

# Talent & Performance Steering Group

Thursday 20 March 2014, 12:00 – 15:00

**Details:** National Office, Darley Dale

## Attendees:

Sarah Hague Expert  
Jackie Newton England  
Allan Bogle Northern Ireland  
Marsela McLeod Scotland (Roger Scrutton standing in)  
Mark Saunders Wales  
Kris Jones Athlete  
Mike Hamilton CEO

**Minute taker:** Cerianne Dengate

## Apologies

Martin Ward Director and Rhona McMillan Athlete.

## 1. Welcome & Meeting Administration

MH provides brief background to the formation of the group and stated that there was a space for an extra expert in the group. Explains reason for meeting from Board of Directors and the committee and group structure. The meeting was largely a fact find meeting to identify a way forward for a strategy. Confirms there will be one face to face meeting per year due to funding. Bob Dredge has volunteered to chair future meetings and SH provides more information on BD background and experience. Martin Ward will continue to be liaison between group and Board of Directors. MS submits his Declaration of Interest and MH confirms that all Declaration of Interest forms will be circulated after AGM.

## 2. Terms of Reference (MH)

Review the Terms of Reference and, if appropriate, make recommendations for change to the Board.

RS asks for clarification on roles and responsibilities and how these will be carried out, which is then discussed between members of the group.

MS asks if the group will be able to have any input with IOF decisions, SH raises the recent issues with IOF and athletes in regards to world ranking. MH acknowledges and will add an IOF responsibility into Terms of Reference and that further discussion on this subject will be conducted electronically.

## 3. Sharing information about talent & performance

Briefings from the relevant member, including, funding, programme, staff (paid & unpaid), key issues:

### • England

SH refers to the England Orienteering Council who focus on selections of regional and international squads but unfortunately communication is poor. SH explains her program structure:

- Talent Development and Elite Development is funded by Sport England (4 year contract, £170,000 /year)
  - o 4 targets are to be met for this funding: Quality and Quantity (Top 20s at JWOC)
    - Breadth and Scale (Number of Athletes in Talent Development)
    - Athlete Progress (from Talent Development to Elite Development)
    - Quality of Pathway (Quality of Deliverers, incl. staff and coaches. Number of contact and coaching hours delivered per athlete.)

To put the £170,000 into perspective this covers all delivery and salaries. It costs around £25,000 to send a team to WOC.

JWOC is Sport England funded and WOC is part Sport England funded as Elite Development goes too.

Sport England is aware that they fund Staff even though Staff also work on Performance Program.

- Performance is funded by British Orienteering (1 year contract)

MH explains that SE funds 46 sports through Whole Sport Plan Bids. SE fund talent as they believe it generates participation but do not fund 'performance' apart from one or two exceptions.

### • Northern Ireland

Funded by Sport NI and for a small sport Orienteering is well funded.

NI have a Performance Officer (AB) who works on "Performance Focus" program and a Development Officer who works with Active Schools and increasing Schools Participation. Historically they have always had strong Schools Participation.

Junior Athletes in NI have the choice between using the NI Talent Pathway and the British Pathway. NI athletes have a choice as to whether they represent Great Britain or (republic of) Ireland in international competition. AB encourages and creates

opportunities for athletes to use British Pathway as they will be more likely to reach their goals. Although athletes believe that Irish Pathway is an easier option and don't realise that the funding is there to send them to the Talent Development coaching camps provided by British Orienteering. In actual fact AB is struggling to spend the funding.

A culture change is needed and it is often found that NI athletes do not feel part of British Orienteering or NI and are in "limbo" JN asks if athletes could represent Northern Ireland at home internationals and suggests that representing Ireland may create an identity with that team early in their careers?

AB states that there is not enough numbers to make it viable and would cause a political storm. At the JHI the teams run as "Ireland" and that will continue to happen, but suggests that a Celtic Cup could help.

AB feels that those top athletes who have come from Ireland have done so without support and therefore show real talent. KJ points out that Lagganlia used to be a good opportunity for those athletes.

- Scotland

RS – Highly developed structure although ups and downs due to funding. In 2010 Sport Scotland stopped funding performance altogether.

