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Chairman's Foreword



Last year at this time, we were fresh from a fantastic Commonwealth Games – a high point for Boxing in Scotland having created fantastic headlines, excitement and real working class heroes.

However, this only represents the tip of the iceberg that is Boxing Scotland and in many ways does not recognise the many hours, days, weeks and months of tireless effort by our army of volunteers. As an organisation, it is important that we strike the correct balance between grass-roots and performance.

Over the last four year funding cycle, our 2010 – 2014 strategic plan was heavily focussed on delivering medals at the highest level. That said, there were a number of other successes and achievements in a number of other areas of that enabled our sport to grow, develop and improve.

2014 will be rightly remembered for the Glasgow Commonwealth Games where we all enjoyed the performances of one of our most successful teams ever. We now find ourselves in the middle of one of our busiest ever preparation periods with a select team travelling off to Samoa in September for the 2015 Youth Games and our Elite boxers preparing longer term for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

As a Commonwealth Games sport, we have aligned our new 2015 – 2019 strategic plan to the Commonwealth Games cycle, which in turn aligns to our four year investment award from sportscotland.

Following Glasgow 2014, we spent approximately 6 months focusing on the production and presentation of our 2015 – 2019 strategic plan which was completed following consultation with members and other stakeholders.

The 2015 – 2019 plan only highlights what is a strategic priority for the organisation and does not present an exhaustive list of all our responsibilities. Understandably, performance remains a key strategic priority in our new plan. However, and as explained in our 2014 Annual Report, increased focus is now being placed upon Development and Organisational Effectiveness with a view to creating growth and sustainability within our existing and to create opportunities for new clubs.

Ultimately, we want an enjoyable, safe, accessible, equitable and successful National sport that will grow by attracting new and retaining existing members of the BSL family.

Chairman's Foreword

We must be also be mindful that landscapes change and nothing stands still so our 2015 – 2019 plan will evolve and alter to suit the needs of our members as and when necessary.

Yet again, we must congratulate our boxers who have once more produced a number of out-standing performances in major international tournaments.

This is testament to the work of our Performance Director/National Coach, Technical and Emerging Talent coaches who continue to better prepare our boxers technically and tactically to compete with the World's best boxers. They are ably assisted by our recently appointed pool coaches who provide invaluable support in delivering our performance programme.

Our World class Scottish High Performance Centre continues to be absolutely vital for the preparation of our boxers. It will become even more significant this coming season as we look to incorporate a strength and conditioning suite enabling us to provide a performance programme 'one stop shop'.

Our Junior and Youth boxers have produced some of Scotland's best ever international results this year. This has been directly as a result of our ability to send our best boxers to the best tournaments because of increased investment.

Since 2009 there has been an earnest endeavour to grow and develop Women's boxing in Scotland. Now we are starting to bear the fruits of our efforts. We must recognise Stephanie Kernaghan's significant 2015 GB Women's Elite Championship win and we hope this is a catalyst for further female participation in Scottish boxing.

Having undergone an organisational restructure, our increased investment will allow us to appoint a new Chief Executive Officer and a further Regional Development Officer based in the North of Scotland. Our current Chief Operating Officer will continue in his current position and will assume a lead development role. Our development staff will work closely with clubs and external partners to establish new partnerships to promote growth, sustainability and ambition in our clubs across the country.

As an organisation we want to provide richer experiences for all our boxers, coaches, officials and volunteers through our member clubs by:

- Establishing closer links with external partners such as Local Authorities who can provide additional development resources;
- Delivering our new nationally recognised level one coaching course;
- Launching our new online Membership and Affiliation system;
- Implementing our new Club Accreditation Minimum Operating Requirements scheme;
- Providing ongoing mentoring and training to our Officials and the opportunity to become AIBA certified.

Chairman's Foreword

Our National Championships continue to go from strength to strength and this season saw the best organised series of events ever with over 1000 entries again. Following the highs, lows and dramas of the 2014 Elite Finals in front of thousands of people at the Glasgow Emirates Arena, our 2015 Elite finals was a great night of boxing and fitting way to conclude the season.

The introduction of our new Membership and Affiliation system will significantly improve communication with boxers, clubs and members. Our Social media pages continue to attract massive interest with over 35,000 individual fol-lowers between our Facebook and Twitter pag-es. This season, we will make an even greater effort to publicise our boxers and sport through these pages.

Finally,I would like to thank our members all of whom are volunteers and contribute a massive amount of time and energy into making BSL the success it is today. I would also like to thank sportscotland and its performance arm – the Institute – for its vital financial investment and athlete support which underpin the delivery of our strategic goals.

As the 2014/2015 comes to a close, we feel sure that the vast majority of our members will be able to reflect on another successful year and be proud to be a member of the Boxing Scotland family. Here's to another great year ahead and thank you all for your continued support.

Best Regards

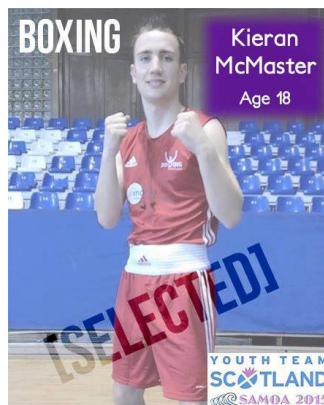
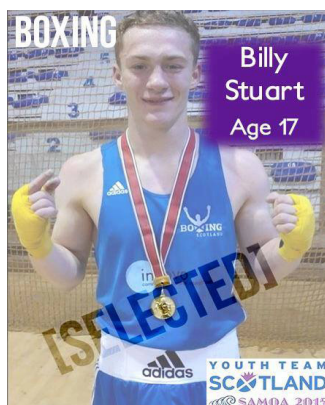


Richard Thomas
Chairman
Boxing Scotland Ltd

Performance

Introduction

Even though we were celebrating one of Team Scotland's best ever Commonwealth Games results this time last year, the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games now seem like a distant memory. Especially as we are currently engaged in one of our busiest ever preparation phases – short term for the 2015 Samoa Commonwealth Youth Games and long term for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.



With the ever looming threat of our best boxers turning professional we must ensure all our Performance Squad are aware of the fantastic opportunities and support they have available to them by progressing their career with Boxing Scotland to the 2018 Gold Coast games and beyond.

The recent uplift in performance investment coupled with sportscotland Institute athlete personal awards (SAPAs) will undoubtedly help us achieve our goal in making sure all our team are best prepared, both physically and mentally.

Post Glasgow 2014, five of our team of our Commonwealth Games Team (50%) as well as another 2 of the boxers involved in the preparation phase turned to the Professional Ranks. This had a devastating effect on one of our strongest ever elite teams and our programme.



We must up our efforts to unearth new talent and integrate them with our more experienced performance programme boxers, with a view to focussing all our efforts on achieving our very challenging medal target of 5 or more medals at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

The Performance Programme has seen significant changes in recent times and increased investment has afforded us the opportunity to attend more International Tournaments which will benefit boxers of all ages.

Performance

A major addition to the programme has been the ability to take all our best boxers to overseas conditioning camps, which based on recent medal success, have proven to be very worthwhile. These camps have also been very beneficial in building camaraderie between the boxers and the coaches.

We have also benefitted from the addition of the very ex-perienced Danny Lee onto our coaching staff - Danny will help the existing Team of Coaches at Bridgeton as well as leading and assisting at Tournaments when required.

