



Scottish Touch Association Selection policy for the national squad

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to describe clearly to players, selectors, coaches and other interested parties the selection policy for the 2014 European Championships.

This document should be read in conjunction with the current *STA Selection Process*, which sets out key dates, as well as details of what will happen at each of those landmark points.

Eligibility

To be eligible to represent Scotland, a player must meet the FIT eligibility criteria. These can be found on the [FIT website](#).

In addition to meeting FIT criteria, players must meet the following STA criteria:

- The player must be a financial member of the STA through affiliation with a Scottish regional touch association.
- All players are expected to attend all national training sessions for which they are selected as a player or train-on player.
- Players not resident in Scotland are to discuss their attendance at training ahead of time. Please note there will be a strong expectation of attendance, and we will address each player's case individually.
- Player must sign and agree to terms of the 2013/14 national squad player agreement at the first opportunity.
- Players need to be at zero financial balance with the NSMC or have previously agreed an arrangement for their outstanding balance.

The STA is able to apply for an exemption for a player that does not meet these criteria.

The decision to make an application for an exemption will be at the discretion of the NSMC. However, the decision whether to grant the exemption is at the discretion of ETF/FIT and outwith the control of the STA.

A player must not be ineligible to compete at FIT championships due to failure to comply with the FIT Anti-Doping Policy.

Selection Framework

Touch is a team sport, with teams made up of individuals. In this context, selection must cover both the individual and the team. Whilst an individual can do a great deal to develop their own skills, knowledge and fitness, ultimately that individual player has to be able to perform within a team.

The selection process aims to offer players the chance to develop themselves both as individual players and as team players. It aims to recognise individuals' skill levels, knowledge, fitness and other individual factors.

However, in selecting for a team sport, factors such as skill mix within a team, combinations, the balance of a team and the ability of players to play in more than one position, are also considered alongside individual factors.

Selection strategy stems from the national squad strategy, which is set jointly by the National Squad Management Committee, the National Squad Coaching Director and in line with the STA National Development Plan, prior to the training cycle.

Talent Identification

For the next training cycle and selection process there will be **no automatic invitations to join the Scotland National Training Squad**. Instead players will be assessed during the following events:

- The Scottish National Touch Championships on 17th August 2013 in Perth
- An Open trial event to be held on 7th September 2013 (venue to be confirmed)

The National Squad Selection Panel may also invite players who have been identified by other means including, but not limited to, the current season's Scottish Touch Series (STS) and the current season's international events. The decision to invite a player into the national training squad is open to discussion with the NSCD and NSMC and analysis of and reasons for including a player who has not previously represented Scotland should be recorded in a written form that is accessible to all members of the selection panel.

Acceptance into the training squad will depend on a player responding to the invitation, signing and agreeing to the terms of the player agreement and paying their training deposit.

Selection Process

At the start of each season the *Scotland National Squad Selection Process* will detail the process.

A high level outline of the process is as follows:

- Players join the training squad in September and are placed in a specific training squad.
- Players receive feedback and advice about their strengths and development needs
- Training and assessing will be repeated at regular intervals through the winter. Feedback and suggested remedial action continues during this time.
- Playing squads will be selected approximately four months before the major international tournament.

Selection will be based on a publicised set of criteria, detailed in the selection process document. These cover areas such as individual touch skills, team skill, athletic performance and mental skills.

Selection for each training squad will be determined by a selection team for that squad, and that selection team reports to the selection panel. Each selection team is responsible for drafting preliminary teams and giving a strong recommendation on the final selection of that particular squad. The national selection panel is expected to look favourably upon and act on that recommendation.

The selection panel will communicate the final playing squad selections to players via e-mail and the STA website.

Prior to this announcement, the STA will contact and inform those players who:

- Are being invited as train-ons
- Are being selected for the first time

Post-selection issues

Discipline and player conduct

All players are expected to comply with the behaviours and actions outlined in the *Scotland National Squad Player Agreement* and the *Code of Conduct*. Acceptance into both the training squad and the final squad involved reading and signing this agreement.

The NSMC reserves the right to suspend or expel players from the squad for disciplinary reasons. Any player who is expelled can appeal that decision and must do so in writing to the NSMC within 14 days of receiving written notification of their expulsion. The NSMC, NSCD and player's team coach will review the decision and reply in writing within 14 days of receiving the review request.

A suspension or expulsion from the squad for disciplinary reasons will be considered in any future possible selection for the national squad.

Appointment of team captains and vice-captains

The appointment of team captains and vice- captains is a matter for the coaches of each team.

Movement between teams

Movement of players between different teams within the Scotland squads will be allowed at any time as a reaction to circumstances or for reasons of team balance and competitive advantage.

Outwith the main team selection process any decision to move a player must be agreed by all parties concerned: the player, both team coaches, the NSCD and the NSMC.

Withdrawal from the squad

Players have the right to withdraw from playing for the squad. If a player intends withdrawing from the squad, they should do so at the earliest possibly opportunity so as to minimise disruption to their squad.

When withdrawing from the squad, the player must inform their coach, the NSCD and the NSMC in writing. The NSMC must reply to the player, confirming their withdrawal, within 14 days. This correspondence will be confidential.

If the reasons for withdrawal are deemed to be private and sensitive and the player does not wish to detail this in writing, they can request to discuss this with their coach and for their coach to act as their advocate to the NSMC before the coach approaches the NSMC.

All withdrawals will be considered final. In some circumstances, withdrawal from the current year's squad may be considered in any future possible selection to

the national squad. Any further involvement with the squad in a non-playing support capacity such as coaching, team manager etc is at the discretion of the team coach and the NSMC, and must be agreed to as soon as possible after the player's withdrawal.

Train-ons

Players who miss out on selection to a final team may be invited to join a team as a train-on. Such players will train with their team as cover for the potential loss of a selected player.

A train-on will only be brought into the final side to replace the loss of a selected player and not in any other circumstances. This may happen at any point up to the registration of final teams at the event (usually a few days prior to the tournament starting).

The decision to bring a train-on into the side to replace the loss of a player is at the discretion of the team coach. It should be based on which positions and players the train-on would be covering and the decision is open to question by the NSCD and the NSMC.

A train-on who is not brought into the final squad ahead of the tournament but decides to attend the event anyway will not be given the opportunity to play during the tournament.

Overseas travel and extended absence from training

A player who is selected into the national training squad who then intends travelling or being absent from training for an extended period of time must discuss this with the NSMC and NSCD.

Such a player may keep their place in the squad but will be expected to meet a number of requirements. The player and the NSMC/NSCD will jointly decide on a number of agreements covering areas such as how the player will meet their training requirements (both S&C and skills), communication, regular updates on their training record and performance, testing, injury updates and management, and other issues that arise.

Injuries and medical matters

Players are expected to inform their coach of any injury or medical matter that could have a bearing on their ability to train or compete. Similarly, if during training they are injured or fall sick, they are expected to tell their coach. Coaches are expected to treat such discussions with the appropriate discretion and sensitivity.

In the case of a return to training from injury or illness, consent from the player's own physio or doctor may be enough for them to resume training. The player's team coach may request that this consent is provided in writing.

However, their coach or the NSCD can request they undergo a fitness test, and their return to active training may depend on passing the test.

A player injured at the tournament will be assessed by the squad physios and their continued participation will be agreed between the physios, the player and the player's team coach.