme, getting the sport into 11 County School Games programmes, junior club development, coach education, facility development, Hit the Pitch programmes etc. Much of this work is helping to bring down the average age of slowpitch softballers: for example, university slowpitch teams are up from four in 2008 to 41 now, and of 1,000 university players (a third of which graduate each year), 40% are female, 10% LGBT, 34% BAME and 98% are less than 25 years old. This is a farm system that provides players into slowpitch regularly. Students and recent graduates are enthusiastic advocates for the sport and are see baseball and softball as the same family, often playing both sports interchangeably – including women.
- **Staging events (and sometimes webstreaming them).** This includes plans to showcase slowpitch as a spectator event and BaseballSoftballUK is working on a set of evening games on 14 July at the Windsor Tournament pitting GB v Ireland, which will also be webstreamed. BSUK is also working with the BSF to enhance the Slowpitch Nationals as well as attracting key international events to Farnham Park for slowpitch and fastpitch.
- **Providing communications support through a range of social and other media.** BaseballSoftballUK provides SLA hours as a professional communications resource for the BSF, which means the BSF doesn't need to employ staff to do this. This will continue to drive social media and this year will include a review and potential rebuild of the BSF website.
- **Creating governance systems and policies.** Someone needs to cover areas such as safeguarding, data protection and governance, and BaseballSoftballUK provides the BSF volunteers with a professional and accountable staff connected to the wider sports network.
- **Creating or enhancing facilities, from Farnham Park to help with local projects.** Programmes to develop the skills of young players impact all formats of the sport. Farnham Park is primarily a slowpitch facility and is buoyed by slowpitch use and income received through Home Plate. This allows additional use by baseball and fastpitch. B SUK is still working on a Manchester facility, which is proving complex, but in the meantime has provide help and guidance for a number of local facility projects.
- **Talent development.** BaseballSoftballUK's Academy and High Performance Academy is helping develop strong young talent, much of which makes its way into A and B-grade slowpitch, and grants have been secured for young players. This is driving forward the quality of the talent pool below the national teams in fastpitch too.
- **Fastpitch development.** BaseballSoftballUK and the BSF jointly support a Fastpitch Development Manager – Johanna Malisani – which has put fastpitch development higher on the agenda and attracted financial support from Little League. The key to Jo's role is developing Fastpitch Little Leagues for girls and providing a pathway for young girls into the Great Britain Fastpitch League.
- **Presenting a united front to achieve efficiencies and attract funding.** BSUK acts as the united front for the sports, providing the legal and financial framework for the sports to be able to secure and keep government funding. Along with this, BaseballSoftballUK acts, in part, as the governing body for areas such as safeguarding, the Olympics and governance. Without this, there is little to no chance that the sports would have any access to Exchequer or Lottery funds.

“BaseballSoftballUK is your resource,” John told the meeting, “and our existence, and the government money we get, is facilitated by what you pay to the BSF to play softball. And that money is good value, because of everything the sport brings us.”

Motions and proposals to the AGM

There were no Motions or proposals from the BSF Executive or from the membership to consider at the 2018 AGM.

Elections

There was no need for formal elections at the 2018 BSF AGM because seven Officers are serving the second year of a two-year term that they were elected to last year, and no candidates had come forward for any vacant positions.

The only exception was Jana McCaskill, who is standing down from the position of National Teams Officer because of increased work commitments but has offered to remain on the Executive as a General Officer with responsibility for National Terms, so she can still support the work of the GBMC. This was approved by a show of hands.

There are vacancies on the BSF Executive for one Director position – that of National Teams Officer – and two General Officer positions, one responsible for Marketing and Communications and the other for Coaching. The Executive will attempt to co-opt to fill these positions.

BSF Policies

In the final session at the AGM, Jenny Fromer pointed to a number of Policy or Guidance documents that the BSF, BaseballSoftballUK or the World Baseball Softball Confederation have recently developed or updated on:

- Safeguarding.
- The use of helmets in slowpitch softball.
- Pregnant players.
- Action to take in case of lightning.
- The insurance implications of damage to cars from flying softballs.
- WBSC rule changes.

All of these policies are summarised in the AGM Pack

(<http://www.britishsoftball.org/uploads/documents/Files/BSF%20AGM%20Pack2018.pdf>) on the BSF website, and the BSF intends to create a dedicated section on the website soon for Policy and Guidance documents.

AOBs

A final question from the floor asked whether the BSF AGM could be held in future by videoconferencing. The Executive will look at the possibility.

Post-AGM meeting

Following each AGM, the BSF Executive holds a brief face-to-face meeting to discuss matters arising from the AGM as well as other agenda items. This meeting took place a couple of hours after the 2018 AGM ended, and the main points were:

- The BSF's previous insurers tended to resist any claims for damage caused by softballs hitting car windscreens, but the Federation's new insurers are taking this more seriously, and may put a prohibitive excess on any claims. While the BSF negotiates over this, all softball venues should put up clear notices in car parking areas where this kind of damage could occur, and the BSF will circulate a template notice that can be used for this purpose.