Another valuable introduction to the performance programme has been our 10 pool coaches – A comprehensive recruitment process resulted in the appointment of the following Team Scotland coaches:

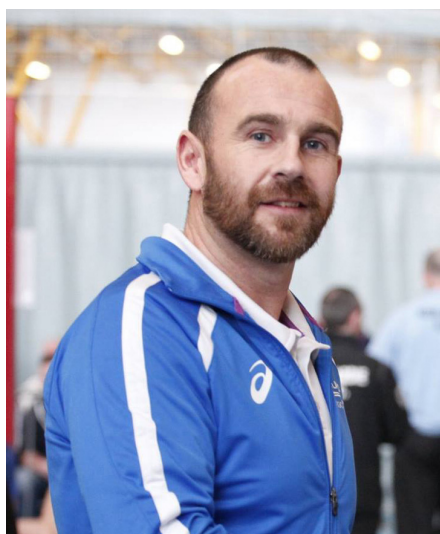
Bert McShane (AIBA 2 Star)
Ian McDonald (AIBA 1 Star)
Niall Clark (AIBA 1 Star)
Anne Armstrong (AIBA 1 Star)
Alistair Chisholm
Trevor Johnstone
Dave Cowan
Willie Leckie
Paul Gordon

Those coaches currently without AIBA certification will be attend the next available AIBA coaching course in order to achieve level one. Further to this, we will endeavour to add to our list of pool coaches in the coming season and also upgrading our 1 and 2 starred Coaches where and when appropriate.

Our performance programme has been greatly enhanced by Technical Coach Craig McEvoy (bottom left) and Emerging Talent Coach Ray Gibson (bottom right). They must be commend-ed for the added experience, commitment and technical knowledge they have brought to the coaching team.

Our Pool Coaches have also played a massive part, especially as they are volunteers, and we would struggle to operate the Programme, especially when any of the coaching staff are attending tournaments.

Each season is becoming busier with the only lull in the programme coming during the national championships season in February and March each year. However that can only be a good thing for our boxers as they gain more and more experience at the very best competitions and win more and more medals.



Tournament Results

Tammer Tournament, Finland: 15th – 20th October 2014

A team of 5 Elite Male boxers attended this prestigious event winning:

- Gold – Reece McFadden;
- Silver – Mark McKeown & Scott Forrest;
- Bronze – Aqeel Ahmed.



Scotland v London Charity event, London: 06 October 2014

A team of 7 Youth and Elite boxers won in reounding fashion with a 7-0 whitewash;

Mark McKeown;
Dennis Broadhurst;
Stephen Beattie;
Aqeel Ahmed;
Kieran Smith;
Scott Forrest;
Lee McGregor.

European Youth Championships, Croatia: 16th – 27th October 2014

Lee McGregor;
Lewis Hay
Igor Sliwinski;
Peter George;
John Docherty;
Connal
McDonald.

No medals were won at this event but there were some excellent performances from the Boxers with Connal losing on a very close decision to a Croatian Boxer for a place in the Semi Finals.

Tournament Results

EUBC European Junior Championships, Anapa 1-8 November 2014

6 Junior Boxers attended:



Ryan Ball;
Stephen Newns;
Billy Stuart;
Callum Stuart;
Daniel Allan;
Willie Hutchison.

Willie Hutchinson produced the performance of his career so far in winning Gold in the 70kg against a Russian opponent. In doing so he recorded Scotland's best ever result at the Euro-pean Junior Championships. Callum and Billy Stuart also performed extremely well losing narrowly to Eastern European opposition at the Quarter Final stages.

Norway v Scotland Dual Match, Oslo 23 – 25th January 2015

5 Male Elite and 2 Female Elite boxers attended:

Jack Turner;
Lewis Paulin;
Steven Beattie;
Scott Forrest;
Connal McDonald;
Stephanie Kernachan;



Team Scotland had one winner – Jack Turner but the international provided some much needed female competition.

Tournament Results

Nikolay Pavlyukov International, Russia: 17 March – 04 April 2015

This followed on the back of an extremely intensive youth training camp held in Anapa. The following 8 took part:

Jack Turner;
Lewis Paulin;
Steven Beattie;
Scott Forrest;
Connal McDonald;
Stephanie Kernachan;

William Hutchinson boxed 5 times and Sean Lazzerini 4 times with outstanding performances throughout to win two 2 Silver medals from this incredibly difficult tournament.

Belgrade Winners , Serbia: 23 – 27 April 2015

The following Elite male boxers attended:

Aqeel Ahmed;
Reece McFadden;
Stephen Boyle;
Josh Sandford;
Jason Easton;
Dennis Broadhurst;
Boris Chrighton;
Scott Forrest.

Aqeel Ahmed & Scott Forrest won Gold, Jason Easton & Josh Sandford Silver and Dennis Broadhurst and and Stephen Boyle won Bronze.



Tournament Results

Boxam Tournament, Cartagena, Spain: 04 – 10 May 2015

The following 11 Elite Boxers attended:

Lynne Calder;
Elaine Greenan;
Aqeel Ahmed;
Matthew McHale;
Stephen Boyle;
Stephen Tiffney;
Jason Easton;
Dennis Broadhurst;
Boris Chrighton;
Scott Forrest;
Tommy Philbin.

Aqeel Ahmed (Silver), Stephen Boyle (Bronze) Stephen Tiffney (Bronze) were the medal winners.



European Junior Male Championships, Lviv, Ukraine: 14- 24 May 2015

The following 9 boxers attended:

Alex McCormack;
Tony Orr;
Declan Duffy;
Aidan Duggan;
Peter McPhee;
Brandon Matulaitis;
Nathan Shaw;
Stephen McKenna;
Lewis Johnstone.



Declan Duffy and Lewis Johnstone produced fantastic performances to both win Bronze medals and give Scotland its best ever result in this tournament.

Tournament Results

Lah Minana Tournament, Kosovo: 22–25 May



William Stuart;
Lewis Hay;
Kieran McMaster;
William Hutchison;
John Docherty;
Sean Lazzerini;
Mitchell Barton.

An incredible medal haul of 5 Gold and 2 Silver Medals, with teams from Germany, Bulgaria, Turkey Hungary present, gave Team Scotland one of its best ever international results.

33rd Golden Glove of Vojvodina Youth Tournament, Serbia: 06 – 12 July 2015

The following 8 boxers attended:

Dylan Arbuckle;
William Stuart;
Lewis Hay;
Kieran McMaster;
John Docherty;
William Hutchison;
Sean Lazzerini
Mitchell Barton



This was a great tournament for our 2015 Samoa Commonwealth Youth Games preparations with William Stuart winning gold, John Docherty and Sean Lazzerini collecting bronze in what was an extremely tough tournament in 36 degree heat.

Development of our female boxers is covered in a separate section below. This will continue to gather pace and a full summary of the female programme can be read later in the performance report. We have a long term performance target to have at least one female boxer qualify for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and our Coaches are fully committed achieving this. As well as attending a number of tournaments, our best prospects are current out in Portugal at a conditioning camp.

Tournament Summary

All in all, this has been our busiest season which began as soon as the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games has concluded.

- Aqeel Ahmed – 2015 GB Elite 49kg Champion;
- Stephanie Kernachan – 2015 GB Elite 54kg Champion;
- Declyn Duffy and Lewis Johnstone – 2015 European Junior Championship Bronze Medallists
- 7 Medals from the 7 Boxers at the Lah Minana Tournament in Kosovo;
- William Stuart (Gold), John Docherty (Bronze), Sean Lazzerini (Bronze) in the 33rd Golden Gloves of Vojvodina tournament, Serbia, there has been a lot of time and effort spent on the Youth Boxers as they have the Youth Commonwealth Games in September and some may well be in the running for the Gold Coast 2018.

