

2025-26 BUCS TABLE TENNIS SAG - MEETING 2 - MINUTES

Date Monday 2nd Feb
Time 10:30-12:00
Location Microsoft Teams

ATTENDEES

Dan Bullen (Chair)(DB), Chris Lamb (CL), Howard Brialey(HB), Neil Rogers(NR), Olliver Ingram(OI), , Sandra Deaton(SD) Alex Perry(AP), , Max Bergin(MB) Jonny Beasley(JB) Sam Havers(SH) Alisa Khalid (AK), Nick Burley (NB)

APOLOGIES

Maz Vetter(MV), Hannah Underhill(HU), Mollie Patterson (MP)

Item	Action
1. Apologies / Welcome	DB
2. Minutes and Matters Arising (Meeting '1' 2025-26) <p>The meeting began with introductions of new and existing members, including HB as the new secretary, AP as the Vice Chair and performance representative, and SD, who chairs the University League Review and holds several international table tennis positions. DB noted that most outstanding positions had been filled over the summer. The group discussed the University League Review, with SC mentioning she would soon submit an application for changes to the Premier League, including adding two teams to the Men's Premier League.</p>	DB
3. BUCS Premier League Expansion Plan <p>The group discussed plans to expand the BUCS Premier League from 4 to 6 teams in each region (North and South), with two additional teams to be added. They reviewed the pros and cons, including increased opportunities for higher-level play and potential challenges maintaining competition standards. AP raised concerns about travel costs and the need to assess whether the player pool can support the expansion. The proposal will require approval from a committee, and MB and HU are tasked with preparing the necessary documentation, including consultation feedback from Tier 1 teams</p> <p>Action: DB and SD to conduct further consultation with relevant teams (Prem and Tier 1) regarding the proposed Premier League expansion, ensuring detailed feedback and support levels are captured before submitting the formal proposal by 19th April.</p> <p>MB: Support DB and SD by providing contacts for team leads in Prem and Tier 1 for the purposes of consultation on league restructuring.</p>	DB/SD
4. League Restructuring Consultation Process <p>The group discussed the consultation process for a paper related to league restructuring, with Nick and AP agreeing that consultation should primarily involve Prem and Tier 1 teams, while considering the impact on lower tiers. SD raised questions</p>	DB/MB

<p>about the timing of detailed consultation, and DB confirmed they would gather additional contacts and schedule meetings before the April 19th deadline. AP expressed concerns about the concept of parachuting teams into top leagues, suggesting it could disrupt BUCS' usual promotion and relegation system, though he acknowledged this approach might be more common in table tennis leagues.</p> <p>Action: DB to arrange working group and meet with MB to confirm next steps.</p>	
<p>5. Premier League University Team Expansion</p> <p>The group discussed the Premier League's expansion and the potential inclusion of university teams, with SD emphasizing the importance of maintaining high standards. They debated the process for selecting teams to move up, with MB suggesting a different approach than the current BUCS system. CL provided an update on the recent BUCS individual event, noting overall success despite a fire alarm and the removal of the plate system. The group discussed student feedback on these changes, including the increased number of matches and the practice hall, and considered adjustments for future events.</p>	DB
<p>6. BUCS Table Tennis Format Debate</p> <p>The group discussed the BUCS table tennis tournament format, particularly the plate competition. SD and DB expressed concerns about the plate system, citing logistical issues and its lack of strategic value in a national championship. They suggested removing the plate competition and moving to a straight knockout format for doubles. CL acknowledged the unique position of BUCS table tennis, balancing mass participation with national competition standards. The group agreed to continue discussing the format changes and consider feedback from players and stakeholders.</p> <p>Action: Continue discussions next meeting following gaining more feedback from students.</p>	ALL
<p>7. National Plate Competition Challenges</p> <p>The group discussed challenges with the plate competition at the national championships. Students shared their experiences, noting that the plate provides an important opportunity for lower-ranked players to compete, though logistics are difficult due to no-shows and late registrations. DB and CL explored potential solutions, including splitting the tournament into two events on one weekend, but agreed this might not be ideal as it could reduce the quality of play. AP emphasized the need to balance showcasing top players with maintaining the plate competition to drive event participation.</p> <p>Action: DB and CL: Review and propose solutions for the BUCS Individuals plate competition, including consideration of limiting plate entry (e.g., only those just missing out on group qualification), increasing group sizes, and/or reorganizing the event schedule to address logistical and participation concerns; report back to the group with a plan of action.</p> <p>DB: Discuss with the referee team the feasibility and impact of reintroducing the plate competition, considering workload and logistics.</p> <p>DB: Arrange a meeting with the competition organising committee (and referee team as needed) to discuss logistics and potential solutions for the plate competition and other event structure changes.</p>	DB/CL
<p>8. BUCS Table Tennis Format Changes</p> <p>The group discussed changes to the BUCS table tennis competition format, focusing on the singles and doubles events. AP proposed restructuring the schedule to prioritize singles games on Friday and Saturday, with doubles and plate matches on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. JB suggested reducing doubles</p>	ALL

