



# TTE Competition Review Update: Phase 1

June 2022



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# Timeline – a reminder of where we are at

	Process	Detail	Timeframe
Phase 1	✓ Mapping	Identify all event details on common template to provide global map of competitive opportunity + participation data/ trends	Spring '21
	✓ Insight1	<u>External</u> : research exercise with benchmark NGB and TTAs	Late Spring '21
	✓ Consultation	Open membership consultation, inc. specific targeted questions	Oct-Nov '21
	✓ Insight2	<u>Internal</u> : insight interviews and forums	
	✓ Analysis	Analysis of consultation feedback	Dec '21 – April '22
	✓ Decision1	<b>Update to Board inc. key principles and agreement to proceed</b>	<b>May '22</b>
Phase 2	<b>Update</b>	<b>MAG and National Council on key principles</b>	June – Aug '22
	<b>Modelling</b>	Outline modelling of future events and overall programme	
	<b>Decision2</b>	Outline proposal to Board for in-principle agreement; principles to filter into scheduling/ arrangements for '23/24 season	08 Sept '22
3	<b>Development</b>	Detailed development of events and overall programme	Sept – Nov '22
	<b>Decision3</b>	Full agreement by Board	Target: Xmas meeting
4	<b>Implement1</b>	Phased/ partial implementation	Late season '22/23 & season '23/24
5	<b>Implement2</b>	Full implementation	Season '24/25

*pls refer to [consultation document](#) for detailed actions/ timeline and for mapping/ insight data*



# Overview of Consultation

1. Open consultation
2. Insight interviews & Forums



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# Who completed the survey?

## Survey

An online survey, which on average took about 5 minutes to complete, was developed on SurveyMonkey. The survey launched on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October and was open for 5 weeks.

## Audience

The survey link, and supporting documentation, was shared with the wider table tennis community through various communications including Over The Net. Social channels were used to target non-members.

## Analysis

**385** completed responses to the survey were received.

*Executive Summary of consultation outcomes follows – analysis slides will be made available separately for anyone that wants to look at a greater level of detail*

# Executive summary – players

- Self-improvement and competition opportunity are the top two motivations for players to enter competitions (slide 9 on analysis)
- Players are not generally motivated by prize money (42% of players are 'not at all' motivated by prize money, and only 6% are 'extremely' motivated by prize money) (slide 9)
- A player's decision to enter competitions is most significantly impacted by the number of matches (slide 12)
- Improving the quality of competition experiences should remain the focus to effectively change perceptions of value for money (slides 10-12)

# Executive summary – existing structure

- British League is the most valued event, followed by our National Championships (slides 16 & 17 on analysis)
- English League Cup Competitions are the least valued event, followed by the Inter-Regional Championships (slides 16 & 17)
- Respondents are generally satisfied with the current frequency of competitions (slide 18)
- More appropriate opportunities are needed for women and girls (slide 20)
- Straight knockouts are not valued as an event format – formats with more guaranteed games are significantly preferred (slide 21)
- The preferred number of matches per day is 7-9 – and the majority believe a competition day should run for about 8 hours (slide 22)
- The balance between tournament and league opportunities is considered 'About right' by respondents (slide 23)

# Executive summary – looking ahead

- On balance, there is support for periodising the calendar (slide 24 on analysis)
- There is broad support for restricting tournament entry to male events (eg higher-ranked players at lower-tiered events, and vice-versa) (slide 25)
- 43% of all respondents agree that we should consider aligning player eligibility and membership affiliation to a calendar year – only 19% selected ‘No’ (slide 26)
- It was felt strongly among respondents that clubs are seen as the primary vehicle for development and delivery (slide 28)
- Over half (52%) of all respondents consider online access and visibility of fixtures, results, league tables and player statistics ‘Extremely important’ (slide 30)
- Consensus suggests that 10 to 15 national events each season is suitable for Cadets and over (slide 31)
- It is felt that more mixed gender events are needed across all age groups, with more events for U11s (slide 32) and for U21/U23s (slide 33)
- More local opportunities would inspire a greater interest in competitions (slide 38)
- There is a clear need to improve the marketing of competition opportunities (slide 38)