Well done to all the boxers who pulled on the Scottish vest and competed with such distinction throughout Europe and the World. Club coaches should also be recognised and congratulated for feeding our performance programme with such talented and well prepared boxers.

Female Development Programme



Two female Assessment Camps were delivered in 2013 (open invite issued to attend) 12 months out prior to the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games. Following these sessions, it was deemed by coaches that there were no female boxers in Scotland who were at the level at which they demonstrated medal winning potential for Glasgow 2014.

It was also noted by our coaches, with the welfare of our female boxers in mind, that there was not nearly enough time to prepare, what were effectively, novice level boxers to compete with distinction in a major international competition.



Realising and appreciating the time it takes to nurture and prepare boxers who can win medals at the highest international level, a further series of assessment and training sessions were held in September 2014 post Glasgow. The purpose of these was to identify potential medal winners for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. Purposely, Boxing Scotland has a 2015-2019 investment target to have one female in attendance at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, such is our commitment to the development of female boxers.

Initially, these sessions were well attended but numbers began to drop off after many of the boxers realised the commitment and intensity required to box at the higher level (International).

From having no specific female sessions before 2013, the statistics below show the breakdown of the female session provided since 01 January 2015:

- Schoolgirl – 2 Sessions held, 4 boxers attended
- Junior Female – 2 Sessions held, 7 boxers attended
- Youth Female – 2 Sessions held, 11 boxers attended
- Elite Female – 2 Sessions held and 23 boxers attended

Female Development Programme

As our best female boxers improve, a number of residential training camp opportunities have been provided to our best female boxers along with our best males to allow preparation for international tournaments. For the first time ever in late 2014, two of our best female boxers travelled with our best male boxers to international dual match in Norway.

A concerted effort has been made to send our best boxers to appropriate international competitions in order to improve their experience. Notable results have included:

- Swedish box cup – Megan Gordon gold, Elaine Greenan silver and Lynn Calder bronze;
- Norway Duel International – Elaine Greenan and Stephanie Kernachan both performed with distinction against more experienced boxers;
- 2015 Monkstown Cup, Dublin – Shaira Robertson and Megan Gordon both won gold;

There will be many future international competitive opportunities for our female boxers including:

- o The European Junior Championships (Subject to strict assessment prior due to very strong opposition);
- o Proposed Round Robin/Training/ in Sheffield, August with GB Boxing;
- o Warm weather conditioning camp, Portugal;
- o A Proposed Army Dual;
- o A number of home Residential camps;
- o Targeted Individual Technical Clinics.



We have achieved our highest ever level of registered female boxer figures this season and our 2014/2015 championships have attracted record amounts of female entrants – for the first time ever the Boxing Scotland Elite Finals featured 5 female finals. The future for female boxing in Scotland is very bright.

GB Boxing Programme

Currently we have no boxers receiving GB programme support following Glasgow 2014 Gold medallist Josh Taylor's decision to turn professional and Aston Brown's deselection from the programme.

Encouragingly, and following initial assessment at the end of June, eight boxers have asked back to Sheffield for further assessment.

Our Female Boxers will also be given an opportunity for assessment at a later date this year.



sportscotland Institute of Sport

Following months of negotiations between Boxing Scotland and the Institute, we have managed to secure Institute support for 24 of our Boxers.

This means that they will be able to access additional programme support for areas such as strength and conditioning, physiotherapy, nutrition and performance lifestyle.



These additions will be invaluable to our best boxers and they will also benefit from a "Fast Track" system where the Boxer can access either physiotherapy or medical services at short notice to allow to be dealt with as soon as possible

Recent beneficiaries of this have been Connal McDonald and Reece McFadden who have both been sent for MRI scans and operated on immediately thereafter.

sportscotland Institute of Sport

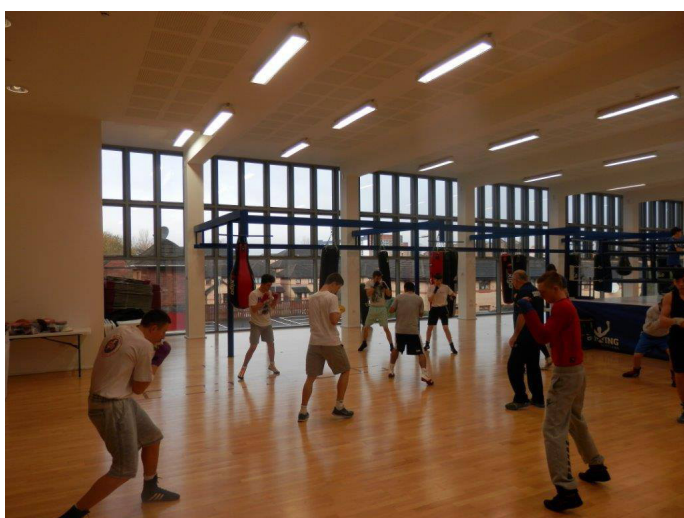
Boxers currently supported by the Scottish Institute of Sport are as follows:

Aqeel Ahmed;
Dylan Arbuckle;
Reece McFadden;
Lee McGregor;
Stephen Boyle;
Mark McKeown;
Dennis Broadhurst;
Kieran Smith;
Scott Forrest;
Stephen Lavelle;
Connal McDonald;
William Stuart;
Lewis Hay;
Kieran McMaster;
Callen McAulay;
Willie Hutchison;
John Docherty;
Paul Burns;
Sean Lazzerini;
Mitchell Barton;
Stephanie Kernachan;
Lynn Calder;
Gardner Moore;
Sally Birrell.



The Institute has listened to our needs regarding the correct type of strength work required for our boxers and adapted the programme to suit our needs. Our 4 female boxers (the first ever Female Boxers to receive Institute support) will benefit to being exposed to this type of training. Coupled with our technical clinics in the Scottish High Performance Centre, we are looking forward to seeing improvements in the coming months.

We currently await on a decision on whether we can install a strength & conditioning suite at the far end of our High Performance Centre. This will make it a "one stop shop" where all the Institute strength and conditioning work can be carried out in our own facility. This will enable us to have more contact with our Boxers and work closely with the Institute to ensure we prepare our Boxers to their full potential.



Training Summary

Month	Activity
September 2014	2 School/ Junior sessions; 1 open women's session assessment/test match sparring over 2 weekends.
October 2014	1 Junior/Youth session; 1 Open Women's Session.
November 2014	1 School/ Junior session (38 boxers); 3 Open Women's sessions (34 women); East Regional Session (19 school, 7 juniors & 4 youths); West Regional Session (48 School/Junior & 6 Females).
December 2014	1 Women's Open Session (15 boxers) 1 Youth Session (15 boxers)
January 2015	2 School Sessions (42 Boxers 4 Female) 2 Junior Sessions (32 Boxers 3 Female) 3 Youth Sessions (39 Boxers 2 Female) 5 Senior Sessions (47 Boxers)
February 2015	2 School Sessions (66 Boxers 2 Female) 2 Junior Sessions (33 Boxers) 1 Youth Session (15 Boxers) 1 Senior Session (13 Boxers)
February 2015	1 Junior Session (25 Boxers 1 Female) 3 Youth Sessions (41 Boxers 3 Female)
March 2015	1 Junior Session (25 Boxers 1 Female) 3 Youth Sessions (41 Boxers 3 Female)
April 2015	3 Junior Sessions (65 Boxers 6 Female) 3 Youth Sessions (44 Boxers 2 Female) 3 Senior Sessions (32 Boxers 5 Female)
May 2015	1 School Session (16 Boxers 2 Female) 1 Junior Session (10 Boxers) 1 Senior Session (9 Boxers 4 Female)
June 2015	22 Male Boxers attended the Portugal Conditioning Camp 2nd – 12th June
July 2015	9 Female Boxers attended the Portugal Conditioning Camp 14th – 20th July

GB Three Nation Championships

A team of 8 Male and 3 Female Youths were the first to enter into the GB Three Nation Championship action with the 2015 GB Youth Championships taking place on April 18 & 19 in the Magma Science Adventure Centre in Rotherham.