- The Executive approved the appointment of three new Head Coaches for GB National Teams made by the GB Management Committee: Johanna Malisani as Head Coach of the new GB Under-22 Women's Fastpitch Team, Robbie Robison as Head Coach of the GB Under-19 Women's Fastpitch Team and Jodie Rushin as Head Coach of the GB Under-13 Girls' Fastpitch Team. More news about these and other national team staff appointments will be posted on the BSF website soon.
- The BSF has decided that future Hall of Fame induction ceremonies will be held every three years rather than every two years, in part so that the ceremonies can rotate between Northern and Southern AGM locations.
- The BSF, in consultation with the GBMC, will draw up a proposal to put to WBSC officials on how the current Slowpitch World Cup, which is an open tournament with no nationality requirements, can move to a World Championship contested by national teams -- but without killing off the competition. This change would have the full support of the GB Slowpitch Team programme.
- The Executive has agreed to contribute a third of the costs for three coaches from a northern league team to take the BSUK Level 2 Coaching Award provided that the league and the coaches themselves can each contribute a third of the costs. Having completed the course, the coaches will be able to run sessions in local schools.
- The Executive has agreed to pay part of the cost for BASU Fastpitch Umpire Bridget Cameron to travel to Japan this summer to umpire at the WBSC Women's World Championship.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jenny Fromer

Having now completed my first term of office as BSF President and having decided to stand for at least one more two-year term, it is constructive to consider how this has all gone, and what the plan is for going forward.

It is worth noting that for the first year of my tenure I was, by choice, unemployed. Therefore, going into this same meeting last year it felt completely conceivable to lay out ambitious plans. Fast-forward a year and as the current AGM approaches I have been given a whole new insight into the obstacles to managing a national organisation by a team of volunteers, more so when that team is fairly depleted.

In last year's report I identified the areas that I wanted the BSF to advance in 2018. These included:

- Updating the BSF Articles
- Enhancing National Championships
- Improving / upgrading the BSF website
- Creating a members' portal with guidance documents

Additionally, I acknowledged another year of underspend in the BSF's budget and therefore our desire to make investment into National Championships, safety education and equipment and additional international and development support.

With the benefit of hindsight, I would grade us a B or B+ on the grounds that we have accomplished some of what we set out to do. This included enhancing the National Championships, not least by continuing to webstream, developing the NSL model and putting focus into safety education and equipment -- the defibrillator that is now at Farnham Park and the Concussion Seminar that will be part of the 2019 AGM. We did make additional financial contributions to international support and areas of development. But other areas, particularly areas of governance and guidance, have not advanced, and work on the BSF website has proved both complex and slow.

It is important to note that whatever grade would be appropriate, it is not for lack of effort, and it is also important to recognise that we were at times forced to prioritise areas that we did not foresee a year ago. A great deal of time has been directed at supporting our GB programmes, contributing to the work we do in partnership with BSUK and to overhauling our affiliation fee structure.

For me personally, the overwhelming takeaway has been that the BSF has a myriad of work and responsibilities, as any National Governing body does, and manages a significant budget -- and should therefore be looking at ways to better protect itself, and by extension, its members, from the inevitable inconsistencies of a purely voluntary workforce.

In the short-term you will have seen our efforts to recruit additional volunteers on a project basis. This approach has been met with some success: we have had people stepping up to organise some of the National Championships this year, to project-manage our website development and to be a link between the BSF and BSUK with regard to development. This is a positive step, but does not fully address all our needs and concerns.

2019 is an important year. This is the year that the GB Women's Fastpitch Team will be trying to achieve Olympic qualification for Tokyo 2020. It is the year that MLB will hold regular-season games in London for

the first time and it is in some ways the first year that the shift from the European Softball Federation to WBSC Europe is fully in place. It is also a year in which BaseballSoftballUK is being asked (mainly by Sport England) to change its focus from development to commercial and digital.

Each of these areas, and many others, come with a raft of additional obligations, and the BSF, as we are currently 'constituted' (small c) is not in the best place to meet these challenges. To my mind the BSF should have the aspiration to move to having at least a partial paid workforce. A review of the accounts will tell you that we are not yet in a place where this can be significant, but a review of the budget will show the initial steps we are taking.

A small amount of money is being budgeted for administrative support in this year. This will allow us to better understand whether we can be more effective with the security of having someone consistently able to manage all correspondence in a timely fashion and tracking and managing deadlines. This will allow us to better communicate with membership and to plan rather than mostly fire-fighting.

The combination of this additional support, the fact that our 'call to arms' did not fall on deaf ears and the fact that we have someone standing for the position of National Teams Officer (a role that I have covered for the past 12 months) means, I believe, that 2019 should be a productive year for the BSF. And in a period, when I have to hold my hands up to struggling to keep up, this has led me to choose to seek to continue in the role of President for an additional two years.

As the saying goes, "it takes a village," and this is exactly what we are trying to assemble.

COMPETITIONS DIRECTOR'S REPORT AND NSL OVERVIEW

Liz Graham

In 2018, with NSL 1 and NSL 2 now fully established, the road to implementing NSL 3 was started. An eight-team "league" competition was played during the NSL Nationals at Farnham Park in September, with the two top teams in the round-robin gaining the two available places in NSL 2 for 2019.

With extensive interest in NSL 3 becoming clear, I put forward a proposal to the BSF Board to establish the third tier of NSL play as two leagues of eight teams, one in the North and one in the South, which was accepted. Although the plan was originally to start these leagues in 2020, it looks like we will be able to start NSL 3 league competition this year, as I have most of the required organisation set up and the teams are keen to get going. For more details, see the end of this report.

With the increase in NSL teams and competitions and the additional workload entailed, I have decided to step away from running the Single-Sex and Co-Ed League Nationals and Fiona Kielthy will take on the organising of these events this season.

