

# EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF TOUCH

*Monthly newsletter for all touch players, referees and coaches*



**P.2** A Resolution a Month for 2018

**P.4** The Final Countdown

**P.5** Shanghai Calling

**P.6** New Faces at the EFT

**P.7** Country Spotlight - Italy

**P.8** Caption Competition + International Rankings

## WHAT'S COMING UP?

**24 Feb 18** - 2nd Torneo Touch, Gran Canaria

**24 Feb 18** - 9th Annual Manchester Touch Championships, Manchester

**14 April** - Brussels Men's and Women's Open Tournament, Brussels

**21 April** - Touch 'N Tulips, Amsterdam

**28 April** - Barcelona International Touch, Barcelona

**26 May** - Alpin Touch, Digne Les Bains

## FOREWORD

*By Ben Powell, EFT President*

Hi everyone,

We hope you enjoyed the first EFT newsletter, and can now look forward to this regular update appearing in inboxes, and on EFT social media channels every month.

This second edition has a lot of exciting developments – including the latest EFT appointments and what's going on to prepare for this year's biggest EFT tournament – ETC 2018!

Enjoy reading, and as always, send any ideas you want to write about or share to [marketing@toucheurope.org](mailto:marketing@toucheurope.org).



## A RESOLUTION A MONTH FOR 2018.....

There's a reason why January is a good time to make New Year's resolutions – it's the start of a new year, it follows a period of festive fun, often slight(!) over indulgence, and is generally a time when people look to make the changes they want to see over the next twelve months. **Ben Powell, EFT President**

And then there are the remaining 11 months. If you're anything like me, January's good intentions can become harder to stick to in February, and are often thrown completely out of the window by March!

So what about making one resolution a month? Accumulation might help preserve at least some of my good intentions at the start of the year.....or so I'm telling myself.

I can't claim this idea for myself, however. I was reading an article about creating a resolution a month for the World Economic Forum, when it struck me that making one resolution a month could also apply to the world of touch. So here goes....

**January:** it's all about **communication**. Since taking on the role of President, the power of communication has been brought back home to me several times. Change and improvement lose meaning and impact if not communicated about. That's why focusing on communication is my resolution to kick start the year.

**February:** as the winter starts to wear off, it's a good time to look ahead to **goals**.

As cited on the FIT website, "Touch is a thrilling sport that allows people of all walks of life to achieve their goals; whether that is the thrill of challenging oneself to compete at their best, the thrill of a fast, skilful and exhilarating sport, the thrill of meeting new people or the thrill of being a part of something that can span a lifetime."

**March:** March should be a month of **opportunity**. As the touch season opens up, this brings the opportunity to travel for touch, meet new players, achieve new coaching or referee qualifications and introduce new players to the sport.



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**April: development** – this is what Touch is all about. Whether it's your skills as a referee, coach or player, touch can help develop skills across the board.

**May: team work** is a must have, and something that Touch is certainly not short of. This goes beyond the teams on the pitch – it's all of the support that players, teams, NTAs and the EFT receive from those people behind the scenes.

**June:** the more time I've spent playing touch, the more I've realised how important it is that the **inclusive** nature of the sport is promoted. Age, gender and experience – none of them will disqualify you from playing. That's pretty impressive for an international sport.

**July:** my resolution for July is one of the cornerstones of Touch – **fair play**. Enough said.

**August:** with the ETC2018 now behind us, August is the time to take your foot off the brake and have **fun** without the pressure of serious competition. So relax, and enjoy the social side!

"My resolution for July is one of the cornerstones of Touch – **fair play**. Enough said."

**September:** back to school – literally for some – which reminds me of the importance that **youth** bring to Touch. As the next generation of players, it's so important that we all work to encourage younger players to take up and join the sport. The work led by the JTC has been vital in that respect, and the new referee academy will help take the game to a higher standard across Europe.

**October:** as the autumn draws in, it's easy to see how the season for many sports also comes to an end. Not for touch though, as we all love the all-year-round, come-rain-or-shine nature of our sport..... On a more serious note, **leadership** throughout the winter months is as important to keeping the sport alive as it is throughout the summer months – hence my resolution for October.