Sally Birrell was the female standout for Team Scotland in the 51kg winning silver in the final against the very highly rated English boxer, Ebonie Jones.

Sean Lazzerini continued his devastating form by beating Englishman Chris Luteke unanimously in the light heavyweight category and relative newcomer Mitchell Barton produced an outstanding performance to take the superheavyweight title unanimously against England's Keeron Williams. Overall, Team Scotland comfortably finished second behind England with a total medal tally of 2 Gold, 4 Silver and 5 Bronze.

It was the turn of Boxing Scotland to host the GB Three Nation Junior Championships in the World class Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility in Motherwell.

As the host, Scotland utilised the two boxer per weight category home advantage, which is customary practice at GB Three Nation events, and entered 23 Boxers.

Whilst they couldn't quite emulate the amazing result our Juniors achieved in 2014 at the same event held in Cardiff, our boxers still produced a great overall performance, winning three gold, eight silver and twelve bronze medals.

Star performers for Team Scotland were Brandon Matulaitis, Stephen McKenna and Lewis Johnston, all of whom won gold.



GB Three Nation Championships



Following a three year hiatus, the GB Elite Championships were reintroduced into the 2015 competitive calendar and a Scottish team of 3 Female and 8 Male boxers travelled to the Magma Science & Adventure Centre in Rother-ham in late May.

Always a tough test with the prospect of facing GB programme boxers, Stephanie Kernachan and Aqeel Ahmed produced exceptional performances to strike gold in the 54kg and 49kg weight categories respectively.

Stephanie's win was a seminal moment as she is the first ever Scottish female to win a British championship title and what a way do it at Elite level. It is also testament to how much of a positive impact our performance programme is having on the development of our female boxers, as we progress towards the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.



GB Three Nation Championships

A popular winner, Aqeel Ahmed continued his impressive recent form with an extremely accomplished victory in the light flyweight division against GB programme boxer Joe Maphosa. Matthew McHale and Dennis Broadhurst were the other Team Scotland finalists both collecting silver to compliment the further 7 bronze medals won.




































Eleven of our Schoolboy boxers made the long journey south to Swansea for the last of the 2015 GB Three Nation tournaments where they gave a sterling account of themselves.







The team returned with its highest ever tally of gold medals for a GB Schoolboy Championship held out with Scotland. Harry Rosbottom, Kyle Kerr, Harry Peacock, Johnny Fitzsimmons and Jack Knight all struck gold in their respective weight categories, on Welsh soil.

GB Three Nation Championships

A table summarising results from the last four years of GB Three Nation Championship events can be viewed in the following table:

Event	Date	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
2012 GB Schoolboys	6th & 7th July 2012	England 	20	4	2
Wales		Scotland 	4	10	2
		Wales 	1	11	29
2013 GB Schoolboys	26th & 27th April 2013	England 	16	8	3
Scotland		Scotland 	10	13	18
		Wales 	1	6	18
2014 GB Schoolboys	9th & 10th May 2014	England 	10	2	1
		Scotland 	2	3	5
		Wales 	1	8	2
2015 GB Schoolboys	13th & 14th June 2015	England 	10	2	0
Wales		Scotland 	5	3	3
		Wales 	2	11	20
2012 GB Juniors	1st & 2nd June 2012	England 	16	5	4
Scotland		Scotland 	8	12	21
		Wales 	2	9	12
2013 GB Juniors	14th & 15th June 2013	England 	20	3	12
England		Scotland 	4	4	12
		Wales 	0	6	15
2014 GB Juniors	20th & 21st June 2014	England 	6	3	2
England		Scotland 	5	4	3
		Wales 	1	4	6
2015 GB Juniors	2nd & 3rd May 2015	England 	6	3	2
Scotland		Scotland 	3	8	12
		Wales 	3	0	7
2012 GB Youths	15th & 15th June 2012	England 	13	13	8
England		Scotland 	5	9	11
		Wales 	2	3	12
2013 GB Youths	7th & 8th June 2013	England 	12	4	1
Wales		Scotland 	5	8	2
		Wales 	2	3	12
2014 GB Youths	7th & 8th March 2014	England 	6	3	1
Scotland		Scotland 	3	3	3
		Wales 	1	3	2

GB Three Nation Championships

Event	Date	Country		Gold	Silver	Bronze
2015 GB Youths	18th & 19th April 2015	England		11	10	4
England		Scotland		2	4	5
		Wales		1	1	6
2015 GB Elite	23rd & 24th April 2015	England		11	13	7
England		Wales		4	2	7
		Scotland		2	2	7

Investment and Organisational Change

Increased funding from our main investor, sportscotland, was key critical during the 2010 – 2014 funding cycle. It allowed us to provide a comprehensive performance programme to our elite boxers in their quest to gain Glasgow 2014 selection and also allowed us to provide an extensive Glasgow 2014 preparation programme for our selected boxers, the likes of which our sport has never seen before.

The appointment of a Technical and Emerging Talent coach, along with the recruitment of a team of pool coaches, has greatly enhanced the delivery of our performance programme and has allowed us to send our boxers to more tournaments, which is demonstrated in the level of medal success we have enjoyed during the season gone.

Achieving our Glasgow 2014 target of winning more than 3 medals was extremely significant in strengthening our position for a further meaningful investment increase.

As we enter into the 2015 – 2019 cycle, there is a need to continue our pursuit of excellence towards the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games as we have set an extremely ambition target of winning more than five medals in Australia.

Post Glasgow 2014, our focus has changed and shifted more towards development. We have identified the importance directing our resources and efforts towards the development of our clubs to create a higher quality and richer service for our boxers. Furthermore, it is vital we forge new and stronger links between clubs and communities, schools and local authorities in order to encourage ambition within clubs and to promote growth.



Shortly after the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games concluded, we entered into an intensive 6 month period to produce and present our 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan to a sportscotland investment panel.

All 17 Commonwealth Games Sports were required to do so in line with the new sportscotland investment application process.

As was widely documented in May this year, we were delighted to receive the news that the total investment figure into Boxing Scotland for the 2015 – 2019 cycle will be £2,578,000.

This figure represents an overall increase of £797,000 (44.7%) on the previous cycle.

The investment has been split into to four annual amounts of:

2015 – 2016:	£667,000
2016 – 2017:	£667,000
2017 – 2018:	£647,000
2018 – 2019:	£597,000

The 2015 – 2019 cycle investment has been allocated in a way that sees performance invest-ment front loaded to ensure preparations for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games are in place.

Goal number 2 within our strategic plan is entitled Growth and identifies the need to increase our membership and grow the sport through strong vibrant clubs in which coaches, officials and volunteers are nurtured.

Investment and Organisational Change

In order to achieve this goal, we will employ a more targeted approach to assisting our member clubs with generic development or funding needs.