<p>participants by only allowing third-place finishers to advance. DB agreed to consider these ideas and consult with the organizing committee and referee team. The group also discussed streaming the competition to increase visibility, with SD emphasizing the importance of proper presentation on Sunday.</p>	
<p>9. BUCS Competition Safety and Scheduling</p> <p>The group discussed BUCS competition scheduling conflicts, particularly regarding the County Junior Prem Weekend clash with university students. They also explored table size requirements and safety standards, with NB proposing to review all table equipment and space requirements by April 19th. The discussion highlighted concerns about venue availability and safety standards, with AP suggesting a survey of current venues to better understand space constraints. NR emphasized that while minimum standards exist, host teams have a legal duty of care to ensure safe playing conditions.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>10. Table Tennis Safety Regulations Update</p> <p>The group discussed safety regulations for table tennis courts, particularly regarding minimum sizes and barriers. NB agreed to investigate liability issues and survey institutions before proposing any regulatory changes. NR announced that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Table Tennis England and BUCS had been drafted and was near finalization, which would establish reciprocity in safeguarding and disciplinary measures. The group also discussed promoting Table Tennis England's new coaching framework and the upcoming World Championships in London.</p> <p>Action: NB: Draft and send a survey to relevant institutions to gather data on current venue sizes, facilities, and barriers used for BUCS table tennis matches, to inform potential changes to minimum court size and equipment regulations.</p> <p>NB: Check internally and with legal advice the liability implications if institutions agree to play in spaces below BUCS minimum standards, and communicate findings to the group.</p> <p>NB: Send follow-up thoughts and questions to the group via email to get further sport-specific insight on proposed regulations before formal proposal.</p>	<p>NB</p>
<p>11. A.O.B.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Actions: DB: Pick up with NR (and/or Neil Hereford) offline regarding the clash between County Junior Prem Weekend and BUCS events, to discuss scheduling impacts.</p> <p>NR: Share the finalized MOU between Table Tennis England and BUCS with the wider group once countersigned.</p> <p>CL: Connect with James Twig (Table Tennis England) to collaborate on promoting new coaching and officiating opportunities to the HE community, including exploring the use of regional hubs.</p> <p>All university representatives: Promote the World Championships (London, Wembley, 2nd May) and Senior Nationals within their institutions and encourage ticket sales/attendance.</p> <p>AP: Promote the Senior Nationals around the University of Nottingham and encourage student attendance.</p> <p>DB: Schedule and announce a follow-up meeting to discuss and formally agree on targets to send to MB and HU.</p>	<p>ALL</p>

Dates and times of meetings for 2025-26 season.

Meeting 1 – 4th September 2025

Meeting 2 – 2nd February 2026

Meeting 3 – TBC

Meeting 4 – TBC