2019 Dates

- **SS Nationals Birmingham – 22-23 June**
Moor Lane Sports Ground, Perry Barr, Birmingham
Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze in both Men's and Women's Divisions
- **Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals – 10-11 August**
Farnham Park
Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze
- **NSL 3 Nationals – 17-18 August**
Bristol (TBC)
- **Co-ed Slowpitch NSL Nationals – 31 August-1 September**
Farnham Park
NSL 1 and NSL 2

2018 Results

SINGLE-SEX SLOWPITCH NATIONALS

Moor Lane Sports Ground, Perry Barr, Birmingham

Men's Platinum

Winner: USAF Bombers (Mildenhall)

Runner-up: Pyros (East Midlands)

MVP: Jordan Goaliron (Bombers)

Men's Gold

Winner: Puppies (London)

Runner-up: Godzillas (London)

MVP: Leo (Godzillas)

Men's Silver

Winner: Terriers (Leeds)

Runner-up: Misfits (East Midlands)

MVP: Anthony Pratt (Terriers)

Men's Bronze

Winner: Bobcats (Birmingham)

Runner-up: Tigers (East Midlands)

MVP: Tad (Birmingham)

Women's Platinum

Winner: Minx (Manchester)

Runner-up: Bluebirds (Bristol)

MVP: Sherry Kenyon (Minx)

Women's Gold

Winner: Sheriffs (East Midlands)

Runner-up: Missfits (East Midlands)

MVP: Tracy Sharp (Sheriffs)

Women's Silver

Winner: Pitchslap (Manchester)

Runner-up: Scorch-Hers (Windsor)

MVP: Emma Bennett (PitchSlap)

CO-ED SLOWPITCH NSL NATIONALS (Farnham Park)

NSL 1

Winner: Pioneers (London)

Runner-up: Chromies (London)

NSL 2

Winner: Mavericks (Manchester)

Runner-up: Bees (Bristol)

NSL LEAGUES 2018

League	Winner	Runner-Up	Promoted	Demoted
NSL 1	Pioneers	Chromies	N/A	Thunder
NSL 2	Mavericks	Warriors	Mavericks	Pyromaniacs Outlaws
NSL 3	The Mob (London)	Drizzle (Manchester)	The Mob Drizzle	N/A

CO-ED SLOWPITCH LEAGUE NATIONALS (Farnham Park)

Gold

Winner: Fuzzy Ducks (GLMSL)

Runner-up: Spittin' Camels (Manchester)

MVPs: Natalie Woolley and Adam Haywood (both Fuzzy Ducks)

Silver

Winner: Pyros (East Midlands)

Runner-up: Falcons (Solent)

MVPs: Phoebe Mulligan (Pyros) and Oliver Howley (Falcons)

Bronze

Winner: Rattlesnakes (Windsor)

Runner-up: Fockers (Glasgow)

MVPs: Sarah Cramond and Billy Bryce (both Rattlesnakes)

2019 BSF LEAGUE CHAMPIONS – INVITED TO 2019 LEAGUE NATIONALS

League Winners	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4	Division 5
Bristol	Jets	Archway Thunder	Monkeys		
Cardiff	Hurricanes	Cardiff Red Sox			
City Bankers	EBRD	Barclays			
East Midlands	Pyromaniacs	Sheriffs	Redbacks		
Edinburgh	Rally Caps	Demons			
Glasgow	Honey Badgers	Fockers			
GLMSL Majors	Mescalitos	Fuzzy Ducks	MouseRat		
GLMSL Minors	Oblivion	Base Jumpers	Mafia	BYOB	
LASL League	Quarto 76'ers	ILM	Havas Helia	St Luke's	Merkle
LASL Season	Google	CNN	ASOS	Start Design	JNR
Leeds	Cheekie Monkeys	Yorkshire Dales			
London Legal					
Manchester	Lions	Mayhem	Tigers	Hurricanes	Base Invaders
Milton Keynes	Homerun Hornets				
Oxford	Angels				
Publishers	S & S Sharks	GDS Griffins			
Sefton	Crosby Vikings				
Solent	Knicks	Falcons	Zombies		
Windsor	Knights	Scorchers 2			

Expansion to NSL 3

Initially set to start in 2020, it looks very likely that NSL 3 can begin in 2019 due to the large number of teams keen to play with the NSL structure.

Plan of Action

- Two NSL 3 leagues -- North and South – with eight teams each. Currently there is one NSL 3 North place available.
- Two events in each area for league games. Pre-determined home-and-away fixtures and a complete round-robin on each weekend.
- The top four teams from each league will go to NSL 3 Nationals.
- **North:** Manchester and East Midlands have offered to host NSL 3 league play.
- **South:** Bristol and Windsor have offered to host NSL 3 league play.
- **NSL3 Nationals (TBC):** A host for this tournament is needed.
- The two teams demoted from NSL 2 will go into NSL 3 and will get first choice of which league – North or South -- they want to enter.
- New teams – including those demoted from NSL 3 -- will be able to apply for any remaining spaces in the Northern and Southern NSL 3 leagues.
- Any team not fulfilling their NSL 3 league fixtures or failing to take up an NSL 3 Nationals place will be removed from the league.

Promotion/Demotion

NSL 1/NSL 2: One up, one down. This will move to two up, two down next season (2020). Two teams will be demoted from NSL 2 to NSL 3.

NSL 2/NSL 3: The winner of each NSL 3 league will gain promotion to NSL 2. Two teams will be demoted from each NSL 3 division but can re-apply for entry.

NSL 3 roster regulations

- Players can only roster to one NSL team.
- There will be a cut-off date for players to switch teams and still qualify for Nationals.
- Guests can play for one team once per day, but only if the team does not have five men and five women from their own roster available. Guests cannot be used to allow a team to bat six-and-six.
- Guest players can only play up or across a grade.