This will be made possible with the considerable uplift in our Development funding which will allow for the appointment of staff who will spend the majority of their time out of the office developing our member clubs. There is also a massive window of opportunity to help clubs through a collaborative approach via the Active Schools programme, Local Authorities, Community Sports Hubs and the sportscotland facilities investment programme.

To achieve our 2015 – 2019 goals, a revised staffing structure has been developed which can be viewed in our new Strategic Plan. This identifies 5 new roles which it is anticipated will provide the correct structure for growth. We have also recently appointed our first ever female Director, Caroline Stewart. With her considerable experience and knowledge of the voluntary sector, she will further strengthen the skillset of the Board.

To provide further context, the following table demonstrates the progression of the core annual investment amounts received annually from sportscotland over the past eight financial years.

Funding Year	Performance	Development	Strong Partners	Total
2008-2009*	£100,000	£0	£75,000	£175,000
2009-2010	£205,000	£35,000	£95,000	£345,000
2010-2011	£240,000	£35,000	£95,000	£370,000
2011-2012	£240,000	£35,000	£95,000	£370,000
2012-2013	£240,000	£35,000	£95,000	£370,000
2013-2014	£373,000	£35,000	£95,000	£503,000
2014-2015	£373,000	£70,000	£95,000	£538,000
2015-2016	£400,000	£160,000	£107,000	£667,000

It is important at this juncture to thank sportscotland, and it's Institute of Sport, for its continued support and the vital nature of its financial investment which underpins the delivery of our strategic objectives.

* Investment stopped because organisation/ General Council found to be un-fit for purpose

Domestic Championships

Our Domestic Championships continue to go from strength to strength. Yet again entries numbers were extremely healthy across all our 2014 – 2015 domestic championship events with one of our largest ever total of 1020 boxers submitting entries to box in our Scottish Championship events.

As always, our Championship events were extremely well attended & supported and thanks must go to our Boxers, Coaches, Officials, Parents, Supporters, Volunteers and Boxing Scotland Staff for making them such a success.

Following the use of four separate facilities for our 2013/2014 championships, a conscious decision was taken to use the same facility for all of our 2014/2015 events – Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility in Motherwell.

Our 2014 Novice Championships kick started the season with a bang with 402 entries received. Our most heavily subscribed championship event never disappoints and resulted in an in-credible 199 contests being completed over the course of two weekends. In total, 65 new Scottish Novice Champions were crowned.

Our Intermediate Championships followed early into 2015 at the end of January 2015. Over the course of the weekend, 62 bouts were completed resulting in 25 new intermediate champions.



The remainder of our 2015 Championships events commenced from the weekend of 14&15 February 2015 culminating with our showcase Elite finals 28 March 2015. As is the case every year now, this was an incredibly busy period for all staff, boxers, coaches, officials and volunteers.

Our Senior and Youth Championships attracted 200 entries including the highest ever total for female entries of 26. The overall entry was up by 31 from 2014/2015 and our female entries were 10 higher than ever before, which is very encouraging.

The prelims were contested on 14 & 15 February 2-15 with a total of 52 preliminary and quarter final bouts completed.

Saturday 07 March was semi-finals day and a very health 21 elite semi-final bouts were contested as the action drew closer to the business end of our elite championships.



Domestic Championships

Our Youth Championships reverted back to the more familiar format of having boxers from each Youth individual year of birth (1998 and 1997) competing for the 2015 Youth Title. A total of 31 youth bouts were completed with 14 new 2015 Youth Champions crowned on Sunday 08 March.

A very healthy 21 elite semi-final bouts were contested new championship venue, staged our 2014 semi-finals where a total of 17 electrifying bouts were contested as the action intensified in the Senior Championships.

Our stars of tomorrow congregated for our Schoolboy/Girl and Junior championships which were extremely well subscribed with a total of 269 entries. Our champions of tomorrow provided a veritable feast of boxing throughout the 119 bouts contested and a total of 53 boxers won titles.

Last but not least, 28 March 2015 saw the staging of our elite finals. Staged in a considerably smaller than last year's venue, the Emirates Arena. The atmosphere was electric the whole evening in the Ravenscraig Main Hall in what was one of best finals events in recent memory. In total 10 male and 5 female champions were crowned and, again encouragingly, we had the highest amount of female finals ever clearly demonstrating the ongoing growth in female boxing.



2012/2013 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	172
Junior	88
Youth	38
Elite Men	116
Schoolgirl	4
Junior Girl	3
Youth Female	1
Elite Women	11
TOTAL	274

2013/2014 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	163
Junior	83
Youth	44
Elite Men	112
Schoolgirl	10
Junior Girl	4
Youth Female	3
Elite Women	11
TOTAL	433

2014/2015 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	137
Junior	77
Youth	43
Elite Men	106
Schoolgirl	7
Junior Girl	11
Youth Female	4
Elite Women	17
TOTAL	402

Domestic Championships

2012/2013 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	23
Junior	30
Youth	26
Elite Men	54
Schoolgirl	0
Junior Girl	0
Youth Female	0
Elite Women	0
TOTAL	136

2013/2014 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	43
Junior	55
Youth	33
Elite Men	59
Schoolgirl	0
Junior Girl	0
Youth Female	0
Elite Women	9
TOTAL	190

2014/2015 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	48
Junior	26
Youth	23
Elite Men	47
Schoolgirl	0
Junior Girl	0
Youth Female	0
Elite Women	5
TOTAL	149

2012/2013 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	123
Junior	106
Youth	69
Elite Men	112
Schoolgirl	4
Junior Girl	5
Youth Female	0
Elite Women	14
TOTAL	433

2013/2014 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	148
Junior	103
Youth	54
Elite Men	96
Schoolgirl	11
Junior Girl	6
Youth Female	4
Elite Women	12
TOTAL	434

2014/2015 Novice Championships

Schoolboy	161
Junior	87
Youth	68
Elite Men	106
Schoolgirl	11
Junior Girl	10
Youth Female	4
Elite Women	22
TOTAL	469

What has been particularly pleasing is the growing amount of Female boxers entering our Championships year on year. Numbers have increased by 75% and 30% respectively over the course of the last two annual championship cycles.

As we secure further opportunities, resource and investment which allows us to provide more development and performance programme opportunities ahead of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, we are sure these numbers will continue to grow.

Coach Development

To date, we have now delivered 15 Introduction to Coaching (ITC) courses across the country and in 2015 alone, we delivered a further five courses to 82 coaches across Scotland.

Preparation for the delivery of our Level 1 qualification, which was authored in partnership with the Scottish Qualification Agency (SQA), is in its final stages. A group of 8-12 tutors must first sit the course and then be trained to deliver the course to our coaches. We anticipate the first level one course will be delivered in the fourth quarter of 2015 from our High Performance Centre giving our coaches the opportunity to gain a recognized qualification.

All coaches wishing to sit our Level 1 qualification will be required to have attended our ITC course as a mandatory pre-requisite to the Level 1 course.

Our coaching statistics for the 2014 – 2015 season were as follows:

- 369 Coaches registered on the Boxing Scotland database;
 - o 109 in the Eastern District (29.6%)
 - o 68 in the Northern District (18.5%)
 - o 191 in the Western District (51.9%)
- 316 coaches fully registered having successfully passed their coaching exam and PVG checking.
- 261 Coaches attended the Safe guarding and Protecting Children course.

The introduction of our new online membership system will result in more accurate data being recorded annually and the reporting and monitoring of information much easier.

