



## JTA Annual General Meeting

### Chairpersons Report, Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

**“the secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but building the new” – Socrates (a very long time ago ...)**

When I took up the position of Chairperson for the Jersey Touch Association last year, I was expecting 2020 to be a hectic year with the membership competing for the places in the squads that would eventually challenge the other European nations at Euro's 2020 in Nottingham. How things have changed and how we have all had to adapt our lives.

The ancient philosopher, Socrates, was right and the Committee members have been busy throughout the year, focussing their energy on adapting and navigating their way through the various levels of lockdown that eventually brought all sports to a standstill. We carried on for as long as we were able, following the government guidelines, until advised that we, like all other sports, had to stop our training. Whilst frustrating, this was the right thing to do.

Eventually all competition, including the Euro's, our Mixed Touch league, the Inter-Insular and the Beach Touch event all had to be cancelled and Jersey Touch “locked down” for the whole period between March and July.

Whilst this wiped out our season, I would like to focus on what has been achieved throughout the year;

#### **Objectives & Values**

The Jersey Touch Association formally adopted our three key objectives and our values, which help define how the Touch community in Jersey expects to move forward in this modern world.

The key objectives are:

1. Provide the opportunity to play touch
2. The develop our players, coaches and referees
3. The represent the Island at international tournaments



Our values are:

1. INCLUSIVITY – promote and provide the opportunity to play to the widest number and range of people
2. TRANSPARENCY – openness, honesty, integrity and fair play.
3. UNITY – create a united touch community
4. AMBITION – compete in the European & World Championships in Men’s, Women’s and Mixed divisions
5. RESPECT ON AND OFF THE PITCH – for our players, coaches, referees, opposition, volunteers and sponsors.

### **Sponsorship**

We all know that we cannot train and compete to the extent that we would all like, unless we have the funds in place to cover essential expenses, such as, insurance, pitch hire (some with lighting), kit and of course travel and whilst the membership subscriptions help, they by no means are enough on their own. It is to this end that your Committee put together a package of sponsorship options, which were, along with the help of various other Jersey Touch members presented to a range of potential sponsors.

I am delighted to report that for the new season and subject to us being able to play and compete, our sponsors are:

- Silver sponsor worth £3,000 - Beaumont Home Centre, who will be the main sponsor for the Beach Touch event.
- Silver sponsor worth £3,000 – Rubis, who will be the main sponsor for the Inter-Insular.
- Bronze sponsor worth £1,000 – Beaumont Business Park
- Bronze sponsor worth £1,000 – Fairway Group.

We are grateful for the support of all the sponsors and this £8,000 of sponsorship will really help as we move forward to some important competitions in 2021.

The Gold sponsorship is still available and we are looking to increase the number of Bronze sponsors, so if any of the membership know of any organisation or business that is keen to get involved with Jersey Touch, then please speak to any of the Committee members and we would be delighted to discuss our sponsorship opportunities.



### **Marketing & Media Officer**

This was a new post added to the Committee last year and the Committee have been delighted that Jeremy Johnson has been so active, updating the website and Facebook page and also setting up the Instagram account @jerseytouchrugby through which, our Touch community can communicate latest news, updates and share photos etc. Please follow and share.

### **Return to Training**

In liaison with Jersey Sport we published a risk assessment and obtained authority to return to training in July. Starting with physical distanced sessions we focussed on fitness, ball skills and general game awareness, before being able to return to full training.

The advantage for Jersey Touch is that we fall under the sports where contact is considered “fleeting” and so the Sunday morning training sessions were reintroduced in September. These sessions remain limited to 40 players, however, the take up has been fantastic and I would encourage the membership to continue to book as soon as they can to avoid disappointment.

The Men’s 40s squad goes from strength to strength and now has 24 members, with a regular 16 training hard on a Tuesday evening at pitch 5 at the Rugby Club. The Men’s 40s have been joined by several players from the Mixed and Men’s squads and are very grateful for the opportunity to train and compete against our younger talent.