- The qualification criteria for NSL 3 Nationals will be four days of play for that team, two of which must be in NSL 3 league play.

Assigning teams to NSL 3 leagues

After the first full season of league play in NSL 3, three spaces will be available in both the North and South Divisions, because one team will have been promoted to NSL 2 and two teams will have been demoted out of the division.

This means that the two teams demoted from NSL 2 will be able to go into their preferred league from a geographical point of view, even if they are both from the same area.

In future, if a team winds up playing outside their area for a season -- e.g. a London team opting to enter NSL 3 North because no spaces are available in the South – that team will be given the option to enter NSL 3 South the following season. Should there be two “outsiders” playing in a division, the highest-placed team will get the option first.

However, teams will only be allowed one swap between divisions.

2018 NATIONAL TEAMS REPORT

In 2018, the number of GB National Softball Teams increased from seven to nine with the addition of a GB Men's Slowpitch Team and a GB Under-22 Women's Fastpitch Team. Seven of the nine teams were in action in a European Championship or a WBSC World Championship or World Cup – and the GB Women's Fastpitch Team played in both the WBSC Women's World Championship in Japan in August and a new ESF tournament, the Super 6, in September. Here is how our teams fared:

GB Men's Slowpitch Team

Head Coach: Stephen Patterson

Team Manager: Kellie Whitaker

The first-ever European Men's Slowpitch Championship was held from 12-16 June 2018 in Chocen in the Czech Republic, with seven teams attending, including the Dutch and the Italians sending national teams to a European Slowpitch Championship for the first time. The GB Men's Slowpitch Team, formed earlier in 2018 in response to this competition being announced, went 9-0 in winning the tournament easily, defeating Germany 20-5 in the final. All of the teams enjoyed the tournament and it looks likely to become a fixture on the ESF calendar in future.

GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team

Head Coach: Stephen Patterson

Team Manager: Kellie Whitaker

The GB Slowpitch Team did not have a European Championship in 2018, but travelled to Plant City Florida in November for the annual Slowpitch World Cup, played from 15-18 November. The team.... It now looks likely that this tournament will become a full-fledged World Championship, played by national teams, starting in 2020 – though in keeping with WBSC conventions, it will be known as a World Cup.

GB Women's Fastpitch Team

Head Coach: Rachael Watkeys

Team Manager: Simon Mortimer

Having qualified for a place in the 2018 WBSC Women's World Championship in Japan by finishing third in the European Women's Championship in 2017, the GB Team had a somewhat frustrating tournament from 2-12 August in Chiba and nearby prefectures amidst heat, humidity and typhoons. On the one hand, the team finished 11th, two places higher than at the previous edition of the tournament in 2016, with wins over Botswana, Venezuela and the Philippines. But only 1-0 losses to China and Italy in pool games that the team might well have won prevented a best-ever top-eight finish. Nevertheless, the team's performance was a step forward towards the goal of winning a Europe/Africa Olympic Qualifier later this year.

This progress was confirmed at the first edition of the ESF's new Super 6 Tournament played at Hoofddorp in the Netherlands from 18-22 September, a competition designed to give the best teams in Europe more high-level experience. For financial and other reasons, the GB Women's Team for the Super 6 had less than half of the players who had competed at the World Championship in Japan the month before, and only

three regular starters from Japan, with the top two pitchers from Japan unable to make the trip. Nevertheless, GB finished third, defeating the European Champion Netherlands 3-2 in the bronze medal game, a result that shows that the team has gained significant pitching depth that could be crucial in the Olympic Qualifier.

[GB Men's Fastpitch Team](#)

Head Coach: Kevin Stockford

Team Manager: Wesley Knapp

At the European Men's Fastpitch Championship, played from 25-30 June in Havlickuv Brod in the Czech Republic, the GB Men's Fastpitch Team came agonisingly close to winning a place in the 2019 WBSC Men's World Championship, which will be held for the first in Europe, also in the Czech Republic. But though the GB Team finished with a 7-3 record, a crucial final loss to Denmark and an unexpected win by the Netherlands over the eventual champions Czech Republic meant that GB could only finish fourth.

[GB Under-19 Women's Fastpitch Team](#)

Head Coach: Robbie Robison

Team Manager: James Hirai

The GB Under-19s, who came in as defending champions, could only finish sixth this time at the European Junior Women's Championship played in and around Staranzano, Italy from 16-21 July, and failed to qualify for the 2019 WBSC Junior Women's World Championship in California. But the sixth-place finish belies how well the team played. Having won their first four games, Team GB then had to play the Czech Republic, Italy and the Netherlands in a 22-hour period. Two of the games went to extra innings, and though GB lost all three of them, each of the games might have been won. Though a second win over Ireland in the tournament gave GB a medal chance, an unexpected loss to Germany by a tried GB Team took the chance away.

[GB Under-22 Women's Fastpitch Team](#)

Head Coach: Johanna Malisani

Team Manager: Whitney Hollis

Eleven of the players who had competed for the GB Under-19s at the European Junior Women's Championship in Italy moved straight on to Trnava, Slovakia to play for the first-ever GB Under-22 Women's Team in the European Under-22 Women's Championship from 23-28 July, and under a wholly different coaching and management staff. Once again, GB won their first four games before suffering a tough loss to Italy and another extra-inning loss to the Czech Republic. But this time the team rallied, and wins over Belgium and a fantastic comeback against Ireland took the team to the bronze medal game. And there, having beaten Ireland four straight times over the two tournaments, the law of averages took over and GB lost to the Irish and missed out on a medal.