**November:** as we approach the end of another year (where has the time gone?), it's important to keep on **looking forward** as we take the sport to the next level in 2019 and beyond.

**December:** I've saved this one until last because it's pretty special, and arguably the most important – **respect**. Touch and the wider rugby game are the leading international sports when it comes to respect – for players, referees and the game in general. That's definitely something to be proud of and always strive for.



# EUROPEAN TOUCH CHAMPIONSHIPS

## NOTTINGHAM ★ ENGLAND

## IT'S THE FINAL COUNTDOWN....

...well not just yet, but ETC 2018 is definitely getting closer! With less than six months to go, we wanted to provide an insight into what to expect from this year's flagship tournament.

**What?** European Touch Championships 2018

**When?** Tuesday 17th July – Saturday 21st July

**Where?** Nottingham, UK.

*Fun fact: Nottingham is home to the oldest pub in the UK, called "Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem". Open to players only after the 21st July.... ;)*

Last held in Nottingham 20 years ago, the ETC2018 will be held at the University of Nottingham's Highfields pitches – complete with viewing pavilion and spectator village. The opening of the tournament will take place in the prestigious Wollaton Hall, and the location of the after party will be revealed in due course....

Initial expressions of interest have shown a promisingly high level of participation. With 46 teams confirming a 100% chance of entry, and 33 teams confirming a 75% chance of entry, ETC2018 is shaping up to be the biggest tournament yet.

The fun and excitement will kick off on Tuesday, 17th July with the Captain's Dinner at 18.00, followed by the opening ceremony at 20.00.

The next three days will see pool games take place, before seeding games and the action-packed finals decide who will be crowned this year's European Champions!



# SHANGHAI CALLING

EFT President, Ben Powell, visits Shanghai for the 2017 FIT AGM and Shanghai International Touch Tournament



In October 2017, I had the pleasure of attending the FIT Annual General Meeting to represent the European Federation of Touch. Whilst a quick trip, I was fortunate enough to sit down with FIT, TFA, TNZ and other major NTA's within Asia and discuss some significant topics within our fast growing sport. In particular, excellent progress was made in pushing towards a global calendar and global awareness of what is occurring within Europe so we can plan on a much larger scale for long-term success.



What was very evident through the meetings and the AGM was the brilliant work that NTA's within Europe and the rest of the world are doing, but also the importance of ensuring we work together as much as possible to achieve our universal goal of getting more individuals involved in Touch! The EFT were in a position to reflect on the experiences of our NTA's and offer advice and assistance where necessary to assist other NTA's in their development and progression.

After the AGM and meetings, I was able to pull on my touch boots and play in the Shanghai International Touch tournament. There was not time for rest or jetlag as I pulled on a number of different shirts throughout the day – after seventeen 20-minute games and 3 different finals, it was safe to say that I slept well on my flight back to Europe. What never fails to amaze me is the universality of a touch tournament – this tournament was full of enthusiasm, plenty of player referees and an excellent after party – just like Europe! Touch in China is booming and it is very clear that they are going to be a force to be reckoned with at the 2019 Touch World Cup.

The hospitality of the China Touch Association and the Federation of International Touch was outstanding – it was an extremely valuable experience to be present in China for the 3 days, with some significant networking and progress made.



# NEW FACES AT THE EFT

2018 has got off to a dynamic start for the EFT, with several new Commission appointments made. Referees, Women, Youth and Coaching all have new hands at the helm, in the form of the talented people below. Thank you to everyone who applied – it's been great to see volunteers stepping up to help give something back to the sport.

Before that, however, there's one highly dedicated and driven individual who is stepping down as Chair of the Referee Commission – Derek Fisher. It is obvious to many of us who are involved with the EFT that Derek has taken referee development across Europe to the next level – earning international respect and inspiring a new generation of referees. We've said it before but we'll say it again – thank you Derek for all of your hard work!

Now it's time to meet the new faces taking over the reins:

## **Peter Faassen De Heer - Referee Commission Chair**

Peter has refereed for 14 years and played at open & senior Touch for Scotland, is a level 5 senior black badge & holds referee and player coaching qualifications. He is perhaps best known for co-writing the 4th edition rules of Touch. He continues to enjoy the sport at all levels: playing for Superhands in Edinburgh, officiating at local, national & international events & supporting referees through course presentations and developing the next generation of referee coaches.