ScotJOS is the Scottish Junior Regional Squad which runs on the back of own fund raising, parental contributions, sponsorship and SOA funding. There are 30-40 members across the age classes. Bill Stevenson and Maureen Brown invite 10-20 potential new members once a year and select.

SEDS is the Scottish Elite Development Squad which is run by Jess and James Tullie, funded by own fund raising, donations and SOA funding. They meet almost every weekend with 6 – 20 athletes turning out.

UK Centre of Excellence is not funded by British Orienteering anymore and hasn't been for some years. UKCE is funded through the Winning Students scheme and University of Edinburgh with support in kind from SOA. ScotJOS and SEDS run in parallel with the UKCE.

RS is worried about the future of BUCS. EUOC purposely encouraged athletes from other Scottish universities in 2013 and 7 out of 24 universities attended BUCS were Scottish.

KJ – BUCS is important, as if it ceases to recognise orienteering, no universities will recognise orienteering. SH said that all but a few squad members are or were university students.

All sports were assessed by BUCS for support and orienteering fell below the threshold but due to a large number of athletes being at university BUCS hasn't stopped yet.

MH believes that from previous discussion with the Board and Sport England about BUCS, support will continue.

- Wales

MS - £3,000 grant for everything (Participation, membership and Performance –HI teams). Whilst there is very little external, funding, clubs and WOA are supportive of their talent and performance athletes typically funding a third each of any of the athletes' personal contributions. The Welsh Junior Squad is very active. They have a 2 day training camp about once a month and alternate yearly between a week long pre-JK camp and a Scandinavia camp. This all supported by the squad's own fund raising. Getting external Sponsorships depends on having people with the right contacts and/or skills and inclination to pursue.

- GBR

SH – Performance Program used to be funded by UKSport until 2 years ago, which is why it is now BOF funded. Athlete contributions make up the rest of the funding. In essence the performance program is £150,000 short of where they'd like to be. Peter Buckley, Commercial Manager, is currently trying to bring in more money to support the program but also trying to make the program operate more commercially.

#### 4. Developing the Strategic Plan to deliver 'more podiums'

a) How do our Home Nations plans integrate into a GBR plan?

b) Should they? Need they to?

RS suggest that starting at the top and working down; the work of the Home Nations could be integrated at the appropriate level. SH explains that the programme reached its target podiums for 2013 and in 2014 the target will be 2 or 3 – this is the starting point.

Action: SH to provide vision on how many podiums for 2014.

MH – World class performers need pathways and coaching, giving people opportunities is not a talent pathway.

SH confirms that SE wants a conveyor belt of athletes but also to retain athletes once they've reached their best.

RS suggested trying to integrate the different approaches from each regional squad and not to make everyone do the same as there may be some negative response to this.

MH – There may always be lots of conflict between different parties but we need to use the existing resources as effectively as we can.

RS questions how will we communicate with the association squads? Some of the association squads may work with the British Orienteering pathway, some may not.

It was decided that a meeting with JROS was needed to discuss how and to what extent there can or should be better alignment between their plans and a GBR strategic plan to deliver more podiums. Participants at such a meeting will need to recognize that the regional squads are different, have their own accountabilities – to regional associations and external funders - and may have a wider remit than just talent and performance.

## 5. Group Working Practice

To agree how the group will operate between face to face meetings.

It was decided a private document library should be set up along with e-mail communications. A schedule for a meeting will be produced after JROS feedback. Time scale will probably be Mid-June with another meeting in October.

## 6. Any other business

To deal with any other pertinent business notified prior to the meeting.

AB – There is the need for a robust Talent Identification programme and suggested that would be a good way for the home countries to become more integrated into the BOF performance pathway.

### Actions:

- SH – Pull together target top 10 places for WOC.
- Agreed Home Nations role and JROS situation meet with JROS or representatives of JROS SH to action MS & AB (as members of JROS) to help facilitate
- British Orienteering recommended Pathway? SH to produce draft
- Need to develop strategy for two way communication (Electronic brainstorm network) JN to draft ideas