[GB Under-13 Girls Fastpitch Team](#)

Head Coach: Jodie Rushin

Team Manager: Julie Spittle

The GB Under-13 Girls' Fastpitch Team, playing at the annual Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy competition from 15-18 August in Collecchio, Italy as the London Cubs, had their best-ever result since this competition began in 2012. The team finished in fifth place in the much-tougher Sport Division (previously the team had competed in the Futures Division). Wins over teams from Russia, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands showed the progress that this age group is making.

Summary

Taken together, the results detailed above show real progress, with every team except the GB Under-19 Women improving on their position from the last time their tournament was played. Our two new teams also did well, with the GB Slowpitch Men winning their first-ever European Championship and the GB Under-22 Women just missing out on a medal.

This is a tribute to the hard work and talent of our players, as well as the volunteer coaches, managers and administrators who run or support our national teams. None of our teams receive any public funding, and while the BSF provides some financial support, the vast majority of the costs of international competition falls on players and/or their families. Many of our fastpitch teams do not get to train or compete together nearly as often as their main rivals. And yet our results, taken together, mean that GB Softball continues to punch above its weight on the international stage.

Changes in age brackets

Beginning in 2019, changes in age brackets for national youth teams, mandated by the World Baseball Softball Confederation, will begin to come into effect. In addition, the fact that softball will be on the programme of the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020, has necessitated changes to the years in which competitions happen (see the next section below).

In 2019, the Under-19 age brackets for Women and Men will change to Under-18 in Europe, with an Under-18 European Women's Fastpitch Championship scheduled for 2019 and an Under-18 European Men's Fastpitch Championship scheduled for 2020, a three-year gap since the last Under-19 European Men's Championship was held.

There will still be an Under-16 European Women's Fastpitch Championship in 2019, which the GB Under-16 Team will attend. But then this age group will change to Under-15, with Under-15 European Women's and Men's Fastpitch Championships scheduled for 2020.

The current European Under-13 age group will change to Under-12, and Under-12 teams will compete each year in the ESF's European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy competition.

The Under-22 Women's age bracket will remain the same, but the next European Under-22 Women's Fastpitch Championship will not take place until 2021.

Official competitions in 2019

Most – but all – National Teams will have an official ESF or WBSC competition in 2019.

The **GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team** will have the chance to regain its European title this year when the European Co-ed Slowpitch Championship is played from 15-20 July in Budapest, with a record number of countries taking part.

The **GB Women's Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Women's Championship from 30 June-6 July in Ostrava, Czech Republic, and will need to finish in the top six to qualify for the Europe/Africa Olympic Qualifier, which will be played from 23-28 July in Utrecht, in the Netherlands. To qualify for the Tokyo Olympics, the GB Women's Team will need to win a tournament featuring the top six European teams and the top two teams from Africa.

The **GB Under-18 Women's Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Under-18 Women's Championship if the event is held, which is uncertain at this point as a host has yet to come forward. If the tournament is played, GB will need to finish in the top three to qualify for a WBSC Under-18 Women's World Championship in 2020. If not, the ESF will send the top-three ranked countries in Europe to the World Championship and GB is ranked fourth.

The **GB Under-16 Women's Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Under-16 Women's Fastpitch Championship from 29 July-3 August in Zagreb, Croatia.

The **GB Under-12 Girls Fastpitch Team** will compete in the ESF's annual Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy competition, to be played from 14-17 August in Collecchio, near Parma in Italy.

A number of GB female fastpitch teams will compete this year in the Canada Cup from 5-14 July, one of the top invitational tournaments in world softball.

BSF ACCOUNTS & BUDGET

Year-end 30/09	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Fees	60,500	59,438	58,500	59,519	58,500	59,670	62,780	
Nationals	22,000	22,695	23,500	23,595	23,500	24,478	25,325	
Insurance	3,250	4,121	4,200	4,284	4,000	4,368	2,500	
TOTAL INCOME	85,750	86,254	86,200	87,398	86,000	88,516	90,605	
Nationals	27,000	25,769	30,000	23,828	30,000	37,686	28,000	
NTL Out	3,500	3,650	3,500	4,000	4,000	3,500	4,000	
Insurance	7,200	8,083	8,100	8,228	8,000	7,577	5,500	
BSUK Service fee	4,000	4,500	5,000	5,573	6,000	7,000	7,000	
Development	8,700	3,144	7,300	5,313	10,000	3,710	5,775	
GBR teams	25,350	18,801	29,250	25,268	35,200	31,365	26,850	
Marketing/Events	4,000	2,268	6,100	2,775	5,500	5,865	9,700	
Meetings/Travel	7,900	7,145	5,300	5,252	8,100	7,611	7,200	
Financial costs	7,500	3,442	7,850	1,977	3,050	1,915	7,270	
TOTAL COSTS	95,150	76,802	102,400	82,213	109,850	106,229	101,295	
RESULT FOR YEAR	- 9,400	9,452	- 16,200	5,185	- 23,850	- 17,713	- 10,690	

BALANCE SHEETS	Forecast	Actual	Forecast	Actual	Forecast	Actual	Forecast	Actual
	2016		2017		2018		2019	
Assets		69,763		80,905		77,250		
Liabilities		- 6,439		- 12,396		- 26,454		
Net Assets		63,324		68,509		50,796		
Reserves b/f	53,872	53,872	63,324	63,324	68,509	68,509	50,795	
Profit / -Loss	- 9,400	9,452	- 16,200	5,185	- 23,850	- 17,713	- 10,690	
Reserves c/f	44,472	63,324	47,124	68,509	44,659	50,795	40,105	

BSF TEAM AFFILIATION FEES: 2019

BSF team affiliation fees were last raised in 2016 – and over the years, the fee structure has become ever more complicated. So for 2019, the BSF is proposing to simplify its fee structure, with the result that there will be fewer categories, with fees slightly higher for some categories of members and lower for others.