## **Lok Man Ho - Coaching Commission Chair**

Lok Man Ho lived in Hong Kong and Australia before moving to Munich in 2005 to further his career in automotive engineering. He represented Germany as a player in international touch championships from 2007 to 2013, and began coaching at a university touch course in 2009. Since then he has coached the Touch München club and German representative teams. Currently he is acting as the coaching coordinator at Touch Deutschland, and is a member of the newly formed EFT coaching commission.

## **Marnie Wills - Youth Commission Chair**

As a current England Touch Women's Open player and England Junior Girls coach I'm very much looking forward to sharing my passion, knowledge and experience of Touch with the wider Europe Touch community. I could not be more excited to be working with the EFT to deliver the junior growth strategy for 2018.



## **Gary Lambert - Women's Commission Co-Chair**

I am honoured to have been appointed and am excited to be working alongside Lani to develop and drive the European Women's Commission; not just for the benefit of the Women's Game but the sport as a whole.

Along with my Professional and Sporting passion for coaching, mentoring and training I have chaired National Surgical Training Committees, formed and coached University Women's Rugby teams, graduated from the England Rugby Leadership academy and helped plan and deliver the Pan Birmingham Rugby World Cup Legacy. More recently my drive to develop the Women's Game has involved helping to lead the campaign for FIT to retain recognition of the Women's Seniors Divisions W27s in the interests of the sport's ongoing development and most importantly the players.

## **Lani Baird - Women's Commission Co-Chair**

Lani Baird is currently a Level 3 referee, Level 1 referee coach/presenter and is a Non-Executive Director on the Scottish Touch Association Board. While studying at College and University, she has spent the last 8 1/2 years involved with the National Union of Students Scotland and UK.

During this time she has held various volunteer positions while sitting on various committees. Her experience has given her skills around policy creation and development, campaign creation and management, membership engagement and research.



# COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT

Each month, the spotlight will be shed on a different EFT member country for national insights and to open up the world of touch.

**Who?** Italia Touch (IT)

**President:** Stefano Emmi

**Number of clubs:** 25



**Insight:** Since the 2012 European Championship in Treviso, Italia Touch (IT) has improved its internal organization and structure significantly. IT has increased the number of teams across the country, 80% of which are located in the North, and 20% in central Italy.

IT has worked hard to allow the clubs the opportunity to improve their way of playing. There are currently 25 teams in the Italian championship, which is played across a series of tournaments throughout the year and results in an overall final ranking – in a similar style to tennis and golf championships. Furthermore, both international teams and prospective clubs, are welcome to participate in IT tournaments.

There are still challenges with the development of the sport. The Italian system is not conducive to helping the touch movement spread and grow: it does not encourage the development of sport with children and teenagers in schools and touch is not seen as a prominent sport nationally.

In order to change this, IT has been trying to work out an agreement with the Italian Rugby Federation (FIR), and Touch has been recognised by the CONI (Italian National Olympic Committee).

IT is also aiming to collaborate with an institution for the promotion of sports in order to spread our sport in Southern Italy and the islands.

For these reasons, every EFT team is more than welcome to participate in our tournaments! Our sunny country is waiting for you!



# CAPTION COMPETITION!

*Send your entries to [marketing@toucheurope.org](mailto:marketing@toucheurope.org) by February 25th*



## INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS

*Monthly updates published on the FIT website*

### RANKINGS

*As of October 2017*

Mixed Open	Men's Open	Women's Open
1. Australia	1. Australia	1. Australia
2. New Zealand	2. New Zealand	2. New Zealand
3. Scotland	3. South Africa	3. South Africa
4. Papua New Guinea	4. England	4. England
5. England	5. Papua New Guinea	5. Japan
6. Samoa	6. Japan	6. Singapore
7. Japan	7. Fiji	7. France
8. South Africa	8. Cook Islands	8. Wales
9. Philippines	9. Wales	9. Papua New Guinea
10. France	10. France	10. Scotland

### CONTACT

*If you want to contribute to the next edition of the EFT newsletter, pop us an email at:*

*[marketing@toucheurope.org](mailto:marketing@toucheurope.org)*