There has been no progression on the number of AIBA certified coaches we have since the last annual report was published. We currently have the following:

- 14 AIBA One Star Certified Coaches;
- 2 AIBA Two Star Certified Coaches;
- 2 AIBA Three Star Certified Coaches.

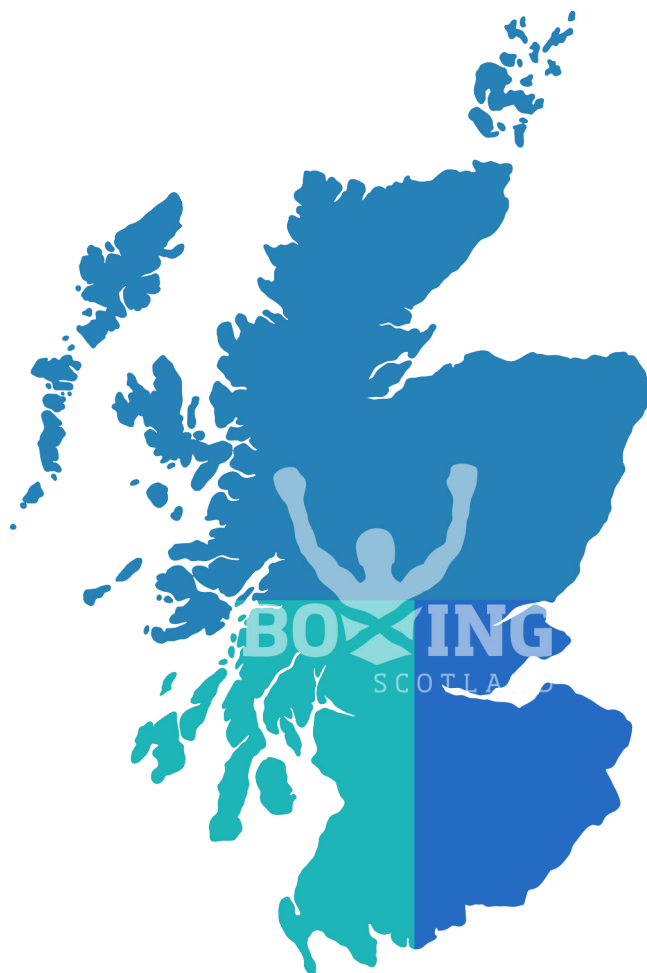


Affiliated Clubs

During the 2014-15 season, we recorded a total of 106 affiliated clubs. This was a slight drop in numbers from last season when we had 110 affiliated clubs. These can be seen below:

The North

Aberdeen Uni.
Arbroath
Byron
Claymores
Dundee
Dundee Uni.
Elgin
Fair City
Granite City
Highland BA
Insch
Inverness
Kincorth
Kingswells
Lochaber Phoenix
Lochee
Moray
Perth Railway
Peterhead
Robert Gordon's Uni.
St. Francis
Wellmeadow



The East

1314
Alloa
Bathgate
Bannockburn
Broxburn
Cardenden
Chirnside
Clovenstone
Craigmillar
Denbeath
Dunfermline
East Lothian
Edinburgh Uni.
Fauldhouse
Galashiels
Glenrothes
Hawick
Heriot-Watt Uni.
Jones's
Kingdom
Leith Vic
Livingston
Lochend
Madison
Meadowbank
Midlothian
Sparta
The Bronx
Zetland

The West

Argo	Dennistoun McNair	Glasgow Phoenix		
Barrhead	Doon Valley	Glasgow University	Linwood	Priestfield
Bellahouston	Doonhamers	Greenock	Millennium	Renfrewshire
Auchenheigh	Drumchapel	Hamilton	Newarthill	Renton
Blantyre Miners	D-Unit	Hayfield	Nith Valley	Robroy
Boxers Booth	Dunoon	Irvine Vineburgh	Noble Art	Springhill
Bravehearts	Durie's	Jackton	North Glasgow	Summerhill
Broadwood	Forgewood	Keir Hardie	North West	Team Shire
Cambusnethan	Forsyth's	Kelvin	O'Neil's	The Barn
Cleland Miners	Four Isles	Kilsyth	Partick	Viewpark
Clydebank Osprey	Garnock Valley	Kirkintilloch	Port Glasgow	
Clydeview	Glasgow East	Larkhall	Victoria	

Registered Boxers

Our registered boxer numbers has decreased slightly too but we anticipate this will exceed our biggest number ever this season with the introduction of our Club Cub scheme.

A breakdown of our registered boxers for the season gone can be viewed below:

Category	Male	Female	Total	District	Male	Female	Total
2004 School	37	3	40	East	398	31	429
2003 School	79	3	82	North	272	17	281
2002 School	81	5	86	West	713	41	754
2001 School	105	5	110	Total	1383	89	1472
2000 Junior	103	6	109				
1999 Junior	130	6	136				
1998 Youth	126	4	130				
1997 Youth	95	3	98				
Senior 19-40	627	54	681				
Total	1383	89	1472				

Online Membership and Affiliation System

At the time of writing, our new online Membership and affiliation system will have been launched removing the need for a paper based system and the administrative burden on our members.

The system has been developed exclusively to allow members to affiliate online and effectively manage all club data electronically. This will speed up the annual affiliation process, save having to submit the same information to BSL year after year and allow the accurate collection & collation of membership data.

Club Accreditation Minimum Operating Requirements Scheme

We recognise the important role clubs can play to increase participation and improve the quality of sporting opportunities for the benefit of the local community.

Our Club Accreditation Minimum Operating Requirements Scheme (MORs) is a quality development programme designed to be adopted and implemented by our affiliated clubs. First introduced in 2013, the majority of our member clubs embraced the introduction of our MORs. However, some clubs found meeting the MORs a challenge.

The aim of the MORs scheme is to provide a nationally recognised standard that will enable clubs to:

- Develop safe, effective and child friendly environments based on good practice;
- Improve the club environment for boxers, coaches, officials and volunteers;

Given the previous difficulties mentioned, the MORs have been reviewed and updated this year in order to directly complement our online membership and affiliation system. There will be varying levels of evidence that each club will be required to produce via the membership system.

There are three levels of accreditation that our affiliated clubs will now be able to achieve, which are as follows:

Bronze – this level requires clubs to provide evidence that it has basic and safe operating standards in place such as a signed constitution, a fully qualified Child Protection Officer, its own bank account, and a non-discriminatory name;



Silver – clubs achieving this level of accreditation can be considered as Enhanced. They demonstrate that they are committed to creating a sustainable boxing development pathway and have things in place such as an adequate facility with changing, showering and toilet facilities for both male and female members, a committee consisting of a President, Secretary and Treasurer – each role is held by a different individual, a designated working official (referee or judge) who is willing to train up to national level and regularly work at club, district and national events;



Club Accreditation Minimum Operating Requirements Scheme

Gold – clubs achieving advanced level will be more established or large clubs that demonstrate commitment to the principles of being a community club that encourages members to stay within the club structure and ensures boxers continue to train at their chosen level.

Typically an advanced club will be able to demonstrate that it has a minimum two year/ maximum four year progressive club development plan in place approved by the club committee, an equality policy that has been approved by the committee, regular committee meetings and an AGM, has successfully achieved accreditation through its Local Authority club assurance scheme; has signed role descriptors for all coaches, officials, committee members and volunteers.