2019 Affiliation Fees

The proposed fees for 2019 are shown below, with the fees that each category of team paid in 2018 shown in brackets.

Full-Member League Teams: £200 [£180]

Associate Member Teams: £100

Associate members include:

- Independent tournament teams with no league affiliation. [£160]
- Scottish league teams. [£150]
- Great Britain Fastpitch League teams. [£100]
- New league teams* for the first two years of their existence. [£110 in first year; £125 in second year]
- BASU as an organisation. [No fee]

** New teams that have joined leagues in the past two years and are in the previous fee structure that involved a three-year progression to full-member rates will continue in that progression but will pay £200 when they reach the full-member rate.*

Junior Members: £75

- Under-18 teams (50% of rostered players must be under-18). [£70]
- University teams playing in BSF leagues. [£70]

Special Membership: £75 [£50]

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

GB National Teams: £25 [£25]

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

University Teams not in BSF Leagues: No fee [No fee]

As has been the case since 2017, teams that enter the BSF Single-Sex Slowpitch National Championship 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 2019.

BSF ANNUAL AWARDS

The BSF will announce the winners of its Annual Awards for the 2018 season at the 2019 AGM. Awards are only made in categories where nominations have been received, and will be awarded in some or all of the following categories:

- The **Glover Cup** for outstanding long-term services to softball by an administrator or organiser.
- The **President's Club Award** for outstanding performance or development by an affiliated club or team.
- The **League Glover Cup** for outstanding development achievement by an affiliated league.
- The **Tournament of the Year Award**.
- The **Umpire of the Year Award** (nominated by BASU).
- The **Youth Team of the Year Award** for outstanding performance or development achievement.
- The **Betsy Holden Award** for outstanding achievement by a young person in developing or promoting the sport.

BSUK COACH AWARDS

In addition to the awards listed above, softball and baseball coaching and volunteer awards for achievements in 2019 were presented on 26 January at the annual BSUK Coach Summit in Milton Keynes. The softball awards presented were:

SOFTBALL YOUTH COACH OF THE YEAR

The shortlisted coaches were Warren Furst for his work in building up the softball programme at LondonSports, Alexis Markham-Hill for her work as an Academy and HPA coach and coaching the young Free Agents team in the Great Britain Fastpitch League and the trio of Jodie Rushin, Nadya Pavlova and Elysee Laporte for coaching the GB Under-13 Girls' programme to increasing success last year.

The winner was **Alexis Markham-Hill**.

SOFTBALL ADULT COACH OF THE YEAR

The shortlisted coaches were Jennifer Edis for her coaching work with the Oxford Brookes University Softball Club, Liam Morrison for organising and delivering Softball 101 sessions for the Greater London Softball Mixed League and Ryan Turtill for his inspiration and comprehensive Softball 101 coaching.

The winner was **Ryan Turtill**.

Other awards presented at the Coach Summit had nominees from both softball and baseball, and the winners were all from softball:

YOUNG COACH OF THE YEAR

The shortlisted coaches were Dan Patterson for his work with the Reading Knights University Softball Club, Jessica Vernon for working with teams in both formats at Bracknell Baseball and Softball Club and Sian Wigington for coaching The Mix in the Great Britain Fastpitch League and running softball sessions in local schools in the Slough area.

The winner was **Dan Patterson**.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The shortlisted candidates were Kim Hannessen for her work as a sports therapist with multiple GB Softball Teams at European and World Championships, Julie Spittle for her work organising and coaching softball at various levels in many settings and Kellie Whitaker for outstanding organisation and management work at both club and at a national team level with GB Slowpitch.

The winner was **Kim Hannessen**.

SERVICES TO COACHING

The shortlisted coaches were Margaret Borley MBE for her long-time and inspirational work coaching the Tonbridge Bobcats Youth Baseball Team, Joss Thompson for sharing her knowledge and passion for softball over many years and in many settings and Dave Wareham for 20 years of organising and coaching teams in the Manchester Softball League.

The winner was **Joss Thompson**.

ELECTION OF BSF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

In 2017, for the first time, people standing for office on the BSF Executive were elected for two-year terms; previously, Officers had been elected for one year only. This means that most Directors and General Officers served the second year of their term in 2018, and all the positions below are therefore up for election unless indicated.

Candidates standing for positions (if any) are listed.

DIRECTORS:

Role	Standing
President:	Jenny Fromer
Treasurer:	Laura Burkhardt
Competitions Officer:	Liz Graham
National Teams Officer:	Alexis Markham-Hill

GENERAL OFFICERS (up to six specific Officer roles can be created by the Executive):

Role	Standing
General Officer / Farnham Park Liaison:	Steve Getraer
General Officer / Finance:	Mike Jennings
General Officer / National Championship Support:	Lesley Morisetti
General Officer / National Teams Support	Stella Ackrell
General Officer / National Teams and GBMC Support:	Jana McCaskill*
General Officer / Coaching:	

* This position has only been filled for a year and is therefore not up for election.