Members competing for places in the Men’s, Women’s and Mixed Open squads are invited to attend the new Wednesday sessions by a selection team of Kevin Hart & Jeremy Johnson. These have been running since the end of September. If any member wishes to be considered for this session, then please contact Kevin or Jeremy directly.

### **Our Coaches and Referees**

I think that the members will agree that much of what we have achieved over the last few years is down to our cohort of coaches, ably led by our Director of Coaching, Chris Veal. It is a testament to the strength of our coaching talent that so many members can step in to assist when called upon.

Arnou Helmholt-Kneisel stepped up to the plate and became the M40s coach last year and has had his work cut out balancing the sessions in a manner that allows the new M40 members to get up to speed with the game, advancing the technique and skills of the more experienced players and increasing the “lock down” fitness of almost every player.



Jeremy Johnson and Kevin Hart have been running the very successful sessions on Sunday mornings making sure that the sessions flow seamlessly between skills training and hard-nosed competition.

Throughout the season, both pre and post “lock down”, we have been very grateful for the coaching assistance of several players, namely; Dave Sharrock, Mark Knight, Simon Le Moignan and Nicole Goddard.

In respect of our referees, Geoff Nott, our Director of Referees has reported that during the season, there were no opportunities to travel to gain experience refereeing games, nor were there any referee courses to attend.

Geoff would like to thank Ruth Brooks for her support of the players with training and a couple of friendly matches arranged by the M40s squad. Ruth has officiated to a very high standard and hopes that next year she will be able to attend the level two course, a standard to which Ruth has already reached.

Next year will be an important year for Touch both locally & Internationally with the new Version of the Federation of International Touch 5<sup>th</sup> Edition rule book becoming the standard for all competition. We will be implementing these rule changes into our coaching and training soon. The Committee will determine a start date for the adoption of these rules at the next Committee meeting. Geoff will be running a level 1 course, which is expected to include the Island players that will be going to the Euro’s in Nottingham. Geoff is also hopeful that a level 2 course can be provided in due course and presented by Nick Richardson.

If any member wishes to become a coach and/or a referee during the new season, please speak with any of the Committee members.

### **Membership and Subscriptions**

Over the past few years our members have numbered 77 in 2018/19, 76 in 2019/20 and to date we have 60 members. It goes without saying that our sport relies wholly on the subscription of our members to fund the activities that we strive to make available to our members. We are extremely grateful for the sponsorship that we receive, but I cannot emphasise enough on how reliant we are on growing our membership and ultimately our finances. I would ask that all members do what they can to recruit friends, family and work colleagues to join us, whether it be to play socially, to keep fit generally, or to compete to represent the Island in one of our teams at the highest level of competition such as the Euro’s and the World Championships.



The membership fees for the new season are excellent value, especially compared with many other sports and are as follows:

- £50 for full members (over the age of 18)
- £25 for under 18s
- £3 for pitch up & play

Remember that only members can be selected for Island teams and full members over the age of 16 can vote at our Annual General Meetings and any Extraordinary General Meetings and only members over the age of 16 can join the Committee.

### **Your Committee**

One of the most important purposes of the Annual General Meeting is to appoint the officers of the Committee for the coming season. All positions on the Committee are elected each year and can be challenged and I would encourage all the members to consider themselves as potential officers.

The posts are; Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Director of Referees, Director of Coaching, League Co-ordinator, Players Representative, Development Officer and Marketing & Media Officer.

Please note that we have a vacancy for Secretary, but all other positions can also be challenged.

### **Thank you**

Finally, I would like to thank the Committee, on behalf of the members for all their hard work, in what has been quite a trying time for everyone. We all like training, playing and competing, but none of what we have achieved would have been possible without the commitment, drive and enthusiasm of your Committee, who have all stepped up to the mark in support of me as Chairperson and you as members, so that we, as the Jersey Touch community have been able to keep things going as best we can.

**“You either win, or you learn. Either way just enjoy Jersey Touch”**