



Scottish Touch Association The 2011/12 Scotland National Squad Selection Process

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to detail clearly to players, selectors, coaches and other interested parties the selection process for the Scotland National Squad for the 2012 European Championships.

This document applies to the 2011/12 national squad training cycle, which begins in October 2011 and finishes at the end of the 2012 European Championships.

As a matter of course, the selection process will be reviewed and updated for each future training cycle and international tournament.

This document should be read in conjunction with the current *Selection policy for the national squad*, which details the objectives and framework of selection, as well as other matters.

Other key documents are: *The Scotland National Touch Squad Player Agreement* and *Code of Conduct*, which details the behaviours and actions required of national squad players.

Objectives

This process is based on the following objectives for the national squad:

To select players to form teams to achieve the best possible results at the 2012 European Championships.

To use an open and fair selection process that gives players a fair chance to challenge for international selection.

Landmark dates

L1: 3 September 2011: Scottish National Touch Championships

L2: 18 September 2011: Open Trial

L3: 20 September 2011: Invitations to players to join specific national training squads

L4: 15/16 October 2011: First national training weekend

L5: 17/18 March 2012: National training, trials and initial selection. Preliminary teams drafted

L6: 31 March/1 April 2012: National training, trials and final selection

L7: 05 April 2010: Final teams announced

L8: Sept 2012: European Championships, Italy

Selection process

3 September and 18 September:

The Scottish National Touch Championships and the Open Trial will be used to observe all players who have indicated a desire to be selected for Scotland.

20 September:

Invitations sent to players to join national training squad. Those invited will include players identified from the SNTC, Open Trial, STS and regional leagues.

15/16 October:

First national squad session. All players to sign player agreement, pay training deposit and place kit orders.

NSMC and NSCD will explain training priorities, the selection process, the training cycle outline and any other matters. Players will be asked their preferences for selection. Please note that the selection panel will decide how much weight to give players' preferences.

17/18 March:

National training and trials games.

The selection teams draft preliminary squads for discussion among the selection teams and selection panel. These preliminary teams will not be made public.

31 March/1 April

National training and trials games.

Selection teams will finalise the teams. During this process, the selection panel will have the right to approach individual players to discuss selection issues with them and to ask and answer questions with those players.

The final teams will be announced by email and on the STA website by no later than 3pm Thursday 05 April.

National squad structure

The final 2012 national squad will be made up of the following teams. It is anticipated that each team will have 16 players plus up to 2 shadows (up to 4 shadows in Mixed teams):

Men's Open (MO)

Women's Open (WO)

Mixed Open (XO)

Men's 30s (M30)*

Women's 30s (W30)*

Men's 35s (M35/40)*

Senior Mixed (SMX)*

*All Senior teams are subject to change, depending on numbers interested/selected and the decision of the NSMC/NSCD

For 2011/12, all Open teams will be prioritised equally within the Open division. Open teams shall be prioritised before Senior teams, and the M30 will be prioritised before M35/M40.

Selection and assessment criteria:

Selection of the final teams will be based on two principles:

- assessment of players as individuals, as per the individual criteria below
- consideration of the final make-up of teams, as per to the team criteria below.

Players will receive assessment and feedback throughout regional and national sessions, and can also request feedback from coaches.

Individual criteria

In considering players as individuals, selectors will assess the following areas: individual skills; team skills; fitness; vision and decision-making; communication; mental strength; and performance-oriented behaviour.

Individual physical skills:

Attack skills: passing, catching, dumping, scooping, diving, sidestepping, swerving, scoring, support running.

Defence skills: making the touch, body position, balance and weight distribution, ability to quickly get back onside.

Team skills:

Positional awareness: correct positioning in attack and defence, rarely caught out of position, awareness of team-mates' and opponents' positioning, support running and use of support runners, gets back into position without disrupting others.

Sub-unit skills: driving, switches, wraps, buddies and quickies, switch defence, wrap defence.

Team skills: ability to interact with team-mates, knowledge and application of attack patterns/policies/moves/game plan, knowledge of rules, maximises strengths and

minimises weaknesses, cohesive and adaptable, ability to both lead and/or to follow, unselfish, positive attitude to referees/officials; encouraging and supportive.

Defence skills: knowledge and application of defence policies, commitment, stays calm under pressure, communication, reads attacking play.

Response to instructions: ability to carry out a game plan, ability to carry out instructions from coach/captain/team-mates.

Fitness:

Evidence of adequate and improving levels of fitness, speed, power and strength.

On-field: ability to maintain physical and mental performance over a game and/or tournament with minimal visible fatigue, high work-rate in games, quick recovery, consistently error-free, contributes on both attack and defence.

Vision and decision-making:

Vision: sees what is happening/read the game, evidence of peripheral vision and knowledge of positioning of team-mates and opposition, reads tactical play and trends in a game, sees things early, reacts quickly, good understanding of team-mates' and oppositions' strengths and weaknesses.

Decision-making: ability to select the right option in attack and defence that will benefit the team, decisive and acts/reacts quickly, confident in taking options, takes responsibility, reacts quickly to assist a team-mate's decision, does not rely unduly on others for direction.

Communication:

Communication: talks positively and effectively for the benefit of team, clarity and precision of communication, clear and audible communication in defence, vocal but not distracting, assists others to see problems and opportunities, encouraging and supportive and positive towards team-mates, influences game via communication.

Mental skills:

Mental toughness: performs tasks well while under stress and pressure, repeats training field form and skill in match situations, brushes off errors and/or poor decisions and remains focussed, reacts positively to setbacks (opposition scoring, injury etc), is highly motivated and able to maintain that, steps up in big games.

Discipline: respectful of officials and opposition, remains disciplined and focussed following refereeing decisions, supportive and encouraging of team-mates in difficult situations, reacts positively and encouragingly following mistakes, remains calm in face of provocation and/or intimidation, commitment to maintaining high personal standards in any situation, helps team-mates to keep discipline.

Performance-oriented behaviour:

Personal preparation: committed to proper and adequate personal training, follows appropriate nutrition and hydration habits, has an appropriate sport-life balance, manages injuries and illnesses effectively, plans for potential sport-life clashes, reviews team and squad resources about tactics/techniques/game plans etc.

Training session behaviour: punctual and appropriately prepared for training, trains to achieve the best results for player and team, behaviour helps team effectiveness and harmony and does not hinder these, high work-rate and motivation and attention.

Self-improvement: seeks to understand own strengths and weaknesses, seeks advice on practical ways to address weaknesses and to maximise strengths, researches and asks questions, open and receptive to feedback and advice, shows commitment to improving self as a player and an athlete.

Team selection criteria

When considering the formation of specific teams, selectors will cover the following areas: the balance of a team; skill mix within a team; combinations; ability of players to play in more than one position; and national squad strategy.

Team balance:

The number of players in each position, physical attributes for different positions, balance of utility players and specialists, balance of leaders and followers.

Skill mix:

Mix of playmakers and workhorses, mix of strong attackers and strong defenders and leaders in both areas, mix of attacking strengths such as strong passers and scoopers and steppers and finishers.

Combinations:

Potential for particular players to form attacking or defensive subgroups, existing effective combinations of players.

Covering positions:

Coach's strategy of utilities vs specialists, players who can cover mid-link, players who can cover link-wing, injury cover or potential tactical changes.

National squad strategy:

How many teams are being selected and in which divisions, which divisions are being targeted for medals, which divisions are targeted for development.

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