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Role	Appointee	Appointed By
London Liaison Officer:	Alan MacFarlane	BSF
Technical Officer:	To be appointed by BASU	

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT: ALEXIS MARKHAM-HILL

Standing for: National Teams Officer

I am happy to stand for the role of National Teams Officer (NTO) for the BSF. I have been involved with the sport of softball all my life: I grew up playing slowpitch softball at school, both within the UK and overseas, and then I was lucky enough to compete with the GB Junior Women's Fastpitch Softball Team for several years.

Since completing my studies at University I have been more involved with coaching fastpitch softball, particularly within the HPA, the National Softball Academy and the GBFL. My recent involvement as an External Selector for GB National Team selections last year was both challenging and exciting due to the high numbers of trialists, but it also gave me new insight into the work that goes into running GB National Teams.

I am passionate about being involved with the GB Softball programme and will enjoy being part of helping them to continue to grow and develop within this role.

CONSTITUTIONAL MOTIONS

From the BSF Executive

No Constitutional motion or amendments are being proposed this year.

MOTIONS OR PROPOSALS TO THE 2019 BSF AGM

There are no motions or proposals from the BSF this year.



BASU REPORT

Chris Moon
BSF Technical Officer

Trainers in 2018: Chris Moon, Pete Saunders, Mike Jennings, Luis Arrevillagas, Jana McCaskill (FP) and Bridget Cameron (FP).

Assessors in 2018: Chris Moon, Pete Saunders, Mike Jennings, Luis Arrevillagas, Jes Sandhu, Lesley Morisetti, Jana McCaskill (FP) and Bridget Cameron (FP).

25 assessments were carried out in 2018 (34 in 2017), and 52 delegates sat two-day courses.

There was no fastpitch training in 2018.

Slowpitch Advanced Course: A new-style two-day Advanced Slowpitch Course was held in Slough over a weekend in April with nine attendees, who also worked a two-man system at the Windsor Firstball on the Sunday afternoon. The course will be repeated in 2019 utilising the GB Open Tournament at Farnham Park.

Umpire Activity in 2018: BASU umpires were active at over 20 tournaments in the UK in 2018 plus at seven Great Britain Fastpitch League (GBFL) dates, the London Cup (an international women's fastpitch tournament) and one international slowpitch tournament (the Softball World Series).

As a group, we umpired 2,721 games. Importantly, there was a decline in the number of relief umpires used during the year.

In the case of the Slowpitch NSL Nationals, the cost of using multiple umpires for games was jointly subsidised by the BSF and BASU. This is done to provide a better experience for the players as well as providing our umpires with more experience in using the two-umpire system. We have received very positive feedback on this from players.

BASU Umpires Abroad: We were well represented abroad in 2018. Pete Saunders, Lesley Morisetti and Darrell Pitman represented GB at the ESF Slowpitch Super Cup in Riccione, Italy, with Chris Moon serving as the Assistant Umpire-in-Chief. Pete also represented BASU at the WSBC Slowpitch World Cup in Florida last November.

Chris Moon was appointed ESF Slowpitch Training Officer and has also been appointed as the ESF Slowpitch Umpire Commissioner.

Darrell Pitman, Jana McCaskill and David Hurley represented Great Britain in ESF fastpitch tournaments, with Bridget Cameron getting major recognition by being selected to umpire at the WSBC Women's World Championship in Japan.

In summary

After more than 25 years of operation, BASU has grown in stature and in numbers -- and looking forward to 2019, it is hoped that the organisation will continue to serve the softball community with the same professionalism and enthusiasm as in the past.

With the continuing growth of softball around the UK, BASU will continue to need a new influx of qualified umpires every year and we would like to encourage leagues to organise regional courses. Some leagues are very active in this process but there are a couple of leagues that could do more.

Tournament umpires generally start as league umpires, so we also need to keep the number of qualified league umpires as high as possible.

Any league Umpire-in-Chief looking to run a BASU course in 2019 should contact Chris Moon (chrisimoon@hotmail.co.uk).

2019 SOFTBALL CALENDAR

(as of 27 January 2019)

Slowpitch = Black

Fastpitch = Red

Baseball = Green

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
Jan 5-6			
Jan 12 Jan 13	National High Performance Academy Session	Coventry	TBC
Jan 19-20	Schiedam Women's Fastpitch Indoor Cup	Schiedam, NL	TBC
Jan 19	National Academy Softball Session	Coventry	TBC
Jan 26	2019 BSUK Coach Summit	Milton Keynes	Chris Rawlings
Feb 1-3	ESF Congress	Athens, Greece	Jenny Fromer
Feb 9	2019 BASU AGM	Bristol	Pete Saunders
Feb 10	BSUK Coach Award Course Day 1	St Albans	Patrick Knock
Feb 10	National High Performance Academy Testing Day	Datchet	TBC
Feb 10	BSUK Coach Award Course Day 2	St Albans	Patrick Knock
Feb 16 Feb 17	National Academy Softball Session	Coventry	TBC
Feb 23	2019 BSF AGM	TBC	Jenny Fromer
Feb 24	BSUK Coach Award Course Day 3	St Albans	Patrick Knock
Mar 2	National Academy Softball Session	Coventry	TBC
Mar 3	Manchester Indoor Softball T'ment	Manchester	Linni Mitchell
Mar 9-10	National High Performance Academy Weekend	Uxbridge	TBC
Mar 16-17	National University Softball Chps	Farnham Park	Chris Rawlings
Mar 23-24	National High Performance Academy Softball Weekend	Langley	TBC
	National University Baseball Chps	Farnham Park	Chris Rawlings
	BASU Two-Day Umpire Qualification Course	Nottingham	Ian Tomlin