# Insight interviews & forums

1. Graham Frankel
  2. Stuart Sherlock
  3. Simon Price
  4. Colin Wilson
  5. Dan Ives
  6. Steve Smith
  7. David Maddison
  8. Harvey Webb
  9. John Mackey
  10. Mike Atkinson
  11. Kevin Buddell & Paul Whiting
  12. Raj Patel
  13. Chris Newton & Martin Ireland
  14. Alan Ransome
  15. Richard Scruton
1. TTE Members Advisory Group
  2. TTE National Councillors
  3. TTE Schools Committee
  4. TTE Technical Officials Committee (TOC)
  5. Talent & Performance forum
  6. BPTT forum
  7. O18 Players forum
  8. U18 Players/ Parents forum

# Results:

1. Robust and representative quantitative and qualitative data from the online consultation – analysed and broken down by role/ gender/ age/ engagement etc – specific answers to specific questions; 50+ analysis slides produced
2. Detailed commentary responses from open consultation questions
3. Informed insight from expert individuals, stakeholders, representative groups and committees
  - Strong opinions and desire for TTE to drive real change in this area – sometimes fundamentally opposed!
  - A large amount of reflection and proposals on operational detail, which will be fed to event committees/ Development team/ Technical Officials Committee/ Membership/ Safeguarding/ MarComms etc
  - ... but also a number of very strong common themes clearly emerging
  - This enables us to identify a **vision** and distil a set of **principles**

*“TTE need to be willing to make tough decisions”*

*“Grasp the nettle!”*



# Overview of Key Principles

Feedback/ analysis > Project Team > Steering Group > agreed by TTE Board



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# Vision – what should the competition programme provide:

- Pathway for new players to elite play
- Experiential development to prepare players for international events
- Participation opportunities
- Support club development
- Support inclusion & diversity objectives (inc. W&G as priority)
- Provide positive experience for participants, and positive advert for table tennis & wider TTE activity

*“Must focus on performance of younger players and help them get better”*

*... plus increased capacity for TTE delivery to encompass ITTF/ WTT hosting in order to meet wider strategic aims*

# Principles 1 of 4 – *structure*:

- a) To consist of three strands: i) invitational national champs/ cups/ series, ii) tiered open tournaments, iii) national leagues, plus schools as discrete strand
- b) TTE to structure and regulate more, deliver less = closed national championship/cup/ series events which support pathway by TTE + open participation-level events by others
- c) Introduce and regulate periodised calendar, with specific dates for competition and tiered tournaments
- d) Lower-tier tournaments concurrent at local level, mid-tier tournaments concurrent at regional/zonal level, higher-tier tournaments standalone at national level
- e) Clubs to apply for events/ dates, which are apportioned centrally to maximise appropriate geographical spread

*“TTE should be more of an enabler than a deliverer”*

*“Logic and value to periodisation and application route”*

*“TTE is brilliant at inventing new events – terrible at getting rid of old ones!”*

*“Whole structure should be simpler and more easily understood”*

# Principles 2 of 4 – *audience*:

- a) Critical focus for national tournaments should be Cadet and Junior, with intro of regional series from U11/ U13
- b) Introduce more U21/ U23 opportunities to bridge Junior-Senior transition and reduce dropout
- c) Make lower-level open events easier to access (eg non-licensed, non-ranking) + more affordable (fewer umpiring requirements); flexible and innovative formats
- d) Restrict entry to highest-tier tournaments by lower-ranked players, and lowest-tier events by higher-ranked players, to avoid total mismatches (nb. less restrictive parameters for W&G events)
- e) Offer Para categories at all core age-groups at National Champs (with support from BPTT) + support inclusive options & adaptive rules at open tournaments
- f) Engender W&G participation via dedicated events and mixed gender opportunities