Full details of our Club Accreditation MORs can be downloaded from our the new club section of our website www.boxingscotland.org/clubs

Officiating

As highlighted in the previous two annual reports there still remains a shortage of working officials within our sport and we are well short of our ambition to have every member club with a recognised working official. That said a number of new officials have been introduced in the past 12 months either as probationary or newly qualified R&J.

It goes without saying that without the volunteer time and commitment our current officials contribute to the successful running of events, we would have no shows and District/National championships so sincere thanks must go to all who have contributed in the past season.

The 2014/2015 season saw the introduction of our new Officials Working Group which has two clear facets:

1 - A Strategic component which be responsible for ensuring the group fulfils the following mandate:

- o To lead, implement and support BSL Technical Officials and R&J across all level of events nationally;
- o To ensure AIBA and BSL rules, where applicable, are communicated effectively to all relevant parties and that such rules are enforced across all events;
- o To ensure the correct quality and quantity of officials are available to resource all current events nationally and internationally and to provide national and technical training on all aspects of the rules of boxing and as authored by AIBA and, where appropriate, BSL;



- o To maintain clear, accurate and up to date records on all tournament officials and R&J to allow regular monitoring and assessment of performance to protect the safety of the boxers and to identify training needs of officials;
- o To promote neutrality and that all decisions and appointments are made based on competency and ability;
- o Ensure all relevant AIBA and BSL codes of conduct are adhered to and conduct any official and R&J related investigations & disciplinary hearings.

2 - An operational component which will be responsible for implementing any recommendations the strategic group identifies.

Our Officials Working Group was very quick to act in establishing a transparent system and principles which allow us to effectively monitor R&J performances and identify those most in need of further development and training. Under the system, the lowest performing 20% of officials at any given national championship event is invited to undertake further coaching, mentoring and examination.

Officiating



2 This system also allowed us to select our most experienced and qualified officials for National Championship events to ensure absolute fairness and protect the welfare of our Boxers at all times.

Training materials were also sourced from AIBA which allowed us to issue an open invite to all our officials to attend training and sit an exam on 13 December 2014 and 17 January 2015 respectively.

Despite the proximity, an impressive 21 officials attended the pre-Xmas training and a very

- 13 Referees;
- 50 Judges;
- 3 Time Keepers.

George Brown, one of our most experienced international referees, travelled to Assisi, Italy and successfully completed his assessment to become an AIBA certified official.

Our current quota of AIBA certified officials currently stands at:

- 2 x 3 Star
- 1 x 2 Star
- 4 x 1 Star

We will look to deliver a further AIBA course at our 2016 National Championships to provide more of our National level Officials with the opportunity to progress to the next stage of their career and become AIBA certified.

Governance

In November 2013, our Board of Directors agreed to commence the process of developing a new strategic plan for our sport. Our current strategic plan ends following the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

This was in light of sportscotland publishing its investment principles which require all 17 Commonwealth Games sports to provide a new strategic plan to be submitted to sportscotland by 26 September 2014 that covers the period 2015 - 2019

As well as Director and Staff input, we provided our members with the opportunity to provide their valuable input into our new Strategic Plan through a series of consultation sessions.

The plan was submitted to sportscotland in September 2014 and our Chairman and Chief Operating Officer were required to present the content to sportscotland investment panel in November. As detailed earlier in the report, sportscotland deemed the plan robust and ambitious which, in turn, gave it the confidence to significantly increase or investment.

The purpose of the plan is to outline the strategic direction of Boxing Scotland. It also does the following:

- Focuses on the goals and priorities to be pursued by the Boxing Scotland Board and Staff;
- Explains our future path and vision to other external stakeholders;
- Serves as a general communication tool;
- Only highlights what is considered to be a strategic priority.



The plan explains our vision for the sport:

- Use the medium of boxing to change people's lives, to improve communities and change a nation;
- Create heroes to inspire a nation;
- Every community experiences the pleasure and benefits for the many facets boxing can bring to their lives;
- Focus on our Boxers from recreational to elite reaching 10,000 members in safe, sustainable clubs;

Governance

It also explains our mission and our values:

- Make boxing accessible to all regardless of age, gender or ethnicity;
- Provide sporting pathways and development opportunities to all involved to be the best they can be;
- Provide quality clubs offering sporting pathways and lifetime involvement for all;
- Providing effective communication and stakeholder engagement to create a community that is broader and wider than the sport itself.

Our Values

Courage, Determination, Respect and Passion.

We have identified six strategic goals which support and contribute to our overall philosophy and vision;

GOAL 1: MEDALS – Ensure Scottish Boxers medal at all major tournaments attended;

GOAL 2: GROWTH – Ensure we have a cohesive plan that fosters and encourages sustainable growth;

GOAL 3: BOXING SCOTLAND BRAND – Build greater understanding of what Boxing Scotland does and its potential;

GOAL 4: FUNDING – Ensure appropriate investment and identify and grow revenue opportunities;

GOAL 5: ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS – Enhance efficient structures to ensure the ability to deliver;

GOAL 6: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS – Build and leverage partnerships to widen our reach and impact.

Governance

Several extremely challenging goals and targets have been identified within each of the 6 strategic goals. These will provide us with the impetus to ensure that we maintain the standards we have achieved so far, we continue the sustainable development of the sport and try to achieve the goal of Boxing being a Scottish national sport.

Equality

After much hard work, we were officially informed on 27 May 2015 that we had achieved the Preliminary level of the Equality Standard for Sport.

The Standard is owned by the 5 Sports Councils (Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland and UK) through the Sports Councils Equality Group (SCEG). The first ever equality Standard for sport was launched in November 2004. It was last updated and re-launched by SCEG in March 2012 to ensure it remained fit for purpose and reflected the latest equality legislation.

There are four standards to achieve – Foundation, Preliminary, Intermediate and Advanced.

Feedback received from assessors included:

“This is a great achievement and Boxing Scotland has shown a real commitment to putting equality high its agenda”;

“We are really impressed with the work that the organisation has done and it is progressing actions for a number of protected characteristics, all of which is aiming to widen the membership of Scottish Boxing”;

“Plans to establish an equality working group with external partners involved is a great way to monitor the action plan and identify any further needs”.



The Equality Standard A Framework for Sport

A selection of some of Boxing Scotland's Equality Work from the past season is summarised below:

1 – Work with LGBT Groups to provide opportunities within Boxing. Boxing Scotland has been involved in negotiations to arrange access to one of our affiliated clubs gyms for an LGBT group called Knockout Glasgow. One of their representatives had been dealing with LEAP Scotland who in turn referred them to Boxing Scotland.

The request was to secure premises to conduct sessions, with a Boxing Scotland registered coach, for a group of LGBT people to partake in boxing sessions

Boxing Scotland's intervention has resulted in one of our member clubs making their facility available to Knockout and it is anticipated that sessions will commence in August 2015. We hope to use this as a further example of how Boxing Scotland is working proactively with protected characteristic groups and providing equal opportunities to all.

Governance

2 – Ethnic minorities

Boxing was the only sport in Glasgow 2014 to have any athletes representing it from an ethnic minority background out of the 270 Team Scotland Athletes that competed. 20% of the Glasgow 2014 Scottish Boxing Team was from an ethnic minority background.



3 - Bespoke project with Peterhead Prison

Boxing Scotland worked in Partnership with HMP Grampian and the staff of Peterhead prison to deliver a boxing fundamentals course between August and October 2014.

The objectives of the course were to positively impact on the lives of a group of female offenders in order to improve their confidence, self-esteem and health whilst bestowing discipline in the hope that will not re-offend upon release.