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
Mar 30-31	BASU Two-Day Umpire Qualification Course	Maidenhead	Tim Taylor
Mar 30	National Academy Softball Closing Day	Farnham Park	TBC
Mar 31			
Apr 6-7	BASU Two-Day Umpire Qualification Course	Bristol	Chris Lunn
Apr 13-14	BASU Advanced Course	Slough	Chris Moon
Apr 13	North West Series Rec T'ment 1	Manchester	Linni Mitchell
	GB Challenge Tournament	Farnham Park	Kellie Whitaker
Apr 14	GB Slowpitch Open	Farnham Park	Kellie Whitaker
	North West Series Comp T'ment 1	Manchester	Linni Mitchell
	East Midlands Firstball	Loughborough	Harvey Pryor
Apr 20-21	EASTER WEEKEND		
Apr 27-28	Manchester Firstball	Manchester	Mike Goff
Apr 27	Great Britain Fastpitch League 1	Farnham Park	TBC
Apr 28	Bristol Firstball (league teams only)	Bristol	Mike MacDowell
May 4	Great Britain Fastpitch League 2	Farnham Park	TBC
May 5			
May 11	Great Britain Fastpitch League 3	Farnham Park	TBC
May 18-19	Diamond Series 1 + NSL	Farnham Park	Craig Moran
May 25-26	Bristol DD Cup	Bristol	Mike MacDowell
	Sefton Shield Tournament	Sefton	Stephen Shearer
May 25	Great Britain Fastpitch League 4	Farnham Park	TBC
Jun 1-2	Glasgow Tartan Tournament	Glasgow	TBC
	Diffodil Tournament	Cardiff	David McCarthy
Jun 1	GLSML Firstball Tournament	Regents Park?	Steve Karmeinsky
	Great Britain Fastpitch League 5	Farnham Park	TBC
Jun 8-9	UK Little League Qualifiers	Farnham Park	TBC
	British Airways Tournament	TBC	TBC
Jun 15-16	Diamond Series 2 + NSL	Farnham Park	Craig Moran
Jun 22-23	BSF Single-Sex Slowpitch National Championships	Birmingham	Liz Graham
Jun 29-30	London Series: NY Yankees v Boston Red Sox	London Stadium	MLB
	London Ad League Tournament(?)	Regents Park	Alan McFarlane
Jun 29	North West Series Rec T'ment 2	Manchester	Linni Mitchell
Jun 30	North West Series Comp T'ment 1	Manchester	Linni Mitchell

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	ORGANISER
Jun 30-July 6	European Women's Fastpitch Chp	Ostrava, CZ	Simon Mortimer
Jul 6-7 Jul 6	Bristol Main Tournament Disco Ball	Bristol Farnham Park	Mike MacDowell Rocco Cammisola
Jul 5-18	Canada Cup Women's Fastpitch Tournament (various GB Teams will compete)	Vancouver, Canada	Jo Malisani
Jul 13-14	Windsor Tournament	Farnham Park	TBC
Jul 15-20	European Co-ed Slowpitch Chp	Budapest, Hungary	Kellie Whitaker
Jul 20-21	Diamond Series 3 + NSL 2	Farnham Park	Craig Moran
Jul 23-28	Europe/Africa Olympic Qualifier	Utrecht, NL	Simon Mortimer
Jul 27-28	East Midlands Labor Day T'ment Final NSL 1 Competition Weekend	Leicester Farnham Park	Kayleigh Green Liz Graham
Jul 29-Aug 3	European U-16 Women's Fastpitch Championship	Zagreb, Croatia	Jo Malisani
Aug 3-4	Manchester Tournament	Manchester	Mike Goff
Aug 10-11	BSF Co-ed Slowpitch <u>League</u> National Championships	Farnham Park	Liz Graham
Aug 14-17	Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy	Collecchio, Italy	Julie Spittle
Aug 17-18 Aug 17	Bristol wRECK Tournament North West Series Rec T'ment 3 GLSML Lastball Tournament	Bristol Manchester Wormwood Scrubs?	Mike MacDowell Linni Mitchell Steve Karneinsky
Aug 18	North West Series Comp T'ment 3	Manchester	Linni Mitchell
Aug 24-25	Edinburgh Festiball	Edinburgh	Liz Graham
Aug 31-Sept 1	BSF Co-ed Slowpitch <u>NSL</u> National Championships	Farnham Park	Liz Graham
Sep 7-8 Sep 8	Softball World Series Tournament Hit and Run Tournament 7	Heston Venue Maidenhead	TBC Alan LeMarquand
Sep 14 Sep 15	Great Britain Fastpitch League 6	TBC	TBC
Sep 21 Sep 22	Great Britain Fastpitch League 7	TBC	TBC
Sep 28-29	Codebreakers Cup	Milton Keynes	Leah Holmes

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>VENUE</u>	<u>ORGANISER</u>
Oct 5 Oct 6	Autumn Cotswold Tournament	Stroud	Mark Saunders
Oct 12 Oct 13	Great Britain Fastpitch League 8	Farnham Park	TBC
Oct 19-20			
Oct 26-27			
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Nov 2-3			
Nov 9-10			
Nov 16-17			
Nov 19-22	WBSC Congress	Japan	Jenny Fromer
Nov 23-24			
Nov 30-Dec 1			
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Dec 7 Dec 8	(Still Not) Jingles Balls Indoor Tournament	Rickmansworth	Alan le Marquand
Dec 14-15			
Dec 21-22			
Dec 28-29			