*“More U11 competition required at regional level before step-up to national”*

*“Focus on youth in order to flourish”*

*“Agree with principles of restricting entry to create upward pressure”*

*“Too ‘official’ at lower levels”*

# Principles 3 of 4 – *event formats*:

- a) Use clubs where possible = mix of smaller/ geographical spread of activity + larger national events across each demographic/ age-group/ performance level
- b) Larger group stages before KOs/ Consolation wherever possible in KO phase/ Progressive KO + RR also enjoyed
- c) Fixed timings for tournament rounds a significant enabler
- d) Increase frequency of competition opportunities in key national leagues (eg JBL)
- e) Recognition should be made in national league events of ‘proper clubs’ in order to support club development
- f) Doubles formats included in national age-group events relative to pathway value

*“Strong clubs are essential [...] National Leagues should support club development”*

*“Need to balance formats that take place in local clubs with those that take place in central/ mass format”*

*“JBL and Nat Cup are best events on calendar = certainty of games & timing is fixed”*

*“Larger groups + smaller KOs = more guaranteed games and less umpires needed”*

# Principles 4 of 4 – *key enablers*:

- a) Maintain qualifying opportunity to National Champs (eg from tiered open tournaments)
- b) Must create environment for top-tier open tournaments to attract best players (inc from overseas) – eg 2 or 3 focus events
- c) Reduce boundaries and distinctions between stakeholders (counties, regions, clubs, leagues) – same approach/ opportunities for all, and removes competing demands on players whilst giving clarity on playing options
- d) Rebrand for simplicity, consistency and in plain-English – e.g. tiered tournaments as ‘local/ regional/ national opens’, national leagues under one umbrella
- e) Appropriate strategy and pathway for officials
- f) Greater technological support helpful (eg online entry, IT-based results/ management)
- g) Active club links essential for schools
- h) Appropriate marketing and promotion for competitions and events

*“Too many stakeholder groups in events (regions, counties, ELCC) – make simpler”*

*“Not just about the best England players competing – about the best players full-stop!”*

*“key issue is engaging players in schools programmes with wider opportunities”*

*“Lack of referees is critical - more so than umpires”*



# Checklist (from project brief) – does this give appropriate foundations to:

- ✓ Reduce current levels of ‘calendar congestion’ and unsustainable burden on available officials, whilst identifying appropriate space in the calendar for events and performance squad commitments
- ✓ Engender a more sustainable delivery approach; reduce financial cost to Table Tennis England and external organisers, and provide Value for Money for players
- ✓ Facilitate opportunity for more creative and innovative external/ sanctioned event formats
- ✓ Provide greater quality assurance of external/ sanctioned events
- ✓ Encourage a more equal geographical spread of tournaments
- ✓ Create ‘upward pressure’ through a pathway of tournament events (must balance with #2)
- ✓ Prepare talented athletes experientially for international competition
- ✓ Deliver greater opportunity to identified gaps in TTE demographic, including Women & Girls, and accessible integrated competition for athletes with disabilities
- ✓ Consider extent of future integration of schools events into core structures
- ✓ Assess the relative benefit of existing programme events
- ✓ Offer an objective basis for removal of existing lower-value competitions from the programme
- ✓ Deliver a high-quality & inclusive event environment
- ✓ Deliver a high-quality player experience

*“the right format, frequency, location and standard of competition across all demographics, for existing and potential members”*

# Potential challenges

- ? Enable understanding of 'what the change is'
- ? Uncertainty around international calendar (expected to improve)
- ? How much clubs will embrace new/ increased hosting opportunities
- ? Reconfigure committee support where required
- ? ...

*To be considered further in next step(s)*

# Next Steps

Agreed by TTE Board



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# Next steps

1. Vision and Principles to be agreed by Board ✓
2. 'Potential change' clause agreed by Board for regulations '22/23 ✓
  - ↓
    - share operational feedback with Development/ TOC/ Membership/ Safeguarding/ MarComms etc ✓
    - aligning player eligibility and membership affiliation to a calendar year inc. in membership review ✓
    - update MAG, National Council and membership ←
3. Develop overall programme model refer again to insight & feedback
4. Create event detail + delivery/ support approach refer again to insight & feedback