Lynn & Phil Brown (Kincorth Boxing Club) and James Price (Peterhead) delivered the sessions and praised the remarkable individual and group growth that occurred as the delivery of the course progressed.

The participants enjoyed the progressive learning, they integrated well, made friendships, embraced and respected the tutors and absolutely relished the challenge put in front of them.

Our Coaches and HM Peterhead Prison staff noted how much each of the course participant's confidence grew, and how much of a positive impact the course had on their lives by way of more exercise and maintaining a more healthy nutritious diet. Furthermore, many lost significant amounts of weight with one of the group losing over two stones in the space of ten weeks.

Governance

Not only that, it was also noted how much each of the participants boxing skill sets had improved – this was shown by way of the seven punch combinations being demonstrated by the boxers during the graduation ceremony held in front of the prison's deputy Governor and representatives from Aberdeenshire social work department.

There was also great enthusiasm for all the participants to continue their physical development, with HM Peterhead Prison, and within their local boxing club when released to integrate into their respective communities. The PTI's involved in the course were also very keen to further develop their boxing knowledge and enrol on our Introduction to Coaching (ITC) course.

Quotes from some of the participants were as follows:

"I have really enjoyed this course and feel much more confident within myself. I have lost weight and I would love to join a gym upon release and continue boxing";

"The coaches and PTIs have been amazing and I will definitely continue. My confidence and fitness have improved no end";

"This has been a great thing to be involved in and I feel so much better within myself. I hate public speaking but I even managed to prepare and deliver a thank you speech today – something I couldn't have dreamt of ten weeks ago";

"I've never felt like this before other than through the use of substances".

In summary, the programme was a terrific success and clearly demonstrated the power box-ing can have in improving and positively impacting on people's lives. This is a model that we aspire to take forward and deliver all over the country in partnership with HMP and YOI so that others can benefit from such positive development and personal achievement.

4 – Boxing Scotland, Cardenden Boxing Club and Fife Police Partnership



4 – Boxing Scotland, Cardenden Boxing Club and Fife Police Partnership

Boxing Scotland worked closely with Police Scotland to deliver the Cowdenbeath Area Partners Boxing Initiative which saw ten youngsters introduced to the sport under the watchful eye of Cardenden Amateur Boxing Club members and over a period of eight weeks they trained and learned the skills of the noble art. Staff at Lochgelly and Beath High Schools, and members of the local travelling community, were also involved in devising the project which caught the imagination of the young people involved.

As a result, the initiative was nominated in the Diversionary Category at the 2014 Police Awards. A Police Scotland spokesperson said "Boxing is a sport which is held in high regard within the travelling community but it was also considered that there were a number of youths at Beath and Lochgelly High Schools who were involved in anti-social behaviour who could benefit from being involved in such an initiative."

The Cowdenbeath Area Youth Strategy Group was also involved and Cardenden Boxing Club quickly offered its support and identified two members who were accredited coaches who could assist. Boxing Scotland further assisted in delivering a coaching course for local community officers in Cardenden, along with a member of the Fife Council Learning and Development team.

Governance

Police Scotland added “We were fortunate to get funding of £1500 from the Community Safety Partnership which covered equipment, coaching and travel costs and four pupils were nominated by the High Schools along with two young members of the travelling community and they were all soon taking part in the weekly sessions at Bowhill Centre.

“Clearly when we set out we were unsure how the young people would take to the initiative but within a matter of a few weeks they showed a desire to take advice on board and take a more responsible outlook to their lifestyle.

“It definitely provided the young people with a structure to their day and helped instil selfconfidence and motivation to attend school and pro-moted a more positive environment for them.

5 – Rhys McCole – Competitive Boxer with multiple disabilities

Rhys McCole, from Greenock, suffers from six debilitating conditions including multiple holes in his heart. Yet, he has defied all the odds to win the Western District Championship.

Rhys also has autism, learning difficulties and asthma but showed incredible fighting spirit to triumph at the Western District Championships.

The 14-year-old, who is registered disabled, took on fierce competition to win gold in the 42kg 2001 Schoolboys category in Glasgow earlier this month to realise one of his dreams. The Notre Dame High pupil has been boxing since the age of 10 and has thrived in a sport which does not separate able-bodied fighters and those who suffer ill-health.

This has allowed Rhys to compete on an equal footing for the first time and the talented teen is as proud as punch. He also bounced back from defeat in his first fight to win a medal in just his second outing.



Rhys said: “It was amazing to win, especially after getting beaten in my first fight and not knowing what it’s like to win. Now to be Western District champion is brilliant.”

The youngster trains at Greenock Boxing Club and is coached by Team Scotland’s Danny Lee — Rhys’ achievements are even more remarkable given his health battles.

His full-time carer James Houten said: “Rhys has had a long, hard journey, but I couldn’t be more proud of his dedication, and his medal win is a fantastic tribute to that. From an early age, Rhys would pass the boxing club at the top of the street almost every day on his way to nursery and school, and partly because of the heightened senses that can come with autism, he was fascinated by the sounds coming out of the place. He would ask what was going on inside, but as there was no way to see, we eventually took him in at eight years old.

“Rhys asked if he could join, and they told him he would have to wait two years. He was desperate to start but waited for his chance. We discovered he had a natural talent for it. The routine and structure of the sport was perfect for helping his autism. The cardiologist at Yorkhill also advised that his heart would grow stronger and gave him the all clear.

Governance

Rhys used to be in and out of hospital all the time, but that's all changed now. What's really overwhelmed me though has been the huge support and encouragement that the other boxers and Boxing Scotland have given him. It's completely changed his life."

What's really overwhelmed me though has been the huge support and encouragement that the other boxers and Boxing Scotland have given him. It's completely changed his life."

The youngster, who lives in the Strone area of Greenock, trains five nights a week and the sport has also had a positive knock-on effect on his personal life and at school, teaching him about discipline and boosting his confidence, fitness and focus to succeed.

After tasting success for the first time, Rhys is now looking to build on that. He said: "I enjoy training and it helps quite a lot with my breathing and asthma. Boxing is a good thing to do and it keeps me busy. My target is just to do my best in every fight and see how I get on. It feels really good to be treated like everybody else — you get trained the same as everyone and they don't look at me in a different way."

Rhys' efforts have also earned him plaudits from Boxing Scotland Chairman Richard Thomas who commented: "We have been keenly monitoring Rhys' progress and have been delighted to witness the huge strides he has made, helped by the strong backing of his fellow boxers and his careful coaching in a safe, supportive environment. We are sure he will continue to have further successes while being able to enjoy the many benefits of the enhanced fitness and discipline that the sport is giving him. The innate structure of boxing has allowed Rhys to over-come significant barriers, opening up a world of possibilities to him, and it's been exciting to see. Praise must also go to all at the Greenock Boxing Club for providing Rhys with the necessary support to progress his boxing career. Head coach Danny Lee has done a fantastic job in nurturing Rhys."

Autism affects around one in every 100 people and Rhys' story has caught the eye of bosses from a leading charity who have hailed him an 'inspiration'.

Charlene Tait, development director at Scottish Autism, said: "Rhys' achievements are inspiring. Of course autism presents uniquely in every individual — while some will require intensive lifelong support, many others like Rhys can and do thrive and excel in all areas of life. Rhys' progress through boxing highlights how important it is for us all to continue to work towards removing the barriers that people with autism face when accessing everyday opportunities. That way people will have the opportunity to explore their talents and enjoy a quality of life that many of us take for granted."



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